

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE

Tracie Amend, Ph.D.

The Madness of Love / The Mad Queen / Locura de amor (1948)

Juan de Orduña (1900-1974)

OVERVIEW

Auteur Juan de Orduña was born and lived his entire life in Madrid. He was one of the most prominent film directors of Spain in the mid-twentieth century, although he also frequently wrote scripts and acted. Orduña specialized in historical melodramas during Franco's regime (1939-1976). Unlike other artists, Orduña remained in Spain throughout the dictatorship and refrained from writing any satirical or politically-charged scripts. As a result, his filmography is frequently equated with Francoist propaganda. Nonetheless, it is rumored that Orduña was a homosexual and hinted at his repressed sexuality in some of his later films. In any case, his adroitness at creating historical epics contributed greatly to European cinema of the twentieth century.

Film *Madness of Love* (1948) is a black-and-white historical drama set in sixteenth-century Castile (central Spain). The plot involves the love story between the queen Juana and her betrothed Felipe I (el hermoso, or the Handsome). In true melodramatic form, Juana becomes enraged when she learns of Felipe's infidelity, then turns mad. While the script is based loosely on the history of the Renaissance monarchs, the film is principally an adaptation of the nineteenth-century play *Locura de amor* (1855), written by the esteemed playwright Manuel Tamayo y Baus. The film stars two well-known actors as the ill-fated monarchs: Aurora Bautista and Fernando Rey (who ironically would go on to become Buñuel's favorite leading man in the 1960s and 70s).

Background *Madness of Love* is considered one of Orduña's best films and representative of his talent for directing historical melodramas. The adaptation of Tamayo y Baus's play was written by Alfredo Echegaray, Carlos Blanco, and José María Pemán. Orduña frequently adapted historical plays as a way of celebrating Castilian heritage while also creating national allegories about the future of Spain.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

<i>Juana</i>	young woman from Castile who becomes queen
<i>Felipe I (El Hermoso)</i>	king of Flanders who marries Juana
<i>Aldara</i>	Felipe's lover at the inn; then Juana's lady in waiting
<i>Capitán Don Álvaro</i>	military leader in love with Juana
<i>Don Filiberto de Vere</i>	Felipe's Flemish advisor and villain
<i>Don Juan Manuel</i>	Felipe's Castilian advisor
Marqués de Villena	ambassador to Italy
<i>Carlos V</i>	Juana and Felipe's son and future king
Almirante	the Castilian admiral loyal to the queen
<i>Elvira</i>	Juana's nanny and faithful advisor

SYNOPSIS

Juana, a cheerful duchess of Castile, becomes the new queen of Spain when her mother, Isabel I, dies suddenly. She marries a Flemish duke, Felipe I, and the two move to Burgos to rule over the greatly expanded Spanish territory. Rather than work together on matters of state, Felipe constantly runs off to hunt or seduce women in an inn outside of Burgos. He is particularly enamored of a maiden at the inn, but she does not return his favor. Juana becomes increasingly jealous and enraged by Felipe's infidelities.

Felipe's advisor, Filiberto de Vere, sees an opportunity to dethrone Juana and install the Flemish Hapsburg line as the rulers of Spain. He convinces Felipe that Juana is going mad and needs to be

locked up in Burgos. Felipe agrees to Filiberto's recommendations. Meanwhile, Filiberto bribes and threatens several noblemen so that they support Felipe and help him to man gaslight the queen.

When Felipe continues to pursue the woman at the inn, Filiberto bribes her to help him break up the marriage. The woman, who reveals herself as a secret Moorish princess named Aldara, rejects the bribe but agrees to help thwart the Castilian throne. She explains that she wants to avenge her father, who was banished by Juana's mother, Isabel. The two work together to make Aldara one of Juana's ladies at court. Specifically, Aldara writes a letter in which she exposes the king's relationship with her.

Eventually, Juana becomes convinced that she is indeed insane, and she allows Felipe to take the crown. Captain Álvaro, the queen's faithful guard, convinces Juana that she is not mad and that she should fight to retain Castilian rule. Juana interrupts Felipe's coronation and accuses the noblemen of treachery and treason. However, when she presents Aldara's letter as proof of Flemish intrigue, it is a blank sheet of paper (Filiberto switched it for the real letter).

In the end, Felipe is secured as king. He dies shortly after due to a mysterious illness, and he asks for Juana's forgiveness on his deathbed. The trauma of Felipe's death pushes Juana into a real madness, and their son, Carlos V, takes the throne.

SCENES

Carlos V, the New King, Approaches the Castle There is a panoramic shot of the plains of central Spain, where a caped horseman is galloping rapidly along the horizon. When he encounters a centurion on a hill, he asks where Juana's castle is and continues up the hill. The guards on the castle's precipice recognize the royal standard and declare that King Carlos is approaching. There is a cut to a long procession with white standards flying. Captain Álvaro de Estúñiga approaches and presents himself to the king, Carlos, and the king's chief advisor, Chiebres. Carlos praises the captain for his faithful service to his parents and reminds Chiebres that the captain fought valiantly against the Italians. Carlos then asks after his mother, and the captain warns him that she still believes she is queen. The king agrees to visit Juana at night in order to keep her calm.



