

Comparative Literature: Literary Traditions

Code: 42316
ECTS Credits: 10

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313178 Comparative Literature: Literary and Cultural Studies	OT	0	2

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)

Teachers

Jordi Cerdà Subirachs
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External teachers

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Prerequisites

Prerequisites:

To be familiar with the analysis of western literary texts prior to 1850 and with basic theoretical and historical-literary categories (periods, genres, themes, motifs, etc.).

To be able to take on the task of reading a significant amount of texts weekly (about 30 pages on a daily basis).

Objectives and Contextualisation

Organized around texts ranging from the Middle Ages to Modernity, this course focuses on long-term literary phenomena and in the manner in which certain literary modes (genres, themes, motifs) articulate in time, in a constant dialectic between continuity and discontinuity. The goal is to demonstrate some of the theoretical and comparative tools for the analysis of works prior to Modernity, without losing sight of the contemporary discourses from which these texts are interrogated and explained, while also considering the institutional maneuvers that guarantee their survival. Finally, the course aims to provide reflection on the history, nature, value and meaning of what we call "Western literary tradition", always in close relation to the study in detail of specific genres and texts, as well as its updating and rewriting over the centuries.

Competences

- Analyse how literary tradition has been built up and the literary and cultural processes that have played a decisive role in it.
- Analyse the historical processes of theory of literature and comparative literature, basing the analysis on paradigm shifts.
- Apply the different theoretical and generic models to text analysis and interpretation.
- Evaluate current applications of comparative literature based on the historical processes it has followed.
- Examine the main theoretical currents in history of the theory of literature.
- Interpret, in accordance with the principal analysis methodologies, the thematic and symbolic contents of the work in terms of its rhetorical and pragmatic strategies.
- Make creative, original contributions to the comparativist study of literary and cultural texts.
- Organise, plan and manage projects.
- Present research findings to experts and non-experts.
- Reason critically based on analysis and synthesis.
- Work in an interdisciplinary team in different contexts.

Learning Outcomes

1. "Identify transformations to epistemic models that besiege notions like ""tradition"", ""canon"", ""classical literature"", ""medieval literature"", or ""European literature"", among others."
2. Analyse the concepts of tradition and canon, from different perspectives.
3. Apply the methods of contemporary comparativism to the study of Western literary tradition.
4. Apply the principles and methods of current comparative approaches to the literary tradition previous to 1750.
5. Apply the principles and methods of recent theoretical currents like feminist theories, post-structuralist theories, queer theories, etc.
6. Distinguish the modelling of literary texts by the different canonical genres and describe how these conventional formulae have conditioned actual thematic content in each period.
7. Establish the characteristic modes of signification by analysing the semantic codes of particular literary genres or sub-genres, through examples from tradition.
8. Link literary manifestations to other kinds of cultural codes (mainly art and music but also philosophy), and to the other cultural practices peculiar to the period or genre in question.
9. Organise, plan and manage projects.
10. Present research findings to experts and non-experts.
11. Reason critically based on analysis and synthesis.
12. Work in an interdisciplinary team in different contexts.

Content

The course 2019-2020 will be devoted to reflect and exemplify a specific theoretical notion: that of rewriting and counter-writing, understood as the dialectical and critical reformulation of the Western canon by other artistic manifestations (literary or not).

The phenomenon of rewriting and counter-writing is a field of study that is especially sensitive to the comparative approach, understood not as an analysis of strict sources or correspondences, nor as mere juxtaposition, but as an interrogation of the successive discourses -including those of the creators- from which literary tradition is constructed, described and interrogated.

Syllabus

1. The problem of tradition: classic, canon, European literary identity, world literature
2. Rewriting and counterwriting the Western literary tradition
3. Dante as the axis of medieval literature
4. Art and nature, civilization and barbarism: *The Tempest*, by Shakespeare, and its posterity
5. *Don Quixote* as the house of fiction: from Kafka and Unamuno to Paul Auster and Javier Marías, without forgetting Milan Kundera or Carlos Fuentes

6. Dantesque rewritings in modern and postmodern times

7. The narrative challenges of modernity and postmodernity: Gustave Flaubert and Julian Barnes, rewriting and creation

Methodology

Magisterial classes: the professor will present the fundamental concepts in order to provide the students with the basic interpretative and theoretical mechanisms.

Seminary-type classes: students will discuss, under the active direction of the professor, a series of readings (literary and non-literary).

