Syllabus, as of November 22, 2011

21G.735 Advanced Topics in Hispanic Literature and Film

Topic for Fall, 2009: The Films of Luis Buñuel

Mon. & Wed., 3:00-5:00

Taught by Professor Elizabeth Garrels

Office hours: Fri., 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

Course conducted in Spanish, advanced reading knowledge of both Spanish and English required.

Each week students view, in class, one feature-length or one or two short films by Spanish film director Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), that is, thirteen out of Buñuel’s total production of thirty-two films. The subject includes roughly two and a half hours per week of discussion about the films and related web materials and printed texts, including film criticism and the director’s autobiography Mi último suspiro (orig. publ. in French, in 1982, as Mon dernier soupir). The subject considers films spanning Buñuel’s entire career, from his earliest silent surrealist classic of 1929 to his last film, “Cet Obscur objet du désir” (“Ese oscuro objeto del deseo,” 1977), although it pays special attention to his Mexican period and the three films he made in Spain. The subject also explores Buñuel’s early friendship with painter Salvador Dalí and poet Federico García Lorca, surrealist aesthetics, the influence in his films of Freud’s ideas on dreams and sexuality, his corrosive criticism of bourgeois society and the Catholic church, and allusions to European painting (ie. Dalí, Vermeer, Ribera, Millet) in his cinematic images. Students give at least two oral presentations, with film clips and other visuals, based on their own research. Historical contextualization will be provided for each film discussed.

REQUIRED BOOK FOR PURCHASE:

Books on Reserve: I have submitted a long list of books to be placed on Reserve for this subject in Hayden Library. You can consult 21G.735’s Reserve list by clicking on CLASS RESERVES at the top of the search page for Barton. Copies of the required book are on Reserve, as well as numerous other recommended books on different films and aspects of Buñuel’s career. There are also film scripts available for some of the films we will study in this class.

****Important: One of the books on reserve contains six articles that you are required to read. This book is Evans, Peter W. The Films of Luis Buñuel: Subjectivity and Desire. Oxford UP: Clarendon Press, 1995. Currently Oxford UP and
Amazon charge $85.00 for a new copy of this paper back. For this reason, I did not request copies for you to purchase. In August, 2011, Amazon advertised 29 used copies, starting at $16.68. You can either buy a used copy, or you can photocopy the six articles from the Reserve copy in Hayden. You will need to bring your own copy of each article to class on the day it is assigned.

CALENDAR
WEEK I

After class (and in preparation for the next class), you should watch this film as often as you can, using the study questions, film script, and chapter by Gwynne Edwards to help you better understand it. The film is available in the FLLRC (Catalog ID: SP#144); the Humanities Film Office, and Hayden Library have, between them, three copies that circulate: Hayden Library - Humanities Media | DVD PN1997.C46.A1 2004 and Hayden Library - Humanities Media | VIDEO PN1997.C46 1990. Also, there are currently several complete versions at video.google.com.

On our class site, under Materials (Topic: Photograms), there is also a file of 59 images, including numerous still shots (fotogramas) from the film as well as other related visuals. The photograms are currently not in chronological order. However, they make a good study tool, allowing you to reconstruct the film's narrative by organizing them in the order they appear in the film and to study the composition of single shots, etc.

WEEK II
- Sigmund Freud, "E. Representation By Symbols in Dreams--Some Further Typical Dreams," from "VI. The Dream Work," in The Interpretation of Dreams. (Available at Course class
website, Materials. The reproduced text is from the Avon English-language edition, pp.385-95.) Freud's book was originally published, in German, in 1900, but the material in this particular section started to appear only in the 2nd. and 3rd. editions of 1909 and 1911. The text of the Avon edition [1965] reproduces a later edition and incorporates changes added in editions subsequent to the third. In 1923, the first Spanish translation of the book was published in Madrid as La interpretación de los sueños; the translator was Luis López Ballesteros. You can download an entire Spanish-language version for free (translator, etc., unknown) at <http://www.planetalibro.net/ebooks/eam/ebook_view.php?ebooks_books_id=90&&author_letter=&author=&title_letter=>. In this version, Chapter VI, "La elaboración onírica," starts on p. 171 and ends on p 318.

