



**Conference on comparative perspectives of Early Modern Theater  
Hosted by  
Arizona State University  
University of Chicago**

## **Theater under the Ming and the Habsburgs: Angelica in and out of the Cathay**

**June 21-22  
Hong Kong  
2018**

Required documents for proposal:

Title of presentation, 150-word abstract, 2-page CV, academic affiliation, and email contact.

Panel proposals and round tables will be taken into consideration.

Send all documents to Juan Pablo Gil-Osle, [jgilosle@asu.edu](mailto:jgilosle@asu.edu)

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Principal organizer: Juan Pablo Gil-Osle

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and Cultures, Arizona State  
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Co-organizers: Frederick de Armas

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(Foundation Professor of Chinese,  
School of International Letters  
and Cultures, Arizona State  
University; & Louis Agassiz  
Professor of Chinese, Emeritus,  
University of California, Berkeley)

### Objective

A conference about Spanish and Chinese theater in the 16th and 17th centuries. This is a project that consists of approximations within fields that do not communicate often.

## ABSTRACTS

Zheng He's travels to the Western Seas

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Zheng He's travels to the Western Seas in the fifteenth century was a popular memory widely circulated during 16th and 17th century China. This paper compares two plays on this subject produced during this period, one *zaju* 奉天命三寶下西洋 (The Eunuch Sanbao Travels to the Western Seas under Imperial Order) and one *chuanqi* 下西洋 (Travels to the Western Seas), focusing on the intersection between geographical knowledge and dramatic representations through performances. To what extent did the playwrights follow or transform the information provided in contemporary travel accounts on the countries/people in the Western Ocean region? How are these country/people imagined/represented on stage? What kind of world view(s) were at work in these two plays?

*La gran comedia de Fernán Méndez Pinto en China* (1640)  
by Antonio Enríquez Gómez

許玉枝 Carmen Hsu

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (USA)

It might not be an overstatement to say that the plays, or rather the two parts of a single play, entitled *Fernán Méndez Pinto en China* (Fernán Mendez Pinto in China), written by Antonio Enríquez Gómez (1600-1663) during the period of his self-imposed exile (1636-1649) in France, are among the forgotten titles of the Spanish comedia of the Golden Age. The play has been known mostly to scholars concerned with the Portuguese author Fernão Mendes Pinto and his *Peregrinação* (Lisbon, 1614) and has suffered unfortunate disfavor from most scholars such as Armando Cortesão deeming it as “a miserable bit of nonsense lacking both head and tail” (“um mísero desconchavo sem pés nem cabeça”). Whatever opinion of the play previous scholars might have, the present paper seeks to carefully examine and evaluate the meaning of this play, thereby properly placing it within its historical and cultural contexts. This paper also explores the role that the representation of the Chinese has in contributing to a fuller understanding of the preoccupations of seventeenth-century Spain.

La ópera tradicional china,  
una convención apropiada para el Siglo de Oro español

马政红 Ma Zhenghong  
Universidad del Valle, Cali (Colombia)

Los recursos expresivos de la Ópera Tradicional China al ser utilizados en las puestas en escena de las comedias del Siglo de Oro español posibilitan un maravilloso resultado espectacular, pero además se convierten en un tipo de partitura paralela de carácter abstracto, que catapulta los sentidos del verso español. Esta es la experiencia llevada a cabo con *El astrólogo fingido* de Calderón de la Barca, en Cali, Colombia, 2001, que adaptó el reparto clásico a la tipología de los personajes de la Ópera Tradicional. La puesta permite constatar postulados sobre la manera como pudieron ser interpretadas en su momento, con una técnica que no abordaba los recursos del psicologismo actual.

