



Módulo 7

7.1.2 Freedom in the work of Federico García Lorca

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[Transcription vídeo 7.1.2]

The entire oeuvre of García Lorca is devoted to freedom, to man's thirst, man's need for freedom. And in that sense he was echoing the times. The 1920s were characterized by the impact of the Soviet revolution and a people in arms, who, according to Eisenstein in 'Battleship Potemkin', rose up against the tyranny of the Tsar. The 1920s were also marked by the arrival in Spain of Sigmund Freud's 'The Interpretation of Dreams' and psychoanalysis in general. A new vision of the psyche that would convert man's experience into the locus of a battle between creativity versus power, its abuses, and the tyranny of rules.

I think one of the most contemporary aspects of García Lorca's poetry is that it constitutes a paean to freedom. We can discern this even in his very earliest writings, from his youth, such as in 'Maleficio de la Mariposa', a work that met with questionable success but that already showed a longing, a quest for freedom.

In later works, both for theatre and in his poetry, García Lorca would express that need for freedom through the words of female protagonists such as Mariana Pineda. Mariana is arrested for embroidering a rebel flag, and, from prison, she says to Clavela: "I am a prisoner, Clavela, my death begins now". So García Lorca, through the yearning expressed by his protagonists, shows us the importance of that longing for freedom experienced by human beings, of that need to find a place, a space that offers greater freedom of movement and thought.

Poeta en Nueva York' is also a paean to freedom, and 'Oda a Walt Whitman' has for many years been interpreted (by both the Spanish and the Americans who have been inspired by the work) as an anthem to sexual freedom. García Lorca also calls for political freedom throughout his entire oeuvre. Both in 'Poeta en Nueva York' and in 'La Casa de Bernarda Alba', which is often interpreted as an emblem of the extent to which a fierce political system was able to strangle the life out of people and condemn their fate.

Bernarda represents the rod of domination and Adela the need to stand up to authority, not only maternal authority, but also all the rules that govern a person's behaviour. In short, what Lorca's literature expresses (in a highly innovative way) is the need—the mission—of literature to represent freedom for man, the liberating force of literature, both in the theatre and in poetry. "All theatre stems from confined dampness," Lorca tells us in 'El Público', and this causes us to reflect on the liberating force that is theatre, and on the power man enjoys—thanks to theatre and poetry—to raise his voice against all forms of oppression.

Un MOOC
sobre

Federico García Lorca



Many have spoken of Lorca as the poet who sang in protest against social oppression, the oppression of the negroes in 'Harlem'. The King of Harlem, with his janitor's uniform, is the emblem of man's capacity to rise above the social condition in which others would like to see him trapped. That, and no other, is the power of Lorca's poetry.



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