Luis Alfaro: Borders, Impulses, and Beliefs

In this presentation, I will analyze the thymotic impulses (Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time*) in two plays by Luis Alfaro: *Mojada* (based on *Medea* by Euripides) and *Oedipus, el Rey* (based on *Oedipus, the King* by Sophocles). I will study the use of affects and emotions to illustrate their crucial role within the structure of a play, their direct connection with tragedy’s nature, and how they generate dramatic action. As part of the thymotic impulses, I will consider linguistic, geographical, and cultural boundaries to understand gender construction, in-betweenness, and social control. Alfaro represents and considers alternative ways of believing. He exposes the traditional tragic concept and the classical tragedy plot to a marginal context. I will also consider the differences and connections between Greek myth and the Chicano culture, the Hispanic context, and the contemporary conflicts in Alfaro’s plays.

During my analysis, I will refer to other plays about the same mythological characters to make a comparison of the use of myth in contemporary Latin American and US Latino literary productions. Among those plays, I will mention *Tebas Land* (2012) by Sergio Blanco (Uruguay) and *Señora de la Pinta* (2012) by Law Chavez (New Mexico), two pieces in which gender roles and language boundaries are essential. They both have in common with Alfaro’s Oedipus the context of prison as a place of control of desire and emotions. In the case of Medea, I will connect Alfaro’s version with *Medea sueña Corinto* (2008), a play by Abelardo Estorino, and *Un bello sino* (2010) by Yerandy Fleites. It will reflect how controlling women’s bodies, knowledge, and space becomes crucial to understanding Medea’s liberation and actions in past and present versions of the myth. With this study, I will recontextualize and update the connection between tragedy and myth in today’s world.