

FLSP 4420 (3 credits)

# Wild Things of the Baroque:

*Staging Monstrosity in Early Modern*

*Iberian Theater*



Fall 2015

Day/Time: MWF, 1:00-1:50 p.m.

Professor: Harrison Meadows

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 8:50-9:50 a.m.; Friday, 12:00-12:50 p.m. & 2:00-3:15 p.m.

Location: Haley 6010

**Course Description:** Often, even though the title is problematic, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries correspond to what has been commonly named the Spanish Golden Age.

Simultaneously, a transition occurred in Europe from the Medieval into a new era, a period that scholars (again, even if problematically) have come to call the Early Modern period. This period saw a rise in numerous artistic and literary forms, including a proliferation of published texts made possible by technological innovations such as the printing press. As artistic production became more accessible, in Habsburg Spain we encounter one of the earliest forms of mass culture: the Spanish *comedia* (a particular manifestation of the three-act play). Along with shorter interludes and religious plays (*autos sacramentales*), theater became one of the most popular forms of entertainment in Spain and across the continent. As a result, these dramatic works serve as particularly useful sources to engage with the cultural, historical, linguistic, and literary characteristics of the Iberian peninsula, given the content and immense popularity that they enjoyed.

The object of this course is twofold. First, we will read important works of theater from the seventeenth century in order to understand more fully Spain's literary history, while also furthering our knowledge of the cultural realities of Spanish society at the epicenter of its global empire. Furthermore, we will approach theatrical works that portray monsters of various types. In so doing, we will analyze the nature of monstrosity during the period, and compare it to our own, contemporary notions of monsters and their function in our society and worldview. You may be surprised by the similarities that you find, not to mention the entertainment value these works retain even for current audiences and readers. These types of comparisons improve our ability to view the world around us with a more critical eye, and to develop our ability to engage more responsibly as stewards of knowledge in a complex global society.

**Literary Texts** (Annotated PDF's of the plays will be provided, unless publisher noted):

- de Vega, Lope. *Fuenteovejuna*. Ed. Matthew A. Wyszynski. Cervantes & Co.
- - -. *El animal de Hungría*.
- Vélez de Guevara, Luis. *La serrana de la Vera*.
- Calderón de la Barca, Pedro. *La vida es sueño*. Ed. Vincent Martin. Cervantes & Co.
- - -. *El mayor monstruo del mundo*. Ed. Angel J. Valbuena-Briones. Juan de la Cuesta.
- - -. *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*.

**Criticism/Theory** (PDFs of the articles and chapters will be provided):

- Boyle, Margaret. "Women's Women's Exemplary Violence in *La serrana de la Vera*". *Bulletin of the Comediantes*. 66.1 (2014): 159-175. Print.
- Eginton, William. "Introduction". *How the World Became a Stage*. Albany: SUNY P, 2003. Print.
- - -. "Introduction: The Baroque as a Problem of Thought". *The Theater of Truth: The Ideology of (Neo)Baroque Aesthetics*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010. Print.
- Mackay, Ruth. "The Maravall Problem: A Historical Inquiry". *Bulletin of the Comediantes*. 65.1 (2013): 45-56. Print.
- Maravall, José Antonio. *The Culture of the Baroque*. 1975. Trans. Terry Cochran. Eds. Wlad Godzich and Nicholas Spadaccini. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1985. Print. (Excerpts)
- Río Parra, Elena. "Introducción". *Una era de monstruos. Representaciones de lo deforme en el Siglo de Oro español*, Navarra: Iberoamericana-Vervuet, 2003. Print.

### **Other Recommended Texts:**

*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Seventh Edition.

*El diccionario de la Real Academia Española*. (<http://lema.rae.es/drae/>)

A good Spanish-English Dictionary such as Oxford or Larousse

### **Course Requirements:**

Class Attendance and Participation: Students will be expected to attend class and participate on a daily basis. Unless the absence is excused by the university's attendance policy, it will be considered an unexcused absence. One percentage point (of the 10% total allotted for participation in the final grade) will be deducted for every unexcused absence after the third. Excused absences are outlined in the Auburn University Attendance Policy (<https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universypolicies/Policiess/PolicyonClassAttendance.pdf>). Note on participation: The classroom is a space for sharing ideas, forming community, and participating in a collaborative learning project. The participation of every student is crucial in order for us to accomplish the objectives of this course. We stand at the cutting edge of questions that continue to perplex early modern scholars, and you have the opportunity to contribute to the intellectual debate currently taking place. That begins by coming to class prepared to share your thoughts on the readings. If you fail to participate, either through inactivity or absence, you should meet with me to discuss ways of making a significant contribution to a future class. To earn a participation grade higher than a "C" you must regularly offer thoughtful contributions to class discussions. Frequently, students have the following questions about effective participation:

-**"What if I'm just a quiet person?"** It is certainly true that some students find participation easier or more natural than others. However, in order to become a good discussant, you need to practice discussing. Some students find it helpful to write down questions they intend to ask or to plan comments ahead of time. It is perfectly

acceptable to read comments you've written out as a form of participation. If you're still feeling uncomfortable speaking in class, schedule an appointment with me to talk about other strategies.