Memory of *Pedro de Urdemalas* play:  
Staging Cervantes in Beijing

Alejandro González Puche  
Universidad del Valle, Cali (Colombia)

La suerte del Cervantes como dramaturgo es problemática, pues su reconocimiento como novelista no es equiparable a su acogida en las tablas. La ponencia describe algunos pormenores de la puesta en escena de *Pedro de Urdemalas* de Cervantes en Beijing en el año 2008, y reflexiona sobre las posibilidades investigativas que surgen al realizar laboratorios de puesta en escena en el continente asiático, donde los espectadores no tienen una percepción matizada por comentarios y preconceptos. El laboratorio de *Pedro de Urdemalas* en Beijing dejó una amplia gama de documentos sobre la percepción de espectadores y de los actores participantes y posibilitó una nueva lectura del maltrecho dramaturgo. La ponencia analiza la manera como la difusa memoria sobre el arte del actor es un asunto que comparten la tradiciones teatrales en oriente y occidental.

Dreams within Art: Melancholic Necromancies  
in Lope de Vega and Tang Xianzu's *The Peony Pavilion*

Frederick de Armas  
University of Chicago (USA)

Two playwrights living approximately at the same time, one from China and the other one from Spain, touch upon very similar motifs in their works. Tan Xianzu, known as the Chinese Shakespeare, died in 1616, the same year as the English Bard. A low-level official, he retired to his home town in 1598 and spent the rest of his life writing plays. He never refers to Spain in his plays. Lope de Vega, who more than once utilized the same subject for his plays as Shakespeare, had a much more adventurous life than his Ming Dynasty counterpart. Perhaps influenced by *La historia del gran reino de China*, he includes numerous references to China in his plays. In many cases, these mentions are

quite general and have to do with its remoteness. They can also serve to underline geographical amplitude or point to an impossible or quixotic journey. This essay looks at one work by each of these two playwrights, *The Peony Pavilion* and *La quinta de Florencia*, both written circa 1598. Both of these works utilize the art of portraiture as well as necromantic and oneiric phenomena to move beyond the here and now, and open new spaces, new planes of existence. This essay will argue that the Spanish play, with its mingling of classical gods and Christian codes, evinces a more unruly space, while *The Peony Pavilion*, shows a subtle weave of cosmological and lyrical wish-fulfillment.

Friendship in Ming and Habsburg Theaters:  
*The Wedding between Two Husbands* by Lope de Vega and  
*Friends in Life and Death: Fan Shi, Zhang Shao*

Juan Pablo Gil-Osle  
Arizona State University (USA)

While living in China, Matteo Ricci must have apprehended the high appreciation of practices and gestures of friendship in the local culture. Ricci participated in the arguments about theories of *amicitia* that were the focus of great debate during the late Ming Dynasty, as well as in Renaissance and Baroque Europe. These theories were so in vogue that Zhang Huang, famous neo-Confucian and Ricci's intellectual partner, composed the objectives of the White Deer Grove Academy in 1592, stressing in the second point the connections between the neo-Confucian academy, learning, and friendship: "The main aim of learning is to gain friendships that will help us in the path of virtue" (Hsia 161). Ricci's knowledge of the topic, and the convenient insertion within the literati, became a stepping-stone. The importance that theoretical friendship for the praxis of networking are obvious in the case of Ricci in China, but the same can be said for Spanish part of Europe. Possibly, for that reason, in both theaters representations of friendship abound and need comparative analysis.

Look, Smell, and Listen: Perceptual Mapping in Erlang Plays

Abstract: This paper investigates a Ming court play, *The Divinity Erlang Locks Away the*

Stephen H. West 奚如谷  
Arizona State University (USA)

This paper investigates a Ming court play, *The Divinity Erlang Locks Away the Great Sage Equal to Heaven* (二郎神鎖齊天大聖), and explores how sensations of sound, smell, and sight define natural communities of demons that are place specific, and how these same perceptual sensations signal the crossing of boundaries that are meant to segregate demons and grant them territorial autonomy. The processes of quelling of these aggressive forces have a historical lineage in folk myth and local cults, and the play reflects the ways in which the Chinese state controlled local cults by incorporating them

into state-sanctioned religious ritual, thereby appropriating local power for state interests.

