

Antíteses
Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em História Social

The puppet against the torero: the difference between two baroque spectacles

Gustavo Ruiz da Silva[I]

Abstract: This paper compares two contrasting forms of early-modern spectacle: Habsburg bullfighting and European puppet theatre. The first section examines *toreo caballeresco* as a courtly and urban practice in which aristocratic conduct, bodily risk, social hierarchy, and political authority were publicly displayed. The second analyses puppetry and ventriloquism as theatrical forms characterised by artificial animation, displaced agency, multiple voices, and recurrent possibilities for satire. The comparison is then developed through Deleuze and Guattari's distinctions between molar and molecular, and striated and smooth forms of organisation, understood here as heuristic rather than historical categories. Finally, drawing on Foucault's concept of alethurgy, the paper proposes the terms *sovereign alethurgy* and *minor alethurgy* to describe two contrasting modes of spectacular manifestation: one organised around visibility, bodily exposure, rank, and ceremonial authority; the other around displacement, simulation, repetition, and the multiplication of speaking positions. Rather than opposing domination and resistance absolutely, the paper argues for the political heterogeneity of Baroque spectacle.

Keywords: Puppeteering; tauromaquia; Baroque; spectacle; counter-conduct.

Field: History; Philosophy.

I Mestre em Filosofia pela Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo – PUC/SP. Doutorando em Filosofia pela University of Warwick and Monash University., Reino Unido/Austrália. Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1149-5411. E-mail: gustavo.da-silva@warwick.ac.uk.

DOI: 10.5433/1984-3356.2026v19.53373

O fantoche contra o toureiro: a diferença entre dois espetáculos barrocos

Resumo: Este artigo compara duas formas contrastantes de espetáculo da Idade Moderna: a tauromaquia sob os Habsburgos e o teatro de fantoches europeu. A primeira seção examina o *toreo caballeresco* como prática cortesã e urbana na qual conduta aristocrática, risco corporal, hierarquia social e autoridade política eram exibidos publicamente. A segunda analisa o teatro de fantoches e a ventriloquia como formas teatrais caracterizadas pela animação artificial, pelo deslocamento da agência, pela multiplicação das vozes e por possibilidades recorrentes de sátira. A comparação é desenvolvida, em seguida, por meio das distinções de Deleuze e Guattari entre molar e molecular, bem como entre estriado e liso, empregadas aqui como categorias heurísticas, e não históricas. Por fim, a partir do conceito foucaultiano de aleturgia, o artigo propõe os termos *aleturgia soberana* e *aleturgia menor* para descrever dois modos contrastantes de manifestação espetacular: um organizado em torno da visibilidade, da exposição corporal, da hierarquia e da autoridade cerimonial; o outro em torno do deslocamento, da simulação, da repetição e da multiplicação das posições de fala. Em vez de opor, de forma absoluta, dominação e resistência, o artigo sustenta a heterogeneidade política do espetáculo barroco.

Palavras-chave: Fantoches; tauromaquia; barroco; espetáculo; contraconduta.

Grande área: História; Filosofia.

Introduction

The baroque was both an artistic style and a culture of spectacle intertwining political authority, social hierarchy, religious representation, and entertainment. In the seventeenth-century Hispanic world, ceremonies, festivals, and performances made relations of power visible. Yet spectacle had no single political logic: alongside elaborate displays of sovereign authority, theatrical practices employed disguise, illusion, delegated voices, and unstable relations between appearance and agency. This paper examines that tension through *tauromaquia* and puppet theatre.

The comparison is deliberately asymmetrical. Bullfighting was closely connected to Habsburg court culture, aristocratic conduct, municipal organisation, and public hierarchy. Puppet theatre belonged largely to a mobile, modest theatrical economy in which wooden figures, concealed operators, artificial voices, and comic characters

complicated the identification of speaker, actor, and author. Rather than establishing a direct genealogy or institutional equivalence, the paper compares their configurations of space, visibility, status, expenditure, danger, agency, and political authority.

Deleuze and Guattari's molar/molecular and striated/smooth distinctions, together with Foucault's analyses of alethurgy, *counter-conduct,* and subjectivity, serve as heuristic instruments for describing differences in the historical and literary material. They are not concepts attributed to seventeenth-century actors but a contemporary vocabulary for comparing how the spectacles organised bodies, voices, appearances, and authority.

The argument is that baroque spectacle was politically heterogeneous: it could monumentalise hierarchy while also multiplying voices and exposing authority's artificial mechanisms.

The Habsburg bull

Bull-related festivities long predated the seventeenth century in Iberia, but under the Spanish Habsburgs they became conspicuous within courtly and urban ceremony. The predominant form was aristocratic *toreo caballeresco,* rather than the modern professional matador's *corrida:* mounted nobles displayed equestrian competence, courage, and composure before spectators (Bennassar, 2000; Campos Cañizares, 2019). Under Philip III, Philip IV, and Charles II, these festivities accompanied dynastic celebrations, religious observances, royal entries, and other occasions that made rank, patronage, magnificence, and authority publicly perceptible.

The Hispanic Monarchy comprised multiple kingdoms and territories with distinct laws, institutions, and privileges (Elliott, 2009).[1] Describing Habsburg bullfighting as modern "Spanish national identity" or retrospectively as *Fiesta Nacional* is therefore misleading. Its explicitly national symbolism belongs largely to later debates, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Andreu, 2008). For the Habsburg period, courtly, dynastic, aristocratic, urban, confessional, and contextually Hispanic or Castilian identifications are more precise.

Bullfighting suited this ceremonial environment because it combined bodily danger, equestrian technique, aristocratic competition, ritualised movement, and collective spectatorship. The Habsburg court did not invent bullfighting, nor was the practice exclusive to royal festivities, but royal and municipal patronage helped integrate particular forms of *toreo* into major public celebrations (Bennassar, 2000; Campos Cañizares, 2019). The spectacle could, therefore, operate simultaneously as

entertainment, aristocratic exercise, and ceremonial display. Its political significance arose less from a single message imposed upon spectators than from the arrangement of bodies, ranks, gestures, and spaces through which the event became visible.

This aristocratic practice had roots in medieval and sixteenth-century equestrian games and martial culture. Mounted knights used lances in *alanceamiento;* by the seventeenth century, the *rejón* became increasingly prominent, and *rejoneo* gained particular prestige under Philip IV (Campos Cañizares, 2019). Charles V's participation entered retrospective accounts of royal involvement, while later Habsburg patronage linked equestrian performance to courtly distinction (Real Maestranza de Caballería de Sevilla, 2026). Confronting the bull on horseback belonged to a culture valuing military preparation, horsemanship, honour, and publicly demonstrated competence, rather than an uninterrupted "national tradition".

