

**Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory**  
**SLC202 #75459**  
**Fall 2015**  
**TTh 10:30-11:45 am, SS234**  
**Guest lectures: Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

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Office Hours: TTh 8-10 & by appt.

### **Course Description and Goals**

The goal of SLC 202 – **Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory** – is to train SILC majors in understanding the central role of languages and literatures in the production of textual, visual, and spatial cultures. How does culture help to explain human behavior and history? How does culture unite a wide range of human activities including religious beliefs, economic activity, language, artistic production, and political activity? Through exploration of primary works of literature, film, visual art and performance and foundational theoretical texts from various eras and countries, students learn to critically question the motivations, aesthetics, transmission, and reception of a variety of works and media. Key questions in debates about culture center on identity, subjectivity, and agency. Does culture determine human behavior or does our behavior determine culture? Although all readings are in English, students will be encouraged to bring in and address primary and secondary sources in the languages that they are studying.

### **Course Goals/Learning Outcomes**

1. to develop writing, critical thinking, and discussion skills of literature, film, art, and other cultural artifacts
2. to learn new strategies for reading, thinking about, and analyzing a variety of cultural materials
3. to encourage students' application of theoretical materials to their own independent work with primary sources.

### **Course Texts** (additional course readings made available as electronic texts)

1. Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones* [1962] (Grove, 1994)
2. Sophocles, *Antigone* in *Sophocles I: Oedipus The King, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone (The Complete Greek Tragedies)* [5<sup>th</sup> century BC] translated by Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1955)
3. Venedikt Erofeev, *Moscow to the End of the Line* [1966] (Northwestern, 1980)
4. Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale* [1986] (Pantheon, 2011)
5. Keiji Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen* [1973-85] (Last Gasp, 2004)

### **Assignments**

1. Three **critical** response papers (500-750 words, about 2-3 pp. each) on questions and scenarios related to 1) textual culture, 2) visual culture, and 3) spatial culture that draw on the readings and discussions. These do not involve any external research. A rubric with specific grading criteria will be provided at least a week before the first due date. Due midnight on Sunday, Sept. 13, Oct. 4, and Nov. 15 as an email attachment to me; late assignments will not be accepted (30%; 10% each). The word limit encourages you to get to the point, and write precisely and concisely.
2. Two **theoretical** responses (250 word, about 1 page) to two of the six theoretical readings in the course, sent as an email attachment to me. The authors are listed in **bold** in syllabus. The

first response (due midnight on Sunday, Aug. 30) can be about Williams (8/25), Eco (8/25), or Ong (8/25), and the second (due midnight on Sunday, Oct. 18) about Benjamin (9/18), Schechner (9/27), or Cresswell (10/9).

- 1) Summarize by identifying key **points, sentences, and words**.
  - 2) Analyze what the theorist is arguing for.
  - 3) Analyze what the theorist is arguing against.
  - 4) What is the significance of argument for this course? For the work you are reading/watching with it?
3. Take-home midterm will be essay questions on theoretical and sociocultural materials in relation to the cultural artifacts from the course (primary texts, films, images, etc.). Due by 10 am, Tuesday Nov. 3 as an email attachment to me; late assignments will not be accepted (20%)
  4. Final project is a group project (4-5 students) that comprises a 1) critical presentation proposal, 2) PowerPoint presentation, and 3) individual meta-narratives that integrate a theoretical approach from the course into your project. Students research, outline, and create projects with students from other language/culture majors to work collaboratively on comparatively researching cultural artifacts and practices from the perspectives of the languages areas represented by each group member's respective major. Examples of past projects include war memorials, public transportation, parks, alcohol, death, clothing, and gangs. Each student completes a report of his or her group project and specific role in the project. Additional guidelines about the project will be provided as we approach the beginning for in-class project work (Week 12). Due (1) Nov. 15, (2) Nov. 24-Dec. 3, and (3) Dec. 6 as an email attachment to me; late assignments will not be accepted (30%, 10% each)
  5. Participation: please come to class prepared **with your book, articles, or online texts**, prepared to participate in reading and discussion. Class participation includes listening carefully to your classmates. (10%)

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory and worth half your participation grade (5%). Let me know ahead of time if you cannot come to class. After 4 unexcused absences (not for verifiable health reasons), your grade for the course will drop a half grade, and a half grade for each additional absence. You can keep track of how many classes you have missed on Blackboard in your grade center.

