



Syllabus 2016
Latin-American Literature 1:
The author and his time:
The political and cultural commitment
Prof. Paula Amarilla, José Luis Inchauspe

Monday and Wednesday: 13:00 – 14:30
Total Load: 96 hours

Course Description

Literature, like other arts, lives at a precise moment in history, not in a parallel universe alone but within a gigantic macrocosm of texts and readings, many of which respond, or seem to respond, to what we can find in between its pages. Literature, like other arts, is not the product of a single phenomenon or a single event, but the mix of various sources, varied influences. Thus, the work of art is steeped in the political, social, linguistic changes –which, at the same time, are only ideological changes–, and new styles and movements generating, from this confluence, the culture of a country. We cannot observe the art of a country without regard these aspects, especially considering –as already mentioned Jean Paul Sastre in 1946 in its presentation of *Les Temps Modernes*- that the author, far from being relativistic, is an absolute and as such has no way to escape from his time as it is done for him as he's done for it. The writer has a situation at the time, every word and every silence affects his time too.

Thus, we believe the focus of our course is the relationship of the author and his time, not reading literature from now, but since yesterday, from the time of production, seeing in the speech present in a story a statement that cannot be separated from the period of production since it was born with it and in it. The start of this tour begins with the texts of the conquest, where Latin American history began to be written. It will reflect on how the dichotomy "civilization vs. barbarism" goes across our history and takes different names through different texts and periods. Then, our program will make a tour on the great political and social paths that occurred in Argentina since independence until the great political, economic and social crisis of 2001. In addition, Latin American social problems of the inclusion of the other and the other will be seen during classes, the ideological construction and culture and also the voice of the oppressed social and politically; all this, of course, without neglecting the fiction, so characteristic of our continent,



Objectives & Learning Outcomes

OBJETIVES:

1. That the student can understand the situation of writing under a social, political, historical and economic outlook at the time of production.
2. To recognize the use of speech as a mean and not an end in the formation of an ideology, plan, criticism or complaint.
3. To acquire tools not only critical but also creative thinking, it may become author in his time.
4. That students understand a little more about the overall Latin American history through culture and literary works.
5. To have an approach to the Latin American idiosyncrasy through some of his literary works, as well as an approach to the construction of the reader and the author.
6. That Students may be able to submit a final home test that reflects a conscious and deep reading axis as well an understanding of the foundational texts grounds.

Required Literature:

All the necessary literature is in two different formats:

1. The Compendium of selected texts that students can buy on arrival in Buenos Aires or download it in a digital format.
2. Compulsory reading books that can be purchased as a copy in Buenos Aires or the student may acquire prior beginning of the course.

The literature will be mentioned below by thematic units. All will have a mandatory nature.

CONTENT & COURSE CALENDAR:

This calendar may be subject to changes. The instructor will announce changes in class and distribute updated versions.

UNIT I:

THE WRITING OF A PURPOSE: CONSTRUCTING IDEOLOGIES.

1.a.- Literature in its entirety, beyond the story and the novel. Conception of the world and man, writing and power, nature and utilitarianism in Cortes, Hernan; confrontation and hyperbole in Diaz del Castillo, Bernal and De Las Casas, Bartolomé. The voice of the oppressed and their absence in the story of the conquerors. The construction of the self.

1.b.- The essay as a proclamation, complaint or revolutionary instrument in the separatists texts. J.J. Dessalines and Simon Bolivar; declamation of freedom and



called to the fight. The union as an ideological construction, Eurocentrism versus *criollismo*. Martí and "Our America".

1.c.- Barbarism in plain sight, denounces of yesterday and now. Political confrontations of the time, establishment and social disorder in Esteban Echeverría and Osvaldo Lamborghini.