The relationship between ecclesiastical authority and bullfighting was more contested than a simple union between Church and Crown would suggest. Pope Pius V's *De salute gregis Dominici* of 1567 explicitly condemned the practice. Describing participants as those who entered public and private spectacles "*ad ostentationem virium suarum & audaciae*" ["for the display of their strength and audacity"], the bull associated the spectacle itself with the conspicuous performance of bodily prowess while condemning the deaths and injuries it produced (Pius V, 1862, p. 630–631). It consequently prohibited Christian rulers from permitting such spectacles and rejected their celebration in connection with saints and ecclesiastical festivities. Yet enforcement met resistance, and later papal policy narrowed the prohibition's practical scope.[2] The persistence of bull-related festivities under the Spanish Habsburgs, therefore, reveals negotiation and conflict among religious, political, municipal, and customary authorities rather than uncomplicated Counter-Reformation endorsement. By the seventeenth century, bullfights could nevertheless be associated with religious feast days and other public celebrations, showing that the practice could coexist with the monarchy's confessional culture despite a history of ecclesiastical opposition (Mitchell, 1991; Shubert, 1999).

Madrid's *Plaza Mayor* offers the clearest example of *tauromaquia*'s integration into an urban and courtly ceremonial environment. Bullfights were held there from the early seventeenth century, with the first generally dated to 24 June 1620 (Mitchell, 1991; Shubert, 1999).[3] The plaza mattered architecturally as well as ceremonially. A major urban square could temporarily be transformed into an arena in which political institutions, aristocratic participants, spectators, and the royal household were brought into a single field of visibility. Unlike the permanent specialised bullrings

familiar from later periods, the seventeenth-century *Plaza Mayor* was a multifunctional urban space temporarily reorganised for particular festivities.[4]

Under Philip IV (1621–1665), the mounted noble bullfighter became a prominent representative of a social ideal. Campos Cañizares (2019) situates the period's normative literature on *rejoneo,* horsemanship, technique, and conduct within courtly culture. Bullfighting offered an occasion to demonstrate aristocratic behaviour publicly rather than merely assert it genealogically.

Municipal and royal organisation also contributed to the spectacle's political legibility. The construction of temporary stands, provision of animals, arrangement of festivities, and distribution of privileged viewing positions demanded substantial coordination. Campos Cañizares cites descriptions of the reign of Philip IV in which "*la espectacularidad rodeó la fiesta taurina, sirviéndose de la protección de la Monarquía*" ["spectacularity surrounded the bullfighting festival, taking advantage of the protection of the Monarchy"] (Campos Cañizares, 2012, p. 36).[5] Such evidence is useful because it locates the political dimension of the *fiesta* not merely in what happened inside the arena but in the institutional apparatus that made the event possible.

Spectatorship in the *Plaza Mayor* was itself hierarchically organised. An agreement of 30 June 1620 fixed balcony prices: "de *los primeros doce ducados, de los segundos ocho ducados, de los terceros seis ducados y de los cuartos cuatro*" ["twelve ducats for the first levels, eight for the second, six for the third, and four for the fourth"]. The *Sala de Alcaldes de Casa y Corte* also regulated window rentals during *juegos de cañas y toros* (Espanha, [s.d.], L.1197, f. 179). Viewing positions thus had administrative and economic distinctions, with royalty occupying a privileged place. The plaza assembled heterogeneous groups according to existing social differences: rank shaped participation, proximity, and where one could be seen watching.

The prominence of aristocratic participation must be situated within the status-conscious society of the *Siglo de Oro*. Lineage, honour, service, office, and recognised forms of comportment structured important dimensions of social distinction within Habsburg Spain (Bennassar, 2001). This did not produce a completely fixed social order, nor can early-modern Spanish society be reduced to three homogeneous estates. Yet noble status carried powerful cultural expectations, and equestrian activities were one field in which aristocrats could enact distinction.

The *toreo caballeresco* of the seventeenth century participated in this economy of distinction. Campos Cañizares identifies a body of treatises written between the mid-sixteenth and late seventeenth centuries in which noble practitioners sought to

codify both taurine technique and equestrian skill (Campos Cañizares, 2019).[6] These works belong to a broader culture of aristocratic instruction in which bodily conduct mattered because it rendered social quality visible. Bullfighting was, therefore, not simply an eruption of uncontrolled violence. In its courtly form, it required managing danger through recognisable technical and behavioural conventions.

Campos Cañizares (2019) identifies four terms central to this ethos: *mesura, elegancia, valor,* and *audacia*. *Mesura* meant composure before danger; *elegancia* joined technical effectiveness to grace and courtly presentation; *valor* made exposure a test of courage; *audacia* introduced controlled boldness. Together, they rendered the arena a site for displaying noble conduct. Direct examination of the treatises would strengthen this account. Although Campos Cañizares identifies a pedagogical dimension in the normative literature and the public display of courtly values, these sources do not establish that spectators learned to accept noble domination. Whether they accepted, mocked, contested, or differently appropriated the code remains an unresolved question of reception.

The aesthetic dimension of the spectacle followed from this connection between form and risk. Seventeenth-century *toreo caballeresco* required controlled movement between rider, horse, and bull, and its normative literature attempted to distinguish skilled execution from disorderly confrontation (Campos Cañizares, 2019). It is, therefore, appropriate to describe the event as theatrical in the broad sense of an action organised for spectators, but care is required not to project the structure of the modern *corrida* backwards.[7] The familiar sequence centred on the professional *matador*, the modern use of cape and *muleta*, the *traje de luces*, and the increasingly standardised *toreo a pie* belong substantially to later developments, particularly those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Bennassar, 2000; Shubert, 1999). The principal seventeenth-century protagonist under discussion here is the mounted noble *caballero*, not the modern matador.[8]

Noble-authored treatises explicitly connected technique to conduct. Pedro Jacinto de Cárdenas y Angulo's *Advertencias o precetos del torear* (1651) distinguishes knowledge from contingency: "no *es lo mismo torear con suerte que torear con conocimiento*" ["fighting bulls by chance is not the same as fighting them with knowledge"] (Cárdenas y Angulo, 1833). Toreo thus appears as transmissible knowledge rather than spontaneous courage alone. Campos Cañizares (2009, 2019) shows that this literature addressed *destreza,* horsemanship, *suertes,* danger, and the *caballero toreador's* conduct. These texts connect practice to aristocratic values and demonstrate deliberate elite codification of an important seventeenth-century form of *tauromaquia*.[9]

