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CANCIONERO IMAGERY AND THE HAPTIC POWER OF THE GAZE IN ROÍS CORELLA'S *HISTÒRIA DE LEÀNDER I HERO*

LA IMAGINERÍA CANCIONERIL Y EL PODER HÁPTICO DE LA MIRADA EN LA *HISTÒRIA DE LÈANDER I HERO* DE ROÍS DE CORELLA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to show the import of vision and visual discourses in the articulation of desire in Joan Roís de Corella's fifteenth-century *Història de Leànder i Hero*. The topoi of the "arrows of love" and the power of the gaze to make others fall in love represent both the catalyst that sets in motion the passionate love of Hero and Leànder and the means through which the lovers express their desire and longings. After Hero and Leànder wound each other with the arrows of love, they cannot stop their life-long quest to apprehend visually each other either across the crowd of guests in the festivity or across the Hellespont. Hero's tower, which becomes a metonym for Hero, is always within Leànder's choric visual field and cannot stop staring until he dies. Like Leànder, when her lover is not in Sestos with her, Hero cannot stop gazing across the sea in search Leànder. Hence after Leànder drowns and the currents carry his corpse to the shore of Sestos, Hero opens his eyes and kisses them with her own eyes. The eyes-to-eyes kiss underscores and attests to the preeminence of vision and visual theories in forming and conveying desire through sight. Corella, then, uses optical theories, extant during his own time, to showcase the power of the gaze in the articulation and expression of human behavior and desire.

KEYWORDS: Joan Roís de Corella, mythology, Hero and Leander, gaze, arrows of love, vision, desire.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este estudio es mostrar la importancia de la vista y los discursos visuales en la articulación del deseo en la *Història de Leànder i Hero* de Joan Roís de Corella. Los *topoi* de “las flechas de amor” y el poder de la mirada para provocar amor representan el catalizador que pone en movimiento el amor apasionado entre Hero y Leànder, y el medio a través del cual los enamorados expresan sus deseos y sus añoranzas. Después de que Hero y Leànder se hieren mutuamente con las flechas de amor, no pueden frenar su búsqueda interminable para capturarse uno al otro visualmente, bien sea a través de la multitud de invitados a la festividad o a través del Hellesponto. La torre de Hero, la cual se convierte en una metonimia de Hero, se sitúa siempre dentro del campo visual de Leànder, y no puede dejar de mirarla hasta el momento de su muerte. Igual que Leànder, cuando su amante no se encuentra en Sestos con ella, Hero no puede dejar de otear desde la torre a través del mar en busca de Leànder. Después de que Leànder se ahoga y la corriente arrastran su cuerpo hasta la costa de Sestos, Hero le abre los ojos, y los besa con sus propios ojos. El beso ojo con ojo subraya y certifica la preeminencia de la vista y las teorías visuales en la configuración del deseo. Corella, entonces, utiliza teorías ópticas, existentes durante su tiempo, para mostrar el poder de la mirada en la articulación y la expresión del comportamiento y el deseo humano.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Joan Roís de Corella, mitología, Hero y Leandro, mirada, flechas de amor, visión, deseo.

Joan Roís de Corella’s fifteenth-century recast of the tragic love story *Història de Leànder i Hero* underscores the preponderance of vision and visual discourses in stimulating both love and desire. Along with the medieval leitmotif of the «arrows of Love», the lovers’ gazes represent optical conduits through which they emit and receive desire. Subsequently, these strong feelings appear in full display in the eyes of the lovers. Hero and Leànder fall in love at first sight after their eyebeams converge in a metaphorical kiss, and from that moment on, their eyes always manage to find each other either across a crowded ballroom or across the Hellespont. When Leànder is not with Hero in Sestos, his eyesight is always turned toward Hero’s tower, representing the longing and desire that overwhelms his heart. As their passion unfolds, both the tower and the lamp on the tower become metonyms for Hero and her gaze respectively.

When Hero is alone, she climbs up to the top of her tower to observe Leànder's home in Abydos. The rift that separates her from Leànder only stresses her unbound desire to see and possess him. After their first meeting, their eyes create a magnetic field in which the gaze of one always attracts the gaze of the other, and the final eye-to-eye kiss after Leànder's drowning only reinforces the notion that their first encounter represented a haptic kiss between their eyes and the union between their souls.

Over the past years scholars of Iberian medieval literature have been increasingly interested in vision and visual epistemology as means of understanding the function of the gaze and its role in forming relations of power and desire. Both modern thinkers of optical phenomenology and medievalists have emphasized the overarching relevance the gaze plays in articulating highly codified messages that seek to express and elicit passion and to exert control over the Other.¹ More than organs for perception, the eyes represent sophisticated devices of non-verbal communication, endowed with a built-in capacity for expressing and understanding affective responses and hidden feelings. The twelfth-century theorist of courtly love Andreas Capellanus posited that love could *only* arise through sight, upholding that blind people were incapable of falling in love (Stewart 2003: 24). Capellanus' assertion was ingrained in *cancionero* aesthetics. The fifteenth-century Valencian poet, Ausiàs March, believed that people could only fall in love through visual means. March, whose poetry influenced Corella profoundly (Martos 2001: 30), added sensorial touch as a complement to vision.²

In the Spanish Middle Ages, men were the wielders of both political power and the gaze. Due to the deep-rooted anxieties concerning the female gaze as well as its connection with sexual (mis)conduct and its latent potential for bringing shame to the household, women were denied the right to *look* and hence to express desire through

1 See, for example, the works of Dámaso Alonso (1964), Blanco (1999), Martos (1997), Burke (2000), Castells (2000), Weissberger (1996), Brownlee (1997), Haywood (2008), Gerli (2011), López González (2016a, 2016b and forthcoming).

2 March: «Quan l'ull no veu e lo toc no-s practica,/ mor lo voler, que tot per ells se guanya» (Archer 1997: 374).

vision.³ The female gaze was sexualized to the point that it came to embody temptation, which can be seen to an extent in the work of early Christian theologians. As Caviness points out, Tertullian, Saint Ambrose and Saint Jerome warned fellow ascetics not to look at women because looking led to lust (Caviness 2001: 20). In medieval culture and social systems, the male gaze was construed as an active force capable of exerting its power over the objectified and fetishized Other. The female gaze was passive and relentlessly policed through sociocultural mechanisms of control, overseen by a hermetic patriarchal system.⁴ These sociological institutions that repressed women's desires and right to look, as we will see, are often undermined in literary texts.

