

MODERN & CONTEMPORARY HISPANIC CULTURES: MAPPING DISENCHANTMENT

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of this course is to provide students with the historical and cultural background and fundaments necessary for the study of Hispanic Cultures in the context of modernity. During the semester, we will study a good array of artifacts with the purpose of acquiring the knowledge of key socio-political events and cultural production that have taken place in the Iberian peninsula and Spanish America from the 18th to the 21st centuries. We will discuss cultural objects that may challenge for a variety of reasons the notions and implications of the idea(s) of *disenchantment*. This course will propose a review of the feeling of disenchantment from 18th century onwards, opening a twofold discussion. On the one hand, we will focus on how this very concept affects and has an effect on how people react and relate to the world around them; on the other, we will explore disenchantment as a construct that intertwines, waxing and waning, with cultural logic and practices.

Emphasis will be placed on close reading of primary sources —i.e. literary texts, newspaper articles, movies, music, and more— research of historical context, and critical analysis of secondary sources. By examining these cultural artifacts, we will delve into the interrogation of the politics and aesthetics surrounding touchstone events of the periods under study. This course will not construct a solid and cohesive narrative of events, but will constitute a wide-range consideration of cultural production to make us aware of its historical and constructed nature. Through the analysis of primary and secondary materials, you will be provided with the necessary skills to set up your own theoretical framework in order to understand how cultural history works within the Spanish state and to develop research projects on their manifestations. Class discussions will seek to situate the works studied within the political and cultural debates of our time.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand the interdependence between socio-political events and cultural production.
2. Identify and apply the concrete tools and methods that allow the study of culture.
3. Examine cultural artifacts and objects as ways of analyzing its political and aesthetic regimes.
4. Produce a critical methodology in order to develop research projects on the functioning of cultural dynamics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Active Participation & Preparation: It is mandatory that students are prepared for class every day and play an active role in the classroom.
- Completion of all assigned readings in time for class discussion. Please bring (digital or hard) copies of readings.
- Weekly written assignments.
- Class presentation.
- Research project.

CLASS SCHEDULE [14 WEEKS]

NB: Students should feel welcome to bring in their expertise and add at least one cultural object of their choice in any of the weeks (after Week 2).

Week 1_Welcome & Introductions.

Week 2_Chronology and Theoretical Overview

a) Hispanic history at a glance: architecture, sculpture and painting [selection of images].

b) Discussion of theoretical readings + collective mind map

Raymond Williams, "Dominante, residual y emergente" (1977)

Marina Garcés, "Humanidades en transición", *Nueva ilustración radical* (2017), pp. 59-75

Week 3_XVIII: Enlightenment

a) Social criticism in the form of a letter: who is reading?

J. Cadalso, *Cartas marruecas* (1793) [selections]

B. J. Feijoo, *Cartas eruditas y curiosas* (1742) [selections]

b) How to make an old text accessible to a contemporary reader: perpetrating philology

D. de Torres Villarroel, *Extracto de los Pronósticos del gran piscator de Salamanca desde el año 1725 hasta 1753...* Madrid, Imprenta de la viuda de Ibarra (1795)

Week 4_XIX: Revolutions & Exile

a) Spanish Revolution?

1812 Constitutional Text aka La Pepa [selections]

Simón Bolívar, *Carta de Jamaica* (Jamaica, 1815) [selections]

b) The world is crumbling

J. Blanco White, selected articles in *El Español* (London, 1811)

F. de Goya y Lucientes, *Pinturas negras* (1818)

Week 5_XIX: National Projects vs World Fairs

a) Renaixença, Eusko Abertzaletsuna, Rexurdimento...

