

Western Literary Tradition I

Code: 100253
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500245 English Studies	OT	3	0
2500245 English Studies	OT	4	0
2500248 Spanish Language and Literature	OT	3	0
2500248 Spanish Language and Literature	OT	4	0
2501801 Catalan and Spanish	OT	3	0
2501801 Catalan and Spanish	OT	4	0
2501902 English and Catalan	OT	3	0
2501902 English and Catalan	OT	4	0
2501907 English and Classics	OT	3	0
2501907 English and Classics	OT	4	0
2501910 English and Spanish	OT	3	0
2501910 English and Spanish	OT	4	0
2501913 English and French	OT	3	0
2501913 English and French	OT	4	0
2504012 Spanish and Chinese Studies: Language, Literature and Culture	OT	4	0

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

Contact

Name: María José Vega Ramos
Email: MariaJose.Vega@uab.cat

Use of Languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

External teachers

Dr. Alejandro Cantarero Salazar
Dra. Marcela Londoño Rendón

Prerequisites

By obtaining the minimum of credits *in basic training subjects*, students have demonstrated to have acquired the basic competences and they will be able to express themselves orally and in writing. For this reason, any expression error that may be committed will lead to a score decrease in the final grade.

Activities, practical sessions and papers submitted in the course must be original and under no circumstances will the total or partial plagiarism of third-party materials published on any medium be admitted. It is also expected that students know the general rules of submission of an academic work. However, students could apply the specific rules that the teacher of the subject may indicate to them, if they deem it necessary.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The subject intends:

- 1) to familiarize students with the notion of literary tradition and with the historical, geographical, cultural and ideological criteria that define the western, ancient and modern tradition (until 1800);
- 2) familiarize the students with the theoretical models and the practices that constitute the literary tradition;
- 3) familiarize students with a selection of works, authors and genres of some of the most representative traditions of ancient, medieval and modern Western literature through case studies;
- 4) improve the analytical and critical capacity of the students.

Competences

English Studies

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

Spanish Language and Literature

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the literary works and works of reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

Catalan and Spanish

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

English and Catalan

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

English and Classics

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

English and Spanish

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.

English and French

- Analysing the formal, thematic, cultural and historical characteristics of the works of literary creation and reflection on literature of different languages and countries.
- Demonstrating they know the basic theoretical foundations of the main methods and currents of literature and criticism.
- Identifying the specific concepts and methods of each of the fields of comparatism.
- Interpreting and assessing literary texts and explaining the process results.
- Relating literary works from different countries, languages, periods and authors according to genres, topics, modalities and forms.

Spanish and Chinese Studies: Language, Literature and Culture

- Comment on literary texts in Spanish and in Chinese, situate them historically and relate them to the literary trends to which they belong.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse literary texts using the different concepts and methods of comparative literature.
2. Analysing literary texts using different concepts and methods of comparative literature.
3. Explain the basic characteristics of comparative literary texts.
4. Explaining the basic characteristics of comparative literary texts.
5. Identify and explain the basic structures of literary works.
6. Identify and explaining the basic structures of literary works.
7. Identify the different literary elements and their insertion in different texts and discursive styles.
8. Identifying and explaining the basic structures of literary works.
9. Identifying various literary elements and inserting them into different texts and discursive styles.
10. Solve problems related to the methods of studying different literatures.
11. Solve problems related to the study of different literatures.
12. Solving problems related to the study of different literatures.

Content

Contents

February 12th

1. Introduction: the study of the literary tradition

The impact of the printing press.

The first part of the session aims to present the contents of the course and how it will be evaluated. The second part is devoted, firstly, to a brief theoretical and methodological introduction to the concept of Western literary tradition from the studies of Ernst Robert Curtius to the present day. Secondly, to the effects of printing on European culture, on modes of reading, writing and dissemination of writing, as well as on Western literary tradition.

19 and 26 February

2. Censorship of the printed text.

(Marcela Londoño)

Studies on censorship have experienced a great development in recent years, especially in the field of Hispanism. From 1544 to the middle of the 19th century, the main instrument for censoring books and printed matter was the index of banned or expurgated books. These sessions aim to familiarize the student with the indexes of prohibited books, with their functioning and to evaluate their relevance to the cultural history of Europe. Presenting the procedures of prohibition and expurgation, and analyzing the systematic crossing out, mutilation or elimination of texts. Based on the particular case of a corpus of prayers in the vulgar language, forbidden in the Spanish and Portuguese indexes of the 16th century, we will establish a general overview of the censorship phenomenon. This will allow us to assess the impact of this means of control not only on the reading, reception and rewriting of the literary tradition, but also on the monitoring of religiosity and mentalities, in the era of the printing press.