Carlos Visits His Mother The servants announce Carlos's entrance into the castle, and one maid remarks that the new king is just as arrogant as his father was. Elvira, Juana's primary caretaker, asks Carlos if he remembers that she was his nanny. He replies that he only vaguely remembers her, and Elvira remarks that Felipe had Carlos sent away when he was only five years old. The other servants warn the king not to mention Flanders or other words that will provoke his mother. When Carlos enters the chamber, the advisors present him as Juana's son. Juana remains seated on her throne and is dressed like a nun with a cassock. She does not fully recognize her son but remarks that Felipe (her husband) had declared celebrations across the land when the prince was born.



Juana Has a Vision and a Breakdown Juana becomes increasingly upset as she remembers how Carlos was sent away and how Felipe had always wanted to have him stay close to his own people. She screams that it was her fault that Carlos did not stay with his family. Elvira tries to calm her down and suggests that she let Carlos talk to her. She agrees. As Carlos approaches, Juana sees a vision of an old nobleman. There is a close-up on the old man's chain that has a silver pendant in the shape of an animal. Juana screams "He's still alive!" various times and also calls out for the captain. Carlos looks at the others, and his face falls as he realizes the extent of his mother's madness. Juana yells at the court to get out, and all leave slowly.

Capitán Alvar Explains Juana's Madness Carlos and Álvár retreat to a nearby chamber. Carlos is agitated and asks the captain why Juana would react so violently towards Chiebres, whom she never met. The captain admits to the king that he has an explanation, but Alvar is reluctant to tell Carlos the "whole story." The captain explains that upon seeing that particular medallion necklace on Chiebres, Juana was reminded of Flemish treachery. The captain also admits that he himself noticed the Flemish symbol. Carlos guesses correctly that the captain is referring to Filiberto de Vere, a nobleman in his father's court. Carlos relates that he only heard good things about the nobleman—that he was a faithful servant of great intellect. The captain agrees to tell Carlos the whole truth, although he warns the king that the story of his "blood" will make him bitter. There is a close-up on a fireplace with flickering flames, which begins the flashback to Juana's youth.



Flashback to Isabel's Death The flames from the castle fireplace dissolve into flames from queen Isabel's chamber. The voice of Álvár explains (in voiceover narration) that the story all began when the greatest queen of Spain, Isabel, died during the night. The captain describes how he rode all night to Flanders to deliver the news of the queen's death. The captain explains that when she was a teenager, Juana was the happiest duchess in the kingdom.

The Cheerful Duchess During the Captain's narration, we see a tableau of Juana and her ladies in waiting posed around the throne. An Italian painter attempts to finish a royal portrait, and he keeps exhorting the women to stop laughing and stay still (in Italian). Juana apologizes, and the painter asks her if she would look towards the portrait of the gentleman with the mustache. She agrees but continues to gossip with her ladies in waiting. Juana teases Leonor about her flirtations with a duke during mass. Then, Juana declares that she will loan her jewels to everyone so that they can fully dress up for the ball. The Duchess brags that the noblewomen of Brussels have the reputation of being the most beautiful of the kingdom.



Capitán Álvár Delivers the Bad News The captain arrives in Brussels and interrupts the painting session. Juana greets him warmly but notices his depressed demeanor. She guesses that Isabel has died, and Álvár hands her the official papers to confirm it. Álvár declares that he wished he could have rode forever so that he did not have to give her the bad news. He leaves, dejected, and Juana and Elvira discuss how and when to tell the king that his wife has died. Juana decides to interrupt his hunting session and relate the news herself.

Felipe the Womanizer We see a woman playing a clavichord and Felipe sitting alongside her and caressing her. There is a long pan across a wild party. People are drinking and dancing until Juana enters, dressed in black. She walks across the room and sees Felipe kissing and whispering sweet nothings into the musician's ear. He describes their walks along the river, and Juana realizes that the pianist is her husband's frequent lover. Devastated, Juana walks out without saying a word. At the threshold of the door, she runs into Filiberto. There is another close-up of the Flemish necklace with the medallion. Juana pushes past Filiberto while the nobleman enters. Filiberto tells Felipe that Juana saw him with another woman, but he also relates that Felipe is the new king of Castile. Felipe is at first enraged, then excited. He walks rapidly across the room, and everyone bows. Filiberto declares that the wheel of fortune is turning toward Flanders.



Álvár Explains Filiberto's Plans The story flashes forward again to the captain telling Carlos the story of his parents. Álvár explains that Juana was raised according to strict Castilian mores, whereas Felipe did not care about discretion or politics. The captain explained that Felipe felt comfortable leaving governance to his subordinates while he chased women and hunted game. Álvár then relates how Filiberto used Felipe's infidelity and Juana's jealousy to sabotage not only their marriage, but also the Spanish line's hold on succession.

Juana Waits for Felipe The action flashes back again to Juana's presentation as queen. She waves to her cheering public from the castle balcony. When she retreats from the balcony, she expresses concern that Felipe has not yet arrived. Elvira reminds her that Felipe loses track of time when hunting. Juana retorts that he does "love the hunt" and "forgets everything" when in pursuit. There is an abrupt cut to a hunting sequence with dogs howling. Felipe is on horseback and complains to his subordinates that this deer is harder to catch than the women in the tavern. When Felipe rides off, Filiberto starts gossiping to the other nobleman about how the king is in love with a tavern girl, how Felipe has been womanizing for five years, and how Juana is "choking" him with her jealousy. The other nobleman retorts that he thinks Felipe actually loves Juana, but Filiberto says that the king is obsessed with the exotic tavern woman. Filiberto further warns that because the tavern woman is a Moor, the object of Felipe's desire would unite Flanders and Granada (which was the capital of the Moorish caliphate until 1492).