The Habsburg bullfight can therefore be understood as a distinctive form of early-modern spectacle without turning it into an anticipation of nineteenth-century nationalism. Within the cases considered here, especially those associated with Madrid and the court of Philip IV, *toreo caballeresco* joined equestrian skill, aristocratic conduct, material risk, ceremonial expenditure, and the spatial differentiation of spectators. It could thereby contribute to the public representation of social and dynastic authority (Bennassar, 2000; Campos Cañizares, 2019; Maravall, 1986).[10]

Puppets, ventriloquists, and displaced voices

Early-modern Europe also sustained smaller, mobile spectacles based on artificial animation, concealed agency, and displaced voice. Puppets appeared in fairs, marketplaces, streets, and courts; practices retrospectively grouped as ventriloquism ranged across theatrical technique, acoustic illusion, religious interpretation, and apparently disembodied speech (Connor, 2000; Jurkowski, 1996). Puppetry, ventriloquism, automata, and literary manipulated bodies have overlapping but distinct histories.[11] Their comparative relevance lies in the separation of visible figure, operative agent, and apparent source of voice.[12] [13]

Comic stock characters inform the political comparison. Italian Pulcinella underwent substantial transformation in related French and English figures, including Polichinelle and Punch. These were not interchangeable characters, but their adaptations sustained physical comedy, insult, inversion, and irreverence. Jurkowski's description of popular puppetry as a "weapon of the poor to fight the rich and powerful" (Puppets..., 2009, par. 4) identifies a satirical possibility, not inherent opposition or universal resistance. Conventional comic figures could represent, exaggerate, and ridicule recognised social types.[14]

The displaced relation between speaker and visible figure was particularly important to the medium. In puppet theatre, the audience sees an acting body that cannot independently produce either its motion or its speech. The operator may be concealed, partially visible, or theatrically ignored, while the puppet receives the gestures and voice produced elsewhere. This arrangement produces neither perfect illusion nor complete transparency. The spectator can recognise the figure as artificial while simultaneously responding to it as a character. Puppetry consequently establishes a double theatrical perception: material object and dramatic agent remain perceptible at the same time.

This structure also helps explain the recurrent proximity between puppetry and the early-modern problem of ventriloquism. The history of ventriloquism should,

however, be distinguished from the later image of the entertainer speaking through a wooden dummy.[15] Early-modern references to "belly-speaking" and disembodied voices frequently belonged to religious, medical, demonological, or literary contexts rather than to the modern stage act. Connor (2000) and Jeon (2022) show that apparently displaced voices could be interpreted through older associations with prophecy, spirits, possession, and bodily abnormality. Women in particular could be represented as passive or suspect vessels for voices whose origins seemed uncertain (Jeon, 2022). During the eighteenth century, increasingly secularised techniques of voice displacement became more recognisable as theatrical entertainment, but this later development should not be projected wholesale onto seventeenth-century performance.

What connects these histories analytically is not the existence of a stable "ventriloquist's dummy" throughout the baroque, but the problem of acoustic attribution: from where does a voice appear to come, and to whom does it belong? Connor describes ventriloquial performance as producing a form of "magical artificiality" through the separation of sound from its expected bodily source (Connor, 2000, p. 40). The effect is structurally comparable to puppetry. In one case, movement appears to belong to an object animated from elsewhere; in the other, voice appears to occupy a location other than the body producing it. Both practices, therefore, complicate the ordinary coincidence among body, agency, and expression.[16]

Theatrical metaphors gave these practices further literary resonance. The *theatrum mundi* conceived human existence as performance within a cosmic or providential order without constituting a uniform "baroque worldview".[17] In Calderón de la Barca's *El gran teatro del mundo,* the *Autor* assigns identities: "Yo *a cada uno / el papel le daré que le convenga"* ["I shall give each one / the role appropriate to him"]. He defines their arrangement: "Seremos *yo el autor [...] tú el teatro y el hombre el recitante"* ["I shall be the author [...] you the theatre, and man the performer"] (Calderón de la Barca, 2014, p. 56-57, 65-66). King, Rich Man, Peasant, and Beggar perform roles within an order preceding them. This is not evidence that spectators understood themselves as puppets; it articulates relations of role, agency, hierarchy, and authorship structurally comparable to visible figures directed by an unseen source.

Cervantes offers a more direct literary engagement with puppet theatre. In *Don Quijote*, Part II, chapters 25–26, Maese Pedro presents a *retablo* depicting the story of Melisendra and Don Gaiferos. Don Quixote initially occupies the position of spectator but collapses the distinction between representation and represented event. He attacks the puppet stage to intervene in the fictional action, destroying the theatrical objects because he responds to their represented danger as though it were

materially present.[18] The episode does more than exemplify "illusion". It stages several levels of mediation simultaneously: Maese Pedro controls the spectacle; the boy narrates it; the puppets represent other characters; Don Quixote responds as participant rather than spectator; and Cervantes frames the entire episode within a fictional narrative.

Don Quixote's error is not that the puppets conceal their artificiality from every spectator, but that he grants represented events an urgency overriding their distinction from immediate reality. The scene gives literary form to *engaño* and *desengaño,* interrogating the conditions under which representations become effective.[19] As Egginton (2010) suggests, baroque theatricality manipulated rather than erased the boundary between representation and reality: a visibly artificial puppet could acquire dramatic intention and affective force without being mistaken for a human body.

The concealed puppeteer offered analogies for providence, authorship, and control: people as performers within an order they neither authored nor understood. Benjamin's later *Trauerspiel* and Hobbes's mechanical body illuminate contingent agency and externally organised movement without establishing a literal seventeenth-century view of people as marionettes.[20] The puppet itself remains materially wood, cloth, or leather while theatrically acquiring a name, voice, intention, vulnerability, and social role. Rather than resolving debates about personhood, the medium performs the boundary between agency and mechanism through apparent life dependent on an operation located elsewhere.[21]

The puppet's artificiality does not simply oppose truth but creates a theatrical regime in which acknowledged fabrication can act meaningfully. Whereas the *corrida* exposes living bodies to irreversible risk, puppetry attributes agency to materials whose injuries and deaths remain theatrically reversible; the contrast therefore concerns modes of spectacular manifestation rather than a metaphysical opposition between "reality" and "falseness". By separating visible body from operative agent, voice from apparent speaker, and fictional identity from material object, puppetry made mediation unusually perceptible and could create opportunities for satire. These formal possibilities, however, establish neither a coherent philosophy of resistance nor a uniformly critical reception among early-modern audiences.[22]

These materials establish contrasting organisations of agency and representation. Habsburg *toreo caballeresco* made aristocratic bodies, risk, rank, and ceremonial position conspicuous; puppetry separated speaker from voice and object from fictional identity through concealment and substitution. Portability and comic traditions offered possibilities for satire without determining reception. This difference, rather than an opposition

between sovereign propaganda and popular rebellion, grounds the following analytical comparison.

