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Ouachita News Bureau

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By Rachel Moreno

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ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Dr. Jerusa Carvajal-Villamar, assistant professor of Spanish, recently presented a paper at the annual Spanish Golden Age Theater Symposium hosted by the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater (AHCT). The symposium was held April 11-13 in El Paso, Texas.

AHCT is an international non-profit organization that promotes and fosters greater appreciation for Spain's classical drama in production. Its members include literary scholars, theatrical directors and producers, teachers and other aficionados of Spain's Golden Age of Theater.

"The AHCT is the most important conference in theater for classic Spanish drama," Carvajal-Villamar said. "Since I dedicated an extensive part of my doctoral research to the study of Golden Age theater, I wanted to have the opportunity to discuss my work with some of the scholars who are experts in this area of study."

Carvajal-Villamar presented her work, "The representation of America and the Amerindians in the stage directions of three comedies of Peruvian topic of the Golden Age Literature." Her essay analyzed *El nuevo Rey Gallinato y ventura por desgracia* by Andrés de Claramonte, *Amazonas en las Indias* by Tirso de Molina and *La aurora en Copacabana* by Calderón de la Barca.

Specifically, Carvajal-Villamar explored how the comedies represented the new reality called America and how they have influenced the construction of the Amerindian as the "other," she said.

"The focus of my study is the representation of the Amerindians," she said. "I am interested in studying how all these literary constructs influenced the Spanish audience in their formation of the image of America and its population."

"My interest in the study of the comedies of Peruvian topic in the Golden Age literature has its origin in my passion for the history of my country, Ecuador, and the conquest of the Americas," she explained. "As a Latin American woman, I was fascinated by the fact that out of the hundreds of comedies written in the Spanish Golden Age, there are only 14 comedies of American theme. And out of those 14, I am specifically interested in the seven comedies that talk about the conquest of Tahuantinsuyo [the Inca Empire], in the region of Peru, and where the Amerindian is portrayed as an active character, not just a mere reference."

Dr. Carvajal-Villamar has taught in Ouachita's Department of Language and Literature since August of 2017. She holds a bachelor's degree in Spanish from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and M.A.



and Ph.D. degrees in Spanish literature from Western Michigan University. She also holds an M.A. in Christian education and a Master of Divinity degree from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition to AHCT, she is a member of the Modern Language Association. Before moving to the U.S., Carvajal-Villamar did ministerial work in her native country of Ecuador with World Vision International.

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