### Chinese Festive Entanglements in the Spanish Philippines

Christina H. Lee  
Princeton University (USA)

The world in the Spanish Philippines of early modernity was culturally entangled. It is well known that the Philippine natives, whose beliefs combined animism and the worship of ancestors, molded their sacred realm to the Catholic forms imposed by Spanish missionaries. Although cultural critics and historians have also recognized the import of Chinese rituals by merchant and migrants, they generally consider it a “foreign” element in the “Hispanization” of Catholicism. In my presentation, I discuss the performative aspects of *fiestas* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and argue that some festive elements believed to be Spanish or indigenous were of Southern Chinese origin.

### Theater and Society in Colonial Manila, 1565-1700

Miguel Martínez  
University of Chicago (USA)

This presentation will explore the diverse theatrical culture of colonial Manila in *relation* to its rich, dynamic, and conflicted social life. While very few of the plays produced in Manila have survived, we do have a wealth of textual material referencing or describing theatrical events in the city. The Jesuits’ annual letters, some cheap prints with narrative accounts of urban festivities, the historians’ accounts of indigenous performative practices, and the testimonies of Spaniards who attended Chinese plays in the Parián, all refer to theater as a crucial site of colonial culture in the archipelago. This presentation will explore the social location of theater and performance in Philippines, particularly its specificities in regards with the theatrical traditions of metropolitan Spain and the American viceroyalties.

### The Chinese Connection in Fernández de León’s *Conquista de las Malucas*

Ricardo Padrón  
University of Virginia (USA)

Melchor Fernández de León’s play *Conquista de las Malucas* (ca. 1679) is based on an episode from Argensola’s 1609 history of the same title. The amorous intrigue at its heart serves to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the Portuguese *fidalgo* as a colonial ruler. Yet rivalry between Spain and Portugal is not the only geopolitical issue at work. In the context of Argensola’s history, the episode reflected indirectly upon the role of

China in the region. Political and sexual intrigue in the Ternatan court, according to Argensola, was the result of Ming China's withdrawal from empire, which left barbaric "Indians" to their own devices. I hypothesize that Fernández de León's play, like Argensola's original episode, also has an implicit "Chinese connection," one that must be understood within the context of European discourse about China as it had developed over the course of the seventeenth century. My paper unpacks this connection.

Rhinos and Elephants: Asia through Charismatic Megafauna  
in Spanish Golden Age Spectacle

John Beusterien  
Texas Tech University (USA)

Rhinoceroses and Elephants were shipped to the Iberian Peninsula from India beginning in the sixteenth century. My paper examines the impact these animals had on the European imaginary by tracing their representation in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century spectacle in Spain. I trace literary references and firsthand accounts of the rhinoceros, with focused attention on the figure of a rhinoceros that decorated the float representing Asia in a parade in Madrid (that celebrated the 1622 canonization of Santa Teresa de Jesús, Saint Ignatius, and Saint Francisco Javier, among others). I also trace literary references and firsthand accounts of the elephant, with focused attention on the comic story about teaching an elephant to speak as found in Miguel de Cervantes's *entremés* the *Comedia famosa intitulada La gran sultana doña Catalina de Oviedo*.

A Successful Connection between Chinese Opera and Spanish Golden Age Theater:  
Representing *The Fake Astrologer*, by Pedro Calderón de la Barca.

María José Domínguez  
Arizona State University (USA)

It is not easy to find studies connecting classical Spanish theater with classical Chinese theater, but in today's global world the cultural borders are disappearing and the possibilities of mutual enrichment are flourishing. A group of theatrical research and creation known as Laboratorio Escénico Univalle (Cali, Colombia) has been a pioneer in using theater to build bridges among countries. Alejandro González Puche and Ma Zenghong have been directing this group for decades and they have broken many cultural and geographical barriers. This study will analyze their 2006 representation of Calderón's play *The Fake Astrologer*, a well-rounded performance of a comedy of intrigue where the characters constantly lie, cannot keep secrets, and hide behind masks. These masks are not only figurative, but also a hard work of artistic makeup imitating Chinese opera facing-masks. The result of wearing this kind of stage makeup, together with Chinese inspired costumes, movements, sounds, and declamation, highlighted the personality traits of each typical Spanish Golden Age character and it smoothly blended Asian and Western theater.



