

The Comedia and Modernity: A Transatlantic View

We will read canonical works of the Spanish comedia, “Fuenteovejuna,” “El burlador de Sevilla,” and “La vida es sueño,” focusing on the political and economic dynamics of the texts as they engage the problems of land distribution, gender inequality and popular voice. These same issues will then be examined in works of Colonial and Modern Hispanic drama, the indigenous play “Ollantay” written at the time of the Peruvian Enlightenment, and 20th century folk tragedies written by vanguardist poets Federico García Lorca (“Bodas de sangre”) and César Vallejo (“La piedra cansada”). We will close with Raúl Ruiz’s cinematic study of traumatic memory, “La vie est un songe,” written in the wake of the fall of Allende’s Unidad Popular government in Chile. The course will explore the role of theatre in expressing the problem of modernity in its various versions and junctures on both sides of the Atlantic, notions of tragedy, the folk, and the return of the Baroque in contemporary culture.