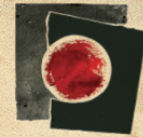


# Study Guide

for



PANGEA  
WORLD THEATER  
PRESENTS

# Sueño

Translated and Adapted by José Rivera  
From the play by Pedro Calderón de la Barca  
Directed by Leslie Ishii

**MARCH 6 – MARCH 22, 2020**

**THE LAB THEATER**

700 N 1ST ST, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55401  
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Credit: Katia Cardenas

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Related Resources:

### **Latinx Theater in the US**

<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199913701/obo-9780199913701-0066.xml>

### **Theater Mania: “Life to Sueño” Review of NYC Debut**

[https://www.theatermania.com/new-york-city-theater/news/life-to-sueno\\_261.html](https://www.theatermania.com/new-york-city-theater/news/life-to-sueno_261.html)

### **Interview with José Rivera**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/26/theater/newsandfeatures/jose-rivera.html>

### **Encyclopedia.com Study Guide**

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/life-dream#Style>

### **LitCharts Study Guide**

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/life-is-a-dream/summary>

### **About the play, “La vida es sueño (Life is a Dream)”**

<http://outofthewings.org/db/play/la-vida-es-sueno/index.html>

### **Western Theater: Spain’s Golden Age**

<https://www.britannica.com/art/Western-the>

### **Spanish Literature in the Golden Age**

<https://www.britannica.com/art/Spanish-literature#ref933823>





## About this Production

### Cast

(in order of Appearance)

King Basilio – Pedro R. Bayon\*

Clotaldo – Ernest Briggs

Clarín – Adlyn Carreras\*

Rosaura – Ankita Ashrit

Segismundo – Fernando Collado\*

Astolfo – Nicolas Sullivan

Estrella – Katia Cardenas

1<sup>st</sup> Soldier – Amarkarit Singh

Servant, Ensemble Leader – Keila Anali Saucedo

*\*indicates membership in Actor's Equity Association*

### Artistic Team

Director – Leslie Ishii

Lighting Design – Mike Grogan

Costume Design – Mary Ann Kellig

Scenic Design – Joel Sass

Sound Design – Eric M.C. Gonzalez

Stage Manager – Suzanne Victoria Cross

Assistant Stage Manager – Johanna Keller Flores

### Synopsis

*Sueño* is Obie Award-winning playwright José Rivera's translation and adaptation of Calderón de la Barca's classic *La Vida es Sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*). Set in 1635, this metaphysical drama—renowned as one of the jewels of the Spanish Golden Age—*Sueño* follows the life of young Prince Segismundo, heir to the Spanish throne, who is imprisoned at birth when astrologers predicted his reign as king would result in the country's ruin. The brilliant, passionate prince is raised in isolation. His only companions are the nobleman Clotaldo and a God whose very existence he questions. When his father King Basilio finds his own life ending without a legitimate heir, he releases Segismundo and places him on the throne. If Segismundo is gentle and civilized, Basilio reasons, he will be allowed to reign. If he is as wild and barbaric as the stars predicted, he'll be sent back to his imprisonment and told that his brief moment of freedom and power was only a dream. When the tormented Segismundo demonstrates the worst of the astrologers' fears and he's sent back to the tower, he's forever unable to distinguish between real life and the world of dreams. *Sueño* is written in sharp contemporary language, but it nevertheless seeks to ask the eternal questions posed by Calderón de la Barca: What is man—an angel or an animal? What is honor? What is freedom? If life is a dream, who is dreaming us? Could God Himself be the greatest dream of all?

Source: <https://www.dramaticpublishing.com/sueno>



## Character Breakdown

**Astolfo** (ahs-TOHL-foh), the Duke of Warsaw, is Basilio's nephew. Basilio has summoned him to Spain to become king if Segismundo proves unworthy. When Segismundo awakes from his drugged sleep the first time, he manhandles Astolfo for daring to touch the attractive Estrella. While in Poland, he seduced and abandoned Rosaura. There are also streaks of decency and honor in him, which become evident, for example, when he protects Clotaldo from Segismundo.