The Conceptualization of China in Spanish Golden Age:  
The Transmission of the “Great Kingdom” (1585-1618) in the Play  
*La octava maravilla* de Lope de Vega (1618)

Diego Sola  
Universitat de Barcelona (Spain)

La aparición de la *Historia del Gran Reino de la China* (1585) del religioso agustino Juan González de Mendoza (1545-1618) ofreció a los autores del Siglo de Oro de las letras castellanas nuevas herramientas de conceptualización de la China Ming. La ambientación del Zhong-Guo en obras de poesía y teatro encontró en este libro, ampliamente difundido en la España y la Europa de época moderna, elementos clave para transmitir un imperio que fascinaba por su grandeza y riquezas. La *Angélica* de Luis Barahona de Soto (1586) tomó en préstamo esos elementos para su escenificación lírica del Catay, pero la transmisión de esta idea de “Gran Reino” alcanzó también al ingenio del dramaturgo Lope de Vega. Esta comunicación presenta, por un lado, la conceptualización de China que ofreció la obra de González de Mendoza. Por el otro, se analiza el impacto que esos conceptos tuvieron en la creación literaria de un marco cronológico que une el Catay de Barahona de Soto con las visiones de Asia transmitidas en la comedia *La octava maravilla* de Lope de Vega (1618).

“Soy como tigre que esta emboscado:” characterization of the pirate Li Feng in Miguel de Luarca’s *Verdadera relación de la grandeza del reino de China*

Noemi Martín Santo  
Providence College (USA)

The pirate Lin Feng, “the bandit of Guandong,” called Limahon by the Spaniards, was infamous all over the South China Sea by the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1574 his fleet attacked Manila and killed the Marshall Martin de Goiti’s. These events provoked the first Chinese-Spanish agreement with which the Governor Guido de Lavezaris tried to establish further contacts with Chinese authorities. One of these ambassadors, Miguel de Luarca, describes Limahon through letters that he copies in his account.

I focus on the characterization of Limahon. The work reproduces the voice of the pirate and his relation with the Spanish authorities by letter. The epistolary exchange between Limahon and the Chinese and Manila authorities give a lively and dynamic idea of the confrontation. I study the narration of the attacks as scenes, and analyze the epithets and metaphors that show Limahon as an awesome enemy for the Spaniards to defeat.

*Ut Historia Theatrum: Chinese Historical Theater and A Theatrical History of China in Miguel de Luarca's Verdadera Relación de la grandeza del Reino de China (1575)*

Jorge Abril Sánchez  
University of New Hampshire-Durham (USA)

In his iconic 1988 essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explored the historical and ideological factors that prevented the oppressed and subjugated minorities from voicing their claims to equality and justice from the periphery. In a political system in which the capitalist and imperialist center of power discriminated against those living on the margins, the subordinate was often incapable of breaking the social barriers that consolidated the pyramidal hierarchy of society and imposed the authority of the elite over their fellow citizens. During the Age of Discovery and Exploration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this relation of dominance and subjugation constituted the core and the pillars over which an empire was built by European nations that embarked in overseas enterprises to increase the territory and wealth of the metropolis. Not only did Miguel López de Legazpi’s 1565 expedition across the Pacific Ocean to the Philippines represent the beginning of the expansion of the Iberian kingdom of Castile over an almost prohibited geographical area due to the signing of the Treaty of Tordesillas with Portugal in 1494, but it also facilitated the encounter of the Spaniards with the unknown inhabitants of the East Indies. From important trade posts and newly built urban centers such as Manila in South and South East Asia, several explorers strove to enter the inhospitable dominions of the Chinese, who had interrupted any maritime trade and contact with foreign people in the 1430s when the Chinese Ming dynasty retreated in the *haijin*, a policy of isolationism. Miguel de Luarca, an Asturian soldier that accompanied Fray Martín de Rada in his diplomatic mission and visit to the region of Oquiam in 1575, left testimony of his experience in China in an account he composed upon his return to the Archipelago under the title of *Verdadera relación de la grandeza del Reino de China*. In what may be considered the first chronicle written in Spanish about this millennial realm, the interaction with his mistrustful hosts demonstrated the ambivalent attitude of the local population, who restricted their guests’ access to manuscripts in libraries and stores, while orchestrated and organized sophisticated theatrical performances to show evidence of their impressive history of military supremacy over their neighbors. In this presentation, I will focus on the analysis of the description of these brief *comedias* that not only stood out as contemporary ekphrastic depictions of their national theater in the second half of the sixteenth century, but as artifacts manipulated by an imperial entity to counteract the intrusion and invasion of a competing power that verbally challenges a speaking and responding subaltern in its narrative.