Felipe Visits the Tavern Felipe enters the tavern and throws money at the owner, Garci Pérez. The king asks for a drink and insists that Pérez's niece serve him. Pérez acts annoyed but agrees to go fetch his daughter. Upstairs, we see his niece, Aldara, tending to Captain Álvaro's wounds. The captain thanks her for her friendship, but Aldara retorts that she really wants something else. When he enters the room upstairs, Pérez tells his niece that she must serve the persistent suitor downstairs. She resists but eventually acquiesces. Before she leaves, the captain tells her that he is returning to Tudela to see the Admiral. Aldara accuses the captain of going to visit a lover, but he insists that no such woman exists. When Aldara asks about the queen, Álvaro admits that she is beautiful and virtuous. Aldara declares that she hates the queen, but when Alvar prods her for more information, she becomes secretive and leaves the room.



Felipe Pursues Aldara Aldara descends the stairs and chides Felipe for stalking her. Felipe tries to hold her hand and tells her that her name sounds similar to that of a princess. She retorts that she is closer to nobility than to a tavern's niece, and she confesses that she is not related to Pérez. Felipe also confesses that he has a secret noble identity, but he does not reveal that he is the king. He proposes that she leave with him. Aldara agrees if he can use his connections to install her in court. Felipe answers that he can easily make her a lady in waiting. Aldara plays hard to get. When Felipe threatens to carry her out by force, Aldara vows that she will never go with him to Burgos. Pérez enters and Felipe demands that the tavern owner lock up all of the employees and turn off the lights later that night. He further instructs Pérez to look the other way so that he can kidnap Aldara. Pérez protests, but Felipe warns him that he is the king and could easily have Pérez hanged for disobedience. Felipe leaves with Pérez babbling in confusion and fear. As Felipe mounts his steed and rides away, one of Juana's servants watches him and follows behind.



Juana Waits in the Castle Yet Again Juana looks out over the plains while the court musicians play the Flemish melody that Felipe's pianist lover was playing at the tavern. She hears Felipe's seductive murmurings as a voiceover, and asks the musicians to leave. Elvira comforts her and suggests that she listen to Castilian music instead. Juana asks Elvira if Felipe is still out hunting. The queen lashes out at the court for treating her for an illness that she does not have. Their conversation is interrupted by the spy Hernán, who followed Felipe. The servant reports that Felipe spent time in a tavern in Toledano and was accompanied by Filiberto. Elvira protests spying on the king. Juana dismisses Hernán and tells Elvira that Felipe is seeing a woman at the tavern. Against Elvira's counsel, Juana decides to feign ignorance when Felipe arrives and trap him into confessing his infidelity.

Juana Refuses Treatment and Filiberto Threatens the Castilians A male physician enters with a chalice for the queen, but she refuses to drink the “medicine” inside. She asks the gentleman to tell Felipe that she is well enough to return to Burgos. Juana hears a trumpet sound and gets excited at Felipe’s arrival. The queen watches as Felipe rides up. Filiberto pulls aside Manuel and Villena and demands that they convince the admiral to gaslight the queen (and keep her in the castle). The two resist, but Filiberto threatens them with the loss of their lands and titles.



Juana Confronts Felipe Felipe enters the room and tells Juana of his fake hunting adventures. She plays along initially and asks if he will return to the hunt tomorrow. When Felipe says yes, she asks to accompany him and rest at an inn. Felipe starts to lie, and Juana accuses him of visiting a lover at the inn. Felipe chides her for her unending jealousy. She asks what he was doing at the inn, and he tells her it is a state secret—and that he is attempting to restore her father Fernando to the throne. Juana asks forgiveness and describes how she dreams of her mother, who warns her to think about her country. She explains that she can only think about him. Felipe asks how he can deserve her love. She promises to stop her jealousy, and the two kiss passionately.



Villena and Manuel Tries to Convince the Almirante Villena and Don Manuel try to convince the Almirante to imprison Juana in the castle. Manuel explains that Juana’s jealousy and madness have worsened, but the Almirante does not believe the diagnosis. Villena asks why Felipe and the doctors would make up a condition, and the Almirante answers that they are trying to usurp the Castilian crown from the Spanish line. When Manuel presses him, the Almirante tells them to tell the king that he will not be bullied into imprisoning the queen. Don Manuel remarks that he knew it would be a waste of time to try to manipulate the Almirante.



Álvar and the Almirante Make a Plan As Manuel and Villena exit, Álvar enters and greets the Almirante warmly. The captain explains that he was detained by a few light injuries, and he asks after the queen. The Almirante tells the captain that Juana does not suffer from mental or physical illness, but rather is infected by unrequited love. Álvar asks about Felipe’s behavior, and the Almirante answers that he is a womanizing cad who has no respect for the queen. Álvar suggests that they intervene to get rid of Felipe, but the Almirante says that they need to wait for the right moment. They go on to discuss Álvar’s love life, and the captain reveals that a woman followed him to Toledo from Italy. The Almirante encourages the captain to pursue the relationship, but Álvar explains that he does not love her—and that he will always love some else.