March 5 and 12

3. The (re)discovery and invention of the world

From Christopher Columbus to the chroniclers of the Indies

The arrival of Christopher Columbus on the American continent at the end of the 15th century marks the beginning of the period of the great European expeditions to conquer and colonise the overseas territories. The discovery of the New World was in fact the European projection of an imaginary inherited from Antiquity and the Middle Ages, which is incorporated into the history and cultural heritage of the "discoverers". America is invented to adapt to the panorama of the known, while it becomes the ideal of Europe, the space in which the desires and nostalgia of Europeans are projected, where the origins and lost times are recovered, the promised land. The examination of some of the texts that related the experiences of the first years in American territory will allow us to understand the place of the literary tradition in the description and assimilation of this new reality.

Required readings:

- Fragments of Christopher Columbus' texts.
- Fragments of the texts of the Chronicles of the Indies.
- Fragments of the texts of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca.

March 19th

4. The consolatory tradition and the world's contempt: topics and texts.

(Marcela Londoño)

The classic rhetoric of consolation acquires its identity in texts such as Cicero's *Tusculanas* or the *Consolations* of Seneca the Younger. This tradition continues a wide and nourishing journey during the Middle Ages and Early Modernity in such widespread texts as *The Consolation of the Philosopher* of Boethius.

Whether in the form of an epistle, a dialogue or a treatise, in consolation the Greco-Roman Stoicism that advocated a permanent awareness of death and rigorous behaviour as a method for facing the adversities of life merges with the Christian conception of the "beyond" as a refuge for the sorrows of the world. Likewise, the theme of contempt for the world, set forth in texts such as Innocent III's *De Contemptu mundi* or Francis Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, is interwoven with the consolatory tradition, enriching and transforming it. Through the exercise of reason and asceticism, consolatoria proposes a path of spiritual edification and pedagogy to endure human suffering: sickness, exile, poverty and, above all, death. In this block we will focus on the analysis of the themes and topics of this genre, referencing them in the texts that had greater diffusion and repercussion in the Western tradition.

Required readings:

- Consolation to his mother Helvia de Seneca.
- Book II of the Consolation of the Philosophy of Boethius.

9 April

Partial examination (blocks 1-4)

16 and 23 April

5. The representation of hell.

From the Homeric *nékýia* to the catabases of the Aeneid and the Divine Comedy.

In order to meet with the soothsayer Tiresias, Ulysses summons the souls of the dead in the XIth canto of the *Odyssey*. In this first example of the description of Hades, the hero does not descend to the infernos, but rather "the underworld ascends"; that is to say, its inhabitants, the dead, appear to Odysseus when evoked (*nékýia*). In connection with the Homeric story, in book VI of the Aeneid, situated right in the middle of the narrative, the Trojan hero descends into hell. This Virgilian description is pregnant with historical and political meaning. At this point in the epic, Aeneas becomes fully aware of the individual future that the fairies predict for him but, more importantly, he discovers the high collective mission that the inhabitants of Olympus have reserved for their descendants, that is, the foundation of Rome, the city that will conquer the entire world. This hellish descent, whose geography is meticulously described by Virgil, is one of the landmarks of Western literature and will have a very long line of descendants. At the beginning of the 14th century, Dante, a great admirer of the Mantuan poet, imagined an infernal journey in which, in Virgil's hands, Christian and classical traditions were twinned. During these two sessions, we will start from the description of the Homeric infernos, to study Virgil's and Dante's descriptions, we will trace the tradition to which they belong and we will ponder the importance of the Homeric *nékýia* and, especially, of the two catabases within the ensemble of the Aeneid and the Divine Comedy.

Compulsory readings:

- Dyssey, Song XI.
- Virgil's Aeneid, Book VI.
- Divine Comedy by Dante, (extracts).

30 April and 7 May

6. Erasmus and European humanism.

The multifaceted intellectual activity of Erasmus, which encompasses a great deal of knowledge - philology, pedagogy, theology and politics, among others - will serve as a starting point for the study of European humanism. Specifically, within the very extensive work of Erasmus of Rotterdam, we will focus our attention on two of the most successful: the *Stultitia laus* and its *Adagia*. Through the *Praise of Madness* we will study the most satirical, ironic and paradoxical side of the humanist. In this text, Erasmus takes up the work of one of his favourite authors of antiquity, Luciano de Samósata, to pass through his critical eye to all strata of society: theologians, men of letters, leguleys, kings or peasants. In a second part of this block, we will analyze the *Adagia* that had such an influence on European humanism. This collection of maxims and sentences, collected from Greco-Latin antiquity, serves as an excuse for Erasmus to argue about some of the great themes of theology and politics of the period. Specifically, we will be interested in analyzing how the action of censorship

modified the inclusion of one or another maxim throughout the different editions of this collection.

Required readings:

- Stultitia laus.
- Adagia (selection).