Don Quixote and the Milky Way Pegasus:  
How a Spanish classic is reimagined for Taiwanese children

Alexander Benninger  
National Taiwan Normal University (Taiwan)

The Paper Windmill Players is a children's theatre based in Taichung Taiwan. The name is an homage to Cervantes and the troupe is best known for transcreations inspired by the lovable antics of Don Quixote. Their most famous play Don Quixote and the Milky Way Pegasus varies greatly from the original work but it speaks to the far reach of the Spanish classic. Cervantes original satiric representations of Chivalry are transformed into a moral narrative imparted to Taiwanese children. The play emphasizes core values of honesty, loyalty and friendship exemplified by Don Quixote. Our protagonist is no longer a mockery but instead a valiant and dimwitted hero meant to incite the creativity of local audiences. The play presents an opportunity to explore contact between Chinese and Spanish cultures in the context of children's theatre.

The Representation of Prosperity in the Spanish Court,  
as Portrayed in Baroque Short Drama

Vicente Pérez de León  
University of Glasgow (UK)

Short drama in verse, popularized in the early seventeenth century, in order to fit within the overall performance of the *comedia nueva* global spectacle, associated to specific social prosperity values which affected its main themes, genres and characters. The evolution and consolidation of subgenres and characters in the cultural imagination illustrate a particular Baroque worldview where picaresque skills for survival in a world of deception was very present. A new set of conservative values associated to a specific drama aesthetics is present in the short plays of authors such as Quevedo, Castillo Solorzano and Quiñones de Benavente, who conceived a parallel, virtual, literary Court in their interludes as well. Their *entremeses* pretend to be a true reflection of the reaction to waves of newcomers fleeing to the Madrid Court, getting away from the misery of the countryside, while looking for better opportunities in an increasingly hostile atmosphere. Being influenced by the impact of these famous authors, the worldview associated to the years following the transfer back and forth from the court of Madrid to Valladolid during the first decade of the seventeenth century was affected by an aesthetics of crude and ruthless realism, leading to promoting a general reaction against the desire to ascend the social ladder.

Calderón, Anero Puente y la escritura de la historia

Enrique Garcia Santo-Tomás  
University of Michigan (USA)

La pieza Luis Pérez el gallego. Segunda parte, firmada por el militar y erudito hispalense Manuel de Anero Puente y estrenada en Madrid en 1717, constituye uno de los episodios más singulares de la historia del teatro áureo en su más inmediata posteridad. Con la muerte de Calderón de la Barca todavía reciente en la memoria (1681) y sin haberse aún

definido las coordenadas de lo que serán las preferencias estéticas del nuevo siglo, Anero Puente va a hacer suyo el proyecto incumplido del dramaturgo madrileño, quien casi un siglo antes (1629) había cerrado su comedia Luis Pérez el gallego con la promesa de una segunda parte nunca escrita. Pero esta nueva entrega se emancipa del modelo calderoniano situando a su protagonista no ya en condición de bandolero en la España de Felipe II, como había hecho Calderón, sino como soldado imperial de Carlos V en el mítico episodio de la toma de La Goleta (1535). El Luis Pérez del dramaturgo sevillano, sostengo en este artículo, responde a un momento histórico de gran incertidumbre, con la Guerra de Sucesión recién terminada y con la escena teatral en busca de referentes heroicos de sabor autóctono. Constituye, igualmente, una cala en la historia literaria de gran utilidad para reflexionar sobre la responsabilidad ética y política de las segundas partes como intervenciones críticas que, tal y como sucede aquí, celebran y rechazan de forma simultánea el modelo del que parten.