-In preparation for this class, students should also have visited the website:

<http://cvc.cervantes.es/actcult/bunuel/indice.htm>

and on the main page of "Es peligroso asomarse al interior: Luis Buñuel, 100 años," next to "Indice," clicked on "Su obra y su tiempo." Students should have viewed and read the contents of the first three titles: "Aragón: infancia y adolescencia" (plus 4 pages of images), "Formación intelectual: Madrid" (plus 6 pages of images), and "Ante las vanguardias parisiñas: la forja del artista (1925-1931)" (plus 15 pages of images). The images that accompany each title are accessed by clicking the forward arrow to the left of the title/text page.

Also, students should start familiarizing themselves with the section "Obsesiones," accessed from the main page of the website. Buñuel includes recurring images (of gestures, objects, animals, human body parts, etc.) in his films throughout his long career. Students also should access the section "Filmografía y bibliografía," click on "Filmografía," then on "Director," and read the contents of the first page and beginning of the second, which include the filmographies of Buñuel's first two films, "Un chien andalou" ("Un perro andaluz," 1929) and "L'Age d'or" ("La edad de oro," 1930). Please note that the list of actors for "Un perro andaluz" is incomplete. The man on the beach at the end of the film is played by Robert Hommet. I recommend you download and retain the pages of the Filmography.

(If students wish to view early paintings by Salvador Dali, that is, up until the mid-1930's, when his friendship with Buñuel ended, the most complete website organized chronologically I have found is: <http://www.abcgallery.com/D/dali/dali.html>.)


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WEEK III


Also recommended: Chapter 9, "The Discreet Charm of The Bourgeoisie," in Gwynne Edwards, The Discreet Art of Luis Buñuel, 248-70 (Book on Reserve). If you found Edwards's discussion of "Un perro andaluz" helpful, you may also profit from reading this chapter. It is clear, and contains fewer errors of fact than his chapter on "Un perro."

Read: By this class, students are expected to have read Chapters 1-11, "Memoria," "Recuerdos de la Edad Media," "Los tambores de Calanda," "Zaragoza," "Los recuerdos de Conchita," "Los placeres de aquí abajo," "Madrid: La Residencia de Estudiantes (1917-1925)," "París (1925-1929)," "Sueños y ensueños," "El surrealismo (1929-1933)," and "América," in Buñuel, Mi último suspiro, pp. 9-156. For all assignments from Mi último suspiro, a student or group of students takes reading notes in Spanish and sends them to me by e-mail as a Word attachment. These notes should be sent to me by 5:00 p.m. on the first Friday after the reading is due. In this case, notes on Chapters 1-11 are due on Friday, Sept. 23.

Notes should record (and if appropriate, comment on) those instances in the autobiography where Buñuel expresses opinions on politics, religion, freedom, sexuality, dreams and the irrational, and art and aesthetics. Feel free to add other categories if you wish. Also, there are a lot of cultural allusions in Buñuel's book, ie. to names and historical events. When you don't recognize a name or an event, write it in your notes, and use the web to quickly identify it. (Give web sources, and use quotation marks if you copy text. Please don't send me more than 100 words per identification, although you are free to print out more and keep it for yourselves. I accept Wikipedia for this...
exercise. (For most topics on Hispanic culture, wikipedia.es is much better than its counterpart in English.) Textual quotes for these identifications can be in Spanish or in English. The notes, themselves, must be in Spanish. Please take care in writing these notes, and use this exercise as an opportunity to improve your written Spanish. Look up all questions regarding spelling and word meaning on

<http://lema.rae.es/drae/>

- Wed., Sept. 21 - Student Holiday

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WEEK IV

5. Mon., Sept. 26 - "Las Hurdes" (Also known as "Tierra sin pan" ["Land Without Bread"], Spain, 1932, view in class, 27 mins. FLLRC Catalog ID: #SP 144; the Humanities Film Office, has a copy under English title, and Hayden has a copy, Hayden Library - Humanities Media | VIDEO PN1997.C46 1990); discuss Chapters 1-14, in Mi último suspiro.