Unlike stern moral treatises like Martínez de Toledo's *Corbacho* or Roig's *Spill*, which depict women as lustful and perverted, *cancioneril* poets subvert the power relations, bestowing upon their ladies the power to hurt with the arrows of love emitted from their beautiful eyes. In poetic representations, women can (and do) *look*, and often, they are the wielders of the gaze, thus usurping and *ungendering* the male gaze.⁵ In the *Història de Leànder i Hero*, Corella *ungenders* the gaze, obliterating all sociocultural stigma that robbed women of their right to *look* and express their inner feelings. Hero and Leànder can look at each other unrestrained by social conventions and gender asymmetry. Hero's eyes embody the bow that issues forth the arrows of love, and Leànder's eyes represent the target that receives and incorporates—in its most etymological sense *in-* «into», *corpus* «body», to make it an inherent part of the

3 «Yet a long cultural tradition has denied women the right to stare, and even denied that women were right to look, precisely because staring is understood as dominating behavior» (Caviness 2001: 19).

4 The Archdeacon Clemente Sánchez (b. 1370-1426), for example, refers the story of a woman who was killed because she was caught looking at a man through her window, which proved to her husband that she was not chaste (2009-2010: 86).

5 The concept of «ungendering», as I use it here and elsewhere, encompasses the idea of indistinguishability. In other words, the social convention of men as the only gender *institutionally* allowed to stare is undermined so that women bridge the gender gap. This idea represents both a usurpation, since they control by means of looking, a prerogative than only men had, but it also suggests that all gender categories are blurred. Women seduce and are seduced through ocular means.

body— the arrows that wound both the eyes and the heart, so that Hero's eyes are the very matrix from which Leànder's desire spawns.

In Corella's *Història*, the reciprocity of Hero and Leànder's gazes causes both the wounds in their eyes and the kindling of their passionate desires. As Baldwin points out, love-gazing was predominantly a one-way phenomenon. Men looked and objectified through their gaze. Women were not allowed to look. Mutual gazing, on the other hand, was a rare occurrence, despite Ovid's description of the eyes as discursive organs that «secretly receive and send forth...signals of our love» (Baldwin 1986: 23). The discursivity of the eyes was already present in the poetic thought of the thirteenth-century theologian and mystic Ramon Lull. In his tropological allegory *Llibre d'amic e amat*, the Amic (layman) tells the Amat (God) that He does not need to say a word because His eyes have dialectic qualities: «Mes fe'm senyal ab tos ulls, qui són paraules a mon cor» (Butinyà Jiménez, Marco i Artigas & Briongos 2011: 60). Like the beloveds in love-lore, God's eyes emit dialectic arrows of love that enter through the eyes and reach the bottom of the lover's heart. Joan Martorell, who adopted multiple passages from Corella's *Història* for his *Tirant lo Blanc* (Guia i Marín 1996: 90-93), puts in Tirant's words a similar idea to mask Felipe's inanity in the Sicilian princess's eyes: «Però creuria que los ulls són missatgers del cor» (Riquer 1979: 345).⁶ Boccaccio's Fiammetta claims to have read in Panfilo's eyes the highly eroticized message: «At one point I stared into his eyes much more intently than usual, and in them I seemed to read words that said, "O woman, our blessedness lies in you alone!"» (Erbani 1988: 8). The mutual discursivity in Hero and Leànder's eyes and the simultaneity of their codified optical messages being sent and received represent the seed that engenders their desire and the dogged will to die for one another that ends with their eye-to-eye kiss.

⁶ Shortly before that, Martorell had explained Felipe's falling in love with the princess in purely visual terms. The princess had issued forth sparks of fire that had penetrated Felipe's eyes and gone into his heart: «Derrocant destil·lades llàgremes d'aquells ulls qui moltes flames de foc havien encases en lo cor de Felip» (Riquer 1979: 318).

THE ARROWS OF LOVE AND THE POWER OF THE GAZE

I'll look to like, if looking liking move.
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly (Mowat & Werstine 1992: 41).

Juliet's words in Shakespeare's masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet* encapsulate the blueprint of vision and visual theories in the «the scopic phase in the unfolding of love» (Spearing 1993: 195). Beyond Shakespeare's rhetorical aesthetics, the idea of «look to like» underscores Juliet's willingness and ability to *look* because she understands that love springs from looking, and her conditional *gerundization* «if looking liking move» represents an echo of the poetic platitudes of the female eyes' power to fascinate. Juliet's allusion to «*endart*» (send in) arrows in order to make Paris fall in love with her sums up the core of medieval ideas of women's eyes being metaphorical bows capable of issuing forth arrows of love. Romeo's words attest to the lethality of Juliet's gaze: «Alack, there lies more peril in thine eyes/ than twenty of their swords» (Mowat and Werstine 1992: 75). Juliet loads her eyes with the arrows of love that are supposed to pierce Paris' eyes to get to his heart, a hunting symbol that will be preponderant in Hero's own loading her eyes-bows with arrows with which she will wound Leànder. Juliet purports to have control over the shooting of darts. However, as the night unfolds and Romeo enters into her visual field, the reader realizes that Juliet has less control over her eyes-bow than she believed. Neither the subject nor the object of the gaze seems to exercise any control over the emitting or the receiving of the arrows. The same holds true in Corella's representation of Hero and Leànder. The arrows come out of their eyes before each is conscious of being observed by the other.

Like Shakespeare's spatial plotline, in which Romeo sees Juliet across a multitude of people during a masquerade, Leànder first spots Hero while attending a festivity in Sestos. The narrator lays out the backdrop of the event with visual descriptions that play out much like a contemporary film, using multiple levels of camera angles and panning techniques. The first description offers a long and high-angle shot of

the multitude of people in the ballroom. After this panoptic view, the scene zooms into a medium shot where Hero and a group of ladies stand, oblivious to Leànder's scopophilic objectification. Finally Hero's eyes become the focal point of a close-up, which the narrator, the reader and Leànder fetishize, recreating the asymmetric binary that Mulvey reports in films between women displayed as passive object of desires and men as voyeurs and wielders of the gaze (2009: 19-25). Just like the reader, who is always invited to look, Leànder's gaze finds its way through the crowd: «Hero sobre totes estava de clara hi elegant figura, a la qual Leànder, ab modesta y entristida continença, dreçà la vista» (Martos 2001: 167). The image of Leànder's glance navigating through the multitude of people to find Hero's eyes is redolent of their subsequent efforts to find each other across the waters of the sea. His eyes are objectifying but also piercing, which reminds us of Fiammetta's «piercing gaze» upon Panfilo during their encounter in the church.⁷ Leànder, however, is represented as a melancholic voyeur, staring at a maiden from the distance. Hero's beauty and demeanor hypnotize the eyes of the lover who is unable and unwilling to stop ogling. In Musaeus' epyllion, Leander's brazen voyeurism is more striking: «I could gaze until I die!» (Edwin 1874: 11).⁸ Leànder's inability and unwillingness to stop staring at Hero becomes a prominent feature in Corella's recasting of the Ovidian myth of Narcissus.⁹

For a brief moment, Hero and Leànder exist in different planes of reality. Hero's eyes and mind only perceive an amorphous mass of people who seem to be as indifferent regarding her as she is regarding them. Leànder's eyes and heart, on the

7 Martos highlights Boccaccio's *Elegia's* influence on Corella's *Història*, and he points out Fiammetta «es deixa captivar per la mirada d'un jove, que travessa la seva vanitat i la fa caure en un amor que la durà a partir» (2005: 262).