Mandatory bibliography for this unit:

- CORTÉS, HERNÁN. "Letters or despatches to the emperor Charles V". (1520) (Selection)
CASAS, BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS. *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, (1552), (Selection)
DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO, BERNAL. *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, (1632) (Selection)
DESSALINES, JEAN-JACQUES, *Live free or die!*, (1804).
BOLÍVAR, SIMÓN, *Letter from Jamaica* (1815)
-----, Decree of War to the Death, (1813)
MARTÍ, JOSÉ, "Our America", (1891)
ESTEBAN ECHEVERRÍA, *The Slaughteryard*, (1871)
LAMBORGHINI, OSVALDO, "The Proletarian Boy" (1973)

UNIT II

THE SPEECH AND THE VOICE OF "THE OTHER"

1.a.- The feminism in Argentina. The voice of the woman, writing and being a woman. Women's empowerment against male battering in the arts. Building the voice of the women in poetry..

2.b.- Representation of homosexuality and Queer in Latin American literature in relation to the Camp and Kitsch aesthetics. The notion of Gender. The travesty of literary genres: Lemebel and Copi, beyond the closet and obscurantist vision. Breaking genres and models such as denunciation and ideological program.

2.c.- The gender issue. Homosexuality and muted speech, the muffled and transmuted voice against the oppression of the time. Transgression and configuration of gender, voice and other.

Mandatory bibliography for this unit:

- STORNI, ALFONSINA, Selected poems.
MISTRAL, GABRIELA, Selected poems.
PUIG, MANUEL, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. (1976)
LEMEBEL, PEDRO, *My Tender Matador: A Novel* (2001)
COPI, *Eva Perón* (1970)

UNIDAD III:

POLITICS AND LITERATURE IN ARGENTINA. FROM PERONISM TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS OF 2001.

3.a.- The political situation of Argentina: Peronism and the generation of '50. Peron and Evita, real and mythical figures. A charismatic government achievements, advances in women's rights. The figure of Evita and her relationship to power in Walsh, the icon of Evita as transvestite figure of authority and power in Copi.



3.b The literature and the Dictatorship in Argentina: the unspeakable, the muted. Literature and horror, dream and nightmare, perspective and hindsight in Martinez and Valenzuela.

3.c.- The causes of the crisis, motives and rupture of an exhausted system. The social and economic debt. The 90s policies: “uno a uno”. Social and political masks, economy and power in *Thursday night widows*.

Mandatory bibliography for this unit:

WALSH, RODOLFO, “That Woman”, (1963).

MARTÍNEZ, GUILLERMO, “Vast Hell”, (1989)

VALENZUELA, LUISA, *Strange things happen here*, (1975)

PIÑEIRO, CLAUDIA, *Thursday night widows*, (2005)

COPI, *Eva Perón* (1970)

UNIT IV

THE FANTASTIC LITERATURE: THE SHORT-STORY

4.a.- Sorting the reality and representation of it. The Only realistic selection process versus the multifaceted reality of fiction in Borges and Cortázar.

4.b.- Fictional genres in short stories. Metafiction as fantastic construction. Free interpretation and genres in Cortazar and Palacio.

4.c.- Visible fiction, hidden reality. The political notion, silence, ideas and imagination. ¿Continental or universal Literature? Construction of a literature and a way to read Borges; dream, surrealism, inspiration, science as basis in Quiroga.

Mandatory bibliography for this unit:

BORGES, JORGE LUIS, Cuentos, (Selección): “The Aleph” (1945), “The south” (1953), “The argentinian writer and the tradition” (1951)

CORTÁZAR, JULIO, Cuentos (Selección): “Letter to a young lady in Paris” (1951), “House taken over” (1946), “Continuity of the parks” (1964)

QUIROGA, HORACIO, Cuentos (selección): “The decapitated chicken” (1941), “the feather pillow” (1917)

PALACIO, PABLO, Cuentos (selección): “The short-story” (1927), “A man dead by kicks” (1927)

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS:

The course will include a compendium of complementary theoretical texts that allow students a critical approach to the issues that will be addressed during the course. Such compendium will be non-mandatory but it is recommended, both for its critical and informational value and for the functionality it represents in the clearest understanding of lectures and participation in seminars.