V. Almirall, *Lo catalanisme* (1886) [selections]

S. Arana, “¿Qué somos?” (1893) [selections]

R. de Castro, *Ruinas* (1886) and *Cantares gallegos* (1863) [selections]

Painting selections: Valentín de Zubiarre, Santiago Rusiñol, Serafín Avendaño, Joaquín Sorolla

b) World Fair

D. Faustino Sarmiento, “Sesión inaugural” de la Exposición de Córdoba (1871) [selections]

J. Martí, “La exposición de París” (1889) [selections]

E. Pardo Bazán, “Al pie de la torre Eiffel” (1889) [selections]

Week 6_Midterm Peer Review Sessions [see below]

Week 7_XX: Art and Manifests

a) Avant-Garde all over the place

Tristán (Ramón Gómez de la Serna), “Proclama futurista a los españoles” *Prometeo*, 20 (1910)

The Storm that Swept Mexico (2011)

b) Women making history

Documentary *Las sinsombrero* (2015)

Twitter project [#misinsombrero](#): thank a (anonymous) woman on your life, why not?

Week 8_XX: The Rise of Fascism

a) Spain in our hearts

“La ponencia colectiva en el II Congreso de Escritores Antifascistas”, *II Congreso Internacional de Escritores Antifascistas* (Valencia, 1937)

Selection from Ramón Puyol’s posters (1936-1937)

Selected poems: Miguel Hernández’s “Vientos del pueblo me llevan” (1937) & Víctor Jara (1975), Gabriela Mistral’s “La libertad” (*Almácigo*, unpublished)

b) International Brigades: Posters of the Spanish Civil War

Visit to the Tamiment Library (NYC)

Week 9_XX: Dictatorships & Counter-Dictatorships

a) Spain After the War

C. Saura, *La caza* (1966)

1968 Protest Songs: “Asturies”, “L’Estaca”, “La mala reputación” + press coverage

b) The Southern Cone & Cuba

T. Gutiérrez Alea & J. C. Tabío, *Fresa y chocolate* (1993)
Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (1977)

Week 10_XX: Transitioning to Democracy

a) The violence of transitioning: same old, same old

A. Rodríguez, *La isla mínima* (2014)

b) Imagining possible worlds

J. Egea, “Noche canalla”

Martí, “Calma chicha”, *El Víbora* 46 (1983)

Camarón, *La leyenda del tiempo* (1979)

M. Benedetti, “Quiero creer que estoy volviendo”

Week 11_XX: Standardized Democracies?

a) Spain’s graves

A. Carracedo, R. Bahar, *El silencio de otros* (2019)

b) Memories of a recent past

E. Burgos, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (1983)

Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, Chile (2010)

Week 12_XXI: The 15M Movement and the Neoliberal Crisis

a) #spanishrevolution

Press coverage of the 15M Movement (2011) [selections]

R. Sorogoyen, *El reino* (2018)

b) Anti-austerity and Rights

El negocio del oro en Guatemala. Crónica de un conflicto anunciado (2010)

Pony Bravo, “El político neoliberal”, *De Palmas y Cacería* (2013)

Week 13_XXI: The 8M Movement and the Rise of Feminism

a) Breaking Taboos

Paula Bonet, *Roedores. Cuerpo de embarazo sin embrión* (2018) [selections]

Luna Miguel, *Los estómagos* (2015) [selections]

b) Sorority

Feminist manifest 8M Madrid (2018)

Performance “El violador eres tú” (various cities, 2019-2020)

Week 14_Paper Showcase and Collective Discussion

**Bibliography available on LMS.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Grade Breakdown:

- Attendance, active participation and class preparation: 20%
- Weekly posts: 20%
- Class presentation: 15%
- Midterm: 20%
- Final project: 25%

• **Active participation and class preparation: 20%**

The class is run on a student-centered environment, therefore it is your responsibility to do all readings and complete all assignments beforehand to engage in the discussions and activities. You are expected to intervene in class with meaningful, well-thought and critical contributions, as well as to interact respectfully with each other. At the beginning of the course, we will discuss a participation rubric and set up commonly shared ground rules for conversation in the classroom.

• **Weekly posts: 20%**

We have a blog in which each week the readings are discussed online before coming to class, as a way to prepare you for the class and as a way for me to check on your understanding of the texts. I will start discussion during the first few weeks as a model, and then you or a peer will be assigned to lead the conversation (see “Class presentation”). You are asked to follow a timeline when posting, so that both I and the rest of the class have enough time to read the responses; there is also a word limit (150-200 words) to enhance your efforts of synthesis. A rubric that details what I expect to find in your responses includes: specific reference to the primary sources, effort to avoid general digressions, and capacity to clearly prove a point.

