

Module Title: Literature, Dictatorship and Cultural Memory in the Hispanic World

Module Code: HSP5043

Credit Value: 15

Level: 5

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

In the 20th century, Spain and Latin America have been united by the common experience of dictatorship. The aim of this module is to present Spanish and Latin American writers within their sociopolitical contexts and within the so called dictator novels. We will explore how these authors write and represent dictatorships and how they reexamine the role of literature within those repressive contexts. We will also examine issues of exile, history, cultural memory, gender and national identity.

Module Aims

By the end of this module students will be able to:

Knowledge

- have developed a critical awareness of the impact of socio-political events and dictatorships in Latin American and Spanish literature in the course of the 20th century.
- know the historical setting informing the literature studied in this module.
- define concepts (e.g. in relation to dictatorship, exile, gender, national identity, cultural memory) and literary contexts.
- show a comprehensive understanding of literary analysis.
- identify different literary periods in Latin America and Spain (especially in relation to social changes and waves of exile and how these have affected the literary output of Spain and Latin America).
- describe arguments and material on recent Latin American and Spanish literary Studies.
- understand key processes of change within Latin American and Spanish history.
- have improved their reading ability in Spanish and increased their vocabulary through exposure to multiple varieties of Spanish

Comprehension

- discuss issues of power, dictatorship, gender, subjectivity and marginality and explain ethical dilemmas where they arise.
- review a range of research methods (both theoretical and analytical) and conclude

- on the ideological implications that affect the evaluation of the role of literature within repressive contexts and what are the implications of reading and writing about past dictatorships today.
- summarize the main trends in relatively recent Latin American and Spanish literature

Application

- interpret knowledge in the discipline.
- apply such knowledge in the discipline in the analysis of selected texts.
- examine critically theories and literary practices.
- demonstrate a conceptual understanding that enables you to evaluate critically current research in the area.
- classify authors and texts in relation to the literary history of the country.

Analysis

- critically appraise qualitative evidence underpinning public debate related to Latin American and Spanish studies.
- differentiate between opinions and facts, 'absolute' and 'relative' truths and question issues of 'truth' and 'reality' particularly concerning ideologically charged analyses.
- debate effectively and constructively in relation to the analysis of texts studied in this module and beyond.
- compare and contrast the literary production of writers.
- distinguish between theoretical debates across contexts.
- analyse recent literature and examine literary responses to social changes and examine the relationship between power, dictatorship and writing.

Synthesis

- plan, organize and undertake research relevant to level 5 of study in order to produce high quality essays.
- propose new readings based on current scholarship.
- organize concepts and present convincing arguments, articulating both orally (in classroom discussions) and in writing (2 essays) in a concise manner.
- specify and develop a corpus of textual and critical material to challenge established analytical practices.
- construct own synthesis (recognizing the advantages and disadvantages of the methodology used) drawing on various critical approaches attempting to reconstruct the past and analyse the present, in relation to class, race, gender, culture, religious belief, politics and literary history.

Evaluation

- judge the effectiveness of literature in challenging state practices and assess to what extent writers have been able to challenge the state.

- select textual materials to support and challenge established scholarship.
- evaluate critically the literary production of Latin America and Spain and how authoritarian political forms have conditioned certain kinds of aesthetic practices.
- argue effectively and write confidently in a professional manner.
- defend your opinions based on factual information and textual analysis, paying
- particular attention to the role of textual interpretation.

Aims:

- To explore, compare and contrast representations of social and political conflict and dictatorships in a range of 20th-century Latin American and Spanish literary texts.
- To consider representations of dictatorships in literature critically with regards to and in the context of different dictatorships, social inequality, gender issues, exile, urban violence and historical and cultural memory.
- To consider writing as a site of resistance within authoritarian regimes.
- To provide students with a basic understanding of the historical background and trajectory of some of the most relevant socio-political events in Latin America and Spain.

Graduate Attributes (Students will acquire transferable skills):

- Students will be able to examine critically what they read and assess the reliability of different sources of information, keeping in mind a global perspective.
- Students will be able to use information for evidence-based analysis and will develop expertise in linking ideology, literary production and public opinion.
- Students will be able to adapt previous understanding to new settings.
- Students will be able to work independently and in collaboration with others, particularly when assessing textual and critical sources. This will be part of professional development and lifelong learning.
- Students will develop coherent and solid arguments and communicate them effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Students will be able to acquire expertise in gathering and processing of new information.
- Students will be able to respond appropriately to constructive criticism in order to improve written work.