8 After Leander confesses his raptness, the narrator says: «Thus he, and others passioned otherwise, / Heart-stricken by the light of Hero's eyes» (Edwin 1874: 11).

9 The narrator avers Narcissus' powerlessness to revert his gaze from himself: «E meravellat per l'extrem de tanta bellea, la primera set tenguí perduda, sens que no tenia poder apartar los ulls de tan delitosa vista» (Carbonell 1983: 124). Then, he declares that the water nymph cannot stop ogling Narcissus: «Que a mi paria que ella, no menys en mi que io en ella, contramplava» (1983: 124).

other hand, have merged to express and receive desire. Leànder's eyes are touching her, which attests to Roland Betancourt's study on the tactility of sight and the eyes «[grazing] the body of the object» (2016: 60). The Andalusian filmmaker Val del Omar notes the haptic qualities of vision. Val del Omar asserts that when the eyes see an object, the eyebeams touch it and feel it through a tangible «vibración luminosa». The filmmaker argues that some women use specific fabrics and sophisticated lighting techniques in order to «ser palpada por quienes la miran» (1959: 28-31). Hero, then, senses the haptic eyebeams that Leànder is emitting through his eyes, so she turns inadvertently toward the rapt voyeur:

Ixqueren a l'encontre al mirar de Leànder los ulls de la graciosa donzella. E a l'hu hi a l'altre fon semblant ab vires de enamorada erba tenien les entramenes travessades e que ls ulls, dels retrets de la nefrada pensa, entre si portaven secretes ambaixades. E fon tan gran lo mal de aquesta primera vista, que a l'hu y a l'altre constituí en pensament de sollicitut profunde (Martos 2001: 152).

As Martos points out, Corella is exploiting the courtly topos of love spawning from the gaze (2001: 152). Trilla Millás and López draw a connection between the lovers' amorous gazing and Petrarch's staging of the gaze as the matrix of love (1996: 693-697). Hero and Leànder's mutual gazing goes beyond a mere interception of glances that results in love at first sight. Their gazes interact embracing and kissing each other through the *species* irradiating from their eyes,¹⁰ provoking an affective and ontological imbrication that not even death can sever. Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), who quotes Musaeus to shore up his assertion, had noted the merging of *species* from the eyes of one lover to the other: «Directing his gaze unblinkingly to the gaze of others, they unify

10 Fray Luis de Granada (1504-1588) expressed with precision the concept of «species» as medieval thinkers understood them: «Y la primera cosa que nos debe poner admiración son las especies y imágenes de las cosas que se requieren para verlas. Para lo cual es de saber que todas las cosas visibles, que son las que tienen color o luz, producen de sí en el aire sus imágenes y figuras, que los filósofos llaman especies, las cuales representan muy al propio las mismas cosas cuyas imágenes son» (Balcells 1989: 457). For a more thorough exposition about *species*, see Burke 2000: 13-15 and also Tachau 1988: 1-19.

their light and, wretched, they impregnate each other with a lasting love» (Béhar 2013: 292). Before Ficino, however, the author of the fourteenth-century romance *Froldino e Brisona* had described the eponymous characters' mutual gazes as a mixture of *species-light*: «Ez ab gran marrimén/ mescleron lur esgart» (Annicchiarico 2003: 94). As Hero and Leànder's eyes meet, they release the arrows of love that fascinate one another.¹¹ March, who peppers his poetry with a wide array of visual theories ranging from extromission to intromission, draws a vivid image of Eros shooting the arrow into his eyes, producing pleasure in his heart:

Quan me ferí amor ab la sageta,
no viu la llanç ans de sentir dolor:
untada fon de una gran dolçor;
material dolç portava la treta (Archer 1997: 220).

In his epistolary literature as well as in his lyric poetry, Corella deploys the motif of the arrows of love to convey the preponderance of visual discourses in the act of falling in love. In his letter to Violant Durlada, Corella declares to her that her *vista* —both gaze and physical beauty— captivated him: «Seria remei a ma pena, la qual no és comparable a ninguna passió, que vós en mi haveu llançat ab vostra vista, robant-me la voluntat» (Carbonell 1983: 92). The *objects* that Violant emits from her gaze are arrows of love that rob him of his will, turning him into a prisoner of love. Corella returns to the trope of the arrows in *Desengany*:

E som tan folls los ferits d'esta fleixa,
que tots pensam tenir un esmaragde
ab tal virtud (Carbonell 1983: 48).

The arrow enters through the eyes and blinds the wounded. Corella reiterates the arrows' ability to blind in his *Lo johí de Paris*, where Paris was blinded by Eros' arrows

11 «Pero es muy evidente que el poeta valenciano, a diferencia de Nadal, a quien para ese punto del episodio no sigue, presenta el enamoramiento de nuestros personajes como mutuo y recíproco desde el mismísimo instante en que los dos intercambian sus miradas» (Morros Mestre 2013: 235).

and subsequently by Helen's beauty. The «vires d' enamorada herba» that Hero emits from her eyes are poisoned arrows that infect him with desire. Unlike the troubadour tradition of *cancioneros*, which portrays the arrows as bittersweet,¹² Corella refers to the arrows as poisoned darts that enter through his eyes to infect his whole being, a platitude linked to the venomous eyes of the mythic basilisk that killed all those whose eyes met with its powerful gaze.¹³ In his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, Ficino argues in favor of the arrows of love that lovers emit from the heart through their eyes. Like Corella, Ficino describes the arrows as poisoned: «Hence the poisoned dart pierces through the eyes, and since it is shot from the heart of the shooter, it seeks again the heart of the man being shot, as its proper home; it wounds the heart» (Sears 1985: 160).

The narrator of *Història*, then, alludes to the discursivity of their eyes, echoing Ovid and Llull. Just like a complex dialogic communication takes place between two speaking individuals, their eyes sent forth codified messages highly encoded within the dialectics of visual discourses. One sends the codified visual message, and the other decodes and interprets it. The secret medium of ocular communication affects both their minds and hearts, transporting them into an alternate mode of existence, where one cannot live without the other. The moralistic voice of the narrator interprets their exchange of piercing *species* as harmful because their eyes are overwhelming each other with passionate desire and blinding reason. Even without having exchanged words, their mere optical embrace is causing an ontological alienation that renders their passion both sinful and immoral.

12 «They eyes of the beloved can function as weapons unleashed on the lover, bringing him mixed sensations of pleasure and pain» (Stewart 2003: 19).