### **Cell Phones and Computers**

Before class begins turn off cell phones. You may use computers at my discretion, for taking notes and reading materials on Blackboard, and not for surfing the web or checking email. Please follow these rules to participate fully in class. You might be interested in learning about the advantages of taking notes by hand as opposed to typing your notes on a computer.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/03/science/whats-lost-as-handwriting-fades.html>

### **Course Syllabus**

\*\*\*\*Please use the online course syllabus on our Blackboard course site

(<http://myasucourses.asu.edu>) for any active links to the required readings and websites listed in the print version of this syllabus.\*\*\*\*

1R 8/20 Introductions. Course Overview: Defining Literature, Culture and Theory

## Weeks 2 – 4: The Textual: What is a Text?

### 2T 8/25 Cultural Transmission: Textuality and Oral Traditions

1. **Raymond Williams**, “Culture” (1976) (PDF)
2. **Umberto Eco**, “Does Counter-Culture Exist?” (1983) (PDF)
3. **Walter Ong**, “Some Psychodynamics of Orality,” *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982) pp. 31-76 (PDF)
4. Tim Parks, “The Most Influential Invention,” a review of *White Magic: The Age of Paper* by Lothar Müller, trans. from German by Jessica Spengler (Polity, 2015), *The New York Review of Books*, August 13, 2014, pp.67-68 (PDF)

### R 8/27 History of Manuscripts in the West

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Mark Cruse, French

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. Marie de France (1100s), Prologue, Guigemar, Chevrefoil, *The Lais of Marie de France* (ca. 1170, translated 1978), pp. 28-59, 190-95 (PDF)

- **First Theoretical Response Paper Due by Midnight, Sunday, Aug. 30, 2015**

### 3T 9/1 Early Manuscript and Book Culture

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Young Oh, Chinese.

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

### R 9/3 Early Chinese Book Culture

1. Zhu Xi, compiler. *Da xue* [“The Great Learning”], [5<sup>th</sup> c. BC] (PDF).
2. Chapters from T. H. Barrett, *The Woman Who Discovered Printing* (2008) (PDF).
3. Denis Twitchett, “Printing and Publishing in Medieval China” (1983) (PDF)

### M 9/7 Labor Day

### 4T 9/8 Crises of Textual Representation

1. Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones* [1962], Part 1

### R 9/10 Crises of Textual Representation

1. Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones* [1962], Part 2

- **First Critical Response Paper Due by Midnight, Sunday, Sept. 13, 2015**

## Weeks 5 – 7: The Visual: What is an Image?

### 5T 9/15 Different Ways of Seeing

1. Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), “The Painter of Modern Life” [1863] (PDF).
2. **Walter Benjamin**, “The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility” [Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit] (excerpt) [1936] (PDF).

R 9/17 Visualizing the Senses: Film and Food

**Pre-Screen for Class:** *Tampopo*, dir. Jûzô Itami, (1985), Japan. 114 min.

1. Lisa Heldke, "But is it Authentic? Culinary Travel and the Search for the 'Genuine Article,'" (2005) (PDF).
2. Jack Goody, "The High and the Low: Culinary Culture in Asia and Europe," *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (1982) (PDF).
3. Ian Fisher, "Is Cuisine Still Italian if the Chef Isn't?" *New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/07/world/europe/07food.html>

6T 9/22 Visualizing Kinship, Death, and Burial

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Michael Tueller, Classics

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. Sophocles, *Antigone* [5<sup>th</sup> century BCE] in Sophocles, *The Oedipus Cycle: Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone* (Mariner Books, 2002).
2. "A Few Greek Grave Inscriptions"

R 09/24 Visualizing Kinship, Death, and Burial

1. **Richard Schechner**, excerpt from *Performance Theory* (1988), "Play, Games, Sports, Theater and Ritual" (PDF)
2. Sophocles, *Antigone* [5<sup>th</sup> century BCE] in Sophocles, *The Oedipus Cycle: Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone* (Mariner Books, 2002).
3. Edmund G. Berry, "Antigone and French Resistance," *The Classical Journal*, 42.1 (Oct. 1946): 17-18.