Álvar Visits the Queen Álvar enters the throne chamber and kisses the royal hand. Juana praises the captain’s service in Italy and offers him the position of her personal guard. The captain vacillates, and she asks after his personal life. When the queen realizes that Álvar stayed at the inn, she interrogates him about Felipe’s love affair and confirms that the king is pretending to be a Flemish nobleman of lower rank. Álvar reluctantly confirms her suspicions but refrains from telling her the whole story. After the captain leaves, Elvira consoles the queen as she weeps over Felipe’s infidelity. Enraged, Juana decides to travel to Toledo to confront the king.

Filiberto and Aldara Form an Alliance Back at the inn in Toledo, Filiberto reveals to Aldara that Felipe is really the king. He propositions Aldara: he suggests that she pretend to be in love with Felipe in order to keep him away from the queen. Filiberto attempts to bribe her with gold, but Aldara asks for a position at court instead. Filiberto reminds her that as a Moorish princess, she cannot serve a Castilian queen. Aldara explains that when her father was banished to Africa, she swore on the Koran that she would avenge her father and punish queen Isabel (and her descendants). Filiberto asks if she intends to kill Juana (to which she doesn’t respond directly). He agrees to facilitate her vengeance. Together,



they write a letter in which Aldara begs the queen to install her as a lady in waiting. Filiberto warns her to hide that night, as there will likely be “trouble” at the inn.

Álvar Tries to Let Aldara Down Gently After Filiberto leaves, Álvar enters and tries to say goodbye to Aldara. She vows to follow him to Burgos even though he does not love her, as she cannot bear the thought of him loving another woman. Álvar tries to dissuade her gently.

Confrontation at the Inn Juana arrives at the inn in the middle of the night. Pérez opens the door and evades her interrogation about Felipe. When she reveals herself as the queen, Pérez begs her not to hang him. He eventually admits that the king is coming tonight, but he doesn't know his intentions. Aldara listens intently to the conversation from the shadows. When they hear the galloping of Felipe's horse, Juana offers Pérez gold coins to stay quiet. She stands in the corner and covers her head with a white veil. Felipe sees a figure in white and thinks it is Aldara. The queen turns around and confronts Felipe, who tries to claim that he is still having political meetings at the inn. The queen condemns his behavior, and Felipe retorts that her love and madness have consumed her.



Álvar Defends the Queen The king tries to force her to return to the castle, and the two wrestle each other. Juana screams out for help, and Álvar hears her from one of the bedrooms. He jumps down from the balcony and cries out “Coward!” and “En garde!” The two duel for a minute until Juana shouts out to stop. The king reveals himself, and Álvar bows before him. Felipe declares that the captain will be executed despite his valor in Italy. Juana intervenes and explains that Álvar, now her personal guard, was only trying to protect her and did not realize the king's true identity. Aldara continues to watch the scene from the shadows in a jealous rage. Felipe eventually agrees with Juana and pardons Álvar. Juana asks Felipe to go back to Burgos with her, and she agrees.



Filiberto Manipulates the King Now back in Burgos, Felipe asks Filiberto how Juana has been able to track him down. Filiberto replies that she is using court spies to surveil him like a little boy. Felipe defends her and says that her behavior is derived from jealousy. Filiberto retorts that jealousy does not excuse bad behavior, and he reminds Felipe that the Castilians are looking for any excuse to delegitimize his rule. Filiberto stresses the narrative that Juana is going mad (like her grandmother) and cannot serve as queen.

New Reign Now back at Burgos, Juana greets the nobles of the court, and she allows Aldara to come forward as a new lady in waiting. Aldara introduces herself as Beatriz, the daughter of Don Juan Manuel. Álvar watches from the sidelines and realizes the plot in motion. Juana praises Beatriz's noble lineage and welcomes her to the court. The couple goes to the window to greet the public. Villena complains to a friend that he would have never agreed to go along with the lie about Aldara. The friend retorts that Villena would have done anything if he had received as much land as Don Manuel did. Manuel approaches, and the two allude to the plot to further slander the queen. Álvar overhears and tries to defend the queen's honor.



Intrigue at Court In the queen's chambers, Juana offers Aldara (as Beatriz) pearl earrings, which she says will complement the lady's “dark skin.” Aldara accepts the gift and leaves the room as Felipe enters. They exchange a charged look. Outside, Álvar confronts Aldara and threatens to expose her as an imposter. Aldara also threatens to reveal the captain's secrets, and she reminds him that the truth will only make Juana more jealous--and crazy. The royal couple emerges, and Juana acts as matchmaker when she sees how “Beatriz” looks at Álvar. Felipe asks Beatriz to play music in the corner while Juana and Álvar play chess by the window. Felipe whispers to Aldara that he wants to commit the queen and keep her as his mistress. Aldara replies that Don Álvar has professed his love for her and that the king should find a way to send him away. Felipe vows to get rid of his competition.



Juana Misinterprets Felipe's Jealousy Felipe confronts Álvaro while he is playing chess and demands that he leave Burgos. Álvaro acquiesces while Aldara looks on, guilty. When Álvaro leaves, Juana tries to convince Felipe that he is being unreasonable, but the king replies that he will not give into her favor this time. Juana approaches Aldara and asks for her opinion about the king's actions. Aldara answers that Felipe is jealous, and Juana is excited that the king might actually return her passion.