Puppets and bulls: two regimes of baroque spectacle

I propose reading the puppet booth and bullring as poles within a baroque assemblage, distinguished by tendencies in space, bodies, visibility, agency, and authority. The *corrida* is predominantly molar:[23] it distributes sovereign representatives, municipal authorities, clergy, aristocratic performers, spectators, and animals into recognisable positions. Choreographed confrontation subjects violence to publicly legible form. The puppet booth suggests a *molecular* arrangement:[24] wood, cloth, strings, gestures, and artificial voices displace the performing body. A concealed performer may divide his voice among characters while an object becomes an apparent subject. Pulcinella, Punch, the Devil, and related figures exemplify this multiplication, though their local and chronological traditions remain distinct.

This distinction can also be expressed spatially. The bullring approximates what Deleuze and Guattari describe as *striated space*[25]: a space organised through boundaries, positions, measured trajectories, and differentiated places. The puppet booth, particularly in its itinerant and fairground forms, can conversely be approached through the category of *smooth space*[26]: portable, adaptable, and less dependent upon permanent architectural differentiation. These concepts must not, however, become absolute historical classifications. For Deleuze and Guattari themselves, the smooth and the striated continually pass into and generate one another (Deleuze; Guattari, 1980). A puppet show may be regulated, commercially organised, or performed before elite audiences, just as a bullfight may contain unpredictable movements and popular appropriations that exceed its official ordering. The terms, therefore, identify predominant tendencies within the cases examined here rather than immutable properties of the two spectacles.

The first contrast concerns animation and death. Puppetry temporarily animates inert material through strings, hands, mechanisms, and voices. Spectators can recognise artifice while responding to character: wood and cloth become quasi-subjects, then return to inert material (Jurkowski, 1996; Speaight, 1990). *Tauromaquia* reverses this trajectory, incorporating a living animal's mortality into spectacle through increasingly codified sequences conventionally culminating in the *estocada* and death (Mitchell, 1991; Shubert, 1999). This inversion identifies different ways of making animation, representation, vulnerability, and death perceptible, rather than metaphysical "rites of being".

The contrast between puppetry and the *corrida* is also evident in how they treat danger. Puppet theatre can represent beating, dismemberment, death, and resurrection while normally suspending their material consequences; the replaceable theatrical body makes violence repeatable, a reversibility central to comic figures such as Pulcinella and Punch (Jurkowski, 2009; Speaight, 1990). The *corrida*, by contrast, theatricalises danger while retaining its irreversible corporeal and economic consequences: bulls face death, human participants risk injury, and the spectacle requires substantial expenditure on animals, equipment, personnel, and the arena (Mitchell, 1991; Shubert, 1999). The distinction is, therefore, not between "false" and "real" danger, but between different material relations to theatrical violence.

A second difference concerns the organisation of social space. Early-modern puppet booths were often portable structures associated with fairs, marketplaces, streets, and other temporary performance sites. Their relative material simplicity permitted itinerant performers to enter spaces that did not require the permanent architecture of an established theatre (Jurkowski, 1996; Speaight, 1990). The social organisation of these performances should not be romanticised as intrinsically egalitarian; puppetry could operate in courtly and popular environments. Nevertheless, the fairground booth did not ordinarily reproduce social hierarchy architecturally with the precision visible in major dynastic *corridas*. In Madrid's *Plaza Mayor*, for example, the distribution of spectators among balconies and other viewing positions could correspond to distinctions of office and social status, while royal presence provided a conspicuous political centre to the event (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Maravall, 1986). The arena could consequently render hierarchy spatially perceptible: differences within the social order became differences in position, visibility, and proximity.

The geographical asymmetry remains essential.[27] The bullfighting evidence concerns Habsburg Spain and Madrid principally, whereas puppetry examples span European theatrical cultures. English puppet performances during the public theatres' closure in 1642–1660 cannot establish Castilian regulation. They show comparatively that puppetry's legal classification could differ from embodied theatre and permit different circulation (Jurkowski, 2009; Speaight, 1990).

Regulation differentiated the spectacles without opposing freedom to control. Puppeteers depended upon permissions, tolerated venues, commercial networks, and local authorities, but portability, ambiguous status, and delegated comic speech could create latitude for satire (Jurkowski, 1996, 2009). Major Habsburg bullfights instead required political authorisation and logistical coordination within municipal, courtly, dynastic, and religious festivities (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Maravall,

1986; Shubert, 1999). The contrast thus concerns forms and degrees of institutionalisation: portable booths could exploit regulatory ambiguities, whereas major *corridas* depended openly upon elite organisation.[28]

Scale further differentiates the spectacles. Puppetry miniaturises courts, battles, devils, journeys, and landscapes within a portable apparatus of scenery, figures, and changing characters (Jurkowski, 1996; Speaight, 1990). Major *corridas* instead expanded spectacle across urban plazas, incorporating architecture, spectators, political representatives, animals, and performers into a civic event (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Maravall, 1986). These were sites of dynastic, municipal, aristocratic, and confessional identification, rather than anachronistic "national theatres".[29] Puppetry condensed a world into a booth; the *corrida* temporarily reorganised part of the city as spectacle.

Agency was displaced in puppetry: the operator could remain concealed while an apparently autonomous figure received movement and voice from elsewhere. One performer might generate several personae. Spectators could recognise this dependence while granting the figure theatrical autonomy (Speaight, 1990; Jurkowski, 1996). The arrangement supported metaphors of the invisible mover and *theatrum mundi*.

The bullfight, by contrast, makes the performing agent conspicuous. The noble *rejoneador* and later the *torero* are exposed to collective scrutiny within an open arena, and the value of their actions depends upon being publicly seen and judged. Courage, composure, skill, and grace acquire social efficacy through their manifestation before spectators (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Mitchell, 1991). In the Habsburg courtly setting, this visibility could be intensified by the presence of the monarch and political elites. The contrast is consequently not simply invisible versus visible power. It concerns two different theatrical distributions of agency: puppetry makes action effective by separating it from its apparent source, whereas *tauromaquia* makes performance effective through the conspicuous exposure of the acting body.

