

SUBJECT:	HISTÒRIA DEL TEATRE ANGLÈS
Code:	28461
Credits:	6
Semester:	1st
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The overall purpose of this course will be to explore aspects of the history of English drama by focussing on one of its major genres, namely, tragedy. Though it will consider essential concepts such as ‘mimesis’, ‘hamartia’ or ‘catharsis’, the course will not seek to produce a theoretical discussion of the notion of ‘tragedy’. Rather, it will attempt to describe and contextualize an evolving practice by concentrating on what can be regarded as the two most spectacular moments in the English history of this dramatic mode: the Elizabethan-Jacobean period and the early decades of the twentieth century. The examination of four outstanding plays—two Renaissance and two modern—will allow students to get a sense of the rich variety of the genre and gain an understanding of the complex ways in which drama, literature, culture, and society interact.

SYLLABUS

These are the four plays with which we shall be concerned:

Renaissance tragedy

- William Shakespeare’s *Othello*
- John Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*

Twentieth-century tragedy

- John M. Synge’s *Riders to the Sea*
- T.S. Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral*

ASSESSMENT

The practical dimension of the course will require students to take an active part in class. Group discussion will be normal practice and students will be requested to enact a scene of their choice from one of the plays. They may also have to offer a presentation on some relevant topic. All students will have to write an essay and sit a final exam. Percentages will be as follows:

Class participation and group work: 20%

Essay: 30%

Final exam: 50%

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary Texts

In the case of the Renaissance tragedies, annotated scholarly editions with full critical apparatus are indispensable. Students are advised to read the plays in the following editions:

W. Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by Michael Neill, Oxford Shakespeare, Oxford Paperbacks, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-19-953587-3.

J. Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. by John Russell Brown, Revels Student Editions, Manchester UP, 1997. ISBN: 0719043573.

J.M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World and Other Plays*, ed. by Ann Saddlemyer, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford Paperbacks, 1998. ISBN: 0192834487.

T.S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*, Faber and Faber, 1976. ISBN: 057108611X.

2. Secondary Texts

On the Notion of Tragedy

Aristotle, *Poetics*, Penguin Books, 1996.

Bradley, A.C., *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Penguin Books, 1991.

Eagleton, T., *Sweet Violence. The Idea of the Tragic*, Blackwell, 2003.

Girard, R., *Violence and the Sacred*, Continuum, 2005.

Leech, C., *Tragedy, The Critical Idiom*, Routledge, 1969.

Nietzsche, F., *The Birth of Tragedy*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, CUP, 2007.

Poole, Adrian, *Tragedy. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford UP, 2005.

On the Plays

Auden, W.H., *The Dyer's Hand*, Vintage, 1989.

Eisaman Maus, Katherine, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance*, Chicago UP, 1995.

Evans, G. L., *The Language of Modern Drama*, Dent, 1977.

Everett, B., *Young Hamlet. Essays on Shakespeare's Tragedies*, Clarendon Press, 1989.

Innes, C., *Modern British Drama*, Cambridge UP, 2002.

Lever, J. W., *The Tragedy of State. A Study of Jacobean Drama*, Routledge, 1987.

Wells, Stanley (ed.), *Shakespeare: A Bibliographical Guide*, Clarendon Press, 1990.