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## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### García-Luengos, Germán Vega, project dir. Teatro Clásico Español (Classical Spanish theater). Other.

David J. Amelang

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Spaces of Power of the Spanish Nobility (1480–1715)  
Les espaces de pouvoir de la noblesse espagnole (1480–1715)

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of those who would be virtuous, and the influences between Jesuit dramatic training and the *comedias*.

These holdings are also useful to the emerging area of study concerning humanistic university theatre, a genre shaped by leaders in philosophical thought whose preferences influenced the dramatic aesthetic as they chose which plays were worthy of production at the university level. Furthermore, educational institutions regularly staged plays for visiting dignitaries and for festivals, and numerous archival records attest that school leaders knew that performances influenced the quality of their reputation in the community. Consequently, they commissioned plays from their most talented faculty or held competitions that awarded the honour of performance to the best work. This has led to a canon that can be mined for works whose rhetorical savvy rivals those of the *comedia* canon.

Overall, CATEH is a meticulous resource that is sure to serve researchers well as early modern theatre studies continues to broaden its scope.

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**García-Luengos, Germán Vega, project dir.**

**Teatro Clásico Español (Classical Spanish theater). Other.**

Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes (The Miguel de Cervantes virtual library), 2013. Accessed 14 May 2020. [cervantesvirtual.com/portales/teatro\\_clasico\\_espanol](http://cervantesvirtual.com/portales/teatro_clasico_espanol).

Teatro Clásico Español is a free online platform that offers its visitors access to the largest collection of digitized images and texts of Spanish classical drama. Directed since 2013 by Germán Vega García-Luengos from the Universidad de Valladolid, it was developed within the broader framework of the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes digital library (Universidad de Alicante) as one of its various specialized collections. While currently focused on the plays of what is commonly known as the Spanish Golden Age of drama (ca. 1570–1700), Teatro Clásico Español seeks eventually to continue to expand well beyond the

boundaries of the early modern period and to house an even broader range of textual ensembles.

The cornerstone of the Teatro Clásico Español library is its “Fondos Antiguos” (Period Holdings). A joint venture between the Biblioteca Virtual and four of Spain’s most important repositories of early modern texts, this digital library hosts digitized copies of over three thousand manuscripts and early printed versions of plays written in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. The four primary participating institutions are the Biblioteca Nacional de España and the Biblioteca Histórica Municipal in Madrid, the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona, and the Biblioteca Menéndez Pelayo in Santander. Each one of these libraries has its own personalized portal within the website, and visitors can choose to consult their holdings either separately or jointly with the others. Additionally, an assortment of Spain’s university libraries and private collections have also contributed their holdings to the project, making it the single largest repository of digitized primary sources related to Golden Age Spanish theatre. The mixture of sources may account for the lack of uniformity in the presentation of these items—most commonly accessible as elegant and easily-downloadable PDF files, but occasionally as cumbersome chains of individual pages as well—but this inconvenience is made up for by the high quality of the digital reproductions, which more often than not have been optimized for Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and thus allow users to search the items for specific strings of text. This is of particular importance and utility for students of Golden Age Spain, a period in which the astonishing productivity of its dramatists can often overwhelm those seeking to pursue corpus-based research.

In addition to the “Fondos Antiguos,” the Teatro Clásico Español website also features six other sections that researchers of Golden Age theatre will find invaluable. In “Obras” (Works), one can flip through the pages of both contemporary and historical catalogues of early modern Spanish plays. “Dramaturgos” (Playwrights) hosts personalized hubs for the most prominent dramatists of the period, including biographical entries, interactive timelines, and author-specific catalogues for each. These individual catalogues also include the Biblioteca Virtual’s HTML renditions of the plays, in addition to the digitized copies from the “Fondos Antiguos” collections. “Investigación” (Research) aggregates information of (mostly Spain-based) research projects and associations, and provides links and summaries for each of their individual

websites. A place of prominence is given in this section to *TC/12*, the macro-project coordinated by Joan Oleza (Universitat de València) that seeks to put all Golden Age theatre digital instruments in communication with each other and in which the Biblioteca Virtual is a key partner.

“Puesta en Escena” (Period performances) highlights digital projects and platforms that focus on the study of performance spaces and professionals. Among the linkages available in this section are the Manos Teatrales database of scribes and manuscripts, the DICAT biographical dictionary of *comediantes* (playmakers), and a variety of 3D and Virtual Reality reconstructions of seventeenth-century *corrales de comedias* (innyard playhouses) from across the Iberian Peninsula. In “Escena Actual” (Contemporary performances) one finds useful information about a handful of theatre companies, festivals, and museums/archives dedicated to Spanish Golden Age drama. And, finally, the “Multimedia” section offers a small collection of audio and film recordings of plays written by Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, and their contemporaries. These last two sections in particular leave room for further development, and more classical theatre performers and organizers of events would surely be interested in collaborating with the Teatro Clásico Español portal so as both to contribute to these collections and to increase their profiles on such a visible stage.

These supplementary portals, in combination with the project’s main digital library, make Teatro Clásico Español a one-stop shop for all matters related to Golden Age theatre. While the website’s somewhat labyrinthine design requires a bit of getting used to, there is much to be gained once visitors become familiarized with its many ins and outs. When it is not offering its own resources and research output, it readily points its visitors in various other useful directions. Each of its different sub-sections and portals has been curated by recognized experts in the field, whose experience guarantees the excellence and reliability of the product being offered. Its many partnerships with other libraries, institutions, projects, and research associations coalesce into a well-rounded and wide-reaching digital platform that has something to offer each and every user. Moreover, it is important to highlight that, despite its longevity, it remains an ongoing and evolving project: not only do its PDF and HTML libraries continue to grow even to this day, but it has also recently begun to publish its own series of open-access modern critical editions of plays,

with particular focus on those that had not yet received this level of scholarly scrutiny and curation. Its only relative downside is that so far it is available only in Spanish. Providing guidance in other languages at strategic spots could help it lure students of early modern drama from elsewhere to become more interested in the boundless paper trail the playmakers of Golden Age Spain left behind.

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**Ferrer Valls, Teresa, project dir.**

**ASODAT (Asociar los datos: Bases de datos integradas del teatro clásico español / Associating the data: Integrated databases of Spanish classical theatre). Other.**

Valencia: Universitat de Valencia, 2019. Accessed 5 June 2020.

[asodat.uv.es](http://asodat.uv.es).

One major problem for users of big online resources is that “you don’t know what you don’t know.” In other words, when it comes to exploring and searching a large dataset, the user does not know its structure or what it is likely to contain and so runs the risk of rooting around without turning up truffles.

ASODAT (Asociar los datos: Bases de datos integradas del teatro clásico español) is another important digital humanities project from the brilliant Valencian stable of Teresa Ferrer Valls. It brings together four of the major repositories of data about Golden Age theatre: CATCOM, CLEMIT, DMP, and Manos Teatrales.

CATCOM: Base de datos de comedias mencionadas en la documentación teatral, 1540–1700 (Database of plays referenced in theatre documentation; [catcom.uv.es/consulta/](http://catcom.uv.es/consulta/)) is an invaluable catalogue of the mentions of specific performances and plays in a wealth of extant documentation, allowing researchers to look for plays by title, dramatist, genre, date range, place, and space (theatre, street performance, palace show), or by director of the theatre troupe. (As the guide notes, complete biographies of the theatre group managers can be found in DICAT: Diccionario de Actores [Dictionary of actors], another