La ordenación del espacio escénico en una fiesta mitológica de Calderón:  
*Los tres mayores prodigios*

Santiago Fernández Mosquera  
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela (Spain)

Las primeras fiestas mitológicas de Calderón de la Barca han suscitado últimamente una fértil polémica sobre su significado. Uno de los elementos que puede resultar significativo para profundizar en su valor es el particular uso del espacio escénico que proponen Calderón y Lotti para la segunda de ellas, *Los tres mayores prodigios*. Frente a la complejidad de *El mayor encanto, amor*, para LTMP Calderón elige la riqueza y novedad escénica, y la variedad de asuntos y protagonistas, siempre bajo el protagonismo de Hércules.

Se ha intentado reconstruir la estructuración del espacio de tres escenarios, correspondientes a las tres compañías que actúan, su propia situación en el Palacio del Buen Retiro, así como la colocación de los reyes, la iluminación, el juego de perspectiva y la distribución de las gradas con el público. Esta reconstrucción será explicada con documentación gráfica.

The mythological image of power in the Habsburg theatre:  
from Charles V to Philip IV

Oana Andreia Sambrian  
Romanian Academy, Craiova

In the Spanish Golden Age, the king was the head of the hierarchical nobility and his figure, authority and power were in constant demand of an “absolute” image. An image that was delivered from the court towards the subjects, creating the pattern of an Almighty king, descendant from an Almighty God (*Rex imago Dei*). The Spanish Golden

Age theatre has depicted this powerful image by making use of some of the mythological figures of the Antique world, such as Ares/Mars or Atlas, in an attempt to display the magnificence of the Spanish monarch. In our study, we shall focus on the Antique models that the Spanish writers used in order to portray their king, analysing at the same time the reasons that lied beyond the choice of each pattern and which determined the manipulated version of the true Spanish court.

*Celos aún del aire matan* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca and Juan Hidalgo:  
A Representation of the Spanish Elegance or a Mere Attempt to Emulate Italian Operas?

Gibran Araújo de Souza & Jonathan Crissman  
Arizona State University, USA

Gaspar de Haro y Gusmán, the marquis de Eliche, commissioned in 1659 two operas: *La púrpura de la rosa* (1659) and *Celos aún del aire matan* (1660). They are ambitious dramatic works written by Pedro Calderón de la Barca with music by Juan Hidalgo meant to celebrate the Treaty of the Pyrenees and the marriage of Infanta Maria Teresa of Spain to King Louis XIV of France. *Celos* is the only one whose musical score has survived. As the earliest extant complete Spanish opera, it has been researched since its discovery in 1933. However, its aesthetic identity remains an object of debate. It is uncertain if *Celos* preserved the traditional Spanish dances and songs, or merely emulated Italian operas. Given the political importance of the events to which these works were commissioned, and the lessened interest and support by the Spaniards due to the use of foreign musical styles—as occurred in the premiere of the Italianate *La selva sin amor* (1627) by Lope da Vega—this paper will examine the context, influences, aesthetics, and reception of *Celos aún del aire matan* to shed light on its identity debate and discuss any potential social repercussions.

Intoxicating dreams: The Quest for Beauty, Knowledge and Power  
in the theater of Tang Xianzu and Calderon de la Barca

Carmela V. Mattza Su  
Louisiana State University

Although it is well known the presence and role that dreams play in the Spanish Golden Age *comedia* as a way to get in contact with the divinity, to contrast reality and illusion or just to find out the truth, very few times this role is studied in connection to other non-western traditions. Thus, in this paper, my goal is to bring together the works of Tang Xianzu and Pedro Calderon de la Barca to examine the complex status that dreams held in both traditions since it can also offer a different platform whence to study the relationship between mind and body, virtue and law, knowledge and gnosis.