**King Basilio** (bah-SEE-lyoh) is the king of Spain, father of Segismundo, a mathematician, and a scholar. Fearing, because of a horoscope reading, that Segismundo will grow up to overthrow him and become a tyrannical ruler, Basilio has kept Segismundo locked up in a tower since birth.

**Clarín** (clah-REEN) is a chatterbox, the *gracioso* (comic servant), of Rosaura, who adds humor and philosophy to the play. His name suggests a clarion, or high-pitched trumpet. He accompanies Rosaura and offers witty, cynical, and philosophical comments about the action of the play. For a brief moment, a mob mistakes him for Segismundo and almost makes him king. He represents the impossibility of staying aloof from the action of life.

**Clotaldo** (kloh-TAHL-doh) is a general in Basilio's court who serves as a jailer and guardian to imprisoned Segismundo. He captures Rosaura and Clarín but sends them on their way, having recognized Rosaura's sword, and discovering the disguised Rosaura is his own son. Duty to his king, however, seals his lips. When Segismundo returns to his tower prison, Clotaldo assures the prince that life is a dream and that in dreams men's evil thoughts and ambitions are unchecked. He is portrayed as constantly torn by divided loyalty. Still, he always acts honorably, though in his past he has been dishonorable, having seduced but not married Violante, who gave birth to his daughter, Rosaura.

**Estrella** (eh-STRAY-ah) is Basilio's niece. He expects that she will marry Astolfo and rule over Spain with him if Segismundo proves unworthy to be king. Upon first seeing her, Segismundo embraces her, to the consternation of the servants. He later favors Rosaura for her. Her name means *star*.

**Rosaura** (rohs-OW-rah) Although she does not know it, Rosaura is the illegitimate daughter of Clotaldo. Disguised as a man and accompanied by Clarín, she has followed Astolfo to Spain to restore her honor, which he had taken from her when he seduced and then left her. Her name means *rosy dawn*, and, as her name suggests, she awakens new perception in Segismundo, when, through her, he achieves enlightenment about the meaning of honor.

**Segismundo** (seh-his-MOON-doh) is Basilio's son. He has lived his life unaware of his identity, imprisoned by his father because predictions by astrologers have convinced his father, King Basilio, that the boy will grow into a monster who will destroy the land. When Basilio devises a ruse to free him from his prison for a day and give him the power of a king, Segismundo's brutal behavior confirms his father's fear. Impossible as a king, he is again drugged and returned to his tower, where he is told it was all a dream. After he is liberated from the tower a second time, he thinks he is still dreaming. He overcomes his brutality and his predestined identity, and treats everybody kindly and generously. Segismundo is often described by himself or by others as a beast or a force of nature. Before Segismundo is taken to the court, Clotaldo fills his mind with the image of himself as an eagle. The meaning of his name, however, stands in contrast to the predatory imagery surrounding him and indicates his triumph over an unchangeable fate written in the stars. *Segismundo* is derived from the German words *sige*, meaning "victory," and *mund*, meaning "protector."

Source: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/life-dream#Characters>



