

HP317-15 Love, Death, and Desire in the Golden Age

26/27

Department

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Rich Rabone

Credit value

15

Module duration

9 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module explores the rich and varied presentation of desire in Golden-Age literature. Students will assess how people typically thought and wrote about love, and how those ideas are developed, challenged, and ridiculed throughout the period. We will ask whether love language is just a mask, as authors use its tropes to discuss a range of other questions, from gender politics to the relationship between humans and God – or, indeed, simply to amuse the reader. And we will ask why literary lovers are so often unsuccessful, by examining a series of Golden-Age masterpieces about jealousy and illicit desire. Throughout the module, emphasis will be placed on the close reading of primary texts, to see what they can tell us about the human condition, and to explore the dynamics of one of the most vibrant of all literary traditions.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The aim of this module is to establish the conventions of love writing which were popular across Renaissance Europe, and to assess how those conventions were developed, challenged, and parodied by Hispanic writers. This will be done firstly by introducing the standard model of

Petrarchan love, and assessing the range of different responses to it in Hispanic love sonnets – a format which every great poet had to master. Students will analyze how female writers such as María de Zayas and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz adapt or attack these male-dominated conventions; explore a rival philosophy of love (neo-Platonism); and see how the secular language of human desire came to be redeployed by religious writers to describe a relationship with God. The second half of the course examines the specific problem of impossible love, in texts where an ill-fated love match produces dramatically different outcomes: implausible marriages, violent murder, and monstrous jealousy. By analyzing Lope de Vega's fast-paced comedy 'El perro del hortelano', his tragic masterpiece 'El castigo sin venganza', and the controversial mythological tales of Luis de Góngora, we will ask what drives these different approaches to impossible love – from critiques of society and literary convention to unexpected humour and wit.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. The Petrarchan Sonnet: Imitation and Developments
2. The Petrarchan Sonnet: Rejection, Parody, and Wit
3. The Petrarchan Sonnet: Mythology and Neo-Platonism
4. Divine Love and Mystical Union: Francisco de Aldana, Santa Teresa de Jesús, San Juan de la Cruz
5. New Perspectives and Feminist Critique: María de Zayas, 'La fuerza del amor'
6. READING WEEK
7. Impossible Love (i): Lope de Vega, El perro del hortelano
8. Impossible Love (ii): Lope de Vega, El castigo sin venganza
9. Love and Death in Mythology (i): Luis de Góngora, 'Arrojóse el mancebito', 'La ciudad de Babilonia'
10. Love and Death in Mythology (ii): Luis de Góngora, 'Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea'

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- an awareness of the ways in which love was conceptualized in the Golden Age, and of the relationship between Golden-Age models of love and those of other literary traditions
- an ability to produce detailed close readings of complex literary texts, with reference to their cultural context and analysis of stylistic features
- an ability to present clear and cogent arguments, supported by detailed analysis of primary texts, and informed by a range of secondary reading
- Knowledge and understanding of one or more aspects of the literatures, cultures, linguistic contexts, history, politics, social and economic structures of the country or countries of the target language
- Ability to access, read and critically analyse primary and secondary source materials in target language
- Refined knowledge of language varieties, register, genre, nuances of meaning and language use

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

International

All modules delivered in SMLC are necessarily international. Students engage with themes and ideas from a culture other than that of the UK and employ their linguistic skills in the analysis of primary materials from a non-Anglophone context. Students will also be encouraged to draw on the experiences of visiting exchange students in the classroom and will frequently engage with theoretical and critical frameworks from across the world.

Subject specific skills

This module will develop students' linguistic skills through engaging with primary materials in the target language. It will build students' capacity to engage with aspects of Hispanic culture through analysis of this primary material and through seminar discussion aimed at deeper critical thinking. In particular, students' awareness of Golden-Age discourses of love and desire, and the literature which they inform, will be enhanced through lectures and seminars which engage with scholarship in the field.

Transferable skills

All SMLC culture modules demand critical and analytical engagement with artefacts from target-language cultures. In the course of independent study, class work and assessment students will develop the following skills: written and oral communication, creative and critical thinking, problem solving and analysis, time management and organisation, independent research in both English and their target language(s), intercultural understanding and the ability to mediate between languages and cultures, ICT literacy in both English and the target language(s), personal responsibility and the exercise of initiative.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Preparation for seminars, including reading the primary text; carrying out research for assessed work, guided by the module bibliography; planning and writing assessments.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Assessed coursework 1,000-1,100 word commentary	20%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component			
Assessed essay 3,000-3,400 word essay	80%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in the course of the module in a number of ways. Feedback should be understood to be both formal and informal and is not restricted to feedback on formal written work. Oral feedback will be provided by the module tutor in the course of seminar discussion. This may include feedback on points raised in small group work or in the course of individual presentations or larger group discussion.

Written feedback will be provided on formal assessment using the standard SMLC Assessed Work

feedback form appropriate to the assessment. Feedback is intended to enable continuous improvement throughout the module and written feedback is generally the final stage of this feedback process. Feedback will always demonstrate areas of success and areas for future development, which can be applied to future assessment. Feedback will be both discipline-specific and focussed on key transferrable skills, enabling students to apply this feedback to their future professional lives. Feedback will be fair and reasonable and will be linked to the SMLC marking scheme appropriate to the module.

Availability

Courses

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)