Contemporary Spanish Novel: From “La Movida” to 15-M (LS 449)

**Instructor:** Prof. Fernando Herrero, PhD  
**Email address:** fherrero@bu.edu  
**Class Time:** Monday & Wednesday 16:00 – 17:20 pm.  
**Room:** TBA  
**Office Hours:** After class and by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course offers an overview of contemporary Spanish novels from the time of Franco’s death (1975) to the “15 M” movement (2011). The objective of the course is to analyze cultural phenomena that have transformed the social and cultural reality of Spain over the last several decades.

Another objective of the course is to discuss the novels alongside supplementary materials such as articles, films, and artistic material from Madrid. This course encourages students to make a true connection to Madrid by inviting them to become critical readers and be able to analyze and discuss what these texts mean in terms of their historical context and what place literature has in the transformation process of current society.

This course includes several field trips to sites in Madrid that are significant in terms of literature, as well as meetings with writers and editors that work in the city who will speak (to the class) about how Madrid figures into their work.

Active participation, a critical spirit, and group work are essential to the course.

**Texts:** Course Reader Assigned readings listed by author’s last name (full bib. below)

**Course Objectives:**

— Student will be able to read and make a critical analysis of literary texts.
— Students will be able to debate, critique, and analyze (orally and in writing) and hold discussions of their ideas publicly.
— Students will understand specific historical and cultural contexts in order to situate readings within specific moments in history and their social and literary circumstances.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 short written assignments</td>
<td>10% each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Oral Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Research paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In addition to the reading packet, students will be given a guide explaining the written assignments and oral presentations.
- All assignments will be submitted electronically on their respective due dates unless previously discussed with the professor.
• This is a participatory class built upon the readings and student commentary. Attendance is mandatory. **No unexcused absences are permitted.** Absences will negatively affect the final grade.

• **The use of laptops and cell phones is completely prohibited during the class unless you have an academic accommodation previously authorized**

• One short written essay (2 pages) will be turned in for each novel read in class (3 total). Essays will test comprehension of assigned readings, contextual vocabulary, and the literary and cultural issues discussed in class, as well as the student’s ability to synthesize literary texts with original interpretation. These assignments will also help students develop skills for the final paper. Each assignment is due on the each novel will be talked about in class so that students may be prepared for discussion.

• Students will give a 10-15 minute group presentation (2-3 students per group) on one of the topics covered in class and chosen by the students. These presentations are meant to help students improve their oral skills in Spanish as well as feel comfortable when discussing, sharing ideas, debating and taking positions in well-informed cultural debates.

• The midterm will include two brief essay questions on some topics covered in class. The exam is meant to help the student synthesize arguments while defending a thesis as a means to prepare them for their final research paper. Attendance is required for the in-class exam. Make-ups will only be allowed for students with an excused absence according to university policy.

• An 8-10 page research paper in which students will reflect on a subject of their choice. The topic and bibliography will be decided with the professor over the course of the semester. It will include at least one reading outside the readings of the course. Several drafts will be submitted to the instructor for feedback prior to the final due date.

It is every student’s responsibility to read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be “...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean.” You can view the entire Academic Conduct Code here: [http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/)

**Plagiarism:**

*Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:*  

- a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks
- an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another’s work
- the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one’s own
- submitting evaluations of group members’ work for an assigned group project which misrepresent the work that was performed by another group member
- altering or forging academic documents, including but not limited to admissions materials, academic records, grade reports, add/drop forms, course registration forms, etc.

**Class Etiquette:**

The most essential part of student behavior in class is a willingness to actively participate. The following are prohibited in class: food, late arrivals, being disrespectful to other opinions and points of view expressed in class.
Course Bibliography:

Novels:
El Cielo de Madrid, Julio Llamazares, Madrid, Alfaguara, 2005
La Trabajadora, Elvira Navarro, Madrid, Random House, 2014

