



Gendering the Crown in the Spanish Baroque Comedia (New Hispanisms: Cultural and Literary Studies)

María Cristina, Dr Quintero

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The Baroque Spanish stage is populated with virile queens and feminized kings. This study examines the diverse ways in which seventeenth-century comedias engage with the discourse of power and rulership and how it relates to gender.

A privileged place for ideological negotiation, the comedia provided negative and positive reflections of kingship at a time when there was a perceived crisis of monarchical authority in the Habsburg court. Author María Cristina Quintero explores how playwrights such as Pedro Calderón de la Barca, Tirso de Molina, Antonio Coello, and Francisco Bances Candamo--taking inspiration from legend, myth, and history--repeatedly staged fantasies of feminine rule, at a time when there was a concerted effort to contain women's visibility and agency in the public sphere. The comedia's preoccupation with kingship together with its obsession with the representation of women (and women's bodies) renders the question of royal subjectivity inseparable from issues surrounding masculinity and femininity.

Taking into account theories of performance and performativity within a historical context, this study investigates how the themes, imagery, and language in plays by Calderón and his contemporaries reveal a richly paradoxical presentation of gendered monarchical power.

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