14 and 21 May

7. Dialogue and Utopia in the European Renaissance.

Between the 15th and 16th centuries, dialogue was a great success throughout Western Europe. The proliferation of this genre, which has its roots in Greco-Latin literature, first took place in Quattrocento Italy, where humanists felt a predilection for dialogue to discuss a wide variety of subjects in a Latin setting with a classical flavour. Shortly afterwards, the dialogue will spread to the rest of Europe not only in Latin but also in the vernacular and in increasing proportion. In the Spain of the 16th century, especially during the reign of Charles V, this protean genre, which admits everything from erudite discussion to burlesque narration, will flourish with great force. Therefore, we will dedicate a first part to establish the literary characteristics of the genre and to study its argumentative essence. We will also delve into the reasons for its success during the Renaissance and will trace the two main lines of transmission of this literary genre from the classical period: on the one hand, the Platonic-Aristotelian-Cycleronian model; on the other, the Lucian model. Both will be warmly welcomed in 16th century Spain and, as an example of this, we will analyse Fernán Pérez de Oliva's Dialogue of the Dignity of Man and Alfonso de Valdés' Dialogue of Mercury and Caron, excellent representatives of each of the two models. Finally, we will talk about the Utopia (1516) by Thomas More, a text that will initiate another emblematic genre of the European Renaissance: utopia. We will point out the literary sources of Moro's text and the typically Renaissance aspects that converge in this fascinating work whose most notorious sign of identity is ambiguity.

Required readings:

- Fernán Pérez de Oliva, Diálogo de la dignidad del hombre.
- Alfonso de Valdés, Dialogue of Mercury and Carón (fragments)
- Tomás Moro, Utopia.

May 28th

8. Invited lecture

June 4th

Partial examination (blocks 5-8)

Methodology

The course is divided into several units.

Each unit will last approximately two or three sessions. With the exception of the first one, a general introduction to the study of European literary tradition, each unit will study a major theme or genre of the Western literary and artistic tradition. Each block will count on a group of texts (or selection) of mandatory readings that the students must have read before attending the respective classes. The readings of each block will be analyzed by the teachers during the sessions in a generic framework that could allow the student to understand the particularity of a discourse or case within its tradition.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	80	3.2	2, 4, 9, 8, 6, 11, 12
Type: Supervised			
Presentations	30	1.2	2, 4, 9, 8, 6, 11, 12
Type: Autonomous			
Essay	40	1.6	2, 4, 9, 8, 6, 11, 12

Assessment

The aim is to carry out a global evaluation that allows to determine the students' skills at different levels (assimilation of the contents taught in class, written expression, argumentative capacity, etc.). The subject will be evaluated on the basis of exams, commentaries and practical sessions. The latter may consist of a brief writing, a text comment or a review.

1) Exams and commentary: a partial exam of the first part of the subject and a final exam of the second part is expected. The evaluation will include: a) a text commentary on some of the mandatory readings b) questions of synthesis and interpretation of the contents taught in class. The ability to respond clearly, orderly and adequately to the question asked will be valued.

2) Practical sessions (continuous evaluation): The type of practical activity (review / text comment / synthesis of academic articles) will be established by each teacher at the beginning of each block. In the correction of the practical activities will be evaluated the writing of the students both on a formal level (syntax, expression, vocabulary, etc.) and content (ideas, arguments, etc).

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exam 1-2 and Critical Essay 1-2	20% (exam 1), 15% (exam 2), 15 % (essay 1), 15% (essay 2)	0	0	2, 1, 4, 3, 9, 7, 8, 6, 5, 11, 12, 10
Short essay 1 (15%) and 2 (15%)	15% i 15%	0	0	2, 1, 4, 3, 9, 7, 8, 6, 5, 11, 12, 10

Bibliography

Anselmi, Gian Mario, *Mapas de literatura europea y mediterránea*, Barcelona, 2002.

Auerbach, Erich, *Mimesis: la representación de la realidad en la literatura occidental*, México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1942.

Curtius, E. R., *Literatura europea y Edad Media latina*, México, 1983.

Grafton, A., G. W. Most y S. Settis, *The Classical Tradition*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 2010.

Highet, G., *La tradición clásica*, México, 1949.

Lida de Malkiel, M. R., *La tradición clásica en España*, Barcelona, 1975.

Kallendorf, Craig W., *A Companion to the Classical Tradition*, Blackwell, 2007.

Panofsky, Erwin, *Estudios sobre iconología*, Madrid: Alianza, 1971.

Reynolds, Leighton D., y Nigel G. Wilson, *Copistas y filólogos*, Madrid, Gredos, 1995.

Warburg, Aby, *El Renacimiento del paganismo. Aportaciones a la historia cultural del Renacimiento europeo*, Madrid, Alianza, 1965.

Software

None