The Almirante Surveils the King From the castle balcony, the Almirante watches as Felipe plays tennis with Villena and gets drunk. He paces the floor and complains to the other noblemen that Felipe is shirking his duty. In addition, Castile is suffering an economic depression.

Aldara Sends the Queen a Letter Elvira delivers a letter to the queen in which the writer describes all of Felipe's indiscretions. It is signed as the "woman from the inn." Juana breaks down, then has a fit of rage. She vows vengeance on both the king and his lover and declares that it was providence that she intercepted the letter. At first, Juana demands that Elvira summon the king, but then she decides to interrogate all of the women at court. When Elvira leaves, Juana hears the Flemish melody and Felipe's voice in her head. She cries out and falls to her knees.



The Almirante Counsels the Queen In the midst of Juana's breakdown, the Almirante enters and describes how Felipe is mismanaging the kingdom. Juana agrees that Felipe is the most dishonest husband, but she does not address the Almirante's concerns about governing. When the ladies in waiting show up, Juana ignores the Almirante and begins to interrogate each one. The queen has them write something so that she can match their hand-writing to the letter. The other advisors murmur that the queen's obsession must mean that Juana is indeed insane. When Aldara refuses to write, Juana accuses her of being the woman at the inn.

Aldara Confesses and Frames the Queen They retreat to another room, and Aldara confesses to the letter, the affair, and her Moorish royal heritage. Juana considers a grave punishment for the infidel traitor and comments that if she were a man, she would challenge Aldara to a duel. Aldara unsheathes a knife and starts to attack Juana. The queen calls out for help, and the knife falls to the ground. When the court enters, Aldara claims that the queen tried to kill her and that Juana is insane. The Almirante tries to intervene and warn the queen that they are trying to depict her as a madwoman. Felipe enters and declares that the queen's insanity has worsened. Juana is shocked, but then starts to believe that she suffers from mental illness—after all, both the doctors and the court say that she is mad, so perhaps it is true. Juana becomes increasingly relieved when she "realizes" that all of the deceptions originated from her madness, and she looks to the court to confirm it.



Filiberto and Felipe Complete the Coup Filiberto declares that the queen is officially mad, and Felipe confirms the "sad truth." The king claims that he hid the truth to protect the kingdom, but now it is time to act. Everyone leaves except Filiberto. Felipe asks him whether the Almirante was convinced, and Filiberto replies that at the very least, the loyal Castilians will doubt the queen's sanity. As they discuss the next steps, Filiberto switches Aldara's letter with a new one. He then suggests that Felipe lock up Juana and bar the doors in order to emphasize her inability to lead. Felipe feels guilty and tells Filiberto that he feels sick. The king asks for a doctor and suspects that one of his drinks is to blame. Filiberto agrees but reminds him that he must be present and dominant when they announce their takeover in court. He also reminds the king that he (Filiberto) must be named the high counselor in the new regime.

Felipe's Declaration There is a wide shot of the assembled court with Felipe in front. The scene begins with Felipe explaining the dire situation. The Almirante interrupts the speech and accuses the king of an illegal coup. He goes on to give a speech in which he warns against "foreigners" usurping the Castilian throne. Moreover, the Almirante demands that the king prove Juana's madness. Some officials yell out that the queen is not mad. Filiberto starts to debate the Almirante, but the Castilian warns that there are enough dissenters to start a civil war and oust the king.



Álvar Tries to Restore the Queen Álvar insists on seeing Juana in order to get her to appear at court. Elvira tries to send him away so that the queen can rest, but the captain persists. Álvar begs the queen to fight back and save Castile, and he promises that several vassals will support her. Juana replies that Felipe deserves the power as her husband and she has given up fighting for her own royal rights. Álvar warns her that if she is dethroned, Felipe will likely marry one of his mistresses. Juana becomes agitated, then she sees the letter and realizes that she has proof of the intrigue. The captain follows her to court.

Juana Appears at Court Filiberto declares Felipe the new king and names his territory. Juana walks in as Filiberto continues his list of titles and lands. She interrupts Filiberto's speech and names him as a traitor; she cites his medallion as proof of his true loyalties. The queen proceeds to accuse Don Manuel and Villena of treachery, and she even reveals that Villena's family poisoned former kings in order to get into court. Juana denounces everyone who helped to frame her or assisted in the coup. She then declares that she has proof of Felipe's indiscretions and gaslighting. She hands the letter to the Almirante and commands that he read it in every territory. Filiberto, knowing that he switched letters, demands that the Almirante read it aloud immediately. Upon unfurling the scroll, the Almirante and the court see that it is a blank parchment. All of the officials chant for Felipe as the new king.



Filiberto Secures His Position and Duels with Álvar After Juana leaves disgraced, Filiberto asks Felipe to sign several declarations, including Filiberto's new position as high counselor. Felipe does so but begins to shake violently. Filiberto takes the papers elsewhere in the middle of the night but is intercepted by Álvar, who is waiting in the shadows. The captain accuses him of framing the queen and vows to avenge Castile. Filiberto tries to bribe him and tells him not to get involved with state matters. When Álvar refuses to take the bribe, the two unsheathe their swords and start dueling. Aldara appears and watches intently from a staircase. She takes out her dagger and throws it at Filiberto, which kills him immediately.



