UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Comparative Literature

2122-2-F0101R017

Course title

The myth of Don Juan

Topics and course structure

An approach to literary studies conceived as critical representation of culture and of cultures, without predetermined linguistic or chronological boundaries. The analysis of texts, themes and poetics aims to put in evidence the relationship between things and words, discourse and reality, historical contexts and symbolic forms.

After a general introduction to Comparative Literature, this year the lecture course will focus on Don Juan, a character which represents one of the great myths of modernity. Our path will start from Spain, Don Juan's cradle, with Tirso de Molina's *El burlador de Sevilla y convedado de piedra* (1616); we will move on French «Grand Siècle» with Molière's play *Dom Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre* (1665), and then arrive at Mozart's Don Giovanni , *o sia Il dissoluto punito* , on Lorenzo Da Ponte's libretto (1787), the best known version of Don Juan's myth in the collective imagination. A final step will deal with one the countless contemporary variations: *Don Giovanni ou O dissoluto absolvido* dello scrittore portoghese José Saramago (2005).

Objectives

The student will become familiar with the idea that literature represents not only a thesaurus of themes and topics which most human sciences usually deal with, but also a way to develop formalized patterns of experience, in which a key role is played by formal features (language, style, modes, genres).

Methodologies

Lectures and discussion. Text analysis: linguistic and rhetorical features, narrative modes, cultural patterns. Exercises in oral presentation.

Information on how the lessons will take place will be provided at due time.

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references for attending students

Texts:

- Tirso de Molina, *Il beffatore di Siviglia*, a cura di Alfonso D'Agostino (Rizzoli)
- Molière, *Don Giovanni*, trad. di Dario Fo e Delia Gambelli (Marsilio)
- Lorenzo Da Ponte, *Il Don Giovanni*, a cura di Giovanna Gronda (Einaudi)
- José Saramago, *Don Giovanni o il dissoluto assolto* (Feltrinelli)

Critical readings:

Two texts among the following criticali studies:

a) Ian Watt, *Myths of Modern Individualism. Faust, Don Quijote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe*

b) Giovanni Macchia, *Vita avventure e morte di Don Giovanni,* Adelphi

c) Cesare Garboli, *Il «Dom Juan» di Molière*, Adelphi

d) Massimo Mila, *Lettura del Don Giovanni di Mozart*, Einaudi

Joseph Losey's movie *Don Juan* (1979) will be taken as reference version for Mozart's opera (interpreters: Lorin Maazel, Ruggero Raimondi, José Van Dam, Kiri Te Kanawa, Edda Moser, Teresa Berganza)

Programme and references for non-attending students

During the Covid-19 emergency, no distinction is made between attending and non-attending students.

Assessment methods

Oral test. Evaluation is based on the following factors: pertinence and complexity, text comprehension, familiarity with the literary texts in programme, capacity for argumentation and personal interpretation, interaction, ability to establish connections, clarity of exposition, linguistic appropriateness.

During the Covid emergency, oral tests will take place online, by means of the Webex platform. The web page of the course will indicate a public link for the access of possible virtual attendees.

Office hours

Student reception by appointment: contact the professor by email. Unless otherwise indicated by the University, reception will take place online.

Programme validity

Until February 2024

Course tutors and assistants

dr Federico Pianzola, postdoc