13 In his *Tratado de Fascinación*, Villena links the mythic powers of the basilisks to a legendary tale in «Çicia» where there were «mugeres que por sola catadura matan» (Ynduráin 1994: 329). See Juan Rodríguez de Padrón's *Triunfo de las donas*, where he describes how his lady hurt him with her sight: «la cueua entrando del Basilisco». For an interpretation of these words, see Antonio Paz y Meliá's edition Saquero Suárez-Somonte & González Rolán 1984: 427, and Lida de Malkiel 1954: 1-2.

Instead of acting upon his lust, as the lover does in Musaeus' epyllion, Leànder attempts to channel his passion through the outlet of marriage. Hero's father, Austerus, decides to reject Leànder's eloping proposal. Instead, Austerus maps out a strategy to marry his daughter to a wealthy suitor. Leànder's sorrowful dejection prompts him to stay away from Hero's sight, a harrowing decision that the narrator conveys in visual terminology: «Desdenyat del matrimoni, ab esperança perduda, per lo camí de virtut ni per força de amor lo seu voler pogués atényer terme, delliberà de la vista de Hero un poch espay apartar-se» (Martos 2001: 154). Leànder decides to take himself out of Hero's field of vision because her eyes have acquired a paradoxical condition: They emit arrows of love that wound his heart, on the one hand, and they keep him alive, on the other.

When Leànder leaves Sestos, his eyes remain fixed upon Hero and her tower. His eyes always follow the course of his desire. Or rather, his desire dictates the direction of his visual field. Even after Leànder takes himself away from Hero's sight, he cannot avert his eyes from her and her tower because his eyes and his desire are magnetized to Hero and all objects related to her: «Hi, partint-se de Cestos, los ulls endreçats a la riba —e més a la casa de Hero—» (Martos 2001: 154). Leànder's eyesight bridges the spatial rift that separates him from his beloved. He knows that part of himself has remained in Hero's heart. His desire for Hero attracts him and his sight toward Sestos. The narrator avows: «Nadant surgiria al port e terme que tant desigava» (Martos 2001: 159). Beyond his desire, there is an ontological part of him that physically entered through her eyes into her heart, which fills her *being* and prevents her from uttering words after Leànder dies. Just like Leànder occupies her body, Hero also fills his *being*, which bars the water from entering his body before he drowns. This kind of ontological transference represents the hallmark of the Platonic optical epistemology, typified by the metaphor of the stream of beauty.

Forced by Austerus' greed to be away from Hero, Leànder spends his days in melancholic solitude looking toward Hero's tower. For Corella, when love is not

consummated, it results in erotic melancholy (Terry 2000: 45). Leànder has turned from a brazen voyeur of Hero's beauty to an ascetic-like observer who contemplates Hero's tower as if it were Hero herself inhabiting a sacred temple. In Leànder's mind, the tower has come to embody Hero, and looking at it enhances his sadness. The tower inhabits Hero as much as Hero inhabits the tower. In her study on architectural economies of Anchorholds in medieval England, Michelle M. Sauer showed how the anchoress and her cell become fused into oneness: «The physical anchorhold was conceived as an extension of the anchoress' body» (1976: 546). The anchoress, Sauer explains, absorbs the physical space that confines her so that it becomes an inherent part of her identity, to the extent that decontextualizing the configuration of places, the spatial economy «is simultaneously a church building and the anchorite's body» (1976: 547). In Leànder's psyche, this metonymic process occurred from the very moment he knew Hero lived in the tower. From the onset, the tower acquires a defining meaning that encompasses both the space and the beloved. As Walthaus notes of the semiological spatiality in Flores' *Grimalte y Gradisa* (1997: 5-18), there is also a distinctive semantization of space in *Història*. For the lovesick lover, Hero's tower has a well-defined meaning, which helps us explain Leànder's fixated fascination with staring at the tower with as much adoration as when he stares at Hero.

Months after Leànder departed from Hero, he recites a poem while he stretches his sight as far as Hero's tower. Although the narrator strives for succinctness and does not say it explicitly, Hero is likely on the top of her tower staring back at Leànder, as she does after deciding to kill herself. Leànder's poem is a testament to his wounds caused by Hero's golden arrows of love during their first encounter:

Que·ls vostres ulls del mur d'onesta vida,
ab tempre d'or les fleixes de Cupido
tiren, matant a tots los qui no us fugen (Martos 2001: 169).

Hero's eyes become the focal point of his poem. Leànder dovetails the classical tradition of Eros shooting the golden arrow with the medieval ideal of the lady's eyes

emitting the golden arrows from her eyes and wounding the lover's heart. The idea of the slaying eyes is preponderant in Musaeus' epyllion: «'Tis the eyes slay, thence fly the subtle darts/ which deal swift wounds and hurt unguarded hearts» (Edwin 1874: 12). Leànder overtly acknowledges the arrows of love that have wounded both his eyes and his heart. Hero's eyes, Leànder posits, *kill* all those who do not flee from her deadly gaze. Leànder does not only refuse to flee, he willfully follows her, evoking the medieval topos of the moth rapt by the candlelight that advances until it burns in the flames. Far from defusing the deadliness of her arrows, his proximity only renders her gaze more lethal.

Faral and Baldwin called attention to Eros' function as the shooter of the golden arrow. In the *cancionero* poetic tradition, Martos (1997: 1043) points out, the arrows were made of three different metals: gold, silver and lead, and each metal would elicit a different effect on the recipient of the arrows, as Màrch notes: «Cascú d'aquests [fleixes] dóna son sentiment,/ segons que d'ells diferencia-n lo món» (Martos 1997: 1043). Given the medieval perception of gold as the purest of all metals, the golden arrows were believed to provoke a purified love, free from the carnal desire that spawned in those who were hit by the leaden arrows. Leànder was hit by a golden arrow, which expresses the purity of his love, while also ennobling Hero's eyes from which the *fleixes d'or* sprung. Since Leànder expresses these words after knowing that Hero's father opposes their relationship, hence preventing him from attaining his desire through the holy conduit of matrimony, he believes that only death can cure him from the wound caused by the golden arrows.

Medieval readers and poets often conflated Hero and Eros into the same character. In their respective recasts of the tragic story, Alfonso X el Sabio and Gabriel Bocángel spelled Hero's name as «Ero», which amounts to coupling Ero-Eros into the same character. Even if spelled with an «h», the phonetic pronunciation is the same (minus the suffix «s»). Based on the dovetailing of the Ovidian tradition of Eros as shooter of the golden arrow and the medieval notion of ladies as emitters of the

(pluralized) «fleixeis», Corella is fusing Eros-Hero into a poetic unit. The Valencian poet is playing with the literary conceit of Eros-Hero as the emitter of «les fleixes d'or», wounding and killing the beholder. The analogy would be more apparent if Corella had used the nomenclature «Eros», instead of «Cupido» in his lyrical poem. Far from trying to distance his character «Hero» from «Eros», his careful use of onomatopoeia only underscores the extent to which he was aware of the poetic tradition of the «fleixes d'or». By choosing the name «Cupido» and not «Eros», Corella eschews turning his carefully crafted ocular metaphor into a tactless cliché.

