

## Fall 2019 PhD Course Descriptions

### **SPAN-GA 2966.001 - Discourses of Medievalism in Spanish Literature**

Instructor: Sarah Pearce

Day/Time: Wednesday, 4 – 6pm

Description: In recent years, the idea of “the three cultures” of medieval Spain —Christianity, Islam and Judaism— has become a popular ideal and model for modernity among a wide variety of thinkers and writers; and both utopian and dystopian visions of Sefarad and Andalus (the Hebrew and Arabic terms that refer to the Iberian Peninsula) permeate discourses on politics, religion and even education. One of the important ways in which this trope has become useful and popular is through modern medievalism, that is, the interest in and appropriation of elements of medieval literature and culture in contemporary art, literature, and general discourse. This course will offer a two-pronged approach to the presence of medieval Spain in modern and contemporary writing in Spain, Latin America, and the Middle East: First, it will offer an introduction to the medieval texts and sources that are the raw material for reuse in later periods. Second, it will aim to interrogate the discourses of medievalism in light of a range of critical theoretical approaches.

### **SPAN-GA 2965.001 - Seminar in Theory: Culture and Subjectivity**

Instructor: Licia Fiol-Matta

Day/Time: Tuesday, 4 – 6pm

Description: In this seminar we will interrogate the notion of the subject in cultural production, focusing on the relationship between subjectivity, agency, and knowledge, with a particular emphasis on post-Marxist and psychoanalytic theories in counterpoint with contemporary critiques of the subject’s limitations. The aim of the seminar is to develop an understanding of theoretical argument from a variety of disciplinary (and sub-disciplinary) perspectives. Structured via a series of keywords (Williams), we will engage with thinkers such as Benjamin, Marx, Derrida, Foucault, Butler, Anzaldúa, Deleuze, Moten, Puar, and others, touching upon selected works from the Iberian, Lusophone, Latin American and Latinx traditions.

### **SPAN-GA 2967.001 - Regionalism reloaded: re-reading nature and culture in 20th and 21st-century literature and film**

Instructor: Jens Andermann

Day/Time: Friday, 12 – 2pm

Description: Until recently, literary filmic regionalism in Latin America has been discussed, first and foremost, in terms of aesthetic and political responses to the challenge of (peripheral) modernity as experienced in the cosmopolitan urban centers: from Ángel Rama's influential thesis on transculturation to more recent work by Carlos Alonso and Jennifer French, the question of regionalism was being framed as one of the cultural geopolitics of Latin American societies. Somewhat different was the reception of regionalist themes and discourses in film, where the focus on the rural interior has been associated, first, with issues of genre and the (truncated) configuration of film industries, and subsequently with an emergent third-worldist aesthetics of liberation. What, however, if we re-read Latin American modernity's consistent interest in, and preoccupation with, marginalized regions from the vantage point of the extractive modes of production that has underwritten this same modernity to this day? In fact, twentieth-century Latin American intellectuals from the provincial interior, often combining in their professional and intellectual lives different forms of expertise ranging from the humanities to medicine and the natural sciences, developed a prescient and idiosyncratic way of reflecting on the extractive frontiers advancing from the region's political and economic centers. In their attempt to reflect the social and cultural impact of deforestation, soil erosion and drought, regionalist writers and intellectuals also came up with a prescient and hybrid mode of writing and thinking, the urgency of which we are only beginning to understand today: a natural history of the Anthropocene. It is in this way, too, that the previous waves of regionalism from the 1930s-40s and from the 1960s-70s are being provocatively re-read today by a literary and cinematic 'neo-regionalism' that brings to the fore elements of these earlier works which had remained underreflected in previous critical assessments. Thus, the course argues for a re-appraisal of Latin American regionalism as an indispensable reference for a political ecology in our time. Texts and films studied include work by Horacio Quiroga, Graciliano Ramos, Sara Gallardo, and by Miguel Littín, Albertina Carri, Gabriel Mascaro and Daniela Seggiaro, among others.

### **SPAN-GA 2968.001 - Performance and Politics**

Instructor: Diana Taylor

Day/Time: Monday, 3:30 – 6:15pm

Description: TBA

### **SPAN-GA 2977.001 - Poetics of Materiality in the Early Modern Hispanic World**

Instructor: Víctor Sierra-Matute

Day/Time: Thursday 4 – 6pm, Room 223

Description: Este seminario explorará las relaciones entre texto, materialidad e historia de los sentidos en el llamado “mundo hispánico” de la Alta Modernidad (ca. 1500-1700). En particular, el propósito de nuestro diálogo será cuestionar la centralidad que se le ha dado a la palabra impresa para así poder repensar los mapas de transmisión textual en la época. A lo largo del seminario, consideraremos diversos medios materiales de transmisión y preservación de la palabra —memoria, sonido, objetos y cuerpos—, así como diferentes prácticas sociales de producción y circulación del conocimiento —academias, performances, justas, intercambios materiales— y su relación con los cinco sentidos corporales.