Read: 3.1. "Primeras exhibiciones," del material docente preparado sobre "Media: Cine" por el Ministerio de Educación del Gobierno de España
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag01.html#
3.2 "Barcelona como motor"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag02.html#
3.3 "Los años 20"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag03.html#
3.4 "Del mudo al sonoro"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag04.html#
3.5. "Los años 30"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag05.html#
3.6. "Postguerra cinematográfica"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag06.html#
3.7 "Conversaciones de Salamanca"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag07.html#
3.8 "España: un gran plató"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag08.html
3.9 "Cambio en los 60"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag09.html
3.10 "El debate de la transición"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag10.html#
3.11 "El cine de los ochenta"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag11.html#
3.12 "El cine de los 90"
http://recursos.cnice.mec.es/media/cine/bloque3/pag12.html#

- Fri., Sept. 30 - Reading notes for Chapters 1-14, Mi último suspiro, due to professor as e-mail attachment by 5:00 p.m.


- Shot sequence of "Las Hurdes" (class website)
- Luis Buñuel, "Tierra sin pan" (Lecture presented in New York in 1940), and "El cine, instrumento de poesía" (Lecture presented in Mexico in 1953), in *Escritos de Luis Buñuel*, pp. 59-71 (class website).

- By today, students need to have informed the professor by e-mail of their film choice for their 10-page paper due Fri., Dec. 16. Students can choose among the following six Spanish-language films: "Los olvidados," "El," "Ensayo de un crimen," "Nazarín," "Viridiana," and "El ángel exterminador." In order to familiarize yourselves with the arguments of the films you haven't seen yet, go to Hayden and consult Agustín Sánchez Vidal, *El mundo de Luis Buñuel* (On Reserve). Go to the "Filmografía" on p. 281, and then read the resúmenes argumentales for these films. The summaries appear chronologically, according to the films' release dates. Students will give two oral reports on their film of choice, one to present the film to the class and help lead class discussion, and the second on their 10-page paper project. The first oral report will be on "Los olvidados," and will take place one week from today.

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WEEK V

7. Mon., Oct. 3 - "Los olvidados" (Mexico, 1950, view in class, 88 mins. FLLRC Catalog ID: SP 116; has a VHS copy).

Read: Chapters 15-17, "Ateo, gracias a Dios," "De Nuevo América," and "Hollywood, continuación y fin" (pp. 201-29), plus Chapter 18 "México (1946-1961)" (only pp. 231-38), in *Mi último suspiro*.

8. Wed., Oct. 5 - Continue discussing "Los olvidados."

Read: Chapter 2, "Family Romances: Buñuel's Mexican Melodramas," pp. 36-43, and 2.3 "Los olvidados and the 'Uncanny'," 72-89, in Evans (class website).


STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "Los olvidados." (Jaime Reyes)
Fri., Oct. 7 - Reading notes for Chapters 15-17, and part of Chapter 18, Mi último suspiro, due to professor as e-mail attachment by 5:00 p.m.

WEEK VI
Mon., Oct. 10 - Columbus Day - Holiday


WEEK VII


STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "El angel exterminador" (Elizabeth Hawkins & Jacqueline Soegaard)


- Fri., Oct. 21 - Reading notes for pp. 280-82 and 239-71, Mi último suspiro, due to professor as e-mail attachment by 5:00 p.m.

WEEK VIII


STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "El"
13. Wed., Oct. 26 - "Ensayo de un crimen" (Mexico, 1955, view in class, 91 mins. FLLRC Catalog ID: SP 137=a video w/out sub-titles and a DVD w/sub-titles).


WEEK IX

14. Mon., Oct. 31 - Continue discussing "Ensayo de un crimen."

STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "Ensayo de un crimen" (Ignacio Bachiller and José M. de la Llera)

15. Wed., Nov. 2 - "Nazarin" (Mexico, 1958, view in class, 97 mins., FLLRC Catalog ID: SP 136 and SP 136B).

WEEK X


STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "Nazarín." (Alejandro Arambula and María Escobar)

Second half of class: See "Simon del desierto" (Mexico, 1965, 42 mins. FLLRC Catalog ID: SP 201)


-At the website <http://cvc.cervantes.es/actcult/bunuel>, on the main page, next to "Indice," click on "Su obra y su tiempo." View and read the contents of the seventh title, "El éxito de una película prohibida: Viridiana (1961)" (plus 4 image pages).