Aldara and Álvar Forge an Interfaith Friendship Álvar thanks Aldara for saving his life, but warns her that God does not like murder. Aldara retorts that she has another god and a different moral compass. She also tells Álvar that she understands he will always love the queen and not her. Álvar replies that he will always think of the most beautiful Moorish princess who allowed him to live yet another day. Aldara says that she will also think of him when she returns to her African homeland. The captain asks about her vengeance, and she assures him that she has given up on any further intrigue.



Felipe Asks for Forgiveness Juana embraces Felipe as he dies. He reminds her of their romantic trysts and realizes that he could have been happy with her—especially given her deep love of him. He asks for her forgiveness, and Juana gives it. The action goes back to the old Álvar's narration, in which he explains that Felipe caught a chill and died at God's hand. He further explains that Felipe's death united Castile.



Felipe Dies and Juana Goes Mad There is a fade to a funeral procession at the court and Juana praying at Felipe's death bed. Juana begs for her own death, but Felipe reminds her that she must raise and protect Carlos and their other children. With his last breath, Felipe asks the captain to protect the Castilian throne. Juana refuses to leave his body and insists that he has fallen asleep. There is another fade to a funeral procession across the plains, with Álvar's face appearing as if floating in the sky. He explains that Juana became insane from grief and continued talking with Felipe as if he were sleeping, but at least this insanity was the "Madness of Love." The final shot is that of Juana standing over Felipe's coffin in the middle of the Castilian plains.



CHARACTER ANALYSIS

JUANA LA LOCA

Juana is a young, beautiful, and jubilant queen who slowly goes insane. As a duchess, Juana is described as happy and generous. Later, she falls deeply in love with Felipe, which causes her to become passionately jealous and incites her eventual descent into madness.

Jealous Juana constantly fixates on Felipe's affairs—in particular, his obsession with Aldara. She uses court spies to follow him and tries to trap him on multiple occasions. She even rides to Toledo and dresses up as the mysterious woman of the inn in order to confront Felipe. Her emotional breakdowns usually occur after she learns of a new infidelity.

Generous Juana is generous and benevolent to her subordinates—both as a duchess and later as a queen. She gives her ladies in waiting court jewels and facilitates beneficial marriages with noblemen. She also praises and promotes Álvaro on several occasions.

Insane Although Juana does not suffer from a true mental illness until after Felipe's death, her obsessive tendencies do hasten her descent into madness. Because she places her relationship with Felipe over the affairs of state, Juana's actions seem compulsive and crazy. When she reads the letter from Aldara, Juana hears music that no one plays, then she proceeds to interrogate her ladies in waiting in a frenzy. Her ultimate insanity occurs at the end of the film when she insists that the dead king is asleep.

FELIPE (EL HERMOSO)

Felipe is the young, handsome duke from Flanders. When he marries Juana, he becomes the king of Castile. Felipe is selfish and hedonistic, but he finds some redemption on his deathbed when he repents.

Selfish Felipe consistently shirks his duties as king and as a husband, and he puts his own needs ahead of everyone else's (including Castile). Because he wants freedom to party and seduce women, he agrees to participate in Filiberto's plots. He abandons Juana either to go on hunts or to visit Aldara, both of which he knows incite her jealousy.

Hedonistic Felipe ignores the duties of the state to indulge in his various vices. He travels to Toledo to seduce Aldara and drink. When he stays in Castile, he either hunts on the grounds or plays tennis and gets drunk with his advisors.

Repentant At the very end of his life, Felipe realizes that he could have been happy with Juana. He begs for her forgiveness for his infidelities. In his very last breath, he admits that the slander ruined Juana's life, and he tells the queen that she should tell their son the truth about his political (if not romantic) deceit.

CAPTAIN ÁLVAR DE ESTÚÑIGA

The captain is a handsome hero who has defeated Italian forces and defended Castile bravely. Along with being a loyal subject, Álvaro is in love with the queen and refuses to toy with Aldara's affections. His loyalty towards Juana is mirrored in his devotion to Castile. His high morals make him the most virtuous character in the film.

Loyal Álvaro serves the state faithfully, whether he is acting in combat or at court. He intervenes several times to protect the queen and Castile, and he is the one character who is able to convince the queen to fight back against the Flemish coup. Even though his love for Juana is unrequited, Álvaro remains her steadfast guard and does not attempt to seduce other women. In addition, it is the captain who reveals the truth to Carlos and guides the viewer via a reliable narration.

Virtuous Álvaro has a strict moral compass and is willing to sacrifice his own safety for the queen and the good of the state. He risks his life to defend the queen at the inn, and he challenges Filiberto to a duel. Rather than use Aldara, the captain tells her the truth and offers his friendship.

THEES

SOCIETY

National Identity The period in which the film takes place (1490-1520, roughly) is a crucial moment in the trajectory of the Spanish nation-state and empire. Juana's parents, Fernando and Isabel, had united Castile and Aragón through their marriage. Their power led to funding Columbus's journey to the Americas. Juana and Felipe's son, Carlos V, would oversee multiple other expeditions to the New World and the largest amount of territory. Therefore, Juana's time as queen becomes emblematic of Castilian culture and dominance of the western world, whereas Felipe represents a "foreign" threat to Castilian power. Ironically, Carlos becomes the most powerful Hapsburg ruler of Spain. This turning point for the Spanish nation-state also acts as an allegory for Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), as he always asserted that Castilian culture and central Spain constituted the true Spanish essence. Like Juana, Franco felt as though he was under attack by peripheral Spanish territories and the condemnation of other post-World War II nations.