After Leànder declaims his poem, the narrator shifts the focus of his narrative to Hero. By then, a whole year had elapsed since Hero's father had denied Leànder Hero's hand. As Leànder's poem suggests, both lovers have developed a suicidal melancholy and an inherent pessimism in mankind. Driven by sorrow and despair, Hero decides to commit suicide as a means of escaping the sorrow caused by her *amor hereos*. Hence she climbs to the top of her tower to do so. Hero's decision to end her life by jumping from the top of the tower is fraught with symbolic meaning from a narratological as well as from a psychological standpoint. Corella, as Badia and Martos note, aims at imitating Dido's suicide as represented in Virgil's *Aeneid* by jumping to her death after Aeneas' departure from Carthage. Psychologically, Hero climbs to the top of the tower, the highest point of the island, in order to stare at Leànder's abode, with the hope of seeing him before her death. Like Leànder, Hero seems to associate Leànder's personal spaces with her lover:

Tant que un jorn, a la hora que'l sol de nostra habitable terra cobrir se volia, era pujada la plorosa donzella en una alta torre, de la qual los murs de la ciutat de Abidos, hon Leànder vivia, clarament se miraven (Martos 2001: 156).

Hero wants to see beyond the city walls, and even on the verge of her death, she longs to find Leànder's dwelling. The narrator tells us that Hero wants to see the place where Leànder lives, but the lovelorn lady desires to see Leànder himself. It is unlikely that Hero knows the location of Leànder's house since she seems to be physically (and ontologically) attached to her tower. But lack of topographic specificity does not deter

her from associating the space with her lover. Instead, the entire city of Abydos comes to resemble and to *be* a metonym for Leànder.

As she prepares to jump from the top of her tower, Hero confesses to her *dida*, Latíbula, that she wants to die in order to end her sorrow. Latíbula attempts to dissuade her, but Hero has made up her mind not to live without her lover, adducing that she does not fear death since her soul was already flying toward Leànder. Like the imbrication of Leànder's gaze and desire, Hero's gaze and soul are intricately connected so that her soul seems to be traveling enveloped in the complex web of her visual rays. Hero responds to Latíbula with a doleful dirge that betrays the influence *cancionero* poetry plays in Corella's literary stylization in his *Història*:

Del món no'm dolch, que ma vida vull perdre,
perquè, del cos l'esperit ja delliure
pugua, volant, estar prop de Leànder (Martos 2001: 156).

Like her gaze, her soul longs to be near her lover. Latíbula assesses Hero's problem accurately. She tells Hero that her passionate love is blinding her reason: «Amor, que sobre les altres passions nostre enteniment embenant encegua» (Martos 2001: 158). In his translation into English, Krummrich uses the transitive verb «encegua» with an intransitive expression «put a blindfold», which does not capture the poetic and moral aesthetics of Corella's lyrical sensibility.¹⁴ Instead of suggesting that love applies a blindfold, Corella says that love blinds («encegua») her reason, which is the hallmark of Corella's tropological moralism. For Corella, Stefano M. Cingolani points out, love that leads to matrimony is not evil, but it could be dangerous because it can always turn into a blinding *amor hereos* (1998: 172-173), or it can end with the degenerate immorality that leads Caldesa to cheat right before the other lover's eyes in *Tragèdia de Caldesa*. Lola Badia notes that Corella perceived carnal love as an «imposible monstruosidad», for which he can only preach the morality of disappointment (1988:

14 Krummrich offers this translation: «Emotions can put a blindfold on our understanding» (2006: 30).

97). Love —or rather Leànder’s metaphorical arrows of love— has blinded Hero to the extent that she can only turn her gaze horizontally toward Leànder’s dwelling and inwardly toward her own overwhelming lovesickness. But love blinds her reason, preventing her from ever transcending mere carnality, which ultimately dooms her body and soul.

In order to save Hero’s life, Latíbula agrees to act as facilitator of Hero and Leànder’s illicit dalliance. Her options are limited. Hero’s only options in life seem to hinge upon «transgressing the human laws or dying of love» (Martos 2005: 265). The faithful *dida*, then, travels to Abydos to persuade Leànder to visit Hero. Unwilling to taint Hero’s honor, Leànder and Latíbula agree on furtive visits at nighttime. They seek to conceal their relationship from other people’s eyes because the public-private dichotomy is determined by the Other’s sight. Secrecy is not entirely related to spatial economies (Caldesa’s deceit, for example, took place within the walls of her own home, and it became public through the conduit of the lover’s eyes). As Spearing notes, it is the Other’s gaze that renders a private occurrence public, and Leànder, Latíbula and Hero understand the imperative of maintaining the public gaze excluded in order to save Hero’s honor. Leànder’s visits will be conducted while nobody can see their encounters, so he will swim at nighttime, and depart from Hero’s bed in the morning during daylight so that people can see him depart Sestos.¹⁵

After his first visit to Hero, Leànder swims back to Abydos, and just as they were during previous times, his eyes remain fixed upon Hero and everything that bears an association with her: «Mirant les aigües, la ciutat e la riba, e, sobretot, a la casa d’Hero, en la qual la sua ànima en alegre cativeri cativa romania» (Martos 2001: 172). The idea of Leànder’s soul imprisoned in Hero’s body is a symbolic image closely related to visual phenomenology. This brings us back to the image of Hero’s

15 «E, perquè delliberava Leànder ans la vida perdre que la fama de la estimada donzella ofendre, fon lo concert de la discreta vella ab Leànder que, al temps que la escura nit als furtats plaers loch abandona, Leànder nedant passàs aquell espay de mar que les dues ciutats separava e que, sens tarda, davant tothom se partís de la ciutat de Cestos» (Martos 2001: 159).

soul flying toward Leànder when she muses suicide, which has its epistemological roots in Platonic visual theories.

Ruth H. Cline asserts that Plato posits sight as the most important of the senses in spawning love. Plato evokes images of the stream and the mirror to explain the origin of love. The «stream» evolves into a «stream of beauty», which symbolizes the flow of visual *species* that resemble the object being observed. Once this stream of beauty enters the affected subject, the eyes, like mirrors, reflect the images of the lover, so that each lover sees him/herself in the eyes of the other. In his commentary of Plato's *Symposium*, Ficino explained the fascination of love as a vapor of the spirit produced from the blood of the heart that «sends out rays like itself through the eyes, which are like glass windows» (Sears 1985: 159). The vapors of the spirit in the likeness of the beloved, then, penetrate the lover's eyes, and the lover's eyes display the image of the beloved like a vitrine. In essence, it is reminiscent of the Narcissus' self-referential motif. It becomes a narcissistic self-love, merely mediated by the fountain-like eyes of the other.¹⁶ Cline points to Aristophanes' explanation of love in the *Symposium*, where a lover is in a permanent quest of finding his second half. This ontological fusing of lovers boils down to the ubiquitous metaphor of one lover dwelling within the body of the other, a poetic device that Corella aptly deploys with mastery in his poem «Cor Cruel» (Carbonell 1983: 54).¹⁷ As Plato asserts: «In the lover's presence, like him he ceases from his pain, and in his absence, like him he is filled with yearning such as he inspires, and love's image, requited love, *dwells within him*» (Cline 1972: 269, emphasis added). Ficino offers a clearer example of how the spirit of one lover penetrates another:

16 Let us remember, as we will show later, that Hero describes her eyes as fountains («fons») swelled with tears after Leànder dies: «E los meus ulls, no sé per què, fons d'amargues llàgrimes brollen» (Martos 2001: 178).