The spectacles' material economies reinforced their difference of scale. Itinerant puppetry used inexpensive, reusable apparatus and small companies, facilitating mobility and repetition; ceremonial *corridas* mobilised animals, horses, temporary architecture, personnel, and crowds, making expenditure politically visible (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Jurkowski, 1996; Maravall, 1986; Mitchell, 1991; Speaight, 1990; Shubert, 1999). These economies also distributed agency differently: puppetry's concealed operators, delegated speech, and reversible violence could loosen relations among voice, body, authorship, and authority, whereas the *corrida*'s visible perfor-

mers, differentiated spectatorship, and aristocratic virtues—*mesura*, *elegancia*, *valor*, and *audacia*—monumentalised hierarchy. Jurkowski's "weapon of the poor", therefore, identifies a satirical possibility, not an inherently resistant medium (Jurkowski, 2009, section "Puppets in Classical Times", para. 4).[30] These contrasts define tendencies—miniaturisation and monumentalisation, displaced and exposed agency, reversible and irreversible violence, portability and institutionalisation—that Deleuze and Guattari describe as relatively molecular and molar, smooth and striated. Used heuristically, these categories reveal the political heterogeneity of baroque spectacle and prepare the comparison between minor and sovereign alethurgy.

Truth, counter-conduct, and subjectivity

Foucault's concept of *alethurgy* extends the comparison to how spectacles manifest relations among truth, authority, and subjectivity.[31] I use it to ask how bodies, gestures, voices, and appearances acquire truth-value before an audience. Neither a category available to seventeenth-century actors nor Foucault's own analysis of these practices, this extension yields my proposed terms *minor alethurgy* and *sovereign alethurgy* for contrasting spectacular tendencies.[32]

Puppet theatre can first be approached as a *minor alethurgy*. "Minor" does not mean politically insignificant or socially marginal in every historical instance.[33] It refers instead to a mode of manifestation in which the apparent source of speech and action is displaced, multiplied, or concealed. The puppeteer may disappear behind the booth while Pulcinella, Punch, the Devil, or another figure seems to acquire a voice of its own. One performer can produce several personae, and an object incapable of speech becomes the visible bearer of an utterance. As the preceding sections have shown, this displacement allowed puppet traditions to accommodate satire directed at social types and figures of authority (Jurkowski, 1996, 2009). The analytical significance of the puppet, therefore, lies less in the disappearance of authorship than in its redistribution: the audience encounters a voice whose material source, fictional speaker, and social attribution do not fully coincide.

Such displacement did not make puppeteers unaccountable or exempt from commercial, legal, and institutional constraints. It nevertheless mediated responsibility for an utterance: ridicule could fictionally belong to a wooden figure licensed to insult as a comic type. This *delegated irreverence* complicated the correspondence between the performer's body, voice, name, and responsibility.

The same structure appears in the relation between illusion and truth. Puppet theatre does not conceal its artificiality perfectly. Its theatrical effectiveness may de-

pend precisely upon a double perception in which spectators recognise the strings, hands, mechanisms, artificial voices, or material body of the puppet while simultaneously responding to the figure as an acting character (Jurkowski, 1996; Speaight, 1990). The truth manifested by the performance is, therefore, not the revelation that the puppet is secretly alive. It is generated through the unstable relation between acknowledged artifice and attributed agency. The puppet acts because an operator makes it act, yet the theatrical event temporarily allows action and voice to adhere to the figure itself.

Puppet violence likewise exposes its construction: figures can be beaten, dismembered, killed, and returned to the stage. This alethurgic form manifests artifice and reversibility, creating possibilities of *counter-conduct* rather than inherent resistance.[34] Comic figures could ridicule magistrates, clerics, and masters; delegated speech could give utterances latitude unavailable to direct address; portable stages could circulate beyond major institutional spectacles (Jurkowski, 1996, 2009; Speaight, 1990). These conditions allowed authority to be imitated, exaggerated, inverted, or ridiculed without proving that audiences formed a resistant political public.

This is the limited sense in which puppet theatre can be related to Foucault's conception of critique. In *What Is Critique?* Foucault associates the critical attitude not with an absolute refusal of government but with the question of how one is governed, by whom. Through these principles, and with what claim to authority (Foucault, 2007). Puppet satire can be placed alongside this problem without being assimilated to it historically. The comic booth makes commands, dignities, voices, and identities available for theatrical duplication. A judge can become a caricature, a devil can acquire authority and lose it again, and a supposedly autonomous speaker can be revealed as dependent upon an unseen operator. I, therefore, use *critical indocility* here not to describe a documented psychological transformation undergone by the audience, but to identify a critical possibility internal to the form: the possibility of treating an authoritative voice as something that can be repeated, displaced, caricatured, and deprived of its seriousness.

The Habsburg *corrida*, in the cases considered in this paper, lends itself to a contrasting interpretation. I propose to describe it as a *sovereign alethurgy*.[35] The expression is not Foucault's name for bullfighting, nor does it mean that every *corrida* performed an identical political function. It identifies a tendency particularly visible in courtly and municipal spectacles in which royal presence, differentiated seating, aristocratic performance, ritualised danger, and public evaluation converged within a highly visible ceremonial space (Campos Cañizares, 2019; Maravall, 1986). Whereas puppet performance displaces the source of agency, the *corrida* exposes acting

bodies to scrutiny. Courage must appear. Composure must be maintained before witnesses. Skill becomes socially effective through its public manifestation.

This interpretation requires neither simple propaganda nor unanimous assent. The institutional *corrida* made aristocratic virtues—mesura, *elegancia, valor,* and *audacia—perceptible* through conduct under visible danger rather than abstract assertion (Campos Cañizares, 2019). The performing body formed part of the proof: courage appeared credible because something was materially at stake, even if spectators interpreted it differently.

The bull's body intensified this structure of manifestation. Unlike the simulated and reversible violence of puppet theatre, the *corrida* incorporated irreversible injury and death. Blood did not merely represent danger; it provided material evidence that danger had occurred. Within the analytical framework proposed here, the *estocada* can, therefore, be understood as participating in a spectacular "truth of valour": not because valour possesses a timeless or naturally aristocratic essence, but because the ritualised encounter organised circumstances in which courage, mastery, and bodily risk could appear publicly connected.[36] Calling this configuration alethurgic is meant to avoid treating such values as self-evident. The question becomes instead: through what apparatus of bodies, gestures, architecture, hierarchy, and spectatorship were these qualities made visible and credible?

These distributions of truth and agency contrast concentration with displacement. Courtly bullfighting gives performance value through exposure, risk, judgement, and ceremonial position; puppetry transfers voice and action to artificial bodies through substitution, simulation, and repetition. Neither is politically pure: their comparison identifies ways of organising appearance and authority without reducing bullfighting to domination or puppetry to resistance.

Puppetry also interrupts the apparent unity of speaking subject, body, and voice: one performer becomes several characters, none of which exhausts the operator's identity. This provides a formal analogue for *desubjectivation,*[37] not evidence that performers or audiences underwent a Foucauldian transformation or that multiple voices necessarily emancipated them. The speaking subject ceases theatrically to appear as a unified source of discourse.