## About The Playwrights

**José Rivera** is a recipient of two Obie Awards for playwriting for *Marisol* and *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, both produced by The Public Theater in New York (the same Off-Broadway theater where *Hamilton* debuted in 2015). His plays *Cloud Tectonics* (Playwrights Horizons), *Boleros for the Disenchanted* (Yale Repertory and Huntington Theatre), *Sueño* (Manhattan Class Company), *Sonnets for an Old Century* (The Barrow Group), *School of the Americas* (The Public Theater), *Massacre (Sing to Your Children)* (Rattlestick Theater), *Brainpeople* (ACT, San Francisco), *Adoration of the Old Woman* (La Jolla Playhouse), *The House of Ramon Iglesia* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *Another Word for Beauty* (Goodman Theatre), *The Maids* (INTAR), *Human Emotional Process* (Chaskis Theatre, London) and *The Untranslatable Secrets of Nikki Corona* (Geffen Playhouse, Los Angeles) have been produced across the country and around the world. Mr. Rivera's screenplay *The Motorcycle Diaries* was nominated for a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar in 2005. His screenplay *On the Road* premiered at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival and distributed nationally in 2013. His film *Trade* was the first film to premiere at the United Nations. Upcoming projects include the pilot "Into the Beautiful North" for TNT and the film *The Dog Whisperer* about Cesar Millan. He has completed his first novel, *Love Makes the City Crumble*.

**Pedro Calderón de la Barca**, (1600-1681), was a dramatist and poet who succeeded Lope de Vega as the greatest Spanish playwright of the Golden Age. Calderón de la Barca was born in Madrid on January 17, 1600. His mother died when he was ten, and his father, secretary of the king's treasury, died five years later. Calderón de la Barca was educated at the Jesuit College in Madrid, where he prepared to take holy orders. But before his studies were completed, he enrolled in the university at Salamanca to study law. He neglected his law studies there, however, and wrote poetry instead. Between 1620 and 1622, in Madrid, Calderón de la Barca participated in a literary festival held to celebrate the beatification and canonization of Saint Isidore, Madrid's patron saint, and was honored in the literary competitions that were a part of the celebration. In 1622, he became Spain's court poet for King Philip IV.

In 1635, after the death of the great Spanish playwright and man of letters Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca became known as Spain's greatest living playwright. In 1636, a volume of Calderón de la Barca's plays, edited by another of his brothers, José, was published. *La Vida es Sueño (Life Is a Dream)* appeared in that collection. That same year, King Philip IV commissioned a series of plays by Calderón de la Barca to be performed at the royal theater located inside the Buen Retiro, which was Philip's private park. In 1637, Philip made Calderón de la Barca a knight of the Order of Santiago.

In 1640, despite recognition and popularity as a playwright, Calderón de la Barca interrupted his career and became a horseman in an army raised by Philip's prime minister, Gaspar de Guzmán Olivares, to quell a secessionist rebellion in Catalonia. Because of ill health, he retired from the army at the end of 1642. In 1645, he was awarded a military pension in recognition of his valor in battle.

Calderón de la Barca did not marry, but he had a mistress, with whom he had a son, Pedro José. The death of his mistress around 1648 or 1649 left him distraught, and he sought consolation in renewed religious devotion. In 1650, he became a tertiary of the Order of Saint Francis and was ordained a priest in 1651. At the time, he renounced writing for the theater.

Although Calderón de la Barca continued in the priesthood until the end of his life, he began again to write plays in 1653. Most of them were *autos sacramentales*, religious allegories performed on and in celebration of Christian holy days. Some of these plays offended the Inquisition and were condemned and the manuscripts confiscated. Nevertheless, Calderón de la Barca was appointed honorary chaplain to Philip IV in 1663, and the condemnation of the plays was lifted in 1671. Calderón de la Barca wrote his last secular play at the age of eighty-one, in honor of Charles II's marriage to Marie-Louise de Bourbon.

Calderón de la Barca died on May 25, 1681, in Madrid. His executor, Vera Tassis, published an edition of his complete works between 1682 and 1691, ensuring Calderón de la Barca place in Spanish literature. ✨

SOURCE: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/life-dream#AuthorBiography>





# Historical Context

## The Golden Age

The Spanish Golden Age (*Siglo de Oro*) was a period of high artistic activity and achievement that lasted from about 1580 to 1680. During this time period, El Greco and Velázquez painted their masterpieces, and Cervantes wrote his famous satirical novel *Don Quixote*. The theatre also enjoyed a Golden Age in acting and playwriting, producing plays to rival those of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists who were writing in England at the same time.