-**“What if I don't have anything to say?”** The works we read are frequently bewildering and difficult to understand; it's not uncommon for students to feel as if they don't know where to start even thinking about the readings. You will be provided with the tools (annotated editions, dictionaries, in-class reading workshops, etc.) to understand and improve your ability to read and understand early modern texts in Spanish. If you have spent the necessary time with the text, and something still stands out to you as peculiar, bring it up in class! These are often the most interesting moments in the text. Talk to your classmates outside of class as you read the works, and, of course, you're always welcome to stop by my office hours to talk about the readings.

-**“How can my opinion be wrong?”** All the ideas that we bring to class are important, but that doesn't mean that they're equal. Some ideas are more persuasive than others. Some ideas can be factually contradicted by reference to the text itself. The best interpretations begin with an appeal to the literary work. That means it's always best to cite a page or specific line of a poem or play. But it's also the case that we don't have to be right all the time. Some of the best interpretations grow out of what initially seem to be errors.

#### Assessments:

*Mid-Term Exam:* The midterm exam will assess students' comprehension of the course readings (both literary and critical/theoretical), and require that they synthesize themes or phenomena that appear across works. Students may be asked to respond to short answer and essay questions, and identify the importance of particular characters or specific quotes from the literary works. Note: The goal of the mid-term and final exams are not for *me* to test *you*; rather, they are to provide space so that *you* can demonstrate to *me* what you have learned and how you are processing class discussions. You are the agent of the assessment, so take advantage of the opportunity demonstrate your ability to intelligently and coherently discuss the topics of the course.

*Final Exam:* The final exam will be a cumulative essay exam that will require students to provide a comprehensive reflection on the themes and works discussed throughout the course.

*Reading Quizzes:* There will be five brief (5 minutes) quizzes throughout the semester on the assigned literary texts. These quizzes will focus on the elements of plot, character and setting in order to assess reading comprehension of the works that students will be assigned.

*Mid-term essay:* For this paper, I ask you simply to interpret one of our class readings by answering the questions “what” the text means and “how” that meaning is produced. Essentially, this will be a close reading of a single work that explores how literary devices and techniques (metaphor, diction, allegory, etc.) contribute to the meaning of a literary text. It is always a good idea to meet with me to discuss paper ideas.

*Research Project:* Students will be required to develop a research project based on a theme or literary work discussed throughout the course. Before turning in the final draft of the research paper, students will be required to meet deadlines that include the preparation of a preliminary topic/research question, preliminary annotated bibliography, an outline, and a draft of the introduction. The deadlines for each are included in the course calendar below. Research papers are to be 7-10 pages in length, and follow MLA style as per the guidelines in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Seventh Edition. The last week of class will be dedicated to student presentations and discussion of student projects. Presentations will take place in panels, in which a group of three or four students will be assigned to present on a given day, followed by time for Q&A. Presentations are to be 5-7 minutes in length, based on students' findings and analysis in their respective research projects. Presentations account for 5% of the grade for the research project. Note: These research papers are one of the best ways for you to engage with the topic of the course in a manner that is meaningful to you, to develop your language skills through reading and writing, and to be able to speak intelligibly and confidently about a topic interesting to you, and in turn, that is interesting to your peers both within and outside of the classroom.

**Grade Distribution:**

Participation/Attendance: 10%  
Reading Quizzes: 10%  
Midterm Exam: 15%  
Final Exam: 25%  
Midterm Essay: 15%  
Research Paper: 25%

**Grading Scale:**

A: 90-100  
B: 80-89  
C: 70-79  
D: 60-69  
F: 0-59

**University Policies and Procedures:**

A. Excused Absences: Students are granted excused absences from class for the following reasons: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family, the death of a member of the student's immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have an excused absence from this class for any other reason must contact the instructor in advance of the absence to request permission. The instructor will weigh the merits of the request and render a decision. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any excused absences, but in no case shall such notification occur more than one week after the absence. Appropriate documentation for all excused absences is required. Please see the Student Policy eHandbook for more information on excused absences ([http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/student\\_policies/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/)).