El corpus a evaluar está formado por textos de autorxs coloniales y peninsulares como Úrsula de Jesús, Elenx de Céspedes, María de Zayas, Cervantes, Sor Juana, Lope de Vega o Diego Mexía de Fernangil. Entre los textos teóricos que guiarán nuestra aproximación se encuentran los trabajos de Sara Ahmed, Susan Stewart, Jean-Luc Nancy, Jean Baudrillard, Roger Chartier y Diana Taylor, entre otrxs.

### **SPAN-GA 2977.002 - Advanced Relations of Production: The Art Museum as a Social Factory**

Instructor: Sara Nadal-Melsió

Day/Time: 6-8, Room 405

Description: In 2012, the artist and essayist Hito Steyerl posed the question: Is a museum a factory? This will be our cue to begin a theoretical exploration on the nature of artistic labor and its speculative possibilities. As a site where production and exhibition overlap, the contemporary art museum has transformed artistic labor and questioned its status as both art and labor. The heteronomous conditions of production of the artwork, its constitutional morphism and capacity to move between disciplines and form of labors—material/immaterial, visible/invisible, creative/productive—can articulate a critique of the division between art and praxis or the dualities of manual-visible and intellectual-invisible labor at the core of the value form.

Thus, the contemporary artwork needs to be understood as a social object with an agonistic relationship to the conditions of its production, a product of specific and contested conditions of possibility where formal and content-based commitments converge. Reading Adorno against the grain, aesthetic autonomy can be reformulated as a site of resistance (rather than aestheticism) that is embedded in the relation between the multiple forms of labor involved in artistic production. Paradoxically, one could argue that aesthetic autonomy already belongs in the agonistic space of labor as its condition of possibility. While the reflection over precariousness as art’s condition of possibility is a fairly recent phenomenon (as artworkers continue to grow in the midst of an exploitative economy), it has already situated the definition of artistic labor at the center of discussions over the nature of aesthetic processes of production. In a way, pauperized art workers may be uniquely positioned to address art’s social alienation under capitalism.

Topics will include: labor, collaboration, sovereignty, public space, avant-gardism, contemporaneity, aesthetic autonomy, community, agonism, situatedness. Selected texts, films,

and installations by: Hito Steyerl, Antonio Negri, Maurizio Lazzarato, Harun Farocki, Boris Groys, Judith Butler, Theodor Adorno, Giorgio Agamben, Peter Osborne, John Roberts, Claire Bishop, Marina Garcés, Roberto Esposito, Enrique Vila-Matas, Santiago Serra, Camel Collective, Tania Bruguera, Joaquim Jordà, Oliver Laxe, Albert Serra. Participants are encouraged to bring materials connected to the course's topics and relevant to their research to be included in seminar discussions. Class will be conducted in English. Final papers may be written either in English or Spanish.

### **SPAN-GA 2978.001 - Reading the Global South: Uneven Development, Critical Geography, and Anti-Imperial Thinking\***

(\*This course originates in Comparative Literature; limited seats for Spanish and Portuguese students.)

Instructor: Ana Dopico

Day/Time: Tuesday, 12 – 2pm

Description: TBA

### **SPAN-GA 2978.002 - Latin@ Poetry and the Translingual Americas\***

(\*This course originates in English; limited seats for Spanish and Portuguese students.)

Instructor: T. Urayoán Noel

Day/Time: Tuesday, 2 – 5pm

Description: This seminar explores twentieth- and twenty-first-century U.S. Latin@ poetry from a hemispheric perspective and beyond the monolingual state. As Latin@ Studies has evolved, it has challenged U.S.-contained ethnic geographies, attuned to trans-American and global flows, from above and below. Latin@ poets have long been at the forefront of (or prefigured) these shifts, often through translingual explorations that challenge existing vocabularies of identity and belonging. The translingual in this sense has formal similarities with the poetic experiments of the avant-gardes (Kellman, 2000), but is perhaps in many ways closer to the sociolinguistic “translanguaging” theorized by García and Wei (2013) as “the expanded complex practices of speakers who could not avoid having had languages inscribed in their body, and yet live between different societal and semiotic contexts as they interact with a complex array of speakers” (18). As we read work from a range of poets, we will consider the potential but also the limitations of existing critical terms, such as translingual writing, translanguaging, “interlingual” texts (Bruce-Novoa), “bilingual aesthetics” (Doris Sommer), Spanglish and Caló, and we will expand the range of the translingual to encompass experimental translation (including auto-translation and appropriative work) as a poetic and political strategy. We will also explore poetics and critical approaches that complicate a Spanglish-English binary, including ones informed by Black and indigenous perspectives. Poets we will read may include Salomón

de la Selva, William Carlos Williams, Julia de Burgos, Alurista, Juan Felipe Herrera, Francisco X. Alarcón. Tato Laviera, Adrian Castro, Jennifer Tamayo, and Raquel Salas Rivera. Critical texts may include work by Harris Feinsod, Marissa K. López, Juan Flores, Emily Apter, Jonathan Mayhew, and Lawrence Venuti.