Theatre historians used to claim that the plays from the Golden Age were too traditional and too concerned with a narrow code of honor to appeal to a wide audience, but recent scholarship has proven that the plays are as exciting, challenging, and relevant as the works of most English and French playwrights of the time period. In fact, the plots for many seventeenth-century English and French plays were taken from Spanish drama.

The most famous plays of the period are the philosophical drama *La Vida es Sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*) by Calderón de la Barca, the historical play *Fuenteovejuna* by Lope de Vega, and *The Trickster of Seville* (about the legendary lover, Don Juan) by Tirso de Molina. There are also great comedies, religious dramas, farces, and tragedies by these and other playwrights. Comedies by female playwrights (Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Ana Caro, María de Zayas, and Angela de Azevedo) have recently been discovered and translated, as well.

The three major forms of Golden Age theatre are the *auto sacramental*, the *entremés* and the *comedia*. *Autos sacramentales* are one-act religious allegories, and *entremeses* are one-act farces originally performed between the acts of a full-length *comedia*. *Comedias* are three-act dramas written in verse, which mix comic and serious elements in complex plots that often emphasize intrigue, disguises, music, and swordplay. In the first act, the issues are introduced. In the second, they are developed. In the third, they are resolved. *La Vida es Sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*) is a *comedia*.

SOURCE: <http://comedia.denison.edu/golden.html>

## Cultural Changes

The period in which Calderón de la Barca lived was particularly vital because of the encounter and contention of two ways of understanding the world. The medieval organization of society and thought essentially was formed by an adherence to doctrines of well-defined religious and secular order. The Renaissance, with the resurgence of classical learning, global exploration, individualism, and challenges to one dogmatically established religion, destabilized and threatened medieval values and truths. "Man," who lived in the Middle Ages under the yoke of authority, in the Renaissance, had become the measure of all things.

## Politics

The hundred years between 1550 and 1650 were marked by power conflicts that combined political and religious issues and took place within and between nations. In Spain, the power of the Roman Catholic Church was enforced by the courts of the Inquisition, the judicial branch of the Roman Catholic Church concerned with protecting the approved understanding of Catholic Church doctrine. The Inquisition could punish deviations from accepted doctrine, and by the Index, a list of books that were banned by the Catholic Church because they threatened accepted religious truth. While these measures strengthened the power of religion, they also nurtured underground Protestant and humanist opposition.

Protestant leaders like Martin Luther (1483–1546) attacked the power of the pope and the Church's practice of selling indulgences. Indulgences were supposed to lessen the time the purchaser of the indulgence would spend in purgatory after death. Protestant reformers like Luther also believed that the Bible ought to be available to each Christian, in the vernacular languages rather than only Church Latin or the original Greek. They believed that the Bible, not the Church fathers, ought to be the ultimate religious authority.

Spanish influence also extended to England when, in 1553, Queen Mary I, attempting to return England to Catholicism after Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534, married Spain's king, Philip II. She died four years later and was succeeded by her Protestant sister, who became Queen Elizabeth I and whose navy defeated the Spanish armada in 1588. Spain also at this time was defending other territories it held in Europe, including parts of Italy and the Netherlands, and it was establishing itself as a major colonial power in the New World and struggling with the Turkish Ottoman Empire for the northern coast of Africa.

SOURCE: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/life-dream#Style>

# Women and Theater in Calderón's Time



The Renaissance gave birth to a cultural resurgence in the Spanish theater. In the 1500s, the demand for plays, which offered the growing population a legitimate diversion, led to the construction of Madrid's first public playhouses, *Corral de la Cruz* (1579) and *Corral del Príncipe* (1583). Spain formed its permanent public theaters from existing houses with large courtyards, in contrast to the playhouses of Paris, *Confrérie* and the *Théâtre du Marais* (1634), built in converted indoor tennis courts, and the English playhouses, either custom-built or in converted buildings like churches or inns with yards. The unique architecture of the Spanish courtyard—a mixture of private residences and public constructions of theater and retail space—played a part in attracting a diverse crowd to its performances. Audiences flocked to the playhouses to watch the latest plays by Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, and their contemporaries. In response to the nation's obsession with theater, women emerged as key players.