Tutorials: advised by the tutor, the students will structure his hypothesis of the various assignments and, if appropriate, this will lead to further research.

Literary works: central to each session is the reflection on one or a series of literary works, that the students must have read and prepared before class, based on the professor's instructions.

Theoretical texts: the course includes some compulsory reading of theoretical articles, that the students will need to analyse and contrast.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Magisterial classes	15	0.6	1, 2, 4, 6
Seminary-type classes	25	1	6, 7, 11
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	5	0.2	9
Type: Autonomous			
Reading of literary works	90	3.6	7, 11
Reading theoretical texts	35	1.4	2, 3, 11

Assessment

Students must hand in from 2 to 4 short essays (2.000-3.000 words) based on the compulsory reading of literary works. These essays must be closely linked to the seminars and magisterial classes, so that they are integrated into the evolution of the course.

At the beginning of the course the student will be notified about all the deadlines.

Class participation is voluntary, but there will occasions in which students (individually or in small groups) must prepare brief oral presentations that present the issue of the day and give rise to collective debate.

On evaluation:

It is compulsory to attend at least to 80% of all lectures and seminars. Exceptions will only be accepted if these are fully justified, but will have a negative effect on the final grade.

It is compulsory to attend all the sessions having thoroughly prepared in advance the (literary or theoretical) readings of the day. Otherwise, the professor can penalize the student.

In order to be evaluated, all course assignments must be completed. All the work has the same percentage value. It is possible to deliver one assignment passed the deadline, always upon request, and due to justified circumstances.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Active participation in class & brief oral presentations in small groups.	10%	5	0.2	2, 10, 6, 11, 8, 12
Written assignments	90%	75	3	1, 3, 5, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11

Bibliography

LITERARY TRADITION, CANON, CLASSIC, & EUROPEAN LITERATURE

Auerbach, Erich, *Mimesis. La representación de la realidad en la literatura occidental*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 1983.

Bauman, Zigmunt, *Europa: una aventura inacabada*, Losada, Buenos Aires, 2006.

Coetzee, John M., "'¿Qué es un clásico?', una conferencia", *Costas extrañas. Ensayos, 1986-1999*, Debate, Barcelona, 2005, págs. 11-29.

Curtius, Ernst Robert, *Literatura europea y Edad Media latina*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 2004, 2 vols.

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Fontana, Josep, *Europa ante el espejo*, Crítica, Barcelona, 1994.

Fumaroli, Marc, Yves Bonnefoy, Harald Weinrich, Michel. Zink (dirs.), *Identité littéraire de l'Europe*, Presses Universitaires de France, París, 2000.

Gnisci, Armando, *Noialtri europei. Saggi di letteratura comparata su identità e luoghi d'Europa*, Bulzoni, Roma, 1994.

Guillén, Claudio, "Europa: ciencia e inocencia", *Múltiples moradas. Ensayo de literatura comparada*, Tusquets, Barcelona, 1998, págs. 368-426.

Moretti, Franco, "La letteratura europea", *Storia d'Europa*, P. Anderson et. al. (dirs.), Einaudi, Turín, 1993, vol. I, págs. 835-866.

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Pavel, Thomas, *Representar la existencia. El pensamiento de la novela*, Crítica, Barcelona, 2005.

Steiner, George, *La idea de Europa*, Siruela, Madrid, 2005.

Sinopoli, Franca, *Il mito della letteratura europea*, Meltemi, Roma, 1999.

RE-WRITING & COUNTER-WRITING

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, *The Empire writes back: theory and practice in post-colonial literatures*, Routledge, Londres i Nova York, 1989.

Bachmann-Medick, Doris, *Cultural Turns: New Orientations in the Study of Culture*, De Gruyter, Berlín, 2016.

Bloom, Harold, *La angustia de las influencias*, Monte Ávila, Caracas, 1991.

Fallon, Ann-Marie, *Global Crusoe. Comparative Literature, Postcolonial Theory and Transnational Aesthetics*, Routledge, Londres i Nova York, 2016.

Genette, Gérard, *Palimpsestos: la literatura en segundo grado*, Taurus, Madrid, 1989.

Kristeva, Julia, *Séméiotikè. Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, París, Éditions du Seuil, 1969.

Said, Edward, *Cultura e imperialismo*, Anagrama, Barcelona, 2001.