17 Corella is surely thinking of the Aristotelian optical theory when he claims to have his beloved inside him in life-like perfection: «So ja content per amor sia martre: / Puix que, dins mi, vos tinch en bella forma, / Treta del viu en perfeta figura, / Ab les colors sobrel fresch, hi lampremta» (Miquel i Planas 1913: 419).

Lysias gapes at the face of Phaedrus. Phaedrus aims into the eyes of Lysias sparks of his own eyes, and *along with those sparks transmits also a spirit*. The ray of Phaedrus is easily joined to the ray of Lysias, and *spirit is easily joined to spirit*. This vapor produced by the heart of Phaedrus immediately seeks the heart of Lysias, through the hardness of which it is condensed and turns back into the blood of Phaedrus as before, so that now the blood of Phaedrus, amazing though it seems, is in the heart of Lysias (Sears 1985: 161, emphasis added).

Ficino's discursive circularity encompasses most of the optical theories that we have been arguing throughout the study. But this rhetorical redundancy underscores the transferring of *species*, blood and *spirit* from one lover to the other. The eyes represent the gateway through which the soul enters and exits in the interchange of amorous gazes. Cline shows that Saint Augustine as well as other Christian and Arabic poets throughout the Middle Ages borrowed this Platonic visual theory of the stream of beauty and the mirror, and it was extant in twelfth-century poetic and scholastic texts. Hence, the idea of both Hero's soul departing toward Leànder, and Leànder's soul inhabiting Hero's body has its etiology in Platonic philosophy disseminated through poetic *cancioneros*.¹⁸

After an undeclared amount of months of nightly visits to Hero's bed, the summer comes to an end. Unlike Rojas, who tells his reader explicitly that his lovers, Calisto and Melibea, enjoyed their passion for a month, Corella offers no specific time because he attempts to represent Hero and Leànder's passion as a timeless love story. On the day of the tragedy, Leànder hides behind the darkness of the night, and walks toward the coastline. As he feels the intensity of the storm, he stares at Hero's tower and at the light that has come to embody Hero's desire to see him. In other versions of the story, Hero lit the torch as a sign that she wanted him to visit her. Hence the light came to signify Hero's sexual availability and desire. Since the light guides Leànder

18 See also Galen's take on the exchange of «pneuma» through visual means: «Galen... also elaborated upon the theory of the extramission of visual "pneuma" or spirits that had been proposed by the Stoics. This theory grants the perceiver a particularly active role, for the visual spirit strikes the air with force and transforms it, rendering it similar to itself, so that the air becomes a sort of extension of the eye» (Stewart 2003: 16).

through the sea, it is Hero's desire as perceived through ocular means that guides him across the Hellespont.

Seeing the intensity of the storm, Leànder hesitates to embark on his voyage, but his hesitancy only lasts a moment. As soon as he beholds Hero's lamp, his eyes and heart ignite with lustful desire and unrestrained passion. He, then, expresses his psychological tension: «La llum que'n la torre, per a mi encesa, mire és la estela a la qual lo meu timó esguarda e lo meu cos és la fusta hon l'ànima de Hero mia, de amor carregada, ab los remes dels meus braços passa» (Martos 2001: 161). In Leànder's discourse, body parts and objects have metonymic and metaphoric significations, which attests to our own assertion that places and objects are endowed with semiological and symbolic meaning: The «llum» is a «estela», his «cos» is a «fusta» and his «braços» are «remes». Hero's light (*llum*) represents both her desire and her eyes that lure and guide him to her body (tower), and Leànder's body is the vessel that enables him to penetrate both the tower and Hero.

The active indicative «mire» shows the powerful effect that looking at the tower exerts on the psychoaffective consciousness of the lover. The simultaneity of looking while he utters the words creates a poetic effect of eternity in the reader. His words function as a capturing mechanism that freezes the image as his eyes fixate on the *llum*. At the same time, the words move the narrative forth to indicate that the power of those *symbols* that he internalizes through his sight spurs him to disdain the dangers of the sea for the sake of spending a night of passion with his beloved. The *llum*, as we noted, represents Hero's eyes and desire, and the lamp's light represents the symbolic *species* fraught with Hero's likeness. Hence, Leànder's visual contact with the light signifies a figurative optical connection with Hero since their eyes are attracted by a magnetic force that impels them to find each other's gaze. By asserting that Hero dwells within his body, Leànder is echoing the Platonic theory of the stream of beauty entering through the eyes into the body of the lover. Hero's soul is also inside Leànder, and it fills his entire being so that there is no room for anything or

anyone in his heart and self. The idea will become more manifest when Hero and Leànder confess that they have each other's souls in their bodies.¹⁹

Leànder's passion, however, cannot be tempered by the storm. The very image he has visually internalized of Hero, which he keeps within himself through the mechanism of memory,²⁰ spurs him to defy both danger and death in order to possess Hero both visually and physically. Just before he enters into the tempestuous waters of the Strait, he repeats the same optical motion he has made every single time before he jumps into the water: He looks to the tower and never lets it go until he penetrates it/her:²¹

Hi, estant de peus en la banyada arena, dreçant los ulls a la lum que, encesa en la torre de Hero, lo seu cor encenia, tornà altra vegada lançar lo cos en la mar fonda, dient, ab veu per amor esforçada (Martos 2001: 162).

19 Hero's occupying his being bars the waters from penetrating his body: «Però l'amor d'Hero axí tot lo ocupava, que a les amargues aygües la entrada defenia» (Martos 2001: 164). The waters are only able to enter his body when he lets go of Hero's name, a symbol of Hero herself. Hero's final moments before she kills herself offer parallels with Leànder's as he is drowning. Both fill each other's bodies. Hero claims that she cannot pronounce her lover's name because he occupies her whole being, and this utter occupation, prevents the name from coming out of her mouth: «La mia lengua, per extrema tristícia, no pot clarament pronunciar lo nom de Leànder» (Martos 2001: 167). Her words simply point out that Leànder inhabits her and despite his departure, she cannot let go of him.