Women were part of the very fabric of the Spanish Golden Age Theater, contributing significantly to its commercial success. They worked as actors, often earning more than their male counterparts. In fact, women in lead roles earned up to three to four times as much as supporting actors. Women also worked their way up the theater hierarchy as business owners, possessing legal authority and responsibility for all aspects of their acting companies. From 1540 to 1710, an estimated 11 percent of all Spanish commercial theater directors and managers were women—a sharp contrast to their European counterparts, such as England, where women rarely participated as theater professionals before 1660. Playwright Ángela de Azevedo, Ana Caro, Leonor de la Cueva y Silva, Feliciano Enríquez de Guzmán, María de Zayas, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz also emerged on the early modern Spanish theater scene, writing plays that transcended theatrical conventions of their time.

Early modern Spanish history offers us strong-minded and career-oriented women who reinvented themselves as actors, directors, and playwrights. They established a network of women who would become autonomous theater professionals in their own right, serving as role models for future generations.

Elizabeth Cruz Petersen, Ph.D.  
Florida Atlantic University

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For a general overview of Early Modern Spanish Theater:

- Thacker, Jeffrey. *A Companion to Golden Age Theatre*. Tamesis, 2007.

Recent scholarship in English on women actors and businesswomen from Spain's Golden Age Theater:

- Cruz Petersen, Elizabeth M. "A Look at Three Career-Oriented Women: María Álvarez, Bárbara Coronel, and Fabiana Laura." *Women Warriors in Early Modern Spain: A Tribute to Bárbara Mujica*. Edited by Susan Fischer and Frederick de Armas. U of Delaware P, 2019, pp. 105-118.
- Cruz Petersen, Elizabeth M. "Reinventing Herself: María Álvarez's Legacy as Actor, Director, Mentor." *Comedia Performance*, vol. 14, no.1, 2017, pp. 152-77.
- Cruz Petersen, Elizabeth M. *Women's Somatic Training in Early Modern Spanish Theater*. Routledge, 2016.
- Ferrer Valls, Teresa. "Actors and Theatrical Documentation in Spain in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." *VII World Shakespeare Congress. Shakespeare and the Mediterranean*, Valencia, 18–23 April 2001.
- McKendrick, Melveena. "Representing their Sex: Actresses in Seventeenth-Century Spain." *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Modern Spain*. Edited by Richard Pym. Tamesis, 2006, pp. 72–91.
- Paun de García, Susan. "Women in Charge: Autoras and Actresses in the Reign of Felipe V." *Women Warriors in Early Modern Spain: A Tribute to Bárbara Mujica*. Edited by Susan Fischer and Frederick de Armas. U of Delaware P, 2019, pp. 119-38.
- Sanz Ayán, Carmen. "More Than Faded Beauties: Women Theater Managers of Early Modern Spain." *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* vol. 10, no. 1, 2015, pp. 114–21.



# Glossary

**Horoscope** - a forecast of a person's future, typically including a description of character and circumstances, based on the relative positions of the stars and planets at the time of that person's birth.

**Astrologer** - the study that assumes and attempts to interpret the influence of the heavenly bodies on human affairs.

**Tyrannical** - exercising power in a cruel or arbitrary way.

**Baptized** - to immerse in water or sprinkle or pour water on, in the Christian rite of baptism

**Original sin** - in Catholic doctrine, the condition or state of sin into which each human being is born; also, the origin (*i.e.*, the cause, or source) of this state. Traditionally, the origin has been ascribed to the sin of the first man, Adam, who disobeyed God in eating the forbidden fruit (of knowledge of good and evil) and, in consequence, transmitted his sin and guilt by heredity to his descendants.