7T 9/29 Visualizing the Contemporary Latin American Woman: Argentine Cinema

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Cynthia Tompkins, Spanish

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. **Pre-Screen for Class:** *Cama adentro*, dir. Jorge Gaggero, (2004), Argentina. 83 min. [*Live-In Maid*].
2. Liner Notes to *Cama adentro*, (PDF).
3. Film review of *Cama adentro*, (PDF).
4. NYT Review of *Cama adentro*, (Web).
5. Gonzalo Aguilar, "On the Existence of the New Argentine Cinema" (2008) (PDF).
6. Cynthia Tompkins, Summary of Argentine Feminism (PDF).
7. Marcus Klein, "Stumbling on the Verge of the Abyss (without Falling into it): Argentina and its Crisis of the Millennium" (2004) (PDF).
8. Further Reading Suggestions (PDF).

R 10/1 **Visualizing a Gypsy Woman's Death**

1. **Pre-Screen for Class:** *Carmen*, dir. Carlos Saura (1983), Spain, 97 min.
2. Prosper Mérimée, *Carmen* [1845] (PDF) <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2465/2465-h/2465-h.htm>  
In French, [https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Carmen\\_\(M%C3%A9rim%C3%A9e\)/Carmen](https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Carmen_(M%C3%A9rim%C3%A9e)/Carmen)

- **Second Critical Response Paper Due by Midnight, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2015**

## Weeks 8 – 10: The Spatial: What is a Cultural Community?

8T 10/6 **Space and Identity**

**Clips:** *Gommora*, dir. Matteo Garrone, (2008), Italian. 137 min. [*Gommorah*]

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Juliann Vitullo, Italian.

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. Roberto Saviano, “The Port,” *Gommora* (2007) (PDF).
2. Roberto Saviano, “Land of Fires,” *Gommora* (2007) (PDF).

R 10/8 **The Capital City**

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Hilde Hoogenboom, Russian.

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. **Tim Cresswell**, *Place: A Short Introduction*, “Defining Place” (2004) (PDF)
2. Venedikt Erofeev, *Moscow to the End of the Line* (1966), pp. 7-102 (including dedication and author preface)
3. Victor Erofeev, “The Russian God. Vodka celebrates its five-hundredth anniversary,” Dec. 16, 2002, *The New Yorker* (PDF)

9T 10/13 Fall Break

R 10/15 **The Capital City**

1. Venedikt Erofeev, *Moscow to the End of the Line*, pp. 102-64
2. Malcolm Gladwell, “Drinking Games,” Feb. 15, 2010, *The New Yorker* (PDF)

- **Second Theoretical Response Paper Due by Midnight, Sunday, Oct. 18, 2015**

10T 10/20 **Spaces of the City**

1. **Pre-Screen for Class:** *Le fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain*, dir. Jean-Pierre Jeunet, (2001), France. 122 min. [*Amélie*].
2. Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1985) (PDF).

R 10/22 **Spaces of Memory**

1. Art Spiegelman, *Maus I: My Father Bleeds History* and *Maus II: And Here My Troubles Began* (1986)

11T 10/27 **Spaces of Memory**

**Guest Lecture:** Professor Daniel Gilfillan

**Combined class meets in Hayden Library, Room C6A-East**

1. Stephen Tabachnik, “Of *Maus* and Memory: The Structure of Art Spiegelman’s Graphic Novel of the Holocaust,” (*Word & Image*, 9.2 (Apr-Jun 1993):154-162) (PDF).