20 For a thorough examination of how visual images are stored into the memory through the complex mechanism of *first* and *second* intentions, see Burke 2000: 29 and Baldwin 1986: 797-819. Like Burke, Baldwin arrives at the same conclusion that desire is prompted by the sight and resides in the brain. See also Carruthers 1998: 67-69. For a literary example, which likely influenced Corella's characterological configuration of both Hero and Leànder, see Fiammetta's words on how she internalized Panfilo's image, and now she can see him without looking at him: «I began to take mental stock of him and his manner... He stared at me, no less adoring than cautious, across the crowd of men. To be sure, I had the strength to refrain from looking at him for long, but neither the estimation of the other things just mentioned, nor any other incident could dissuade me from thinking about him, even if I made an effort. *Since his image was already imprinted upon my mind, I observed it within myself with a certain quiet delight* as if I were adducing new reasons to confirm the judgment I had made of him» (Erbani 1988: 7-8, emphasis added).

21 Morros Mestres notes the similarities between Leànder's penchant for gazing into Hero's tower and that of Céix represented in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*; also points out Boscán's imitation from either one of these two sources (2013: 258).

Leànder exhibits a psychological tension from his desire to go and the danger of the voyage. If he goes, he risks his life. If he does not, his love/desire is compromised. He puts himself in a double bind, and only the tower and the lamp can help him decide the course to follow. As he beholds the light in the tower, his eyes absorb the rays it emits and enter into his heart, provoking a chain reaction that leads to the kindling of erotic desire. Looking at the light provokes an analogous psychoaffective reaction as when he gazes into Hero's eyes. Like Hero's *species*, the rays of light that the *llum* emits penetrate him through his eyes, and they come to inhabit him and move him to desire and lust:

Lo foch que veig encés alt, en la torre,
crema dins mi la por de la mar fonda (Martos 2001: 162).

He literally *sees* the flame of the light and feels it burning within himself, which implies that as he optically apprehends the flame, he incorporates it into his body, just like he incorporated Hero when he saw her for the first time. The eyes act as organs of perception and as *organs* for *incorporation*. Since there is a clear correlation between *seeing* and *feeling*, we can argue that the eyes represent the gateway through which the *foch* (flames) is both seen and incorporated. The idea of the *foch* is intricately related to the visual theory of extramission. According to Saint Augustine, a kind of fire formed behind the eyes' pupils, which then is emitted by the eyes toward the object of vision, and the object reflects back the image into the eye enabling both vision and the storing of the image into memory.²² In Corella, the *foch* has two denotations: It represents the literal beacon that guides him through the sea, and it also represents their ardent passion and the visual rays issued forth by Hero's eyes.

22 «For an object to be seen by a viewer, this fire must be projected in the form of a ray that is focused on the object, thereby establishing a two-way street along which the attention and energy of the viewer passes to touch its object. A representation of the object, in turn, returns to the eye and is bonded to the soul and retrained in the memory» (Miles 1985: 7). See also Burke 2000: 13.

The fury of the sea mirrors the fury of Leànder's passion. When his passions are tempered by the danger of the storm, the tempest abates, and when Leànder feels safe again, his desire for Hero rises, and the storm worsens with redoubled strength.²³ The intensity of the sea becomes the benchmark through which Leànder's passion can be measured. This parallel between the fury of the sea and that of love, Martos notes, represents a didactic analogy recurrent in March's poetry to underline the destructiveness of unbridled passions (2000: 85-94). After a prolonged fight against the fury of the sea and his desire to survive in order to see Hero once more, Leànder prepares to die. The intensity of the storm has overcome his physical strength and his will to live. However, just before he dies, his desire to see Hero for the last time impels him to lift his eyes above the violent waves to fulfill his last wish:

L'esforç de l'enamorat mariner, anant al desigat port, no's canssava hi, ab ales de amor extrema, alçà lo cos sobre les aygües, endreçant la vista a la lum que en la alta torre relluhia, la qual li semblà menor del que acostumava (Martos 2001: 163-164).

The connection between his gaze and the light dominates the entire paragraph. Leànder prefers to center his visual attention on the tower-Hero rather than saving his energy to continue his fight against death. As Hero said when she claimed she did not fear death since her soul was already flying toward Leànder, the passionate swimmer behaves in a similar manner. Leànder does not explicitly say this, but like Hero, he does not dread death for death's sake. Rather, he fears death because he knows that an untimely demise will prevent him from seeing Hero for one last time. In many stories of the Hero-Leander tradition, the lover pleads the gods to allow him

²³ Before Hero's planctus for Leànder, the author links the calmness of the sea with Leànder's demise: «Estava la mar segura, que paria sol contra la vida de Leànder havia pres tanta fúria. Lo cel clar, la nit quieta, los ayres e los vents, Diana e las planetes he les esteles, ab una seguretat atenta, a l'adorit plant de Hero plantent atenien. Los peixos e los ocells, per l'aygua nadant e volant, a la riba venien a les obsèquies de Leànder e, ab lurs veus ensemps ab Hero dolent, la mort de lur oste plantien» (Martos 2001: 171).

to reach the port safely to see Hero for the last time, and the gods could drown him on his way back.²⁴

The sea hauls Leànder further and further away from the coastline and from Hero's sight. As we learn later, Hero is next to the light on the tower hesitating between jealousy of other women in Abydos and fear for her lover's life. The high tide has dragged Leànder so far away from the shore that he cannot see the tower or the light:

No podia a tan gran fúria ja resistir lo miserable Leànder y les hones altes, venint-li a l'encontre, de la riba de Cestos l'apartaven y'l defenien, que ab la vista a la lum de la torre no atteyia. E, ja sens orde, los braços per l'aygua començava moure (Martos 2001: 164).

Leànder fights against the fury of the sea and against his profound desire to see Hero's tower before letting go of his life. Boscán, whom Menéndez Pelayo censures for his verbosity and lack of poetic genius, describes Leander's last effort to behold the tower with lyrical mastery: «La postrer cosa que hizo el desdichado/ fue alçar los ojos a mirar su lumbre» (Clavería 1999: 324). His last struggle to behold the lamp underscores both the magnetic power of the tower as a symbol of Hero and the pleasure he derived from *seeing* it/her. Leànder perceives the distance to the tower as a void that prevents him from possessing Hero —a goal he values more than his life. Corella stresses Leànder's obsession with staring at the tower in order to stage both his longing and his desire for the object of his passion.