Subject-position becomes fluid as voices shift bodies, identities are assumed and abandoned, and authorship is concealed. This displacement suggests that subjectivity need not coincide with a single visible speaker. *Sovereign alethurgy* names the bullring's tendency to render bodies, ranks, courage, and risk credible through public exposure; *minor alethurgy* names the puppet booth's manifestation of artificial, subs-

titutable, multiple sources. These are analytical descriptions rather than historical classifications.

The comparison foregrounds the political heterogeneity of baroque spectacle. It could monumentalise hierarchy while fragmenting the unity of voice, body, and authority through satire, concealment, and substitution. Puppetry remained within power relations, while the bullring represented only some of their mechanisms. Historically and methodologically, spectacularity therefore has no single political function: techniques that stabilised authority coexisted with artifice that made it reproducible, caricaturable, and contingent.

References

ANDREU, Xavier. De cómo los toros se convirtieron en fiesta nacional: los "intelectuales" y la "cultura popular" (1790–1850). *Aye*, Madrid, ES, n. 72, p. 27–56, 2008.

BENJAMIN, Walter. *The origin of german tragic drama*. Tradução de John Osborne. London: New Left Books, 1977. Título original: Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels.

BENNASSAR, Bartolomé. *Historia de la tauromaquia*: una sociedad del espectáculo. Tradução de Denise Lavezzi Revel-Chion. Valencia: Pre-Textos, 2000.

BENNASSAR, Bartolomé. *La España de los Austrias (1516–1700)*. Tradução de Bernat Hervàs. Barcelona: Crítica, 2001.

CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA, Pedro. *El gran teatro del mundo*. Edição de Ignacio Arellano. Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2014. Disponível em: https://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/el-gran-teatro-del-mundo-auto-sacramental/. Acesso em: 1 set. 2026.

CAMPOS CAÑIZARES, José. El caballero toreador artífice de escritos taurinos en la época de Felipe IV. *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, Madrid, Es, v. 44, n. 2, p. 533–554, 2019. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5209/chmo.66370

CAMPOS CAÑIZARES, José. Organización y celebración de corridas de toros en Madrid en tiempos de Felipe IV. *In*: CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE LA ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE PROFESORES DE ESPAÑOL, 43., 2008, Madrid, ES. *Actas* [...]. Málaga, ES: Centro Virtual Cervantes, Biblioteca del professor AEPE, 2009. p. 69–80. Tema: Acortando distancias: la diseminación del español en el mundo. Disponível em: https://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca_ele/aepe/pdf/congreso_43/congreso_43_16.pdf. Acesso em: 8 set. 2026.

CAMPOS CAÑIZARES, José. Antoñete en Las Ventas en 1981. El torero de la verdad. *Revista de Estudios Taurinos*, Sevilla, ES, n. 32, p. 13-83, 2012

CÁRDENAS Y ANGULO, Don Pedro Jacinto de. Arte afortunado de caballería española, o advertencias de torear para los caballeros en plaza. *Tauroarte*: Rejoneadores, Madrid, jun. 1833. Disponível em: https://tauroarte.com/index.php/rejoneadores. Acesso em: 6 set. 2026.

CERVANTES SAAVEDRA, Miguel de. *Don Quixote*. Tradução de Edith Grossman. New York: HarperCollins, 2003. Original publicado em duas partes, em 1605 e 1615.

CONNOR, Steven. *Dumbstruck*: a cultural history of ventriloquism. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

DELEUZE, Gilles; GUATTARI, Félix. *Mille plateaux*: capitalisme et schizophrénie 2. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1980.

EGGINTON, William. *The theater of truth*: the ideology of (neo)baroque aesthetics. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.

ELLIOTT, John H. *Spain, Europe and the wider world, 1500–1800*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

ESPANHA. Archivo Histórico Nacional. *Consejos*. Madris, [s.d.], libro 1197, f. 179.

FOUCAULT, Michel. *On the government of the living*: lectures at the Collège de France, 1979–1980. Edição de Michel Senellart. Tradução de Graham Burchell. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

FOUCAULT, Michel. *The politics of truth*. Organização de Sylvère Lotringer. Introdução de John Rajchman. Tradução de Lysa Hochroth e Catherine Porter. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2007.

JEON, Ja Young. *Women and ventriloquism in early modern english drama*. 2022. Tese (Doutorado em Inglês) - Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York, 2022. Disponível em: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/5027/. Acesso em: 8 set. 2026.

JURKOWSKI, Henryk. *A history of european puppetry*. From its origins to the end of the 19th century. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996. v. 1.

JURKOWSKI, Henryk. *World encyclopedia of puppetry arts*. Charleville-Mézières: UNIMA, 2009. Disponível em: https://wepa.unima.org/en/europe/. Acesso em: 6 set. 2026.

MARAVALL, José Antonio. *Culture of the baroque*: analysis of a historical structure. Tradução de Terry Cochran. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

MITCHELL, Timothy J. *Blood sport*: a social history of Spanish bullfighting. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991.

PIUS V, Papa. De salute gregis Dominici. Roma, 1 nov. 1567. *In*: *BULLARUM diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum romanorum pontificum Taurinensis editio*. Augustae Taurinorum: Seb. Franco et Henrico Dalmazzo, 1862. t. 7, p. 630–631.

REAL MAESTRANZA DE CABALLERÍA DE SEVILLA. *The bull and the arts*. Sevilla: RMCS, 2026. Disponível em: https://www.realmaestranza.com/en/royal-bullring/the-bull-and-the-arts/. Acesso em: 8 set. 2026.

SHUBERT, Adrian. *Death and money in the afternoon*: a history of the Spanish bullfight. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

SPEAIGHT, George. *The history of the english puppet theatre*. 2. ed. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990.

WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PUPPETRY ARTS. *Puppets in classical times*. [S. l.]: UNIMA, 2009. par.4. Disponível em: https://wepa.unima.org/en/europe/. Acesso em: 2 set. 2026.

Notes

1 Following Elliott (2009), "Spanish" or "Hispanic Monarchy" denotes a composite dynastic formation, not a homogeneous nation-state. Castile had particular political and fiscal importance, but other territories retained distinct institutions. "Spanish" is used geographically or dynastically; "national" concerns later nationalisation.

2 For the prohibition issued in *De salute gregis dominici* (1567), its subsequent modifications, and its reception by the Spanish Crown, see Mitchell (1991) and Shubert (1999). The relevant point here is the contested relationship between ecclesiastical restriction and taurine practice, rather than a detailed reconstruction of the papal measures.