**Inquisitor** - an officer of the Inquisition, an ecclesiastical tribunal established by Pope Gregory IX c. 1232 for the suppression of heresy. It was active chiefly in northern Italy and southern France, becoming notorious for the use of torture. In 1542 the Inquisition was re-established to combat Protestantism, eventually becoming key to papal government

**Courtship** - behavior designed to persuade someone to marry or develop a romantic relationship with one.

**New World** - **New World** refers to the Americas, including North America, Central America, and South America, while **Old World** refers to Africa, Asia, and Europe.

**Psalms** - The Book of Psalms, commonly referred to simply as Psalms, is the first book of the Ketuvim, the third section of the Hebrew Bible, and thus a book of the Christian Old Testament.

**Noblemen** - a man of noble birth or rank; of, belonging to, or constituting a hereditary class that has special social or political status in a country or state; of or pertaining to the aristocracy.

**Apollo** - a god in Greek mythology, and one of the Twelve Olympians. The son of Zeus and Leto and the twin brother of Artemis. The god of healing, medicine and archery, and of music and poetry, and was the leader of the Muses.

**Disembowel** - to remove the bowels or entrails from; eviscerate.

**Aphrodite** - an ancient Greek goddess associated with love, beauty, pleasure, passion and procreation.

**Fecund** - producing or capable of producing an abundance of offspring or new growth; fertile.

**Doddering** - a disrespectful reference to an older man or woman, implying that they are old, feeble, or senile.

**The Reformation** - The **Protestant Reformation** was the 16th-century religious, political, intellectual and cultural upheaval that splintered Catholic Europe, setting in place the structures and beliefs that would **define** the continent in the modern era.

**Numerology** - any belief in the divine or mystical relationship between a number and one or more coinciding events. It is also the study of the numerical value of the letters in words, names, and ideas. It is often associated with the paranormal, alongside astrology and similar divinatory arts

**Zeus** - The god of the sky, lightning and thunder in Ancient Greek mythology, and king of the gods on Mount Olympus.



## Glossary (Cont'd)

**Omen** - An omen is a symbolic event or thing that is believed to foretell the future, often signifying the advent of change. People in ancient times believed that omens bring a divine message from their gods.

**Bloody eclipse** - also known as a Blood Moon (not a scientific term). In recent times it is being widely used to refer to a total lunar eclipse because a fully eclipsed Moon often takes on a reddish color.

**Armadas** - a military fleet; another word for a group of boats or ships. The Spanish Armada was an enormous 130-ship naval fleet dispatched by Spain in 1588 as part of a planned invasion of England. Following years of hostilities between Spain and England, King Philip II of Spain assembled the flotilla in the hope of removing Protestant Queen Elizabeth I from the throne and restoring the Roman Catholic faith in England.

**Despot** - a ruler or other person who holds absolute power, typically one who exercises it in a cruel or oppressive way.

**Subversive** - tending or intending to subvert or overthrow, destroy, or undermine an established or existing system, especially a legally constituted government or a set of beliefs.

**Taino** - Arawakan-speaking people who at the time of Christopher Columbus's exploration inhabited what are now Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, The Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and The Virgin Islands. Once the most numerous indigenous people of the Caribbean, the Taino may have numbered one or two million at the time of the Spanish conquest in the late 15th century. Enslavement, starvation, and disease reduced them to a few thousand by 1520 and to near extinction by 1550.

**Orpheus** - a musician, poet and prophet in Greek mythology. His parents were the king of Thrace Oeagrus and the muse Calliope. He was considered the best musician and poet of all, and he perfected the lyre.

**Warsaw** - the capital and largest city of Poland. The metropolis stands on the Vistula River in east-central Poland.

**Codification** - the action or process of arranging laws or rules according to a system or plan.

**Treatises** - a formal and systematic written discourse on some subject, generally longer and treating it in greater depth than an essay, and more concerned with investigating or exposing the principles of the subject.