Illustrative Moment: the Almirante Warns the Court Against "Foreign" Interlopers

The Almirante interrupts Felipe's coronation speech and accuses the king of an illegal coup. He goes on to give his own speech in which he warns against "foreigners" usurping the Castilian throne. Moreover, the Almirante demands that the king prove Juana's madness. Some officials yell out that the queen is not mad. Filiberto starts to debate the Almirante, but the Castilian warns that there are enough dissenters to start a civil war and oust the king. This scene serves to assert that Spain was always centered around Castile despite the unions with Aragon and Burgundy (and the potential Moorish threat from the south). The filmmakers suggest that Castile remains the heart of Spain even during the twentieth century and that Spanish culture must remain "purely" Castilian. The Almirante's threat of civil war may also allude to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) in which the Nationalists (led by Franco) defeated the leftist Republicans.



JUSTICE

Forgiveness Versus Revenge Although Juana exhibits obsessive behavior, she never seeks revenge on Felipe or the members at court who deceived her. She freely forgives Felipe on his deathbed despite the fact that he ruined her life. As Carlos listens to the captain's version of events, he could easily have sought revenge on Filiberto and the surviving traitors, but he opts to unite the kingdom instead. Conversely, Aldara is obsessed with revenge to the point that she wishes to assassinate the queen. Aldara refuses gold in favor of a chance to avenge her father's disgrace. Ultimately, Aldara realizes that the target of her rage does not deserve punishment, nor should she scorn Álvaro for not loving her. Despite the injustice of the Flemish domination of Spain, all of the characters acknowledge that the Spanish empire is flourishing under Hapsburg rule (see **National Identity** above). There is also an acknowledgement that the Moorish and Jewish subjects of Spain (who suffered from military invasion, expulsion, or forced conversion in this period) should assimilate into the Castilian nation-state and forgive the usurping of their lands and rights.

Illustrative Moment: Aldara Vows to Forgive

After the duel at the end of the film, Aldara tells Álvaro that she understands he will always love the queen and not her. Álvaro replies that he will always think of the most beautiful Moorish princess who allowed him to live yet another day. Aldara says that she will also think of him when she returns to her African homeland. The captain asks about her vengeance, and she assures him that she has given up on any further intrigue. Aldara's remarkable transformation from vengeful seductress to noble princess exemplifies the power of forgiveness to cleanse both the soul and state. In addition, Aldara is returning to her homeland and giving up on the cultural/ethnic mixing with Álvaro (which aligns with Franco's racist and xenophobic propaganda early in his dictatorship).



POLITICS

Intrigue Much of the conflict in the film is driven by Filiberto's attempts to stage a coup and infiltrate the Spanish court. On the political level, Filiberto bribes and threatens the noblemen at court in order to secure their support. He continually advises Felipe and manipulates him with rhetoric about freedom from the marriage. Filiberto knows that the breakdown of the marriage will facilitate his takeover, so he plants seeds of discord. In addition, he convinces the doctors to "treat" Juana's illness and isolate her from both company and counsel. All of these machinations are very effective and work to upend the court. When the Castilians rally at Felipe's coronation, Filiberto plants the blank letter in order to discredit Juana. In this sense, Filiberto exemplifies a truly evil villain up to the point of his death. Aldara also engages in intrigue: she incites jealousy and resentment at court, and she is the one who writes the letter that incites the queen's mental breakdown. Despite their more virtuous inclinations, the Castilians also engage in spying and alliances in order to oust Felipe and reinstate Juana, although, tragically, Filiberto's machinations are much more effective.

Illustrative Moment: Filiberto Discredits Juana at the Coronation

At the moment of Felipe's coronation, Juana denounces everyone who helped to frame her or assisted in the coup. She then declares that she has proof of Felipe's indiscretions and gaslighting. She hands the letter to the Almirante and commands that he read it in every territory. Filiberto, knowing that he switched letters, demands that the Almirante read it aloud immediately. Upon unfurling the scroll, the Almirante and the court see that it is a blank parchment. All of the officials chant for Felipe as the new king. In this climactic moment, the viewer thinks that Juana will be able to reverse the coup and renew her position as a strong, sane queen. Filiberto's treachery wins out, however, by using both Aldara's real letter to manipulate the queen and the fake letter to manipulate the court.



RELATIONSHIP

Unrequited Love and Erotic Triangles All of the characters suffer from unrequited love: Juana loves Felipe, Felipe loves Aldara, Aldara loves the captain, and the captain loves Juana. The unrequited nature of the main characters' passions leads to political corruption, as Filiberto uses Aldara's passions to break up the royal marriage and complete the Flemish takeover. The "purest" form of unrequited love comes from the Castilians—Juana and Álvaro—who are both willing to sacrifice themselves and forgive the ones who trample on them. Conversely, Felipe disregards everyone else's feelings and remains obsessed with pursuing the exotic Aldara. She, in turn, remains obsessed with pursuing Álvaro against his will. These more dubious passions underscore both the Flemish and Moorish wildness and hot-bloodedness, as well as their immoral character. Often the point of the triangle (the object of desire) has two options for a romantic partner—an appropriate or virtuous mate, or an ill-advised object of lust. It is only through death that Felipe realizes that he should have remained faithful to Juana, whom he loved all along. Through love and passion, Orduña underscores the "mixed" heritage of Spain during its ascendance and the Francoist assertion that Castile is the real Spain.