B. Make-Up Policy: Arrangement to make up missed major examination (e.g. hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student within one week from the end of the period of the excused absences. Except in unusual circumstances, such as continued absence of the student or the advent of University holidays, a make-up exam will take place within two weeks from the time that the student initiates arrangements for it. Except in extraordinary

circumstances, no make-up exams will be arranged during the last three days before the final exam period begins. The format of the make-up exam will be (as specified by instructor).

C. Honesty Code: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

D. Disability Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. To set up the meeting, please contact the instructor by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

E. Course contingency: If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

### **Programa de clases:**

Semana 1: Introducción / Historia y sociedad de España en los siglos XVI y XVII

17/8, lunes: Introducción / *Syllabus*

19/8, miércoles: Maravall, *The Culture of the Baroque* (Chapters 2 & 5); Mackay, Ruth, "The Maravall Problem: A Historical Inquiry". (adjuntado en *Canvas*)

21/8, viernes: Egginton, "Introduction", *How the World Became a Stage*

Semana 2: Lope de Vega / La historia y la creación literaria

24/8, lunes: Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, primera jornada

26/8, miércoles: Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, primera jornada

28/8 viernes: Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, segunda jornada

Semana 3: El comendador y el concepto de la monstruosidad

31/8, lunes: Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, segunda jornada

2/9, miércoles: Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, tercera jornada

4/9, viernes: (Prueba 1) Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, tercera jornada

Semana 4: Ideología y teatro

7/9, lunes: No hay clase

9/9, miércoles: Egginton, "Introduction". *The Theater of Truth*; Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna*, tercera jornada

11/9, viernes: Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, primera jornada

Semana 5: *Gender & Genre* en la comedia española

14/9, lunes: Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, primera jornada

16/9, miércoles: Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, segunda jornada

18/9, viernes: Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, segunda jornada

Semana 6: *Gender & Genre*, segunda parte

21/9, lunes: Fecha de entrega del tema del trabajo de investigación; Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, tercera jornada

23/9, miércoles: Lope de Vega, *El animal de Hungría*, tercera jornada

25/9, viernes: (Prueba 2) Río Parra, "Introducción". *Una era de monstruos*.

Semana 7: ¿Quién es el monstruo?

28/9, lunes: Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, primera jornada

30/9, miércoles: Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, primera jornada

2/10, viernes: Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, segunda jornada

Semana 8: La muerte del monstruo

5/10, lunes: Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, segunda jornada

7/10, miércoles: Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, tercera jornada

9/10, viernes: (Prueba 3) Vélez de Guevara, *La serrana de la Vera*, tercera jornada

Semana 9: La complejidad de la interpretación literaria

12/10, lunes: Boyle, "Women's Women's Exemplary Violence in *La serrana de la Vera*"

14/10, miércoles: Examen parcial

16/10, viernes: No hay clase - descanso del otoño

Semana 10: Astrología, hipogrifos, y nacimientos monstruosos

19/10, lunes: Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, primera jornada

21/10, miércoles: Fecha de entrega - Ensayo 1 (*Midterm essay*), Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, primera jornada

23/10, viernes: Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, segunda jornada

Semana 11: *La vida es sueño* . . .

26/10, lunes: Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, segunda jornada

28/10, miércoles: Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, tercera jornada

30/10, viernes: (Prueba 4) Calderón, *La vida es sueño*, tercera jornada

Semana 12: ...dentro de que todo es verdad y todo mentira

2/11, lunes: Calderón, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, primera jornada

4/11, miércoles: Calderón, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, primera  
jornada

6/11, viernes: Calderón, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, segunda jornada

Semana 13: Monstruos epistemológicos, segunda parte

9/11, lunes: Fecha de entrega - primer párrafo del trabajo de investigación;  
Calderón, *El mayor monstruo del mundo*, segunda jornada

11/11, miércoles: Calderón, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*, tercera  
jornada

13/11, viernes: (Prueba 5) Calderón, *En la vida todo es verdad y todo mentira*,  
tercera jornada

Semana 14: Monstruos históricos

16/11, lunes: Calderón, *El mayor monstruo del mundo*, primera jornada

18/11, miércoles: Calderón, *El mayor monstruo del mundo*, primera jornada

20/11, viernes: Fecha de entrega - Trabajo de investigación; Calderón, *El mayor  
monstruo del mundo*, segunda jornada

Semana 15: No hay clase - Semana del Día de Acción de Gracias

Semana 16: Presentaciones, conclusiones

30/11, lunes: Calderón, *El mayor monstruo del mundo*; Presentaciones

1/12, miércoles: Presentaciones

3/12, viernes: Conclusiones

Examen final: jueves, el 10 de diciembre a las 12:00-2:30 de la tarde