Reading Packet:
- Alonso de Santos, José Luis, Bajarse al Moro, (Acto II y Acto III) Madrid, Cátedra, 2014 (p. 135-152)
- Martín Gaite, Carmen, “Ven pronto a Cúnigan”, en El Cuarto de Atrás, Barcelona, Destino, (p. 73-99)
- Labanyi, Jo (2007), ‘Memory and Modernity in democratic Spain: The Difficulty of Coming to Terms with the Spanish Civil War’, Poetics Today 28/1, (p. 89-116)
- “¿Lo llamaban democracia? La crítica estética de la política de la transición”, (p. 1-49)
- Mañas, José Ángel, Historias del Kronen, Madrid, Seix Barral, (p. 194-210)
- Muñoz Molina, Antonio, Beltenebros, (p. 52-65)
- Vázquez Montalbán, Manuel “La literatura en la construcción de la ciudad democrática” en La Literatura en la construcción democrática, Mondadori, Barcelona 2001, (p. 98-116)

Films on Reserve (Excerpts will be watched for in-class discussion):
- Garci, Jose Luis, “El Crack” (1981)
- “Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios” 1988
- de la Iglesia, Alex, “El Día de la Bestia”, 1996
- León de Aranoa, Fernando, “Barrio”, 1998

Reference Bibliography:
- Gallero, Jose Luis, Solo se vive una vez. Esplendor y ruina de la movida madrileña, Madrid, Ardora, 1991. (178-188)
- Gopegui, Belén, Lo Real, (extracto) (pp. 274-286), Anagrama, Madrid
- Guerra Garrido, Raúl, La Gran Vía es Nueva York, Madrid, Alianza, 2005
- Juristo, Juan Ángel, John J. Winters, David Draper Clark and César Ferreira “Observations on the Recent Spanish Novel” in World Literature Today, Vol. 80, No. 3 (May-Jun., 2006, (p. 31-37)
- “History and Hauntnology, or What does one do with the ghost of the past? Reflection on Spanish Film and Fiction of the post-Franco period” en Disremembering the dictatorship, Rodopi, Amst. 2000, (65-84)
--- Labrador, German, “Las vidas subprime. La circulación de historias de vida como tecnología de imaginación política en la crisis española (2007-2012)” (p. 1-28)
--- “¿Lo llamaban democracia? La crítica estética de la política de la transición”, (p. 1-49)
--- Lamazares, Julio, El Cielo de Madrid, Alfaguara, 2005, full text.
--- Mañas, José Ángel, Historias del Kronen, Madrid, Seix Barral, (excerpt) (p. 143-154, 194-210)
--- Martín Gaité, Carmen, “Ven Pronto a Cunigan” en El Cuarto de Atrás, Barcelona, Destino, 2012, (p. 73-99)
--- Beltenebros, Madrid, Seix Barral, ed. Bolsillo, 2014 (p. 52-65)
--- Moreiras Menor, Cristina, Cultura Herida: Literatura y cine en la España Democrática, Ediciones Libertarias, Madrid, 2002
--- Navarro, Elvira, La Trabajadora, Random House, Mondadori, full text.
--- Blog, Periferias de Madrid.
http://madridesperiferia.blogspot.com.es
--- Resina, Joan Román, El cadáver en la cocina, La novela criminal en la novela del desencanto, Barcelona, Anthropos, 1997
--- “Short of Memory: The Reclamation of the Past Since the Spanish transition to Democracy”, en Dismembering the dictatorship, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 2000, (pp. 83-127)
--- Steenmeijer, Martín, “El Tabú de Franquismo vivido en la narrativa de Mendoza, Marias y Muñoz Molina,” en Dismembering the Dictatorship, (p. 139-157)
--- Subirats, Eduardo, “Europa la tierra prometida” en Después de la lluvia, sobre la ambigua modernidad española, Madrid, Tiempos de hoy, 1993
--- Umbral, Francisco, Trilogía de Madrid, (artículos seleccionados)
--- Vázquez Montalbán, Manuel “La literatura en la construcción de la ciudad democrática” en La Literatura en la construcción democrática, Mondadori, Barcelona 2001, (p. 70-116)
--- “La Guardia Civil acata pero considera dura la sentencia” en Crónica Sentimental de la Transición, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Random House Mondadori, 2005., (pp. 274-282)
Course Calendar:

**PART 1. 1975-1981: Transitioning to democracy: From Franco’s death to Guernica**

**Class 1:** Franco’s death and the end of the Dictatorship  
Course Introduction and class materials

**Class 2: 1978: Democracy and literature after Franco.**  
Reading: Martín Gaite, (p. 73-99)  
Film excerpt: *Lucy, Pepi, Bom y otras chicas del montón*, Pedro Almodóvar, (1980)

**Class 3: 1981: 23-F and the arrival of Guernica.**  
Reading: Labanyi (p. 89-116)

**Class 4: A new novel for new times.**  
Reading: Muñoz Molina, *Beltenebros*, (p. 52-65)  
Film excerpt: *El Crack*, José Luis García (1981)

**Class 5: New voices for a changing era.**  
Reading: Vázquez Montalbán, (p. 90-116)

**Class 6: Youth and daily life in the 80s.**  
Reading: Alonso de Santos, (p. 136-152)  
Field Trip: Literary Café

**PART 2. 1982-1992: The Movida and Postmodernity: From Naranjito to Curro.**

**Class 7: From Naranjito to La Movida --- Madrid’s urban culture in the early 80s.**  
Reading: Muñoz Molina, *El Invierno en Lisboa*, part I (p. 9-44)  
Group Presentation

**Class 8: La Movida: A new aesthetic and urban writing: culture in liberty.**  
Reading: Muñoz Molina, *El Invierno en Lisboa*, part II (p. 45-81)

**Class 9: La Movida II: Uncensored writing: A new literary space.**  
Reading: Muñoz Molina, *El Invierno en Lisboa*, part III (p. 82-124)  
Field Trip: Museo Reina Sofía

**Class 10: 1986: Europe, Europe.**  
Reading: Muñoz Molina, *El Invierno en Lisboa*, part IV (p. 125-151)  
Film (excerpts): *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*, Pedro Almodóvar, 1988

**Class 11: Political narrative of the 80s.**  
**DUE:** short written assignment.

**Class 12: The X Generation**  
Reading: Mañas, (p. 143-161)  
Class 13: X Generation II and Review Midterm
Reading: Ray Loriga, Héroes/ Caídos del Cielo (excerpts)
**DUE:** Research Paper Draft: Thesis statement and references that will be used

Class 14: MIDTERM EXAM

**PART 3. 1992-1998:** Culture as a spectacle: From the Olympic Games to the Guggenheim.

Class 15: 1990s Spain: Culture as a spectacle.
Reading: Llamazares, *El Cielo de Madrid*, part I (p. 15-48)

Class 16: The “hangover” of 92: Disenchantment.
Reading: Llamazares, *El Cielo de Madrid*, part II (p. 49-100)
Film excerpt: *El Día de la Bestia*, Alex de la Iglesia, 1995.

Reading: Llamazares, *El Cielo de Madrid*, part III (p. 105-149)

Class 18: Discussion of novel: *El Cielo de Madrid*.
**DUE:** Short written assignment
Reading: Llamazares, *El Cielo de Madrid*, part V (193-256)
Film excerpt: *Barrio*, Fernando León de Aranoa, 1998.

Class 19: From the Euro to 15-M: The crisis and its consequences.
Reading: Labrador (p. 1-26)
Group Presentation

Class 20: New perspectives of the city.
**DUE:** Research paper draft
Reading: Navarro, *La Trabajadora*, part I (p. 11-41)

Class 21: Crisis and New urban subjectivities
Field trip: Malasaña and Gran Vía
Reading: Navarro, *La Trabajadora*, part II (p. 45-69)

Class 22: Madrid today.
Reading: Navarro, *La Trabajadora*, part III (p. 70-112)
Group Presentation

Class 23: Discussion of novel: *La Trabajadora*
**DUE:** Short written assignment
Reading: Navarro, *La Trabajadora*, part IV (p. 113-155)

Class 24: Paper Presentations
In-Class discussion
Class 25: Paper Presentations
Reading: Labrador II (p. 30-49)

Class 26: Final Remarks
DUE: Final research paper

Class field trips and excursions

They will be announced during the course of the semester and it might include:
--- Literary Café
--- Museo Reina Sofía
--- Malasaña neighborhood and Gran Vía