WEEK XI

18. Mon., Nov. 14 - Continue discussing "Viridiana."

STUDENT GROUP REPORT ON "Viridiana" (Vinati Kaul and Tzipora Wagner)

WEEK XII


21. Wed., Nov. 23 - "Tristana" (Spain, 1970, view in class, 105 mins., FLLRC Catalog ID: SP 152)


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WEEK XIII

22. Mon., Nov. 28 - Continue discussing "Tristana."


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WEEK XIV

24. Mon., Dec. 5 - Continue discussing "Ese oscuro objeto del deseo."

25. Wed., Dec. 8 - Individual oral reports on topics of 10-page papers. ("Los olvidados," and "El ángel exterminador.")

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WEEK XV

26. Mon., Dec. 12 - Individual oral reports on topics of 10-page papers. ("Ensayo de un crimen," and "Nazarín").

27. Wed., Dec. 14 - Individual oral reports on topics of 10-page papers. ("Viridiana").

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-Fri., Dec. 16 - Ten-page paper due as Word attachment to e-mail, by 5:00 pm.
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. During the semester, students also read Buñuel's autobiography, Mi último suspiro (originally published in French, in 1982, as Mon dernier soupir), and on Fridays, a student or students (collaboratively) write and place reading notes, in Spanish, on the course class site. Each student only has to write reading notes once during the semester.

2. If enrollment numbers permit, all students collaborate, at least in pairs, in teaching one of the six Spanish-language films indicated for the ten-page final papers; these are the STUDENT GROUP REPORTS. By 5:00 pm. By 5:00 pm., a week from the Friday following the report in class, each presenter will send professor, as a Word attachment to an e-mail, a minimum of 750 words in Spanish, in essay form (double-spaced), explicating/interpreting one scene from the movie taught. No two students should write on the same scene; thus students will consult with each other and the professor well ahead of time about their scene of choice.

3. Each student will independently write a ten-page paper in Spanish on the film on which he or she gave an initial oral report. Students will be expected to have read a minimum of three interpretative articles on their film, and these articles will be chosen from a list given them by the professor. (The list will include the article or articles on the film already read and discussed in class.) This paper will be due, as a hard copy and as a Word attachment (Word.doc, only) to an e-mail, by 5:00 pm. on Friday, Dec. 16.

Added Nov. 22: All final papers will include a bibliography, which must follow the format prescribed by the Modern Language Association of America (MLA). References to specific secondary texts can appear in the text, within parentheses (Author's last name, date of text if there is more than one by the same author, and the relevant page number/s) or within foot or endnotes, which must also follow the format of the MLA. Where effective, points in your paper should be illustrated by fotografías (still shots), which you can find on class website or Google Images. I recommend the use of at least five still shots, but these should be well chosen and should not be placed in the paper gratuitously.

The oral presentations of the most important points in your nearly finished 10-page paper should last between 10 and 15 minutes. Each presentation will be followed by 10 to 15 minutes of class feedback during which your audience will
respond to your arguments, suggesting which points could be made more clearly, what needs to be further documented, etc. The audience will also be invited to suggest additions to your paper or simply to reflect on the implications of your ideas as presented. This will be the final opportunity for the class to discuss these five films by Buñuel: "Los olvidados," "El ángel exterminador," "Ensayo de un crimen," "Nazarín" and "Viridiana."

There will be no final exam.

ORAL REPORTS:
During the semester, each student will give two formal oral reports, both on different aspects of the same film.

DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE:
1. Attendance* and quantity and quality of active participation in class discussions = 40%
2. Written notes on Mi último suspiro = 5%
3. First oral (student group) report = 10%
4. 750-word min. essay on scene from film = 10%
5. Oral report on 10 pp. paper = 10%
6. 10 pp. paper = 25%

Total = 100%

*An unexcused absence for more than one class will negatively affect your final grade.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:
According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, to plagiarize is "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (a created production) without crediting the source ~vi: to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source."

This includes copying something out of a book, newspaper, journal or any other printed source, as well as electronic resources such as the World Wide Web without the appropriate acknowledgement. According to this definition, plagiarism would also include the following:

• using material created by another student at your school or anywhere else and passing it off as your own (with or without their consent).
• using a paper-writing "service" which offers to sell written papers for a fee.
• translations (with or without translation software) of texts from other languages and submitting them as your own work.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. Students should be aware that they will be severely penalized if caught engaging in any form of plagiarism. If you have any questions or doubts about how to document the sources of your ideas, please consult your instructor. For
further information you can consult the MIT Libraries: What is plagiarism and how to avoid it.