R 10/29 **Spaces of Memory/2**

1. Keiji Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen*
2. Art Spiegelman, “Barefoot Gen: Comics after the Bomb” – Introduction to *Barefoot Gen*, Vol. 1

- **Pick Up Take-Home Midterm**

## Weeks 12-14 Group Project – Premise and Research Time

12T 11/3 **Group Project – Premise and Research Time**

- **Turn In Take-Home Midterm by 10 am as an email attachment to me**

R 11/5 Wrap up and discuss parameters of final project

13T 11/10 In-class project work

R 11/12 In-class project work

- **Critical Presentation Proposal (Third response) due by midnight Sunday, Nov. 15, 2015**

14T 11/17 In-class project work

R 11/19 In-class project work, practice presentations (strict time limit of 5 minutes each, or 2 pages and a slide or 2)

15T 11/24 Group Presentations

- **Presentation Final Outline/Script Due**

R 11/26 **Thanksgiving**

16T 12/1 Group Presentations

R 12/3 Group Presentations

- **Final Project PowerPoint and Short Metanarrative Write-Up Due by midnight, Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015**

17T 12/11 Conclusions

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** The aim of education is the intellectual, personal, social, and ethical development of the individual. The educational process is ideally conducted in an environment that encourages reasoned discourse, intellectual honesty, openness to constructive change and respect for the rights of all individuals. Self-discipline and a respect for the rights of others in the university community are necessary for the fulfillment of such goals.

According to the Student Academic Integrity Policy, every assignment that the student completes must be her/his own work and created specifically (only) for this class. Plagiarism is punishable by the university and ultimately may result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the entire course. Information on this policy can be found at: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

**Special Needs:** If you are in need of special accommodation for assignments or exams, please communicate this to the instructor at the beginning of the semester to assure that your needs are

met. In order to guarantee the necessary accommodation, you must present documentation from the Disability Resource Center, located in Mathews Center.

### **SILC Learning Support Services**

Located in the basement level of the Language and Literature Building (LL61 and LL65), the SILC LSS provides technology-focused instructional support for students and faculty in the School of International Letters and Cultures. It is an excellent place to inquire about resources to assist you in this course, for example, with the presentations and for films needed for the course. Go to <http://silc.asu.edu> and click on “Learning Support Services” to find out more.

### **Guidelines for Papers**

Papers must be double-spaced and responsive to all aspects of the assignment, including length (provide a word count on the first page), and prepared according to the Modern Language Association or *Chicago Manual of Style*. *Make sure you document every reference--in quotation or paraphrase--including page numbers*, using the in-text format: “blah blah blah” (304). Feel free to write in the first person. Most important, a paper is an argument: no argument, no paper. Support your thesis with evidence. **Please read the handouts on writing and editing on BB.**

### **Paper grades**

An “A” paper demonstrates that the writer has not only mastered the concepts of the course, but also has applied them in an imaginative and incisive way. The paper shows a command of language that allows the writer to express worthwhile ideas or perceptions clearly, effectively, in detail and with virtually no mechanical errors. There is grace to the sentence structure, which is clear and varied throughout. The paper consistently includes adequate documentation. The “A” grade is reserved for exceptional papers; “A-” papers tend to be exceptional in part but marred by one or two problems.

A “B” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood the concepts of the course, and has applied them with some originality. The paper shows the writer can organize a coherent essay with few mechanical errors. The thesis statement is clear and is responsive to the assigned topic. It is supported with strong, logical argumentation and use of evidence. The paper for the most part includes adequate documentation.

A “C” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood most of the concepts of the course, but needs to pay more attention to detail in reading or writing. Thesis statement and topic sentences are weak, and documentation is erratic.

A “D” paper demonstrates that the writer has only a minimal understanding of the concepts of the course. Significant gaps in the writer's comprehension indicate the need for more study. Moreover, the writer's basic compositional skills are below satisfactory for university work. Documentation is unsatisfactory.

An “F” paper demonstrates that the writer has little, if any, understanding of the concepts of the course. Because of the writer's lack of skill or concern, the work includes gross errors as well as a conspicuous lack of content. Documentation is negligible. The paper may also fail to address parts of the assignment.

A paper may combine different levels of work. In that case, the grade will depend on the paper's overall demonstration of knowledge of the material and of writing skills.

### **Emails**

You should regard all writing for this class as professional writing, including your emails to me. You can address me as “Dear Professor Hoogenboom,” and you should put your name at the end. My emails to you will have this format too.