• **Class presentation (“Professor for a Day”): 15%**

Each week (7-13) a student (or two, depending on the number of registered people) is in charge of the class. The chosen student will meet with me no later than one week before the class, and together we will prepare background details and materials. This student will be responsible for the class, and I will be available to help include the content and important points into each students’ presentation. The student in charge will draw on the weekly posts to lead the discussion. At the end of each presentation, students are given a very short survey to offer meaningful feedback to their peers. That survey focuses on what they would take for their future presentations and on what they would not. Even though this feedback does not affect the presenter’s grade, it helps students realize what went well and what could have been improved, especially when projecting themselves as future presenters. Also, you will be shared a rubric that details my expectations: adequate content, capacity to interact with others and to facilitate the discussion, and ease of transmission and conveyance of ideas.

• **Midterm rubric and check-in: 20% (week 6)**

The midterm assignment consists of a two-part peer review session devoted to crafting and thinking together about the final project. Although projects will be individual, the idea of the

midterm assignment is for you to collectively design a rubric to critically recognize what makes a good research project—so you know how to be successful on this piece of work. On the first day of the week, and working in small groups, you will prepare a set of questions that the project should cover satisfactorily. At the end of the class, we will all finalize the rubric and the final product will be shared online. On the second day, and after reorganizing the groups, students will review each other’s preliminary outlines for the final projects following the criteria you prepared. I will evaluate both the appropriateness of the feedback provided and the revisions made thereafter. Additionally, I will meet with each of you for a check-in in order to discuss your evolution throughout the semester and your research project.

• **Final project: 25% (week 14)**

The final project consists of an academic research essay. The topic must be original and should incorporate new primary sources as well as explore further secondary references (a list will be provided). This topic will be discussed with me, and you will make a final decision no later than week 6. At least twice during the semester, you will fill in a self-evaluation rubric provided so that I can monitor your progress. This project will be individual. The essays should not exceed 3000 words without advanced permission, and will include bibliography cited in MLA style.

INCLUSIVE POLICY

This class is led as a seminar and it aims at building collective knowledge. Interactions and exchanges among participants are, therefore, established on the basis of a respectful discussion. Everyone is expected to listen carefully and to engage with others’ ideas with well-grounded and critical arguments. Dissensus is encouraged as a way of developing a high sense of tolerance; particularly in a Humanities class, where critical thinking is paramount, dissensus should constitute a weapon for empowerment.

DISABILITY SUPPORT

NB: To be modified in accordance with Departmental and University Policies.

I am personally committed to foster an inclusive and supportive academic space. If you have special learning requirements or require an accommodation for a disability, please do let me know so that I can do my best to help you receive accommodation. If you are a student with a disability and have a DS-certified “Accommodation Letter” please contact me to confirm your accommodation needs.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON ABSENCES

NB: To be modified in accordance with Departmental and University Policies.

You are expected to attend all classes throughout the semester.

Excused absences are absences nonetheless and will NOT be added to other unexcused absences. An excused absence is an absence due to a religious holiday or one for which you can provide some form of written justification from a physician or dean. You should see it as a hedge against illness and other unforeseen circumstances that may make it impossible for you to attend class. Athletes need to keep in mind that absences due to games played away from Columbia are NOT excused absences. These students will need to bring a signed form from their coach with all projected absences.

If for some reason you can't attend class, you are still expected to be ready for the next day. You will find an explanation of what was done in class and what is the homework for the next session in the course LMS. **You are responsible for catching up on all the homework you missed and be prepared for the next class.** An absence should never be an excuse for not doing the work. If you think you will be absent for more than one day, **contact your professor.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

NB: To be modified in accordance with Departmental and University Policies.

The work you submit in this class is expected to be your own. If you submit work that has been copied from any published or unpublished source (including the Internet) without attribution, that has been prepared by someone other than you, or that in any way misrepresents somebody else's work as your own you will face disciplining by the university.