The narrator underlines Leànder's inability to reach the light with his gaze. Leànder seems more saddened by not being able to see the light than by being at the verge of death. The light of the tower represented a spark of hope. As long as the light was within his visual field, he felt the strength to defy the sea and death. With the light being enshrouded by the tempest, Leànder is destined to lose both hope and self because for Leànder, hope enters into the psychoaffective consciousness through visual

24 See for example Garcilaso's rendition. He puts the beseeching words in Leander's mouth: «Ondas, pues no se escusa que yo muera, / dejadme allá llegar, y a la tornada / vuestro furor ejecutá en mi vida» (Rivers 1996: 71).

means. In Ovid's *Heroides*, Leander underscores the power of vision for encouraging and making him stronger when facing danger: «When in truth I can be seen as well as see, by your glance you straightway give me heart, and make me strong» (Stewart 2003: 19). Rodríguez del Padrón's recast of Ovid's *Heroides* makes Leandro express the same idea: «Entanto que te podía ver, el mi cuerpo nadava como devía; y desde que la tu absente forma desmamparava los mis ojos, luego era desgovernado» (Saquero Suárez-Somonte & González Rolán 1984: 189). Leànder can be strong and courageous provided that Hero's glance lays within his choric field of vision. Without Hero in his panoptic view and without her eyesight (*lum*), he becomes lethargic, hopeless and cowardly. Hence, losing sight of the tower and the *lum* dwindles his hopes of surviving, and it prefigures his loss of hope and life.

Stranded in the middle of the sea and with the storm raging around him, Leànder knows death is lurking. He is certain he will drown, but before he does, he summons the strength to see the tower for the last time: «Hi, ab la agonia de la mort que ja l'asaltava, dreçà los uulls a la torre de Hero, per qui moria. Hi, abandonat a la fúria de la mar tempestuosa, ensemps ab la ànima, de la sua boca tals paraules se partiren» (Martos 2001: 164). Unlike the previous times, Leànder raises his eyes to bid goodbye to the tower and Hero, and just as he does it, both his and her spirit—which has remained bound within him—depart from his body. The narrator draws a poetic image of Hero filling Leànder's entire body, which bars the waters from entering his body:

E, si un poch espay lo cap de les ones alçava reclamant lo nom de Hero, escopia l'aygua salada, la qual, ab terrible porfídia, volia entrar en lo cos de Leànder. Però l'amor de Hero axí tot lo ocupava, que a les amargues aygües la entrada defenia (Martos 2001: 164).

The narrator said that «l'amor» of Hero occupied Leànder, but he could have said «the soul» since Hero's spirit had already entered Leànder's body through his eyes. Her love that filled him represents the hallmark of the two-way exchange of *species* issued forth by the lovers' eyes. Hero emitted arrows of love in the form of her image

through visual *species*, and Leànder consumed them through his eyes —«and veiled the perilous glory [of Hero’s beauty] his eyes drank» (Edwin 1874: 12)— as he also emitted arrows of love that wounded Hero’s heart and filled her body with his love.

Just before Leànder’s corpse arrives on the shore, Hero climbs to the top of the tower for the third time in the story. Her frantic trips up and down symbolize her psychoaffective mindset. Hopeful at times and despaired at other times, Hero cannot stop staring into Abydos and into the sea to find solace for her distress. After seeing Leànder’s ghost, she then looks down and sees Leànder’s body inert on the wet sand. Instead of jumping from the tower, as she does in many accounts of the tradition, including in Alfonso X’s *General Estoria*, Hero descends the tower to kiss his mouth. Miquel i Planas suggests that Hero’s descent to embrace her lover for the last time represents a conscious poetic effort to counterfeit Thisbe’s suicide (1913: LVII). Miquel i Planas’ assessment is cogent. However, Hero’s actions depart from Thisbe’s in one fundamental way: Hero’s penchant for ocular fascination. The despaired Hero does much more than simply kissing the cold lips of her lover for the last time.

In a study on Corella’s workmanship as translator, Vicent Martines notes that Corella «crea y traduce para crear» and that the Valencian poet dares to «realizar una traducción interpretativa» (2013: 55-64). More than mere translations, in the Middle Ages, «translators» sought to improve the original. Nowhere is this assertion clearer than in the redeployment of Thisbe’s suicide motif of kissing the *cold lips* of the lover before stabbing herself. In an image that represents the personal poetic and aesthetic stylization of Corella, Hero opens the eyes of the dead lover, and kisses them with her mouth, but her gesture did not satisfy her desire to connect both physically and spiritually with her lover. Hence she opens his eyes once again and kisses them with her own eyes:

Hi, ab les mans, tremolant, los ulls de Leànder obria, los quals, primer ab la boca hi après ab los ulls besant, deplorava; axí de abundants làgremes omplia, que semblava Leànder, encara mort, plorant la dolor de la sua Hero viva, planyent deplorava (Martos 2001: 180).

Hero does not just kiss one eye. She kisses both eyes in a way that feels ritualistic and out of touch with poetic traditions. Hero's mouth-to-eyes kiss already represents a rare instance in which a beloved kisses her lover goodbye. It is more common to represent lovers kissing the cold lips of the departed, as March does in a similar situation in poem 95.²⁵ Since the ending is Corella's interpolation and we do not have a previous version to compare it to, we must conclude that both the mouth-to-eyes and the eyes-to-eyes kisses illustrate the author's penchant for sight and visual economies. Mouth-to-mouth kissing symbolizes a metaphorical union of bodies and souls, since in the Middle Ages, the spirit was believed to exit through the mouth of the deceased. The eye-to-eye kiss follows a similar, though more idealized, metaphor. Instead of receiving Leànder's soul into her body, Hero recreates the very first meeting of their gazes. Their mutual gaze during the overture of the epyllion already represented an eye-to-eye embrace through the haptic mechanism of optical *species* in the form of arrows of love. Their final eye-to-eye embrace capitulates the countless times that their gazes sought each other both through the waves of the crowd in the ballroom and through the ones of the Hellespont.

In conclusion, Corella uses well-established visual theories to heighten the desire of the lovers as well as to offer a representation of the arrows of love penetrating through the other's eyes. *Cancionero* poets offered a fulcrum of ocular imagery on which Corella leaned to show the importance of visual economies in the process of falling in love. The arrows-of-love leitmotif was widely known during Corella's time both through the troubadour lyrics and through philosophical treatises on vision. In Spain, just a few decades before Corella, Enrique de Villena, father of Isabel de Villena, the most influential female writer of fifteenth-century Valencia, had already composed a

25 In the Hero and Leander literary tradition, some stories make Hero jump from the tower onto Leander's dead body. Corella is aware of this variant, but he chooses not to make Hero cast herself down from the tower so that she can kiss his «cold lips»: «No tardara sobre lo cos mort la ja quasi morta donzella, saltant de l'alta torre, acabar de matar-se; sinó que volia, encara vivint, la boca freda besar de Leànder» (Martos 2001: 170).

treatise of visual theories in which he exposed extramissive and intromissive theories. Once Hero and Leànder's eyes meet during the festivity, they fend each other off with arrows of love, which makes them both fall in love simultaneously. Along with their arrows, the lovers' souls are carried into each other, resulting in a union of souls and selves. One lover emits the arrows by means of *species*, which represents the hallmark of Plato's theory of visual extramission. The other lover receives the arrows through the eyes, which then wounds his/her heart, marking the Aristotelian theory of intromission. Hero and Leànder's final eye-to-eye kiss underscores both the power of visual discourses within the story and the ontological transferring that takes place through the exchange of optical *species* and arrows of love.

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