Illustrative Moment: Juana Tricks Felipe at the Inn

Juana arrives at the inn in the middle of the night. Aldara listens intently to the conversation from the shadows. When they hear the galloping of Felipe's horse, Juana offers Pérez gold coins to stay quiet. She stands in the corner and covers her head with a white veil. Felipe sees a figure in white and thinks it is Aldara. The queen turns around and confronts Felipe, who tries to claim that he is still having political meetings at the inn. The queen condemns his behavior, and Felipe retorts that her love and madness have consumed her. In this moment, all of the lovers converge at the inn in order to pursue the object of their respective desires. Juana even tries to become Aldara in her desperation to win Felipe's love, but the ruse only strengthens the king's attempts to seduce the maiden at the inn. Rather than disrupting immoral desire, Juana's arrival only inflames everyone's passions.



PYSCHOLOGY

Madness Like Hamlet, Juana and the other characters do not fully understand to what extent (or even whether) she is insane. For the majority of the film, Juana's madness is constructed via Filiberto's rhetoric and the doctor's prescription of poisonous medication. The queen begins to doubt herself based on the gaslighting of those around her, which indicates that her madness is a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the other hand, Juana does show signs of madness earlier in the film, as when she hears the Flemish ballad in her head. She also displays compulsive behavior in her efforts to spy on Felipe. It could be argued that Juana is not mad until she watches Felipe die—in this moment, she experiences a psychotic break. Later, when Carlos returns to Castile as an adult, he witnesses his mother's insanity first-hand—she no longer knows what year it is or that her son is the ruling king. In any case, it is the machinations of Filiberto and Felipe's selfishness that are mostly directly responsible for Juana's insanity. As a young woman, Juana remains the rightful queen of Castile and the mother of the Spanish Empire. In this interpretation of history, Juana was robbed both of her sanity just as Castile was robbed of its destiny as a European powerhouse of the sixteenth century.

Illustrative Moment: Juana Denies that the King Has Died

There is a fade to a funeral procession at the court and Juana praying at Felipe's death bed. With his last breath, Felipe asks the captain to protect the Castilian throne. Juana refuses to leave his body and insists that he has fallen asleep. There is another fade to a funeral procession across the plains, with Álvaro's face appearing as if floating in the sky. He explains that Juana became insane from grief and continued talking with Felipe as if he were sleeping, but at least this insanity was the "Madness of Love." The implication of Álvaro's narration was that there were two madnesses: 1) the one fabricated by the traitors at court (who slandered the queen); 2) the true madness brought on by the trauma of losing one's true love. The latter, as the film's title suggests, was an insanity which the queen could never escape.



FLAWS

Obsession (including Jealousy) Nearly all of the characters are motivated by their obsessions, which leads to their ultimate downfall. Juana is obsessed with catching Felipe in the act and reforming him, but her jealous behavior only provides "evidence" for her supposed insanity. Later, her obsessive love for Felipe constitutes her ultimate descent into true madness. Moreover, the queen's obsessions prevent her from running the kingdom. Despite her virtue overall, Juana's jealousy and obsession become the catalyst for her downfall. Until their respective epiphanies, Felipe and Aldara's obsession with the "wrong" lover also provides Filiberto with the tools to delegitimize the Castilian throne. Had they both accepted that their love was unrequited, the Castilian lords may have been able to restore Juana to the throne. Filberto's lust for power secures his place at court but also results in tragedy.

Illustrative Moment: Aldara and Felipe Indulge in Their Illicit Desires

In the queen's chambers, Juana offers Aldara (as Beatriz) pearl earrings, which she says will complement the lady's "dark skin." Aldara accepts the gift and leaves the room as Felipe enters. They exchange a charged look. Outside, Álvaro confronts Aldara and threatens to expose her as an imposter. Aldara also threatens to reveal the captain's secrets, and she reminds him that the truth will only make Juana more jealous--and crazy. The royal couple emerges, and Juana acts as matchmaker when she sees how "Beatriz" looks at Álvaro. Felipe asks Beatriz to play music in the corner while Juana and Álvaro play chess by the window. Felipe whispers to Aldara that he wants to commit the queen and keep her as his mistress. Aldara replies that Don Álvaro has professed his love for her and that the king should find a way to send him away. Felipe vows to get rid of his competition. This scene of jealousy and manipulation constitutes a crucial moment in the trajectory of the film, as all of the characters remain fixated on their own selfish desires rather than the good of the state. Their obsessions create further tensions at court and provide Filiberto with more means of delegitimizing Juana as queen.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When (and how) does Juana become mad? Would she have remained sane if she had won back the throne?
2. Did Felipe really love Juana?
3. How does Orduña use flashbacks to create suspense?
4. What are some of the visual symbols that help to tell the story?
5. How does Orduña use panoramic and aerial shots throughout the film?
6. How is the political history of western Europe in the sixteenth century relevant for Franco's dictatorship in mid-twentieth century Spain?