This schedule may be subject to change. The teachers will announced in class the respective changes if any. The texts are given for each week under the name contained in the mandatory compendium required for the course. Those books that can –and have to– be purchased separately have the corresponding ISBN. Also, students may, if desired, acquire all the necessary material in Buenos Aires.



Note: The texts listed below are included in the compendium except those whose ISBN is detailed. Such texts should be acquired by students either before his arrival to Buenos Aires or in Buenos Aires since they are not an integral part of the compendium.

WEEK 1: THE VOICE OF THE SELF. CONSTRUCTION OF POWER THROUGH RHETORIC DEVICES.

Texts:

Lecture:

HERNAN CORTES; Letters or despatches to the emperor Charles V.

Seminar:

FRIAR BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS; A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies.
BERNAL DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO; The True History of the Conquest of New Spain.

WEEK 2: REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AND THE IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION. THE RHETORIC AS AN INSTRUMENT OF ACTION AND PERSUASION.

Texts

Lecture:

JEAN JACQUES DESSALINES; Live free or die!
SIMÓN BOLIVAR; Letter from Jamaica.
SIMÓN BOLIVAR; Decree of War to the Death.

Seminar:

JOSÉ MARTÍ; Our America

WEEK 3: CIVILIZATION AND BARBARISM. THE LITERARY SPEECH AS A TOOL OF WORLD POLARIZATION.

Texts

Lecture:

ESTEBAN ECHEVERRÍA; The Slaughteryard (ISBN-10: 0007346735 / ISBN 13: 978-0007346738)

Seminar:

OSVALDO LAMBORGHINI; The Proletarian Boy,

WEEK 4: THE VOICE OF THE WOMEN THROUGH POETRY.



Texts

Lecture:

ALFONSINA STORNI; Selected Poems.

Seminar:

GABRIELA MISTRAL; Selected Poems.

WEEK 5: ESSAY PREPARATION WEEK

WEEK 6: ESSAY PREPARATION WEEK

WEEK 7: FREE WEEK (ESSAY EMAIL DELIVERY)

WEEK 8: POLITICS AND LITERATURE. THE FANTASY OF THE POWER AND RHETORIC.

Texts

Lecture:

RODOLFO WALSH; That woman.

Seminar:

COPI, Eva Perón.

WEEK 9: LITERATURE AND SOCIAL REALITY. CONSTRUCTION OF A FICTIONAL NARRATIVE.

Texts

Lecture:

LUISA VALENZUELA; Strange things happen here.

Seminar:

GUILLERMO MARTÍNEZ; Vast hell.

WEEK 10: LITERATURE AND SOCIETY. THE VOICE OF THE OTHER THROUGH CAMP.



Texts

Lecture:

MANUEL PUIG, Kiss of the Spider Woman. (ISBN-10: 0679724494 / ISBN-13: 978-0679724490)

Seminar:

PEDRO LEMEBEL, My Tender Matador: A Novel (novel). (ISBN-10: 0802141870 / ISBN-13: 978-0802141873)

WEEK 11: EVENTS THAT CHANGES A COUNTRY AND SOCIETY. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN LITERATURE.

Texts

Lecture:

No hay texto obligatorio para teóricos.

Seminar:

CLAUDIA PIÑEYRO, Thursday Night Widows. (ISBN-10: 1904738419 / ISBN-13: 978-1904738411)

WEEK 12: THE FANTASTIC. THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SHORT-STORY.

Texts

Lecture:

JULIO CORTÁZAR; Selected Stories.

Seminar:

PABLO PALACIO; Selected Stories.

WEEK 13: THE FANTASTIC. THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SHORT-STORY.

Texts

Lecture:

JORGE LUIS BORGES; Selected Stories.

Seminar:

HORACIO QUIROGA; Selected Stories.

WEEK 14: OPEN TABLE WITH A GUEST LECTURER.



Evaluation & Grading

A) Examinations, Evaluation Criteria and Requirements:

As part of the learning activity of the literature course, students have to write 2 assignments; (i) essay (the “Short Paper”) and (ii) a term paper (the “Term Paper Exam”)

The Short Paper will be assessed by your seminar leader and must qualify as “approved”. If it fails, you will be given the possibility to improve your paper within the eight or ninth week of the course.