3 The first bullfight in Madrid's *Plaza Mayor* is generally dated to 24 June 1620 (Mitchell, 1991; Shubert, 1999).

4 Seventeenth-century urban plazas were temporarily adapted for festivities. Seville's permanent *Real Maestranza* bullring belongs principally to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architectural history.

5 Campos Cañizares (2012, p. 36) writes that in Philip IV's reign *"la espectacularidad rodeó la fiesta taurina, sirviéndose de la protección de la Monarquía*". Translation: "Spectacularity surrounded the bullfighting festival, taking advantage of the protection of the Monarchy".

6 Campos Cañizares (2019) identifies a corpus of taurine writings produced from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century concerning equestrian technique, *rejoneo*, and the norms governing noble participation.

7 This chronological distinction is important. The courtly *toreo caballeresco* of the seventeenth century and the professionalised *toreo a pie* that developed particularly during the eighteenth century are related but historically distinct formations (Bennassar, 2000; Shubert, 1999). Terms and images associated with the modern *matador* should, therefore, not be used indiscriminately to describe the practices of Philip IV's court.

8 Seventeenth-century *toreo caballeresco* should be understood within its courtly and urban setting, rather than as an embryonic *Fiesta Nacional*. The emergence of professional bullfighting on foot transformed the spectacle's social composition, techniques, protagonists, and meanings (Andreu,

2008; Bennassar, 2000). Later works, including Goya's *La Tauromaquia* (1816), belong to the history of taurine imagery's reception and reinterpretation, rather than documenting spectatorship under Philip IV or Charles II. Dramatic representations, satires, courtly descriptions, municipal records, and technical treatises likewise illuminate different aspects of the practice according to their genres and purposes. Associations with nature, mortality, masculine courage, and Spanish identity are therefore treated as historically situated interpretations, not timeless properties of *tauromaquia*.

9 Preparations, temporary architecture, animals, personnel, ceremonial ordering, and conspicuous noble dress made expenditure and patronage visible (Campos Cañizares, 2012, 2019; Maravall, 1986). The modern *traje de luces* and codified professional visual repertoire belong to a later phase and cannot describe seventeenth-century courtly attire.

10 Patronage, hierarchy, and aristocratic participation establish institutional arrangements, not uniform reception: audiences might find legitimation, entertainment, rivalry, or mockery. Bullfighting's later nationalisation was a contested process associated with liberal society and nationalism, not its original essence (Andreu, 2008).

11 The terms require historical differentiation. "Puppetry" includes several technologies of figure manipulation, including marionettes operated by strings and glove puppets manipulated by the performer's hand. "Ventriloquism" refers to the displacement or apparent displacement of voice and possesses a history extending well beyond performances involving dummies. Automata, meanwhile, generate or simulate motion through mechanical systems. These traditions may overlap culturally or conceptually without being identical historical practices.

12 Portable marionette and glove-puppet performances were widely attested in seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century European fairs and marketplaces, where they accommodated figures adapted from *commedia dell'arte* traditions (Jurkowski, 1996; Speaight, 1990). English evidence, particularly from Bartholomew Fair, illustrates the medium's mobility and the circulation of continental theatrical figures. It is used comparatively, however, and cannot establish the institutional conditions of puppetry in Madrid, Castile, or other territories of the Hispanic Monarchy.

13 Unlike the large urban *corrida*, portable puppet companies could create theatrical worlds with minimal apparatus. British repertoires combined religious narratives such as Jonah and the Whale with comic and moralising figures such as the Devil, demonstrating that didactic and popular entertainment functions could coexist (Victoria and Albert Museum, n.d.; Speaight, 1990).

14 During the English theatrical closure of 1642–1660, puppet shows continued to appear while performances involving human actors faced stronger restrictions (Speaight, 1990). This episode illustrates how an artificial or miniature stage could occupy a different legal category from embodied theatre within a particular jurisdiction. It does not place puppetry generally "outside censorship" or imply immunity from political authority; any resulting regulatory latitude remained contingent upon jurisdiction, venue, repertoire, and historical circumstance.

15 The familiar modern ventriloquist's dummy should not be projected backwards as the standard form of seventeenth-century ventriloquial performance. Connor (2000) traces a much longer history in which ventriloquism was associated with prophecy, spirit voices, bodily displacement, deception, and later theatrical entertainment. The distinction is essential for avoiding a chronological conflation between early-modern "belly-speaking" and nineteenth- or twentieth-century stage ventriloquism.

16 Athanasius Kircher's seventeenth-century experiments with hidden tubes, acoustic transmission, and speaking or sounding figures could create the impression that an inanimate object possessed a voice (Burke, 2014; Rokem, 2016). These devices belonged to a broader culture of artificial marvels connecting mechanics, acoustics, theatricality, natural philosophy, and wonder. They are invoked comparatively, not as examples of puppet theatre, because they produce the same perceptual disjunction between a visible apparent speaker and an operative source located elsewhere or concealed.

17 *Theatrum mundi* is used here as a historically recurrent metaphor rather than as evidence for a homogeneous "Baroque mind". The image of the world as theatre predates the seventeenth century and appears in different confessional, literary, and philosophical settings.

18 In *Don Quijote II*, 25–26, Maese Pedro's *retablo* stages the rescue of Melisendra. Don Quixote attacks the puppet theatre: "*con acelerada y nunca vista furia comenzó a llover cuchilladas sobre la tierra morisma, derribando muchos castillos y matando infinitos moros*" ["With accelerated and never-before-seen fury, he began to rain down sword blows on the Moorish land, demolishing many castles and killing countless Moors"] (Cervantes, 2003, p. 700). The episode is retained here as direct literary evidence concerning theatrical representation, not as evidence that ordinary puppet spectators experienced the same confusion.

19 In Les Caractères, La Bruyère writes: « *Elle augmente et embellit la fiction, et plaît davantage … comme les marionnettes, qui n'ont ni vie ni mouvement que celui qu'on leur prête* » ["It enhances and embellishes the fiction, and pleases more … like puppets, which have neither life nor movement except that which is attributed to them"] (*Les Caractères*, VI §47; La Bruyère, 1688/1962). The marionette thus becomes a metaphor for borrowed movement and the artificial production of apparently spontaneous social identities. Unlike Cervantes's theatrical use of puppetry, this passage belongs to moral and social criticism; it demonstrates the puppet's conceptual versatility but does not document puppet audiences or performance conditions.

20 The metaphor of human beings governed by external forces predates the Baroque and represents the reactivation of an older topos (Jurkowski, 2009). Benjamin provides a twentieth-century interpretation rather than evidence of early-modern self-understanding (Benjamin, 1977). Hobbes compares the heart to a spring, the nerves to strings, and the joints to wheels (*Leviathan*, Introduction; Hobbes, 1651/2017), but this mechanical analogy implies neither a literal puppeteer nor a doctrine of theological predestination.