**Guerilla army** - a form of irregular warfare in which small groups of combatants, such as paramilitary personnel, armed civilians, or irregulars, use military tactics including ambushes, sabotage, raids, petty warfare, hit-and-run tactics, and mobility, to fight a larger and less-mobile traditional military.

**Sycophant** - a person who tries to win favor from wealthy or influential people by flattering them.

**Coronation Day** - A coronation is the act of placement or bestowal of a crown upon a monarch's head. The term generally also refers not only to the physical crowning but to the whole ceremony.

**Effigies** - a roughly made model of a particular person, made in order to be damaged, burned or destroyed as a protest or expression of anger.

**Proliferation** - a rapid and often excessive spread or increase.

**Chivalry** - the combination of qualities expected of an ideal knight, especially courage, honor, courtesy, justice, and a readiness to help the weak.

**Resplendent** - attractive and impressive through being richly colorful or sumptuous.

**Illusory** - made to be or related to something fake or deceptive.



## Discussion Questions

Recommended after reading and/or seeing *Sueño*

1. Clotaldo says *“Any young man of breeding, once he’s been offended as you have, has stopped living. You have no life until you’ve regained your honor — which can be done — honor can be cleaned spotless — but it’s something only you can do.”*

Honor and reputation are very similar. In Golden Age Spain, honor had different standards based on gender, especially when concerning sexuality and inheritance.

- How important is reputation?
- How may reputation differ between men and women, even nowadays? Is this right or fair?
- Why might people in the 1600s have believed gender bias was acceptable?

In the following situations, how have the characters lost their honor?

- Rosaura claims she has come to win her honor, but she is also a trespasser. As Segismundo’s guardian, Clotaldo has to punish Rosaura for trespassing, but once Clotaldo realizes she has his sword and that they may be related, Clotaldo feels the need to help Rosaura.
- Rosaura’s honor as a “man” differs from her honor as a “woman.” As a man, Clotaldo defends honor in that it may have been lost in a way that no one could have prevented, and decides to ask the King to make the final decision to help Rosaura.
- Clotaldo must serve his duty to the king or be dishonored.

2. Clotaldo says *“I’m bound by my oath of loyalty to the king who said, twenty-five years ago, that anyone caught trespassing on this unlucky mountain must be put to death. Even if... my own dear son were to break this law... and die as a consequence of my actions, my duty is to my king, a duty that beats louder than my heart.”*

- What is more important, allegiance to the law or to family?
- Can you think of a situation where one’s family must be placed above the law?
- Can you think of a situation where the law must be placed above family?

NOTE: Clotaldo is caught between his duty to the King and his loyalty to his family. Clotaldo serves the King as his closest advisor and represents duty in the play. Duty is a highly valued quality that Segismundo must learn.

3. Segismundo is described at the beginning of the play as *“the ghost of a poor man—no more reflection than ghost: a walking mirage...”* but he says *“I know from my small experience of the world that some men are actually free. Free! Yet here I am! Why? What have I done to deserve this? Birds are free. Birds are beautiful. Is it their beauty that exempts them? I’ve never seen my face. Am I unfree because I am unbeautiful? But wild snakes are ugly! Yet they are free!”*

- Is freedom a natural human right? Should Segismundo be free even before he reconciles himself to his father the King?
- Is it ever appropriate for a person, government, or a society to take away a citizen’s liberty?

NOTE: Liberty is a theme often examined in the play. Not only is Segismundo imprisoned, but also so is Clarín. The people seek to liberate Segismundo so that he will lead the revolution. Rosaura feels herself the prisoner of her dishonor and is not free to pursue her life otherwise. Basilio seems to believe that the good of the kingdom should be placed above Segismundo’s liberty based on the predictions about Segismundo.