It is expected that students read the assigned texts for each class and discuss them with their fellow classmates. Student participation throughout the course is very important and highly encouraged. In addition to studying the curriculum through lectures and individual reading, students are also expected to participate in seminars (the “Seminars”).

The term paper will be also assessed by your teachers during the first weeks of classes.

ESSAY (SHORT PAPER EXAM):

The short paper will consist of a critical text, without requiring quotation, to be presented during the sixth week of class. Approval is exclusive to make the final written test condition. The essay topic will be given to students two weeks in advance. The requirements are as follows:

1. It consist of individual work
2. 1000 words ($\pm 10\%$), English language.
- 3.- Delivered in a text file in Word format or PDF (sent by internet).

Grade mode: Approved or Fail

FINAL HOME EXAM (TERM PAPER EXAM):

El examen domiciliario deberá dar cuenta de una adquisición de mirada crítica del alumno sobre un tema específico a elección entre diferentes temas. Los temas a elegir serán entregados por los docentes con debida antelación. El alumno deberá entregar dicho examen a través de un archivo PDF (enviado por internet). Las características del mismo son:

- 1.- Trabajo individual de lectura y reflexión.
- 2.- 2400 palabras ($\pm 10\%$), en idioma Inglés.
- 3.- Formato monográfico: introducción, desarrollo y conclusión. Citas a final del documento. Bibliografía utilizada o consultada para el análisis (autor, obra, edición, lugar, año)



4.- Times new Roman o Courier, cuerpo 12, interlineado doble espacio, 3cm de margen superior, derecho e izquierdo.

The Term paper examination must account the acquisition of a critical point of view on a specific topic to choose between different possibilities. The topics that students can choose will be delivered by teachers with due advance. The student must submit the examination through a PDF file (sent by internet). Its characteristics are:

1. Individual work of reading and reflection.
2. 2400 words ($\pm 10\%$), in English.
3. Paper format: introduction, development and conclusion. Quotes in the end of the document. Bibliographical references used or consulted for analysis (author, work, edition, place, year)
4. Times New Roman or Courier, size 12, double-spaced line spacing, 3cm top, right and left margin.

Grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

40% Seminar participation.

60% Term Paper Exam.

B) Attendance Policy:

The university policy is that more than six absences (equivalent to nine hours) implies an automatic "F." In this class, 0.5 points will be deducted from your Attendance grade for every unexcused absence. Students are responsible for getting all the material and work handed out during a class they missed. Unexcused absence on a workshop day will result in the deduction of 0.5 points on the next essay due.

Missed Exams: "Make-up" exams are a privilege, one to be extended only to students who have missed an exam with prior arrangement (one week notice) with the instructor or due to extenuating circumstances.

Participation: A high weight is placed on participation as a learning experience. A student's grade will suffer due to actions which disrupt the group experience. For this reason **all cell phones must be turn silent before class begins**. If you have a unique circumstance for which you must leave the phone with full sound –and not only vibration–, consent from the instructor is required beforehand. Students will have a significant point total deducted from their class grade if they do not adhere to this regulation.



C) Grading Scale

Description	Percentage
10 (A) Excellent	100-95
9 (A-) Very Good	94-89
8 (B) Good	88-83
7 (B-) Above Average	82-77
6 (C) Average	76-71
5 (C) Below Average	70-65
4 (D) Lowest Passing Grade	64-60
F Failure	59-0
W Officially withdrawn	Academic Advisor's approval
I Incomplete	Only with Academic Advisor's approval

Plagiarism: An important objective of this course is to get students to learn how to write essays and critical texts. Students are expected to do their own written work. Plagiarism not only undermines this learning process but also represents a serious breach of College policy and of academic honesty.

Outside sources should always be referenced in the essay's bibliography. Plagiarized work will receive an automatic F. If you have any doubts on what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask the Instructor.