21 Early-modern automata intensified interest in artificial movement, life, and mechanism (Riskin, 2016), but they differed from puppets: an automaton generated movement through an internal mechanism, whereas a marionette foregrounded external operation through strings or manipulation.

22 Kleist's *Über das Marionettentheater* (1810) offers a later philosophical reception of this problem: the externally controlled marionette appears graceful because self-conscious intention does not interrupt its movement (Kleist, 1989). Its affinity with *sprezzatura*, understood as the concealment of effort, is heuristic rather than genealogical; neither Kleist nor Speaight's discussion of apparently natural puppet movement provides direct evidence for seventeenth-century spectatorship (Speaight, 1990, p. 58–65).

23 The *molaire* [molar] refers to large-scale aggregates and relatively stable organisations—families, states, classes, institutional identities—through which heterogeneous flows are organised into recognisable forms. It should not be understood simply as synonymous with "large" or "oppressive"; rather, it designates a particular regime of segmentation and stabilisation. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1980, p. 216): «*Il y a toujours, dans le fait social, deux segmentarités : l'une molaire, l'autre moléculaire. La première se présente en masses, en binarités, en organisations ; elle "surcode" les flux et produit des identités stables* ». Translation: "There are always, in social fact, two segmentarities: one molar, the other molecular. The first presents itself in masses, in binarities, in organisations; it 'overcodes' flows and produces stable identities".

24 The *moléculaire* [molecular] designates processes that operate below or across established identities and institutional segmentations: movements, variations, distributions, and relations that may disturb or reconfigure molar arrangements. "Molecular", therefore, does not simply mean small-scale. In Deleuze and Guattari's (1980, p. 217) formulation: «*La segmentarité moléculaire n'est pas "petite": elle relève d'une autre logique, celle des particules, des vitesses, des variations infinitésimales qui fissurent le molaire* ». Translation: "Molecular segmentarity is not 'small': it is based on another logic, that of particles, speeds, infinitesimal variations which crack the molar".

25 Striated space is organised through boundaries, fixed reference points, measurable trajectories, and differentiated positions. The concept is useful for analysing the bullring because the arena's architecture and ceremonial organisation distribute bodies according to spatially legible distinctions. Deleuze and Guattari (1980, p. 592) write: « *Nous appelons espace strié l'espace métrique, parcouru et délimité par des trajets mesurables, où l'on doit compter pour l'occuper*». Translation: "We call striated space the metric space, travelled and delimited by measurable paths, where one must count to occupy it".

26 Smooth space is not the simple absence of organisation, nor does Deleuze and Guattari's distinction establish a moral opposition in which smooth space is necessarily emancipatory and striated space necessarily repressive. Smooth and striated spaces coexist, transform one another, and are produced through an "incessant passage" between different spatial regimes (Deleuze; Guattari, 1980, p. 597). Deleuze and Guattari (1980, p. 593) describe *espace lisse* as an open, non-metric space occupied differently from the calibrated organisation characteristic of striated space. In the present argument, "smooth" consequently identifies the relative portability and adaptability of itinerant puppet performance rather than an historically unregulated or politically liberated domain.

27 English, French, Italian, and Hispanic puppet traditions were not institutionally identical. Non-Hispanic examples support comparison of spectacular forms, not automatic conclusions about Spanish practices.

28 Puppetry was not uniformly oppositional, nor were its audiences necessarily resistant. Ecclesiastical prohibitions likewise placed *tauromaquia* within conflicts among authorities, not outside institutional power.

29 The Habsburg Monarchy's distinct territorial institutions preclude an unqualified seventeenth-century "national identity". The later *Fiesta Nacional* designation carries a different political meaning.

30 Puppetry was neither uniformly poor or resistant, nor was every *corrida* lavish or dominating. These tendencies coexist and interpenetrate; the selected cases indicate predominant modes of organisation rather than politically pure forms (Deleuze; Guattari, 1980).

31 Foucault develops *aléthurgie* [alethurgy] in his 1979–1980 *Collège de France* lectures to designate procedures through which truth is manifested, rather than simply the propositional content of something judged true or false (Foucault, 2014). Alethurgy, therefore, concerns the forms, actors, rituals, gestures, and conditions through which something comes to appear and function as truth. In the present paper, the concept is extended heuristically to spectacular practices. This is an analytical extension made by the author, not a claim that Foucault himself classified puppet theatre or *tauromaquia* as alethurgies.

32 The expressions *minor alethurgy* and *sovereign alethurgy* are analytical terms proposed in this paper. They do not constitute a conceptual pair found in Foucault. "Minor" designates a relatively dispersed manifestation in which voice and agency are displaced among heterogeneous elements; "sovereign" designates a relatively concentrated manifestation organised around visibility, bodily exposure, rank, and ceremonial authority. As with the molar/molecular distinction used in the preceding section, these terms identify tendencies rather than mutually exclusive historical essences.

33 "Minor" should not be confused with "small", socially insignificant, or inherently emancipatory. Nor is every form of puppet theatre necessarily minor in the sense proposed here: puppetry could be appropriated by courts, religious institutions, commercial enterprises, or other established authorities. The adjective describes a formal tendency toward displacement and multiplication of the apparent speaking or acting subject.

34 *Counter-conduct* is employed here in a restricted, heuristic sense. The argument is not that early-modern puppeteers consciously practised a Foucauldian politics or that puppet theatre belongs straightforwardly within the particular historical genealogies for which Foucault developed the

concept. Rather, the term identifies practices that can redirect, parody, evade, or problematise expected relations of conduct. Where the historical evidence establishes satire or regulatory latitude, these phenomena may be compared with the broader Foucauldian problem of refusing to be governed in a particular manner (Foucault, 2007).

35 *Sovereign alethurgy* relates Foucault's concept to ceremonial visibility that makes hierarchy credible. It is this paper's terminology, not Foucault's or that of Habsburg actors.

36 "Truth of valour" consequently refers not to a metaphysical truth about courage but to an historically organised manifestation: conduct performed under visible risk could make particular claims about courage and status persuasive within the cultural setting in which the spectacle operated. The analytical emphasis falls upon the procedures by which a quality becomes recognisable as true rather than upon whether the quality possesses a transhistorical essence.

37 *Desubjectivation* is used here as an analytical analogy rather than an empirically attributed historical experience. The fragmentation of theatrical voice demonstrates a separation among visible body, speaking position, and operative agent; it does not by itself establish the ethical or political transformation of the historical subject. The distinction prevents formal theatrical multiplicity from being equated automatically with emancipation.

Submissão: 12/07/2025 | Aceite: 10/09/2026