

SPANISH 494
Gazing José Martí: Interpreting a National Icon Through Literature & Visual Arts
M-W 12:00-13:15, LL265

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Course Description:

The omnipresence of José Martí is an unavoidable topic to experience when referring to the history of America. The abundant critique of his literary works and extensive iconography, along with the overuse of his quote, display the effectiveness of the construction processes of a cultural symbol. Martí represents the permanence of a 19th Century icon that is still alive, still attractive and performing an act of memory and marketing that prevails until today. In addition to the literary analysis of some of José Martí representative works (Poetry, Theatre, Chronicles and Diary), this course incorporates an approach to the examination of the representation of Martí's image in Visual Arts in order to observe the elements and patterns in the evolution of the depiction of a national icon.

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Course objectives around Martí's works

- To recognize and become familiar with some of the representative works of Martí in a variety of genres.
- Locate the historical and literary coordinates where the works of Martí emerge.
- To identify some of Martí's thematic and stylistic contributions to the history of Hispanic literature.
- To dialogue and express a personal opinion on Martí's works while appraising the cultural & political relevance of his literary contributions while relating his works with that of contemporary authors.

Course objectives around the construction of a national iconic figure:

- To locate, evaluate and identify the participating elements and the processes of construction of a national figure.
- To describe and evaluate visual art around Martí before and during the Cuban Revolution.
- To locate and evaluate new trends on José Martí's artistic representations (on digital platforms)
- To connect and interpret visual & literary narratives in order to generate a personal analysis that questions the functions of a national myth.
- To formulate a critical opinion on the relation between politics & culture that position Martí as a transnational icon.

Evaluation:

Critical reports (3) 30%:

- Each student will have the responsibility to work on an analytical 2 pages essay on a preferred reading assignment. This assignment will consist on a rough draft and a final version. No late work will be accepted after the deadlines, which are indicated on the daily calendar.

Presentations 15%

Students are required to prepare two presentations during the course:

1- Collaborative presentation (10%): Based on the syllabus content and distributed at the beginning of the semester, students in pairs will present, analyze and lead discussion about a reading or assigned topic.

2- Individual presentation (5%): Each student will prepare a 5 minutes presentation on the final research project. Title, relevance and methodology will be part of the exposition. This assignment will be distributed on the final week of classes.

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In class participation: 10%

Students must be prepared BEFORE class with assignments and readings completed by the date indicated on the class schedule. It is expected that students arrive early, be prepared with notes and briefly intervene during the discussions. **Please turn off or silence your phone before class begins.**

Final research project: 25%

First Draft: *10%

Final Draft: 15%

Each student will work during the semester on the development of a research project on a national icon in Latin America. The main focus of this assignment is to analyze the process of construction of a particular cultural character in Visual Arts as well as in Literature. Therefore, each student will be in charge of gathering, evaluating and elaborating a 10 pages article on the representation of the chosen icon.

Students are expected to complete a 1500 words critical essay in order to demonstrate an acquired ability to analyze the components that participate in the building of a national emblem. In addition to the description of the process, each student is expected to show the familiarity with the interdisciplinary research tools while defending a main argument on the selected Latin American icon.

Quizzes (in class examinations): 20%

Examinations will be scheduled after each unit is completed (dates are listed on the assignment calendar) Quizzes may be taken late only when a legal excuse is shown in writing: a medical excuse from a doctor, a court summons, etc...

Course materials:

Readings for each week will be available on a PDF version on eCampus. Also, most of the materials are available through the TAMU library system. Please make sure to follow the daily calendar given the first day of classes. Electronic devices will be accepted as well as printed versions of the documents are encouraged.

Note: videos and documentaries will be only projected in class.

SCHEDULED UNITS

Each unit is to be covered in 2.5 weeks

Students will receive a detailed calendar on the first day of classes

Unit 1. Chronicle

**Course introduction: Expectations. Objective. Methodology.
Assignments, calendar and evaluation.**

Main works (selected fragments)

- 1-Martí in the U.S.: Patria, PRC
- 2-Martí in México: *La Revista Universal, El Federalista*
- 3-Martí in Spain: *El presidio político en Cuba*

Visual Representations in class

1. Microfilms. Hemeroteca Digital de la ciudad de México. Online. HNCM
2. Film: *El ojo del canario (fragment)*

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Schulmann, Ivan. *El modernismo hispanoamericano*. Centro editor de América Latina, 1969.
2. Mirzoeff Nicholas, Introduction. *The Visual culture reading*. Psychology Press, 2002
3. Rotker, Susana. *The American Chronicles of José Martí: Journalism and Modernity in Spanish America*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000.

Unit 2. Poetry

Main works (selection)

1. Versos sencillos
2. La edad de oro
3. Ismaelillo

Visual Representations in class

1. *Martí Song for Freedom-Martí y sus versos por la libertad*. Emma Otheguy. Children Book Press, 2017.
2. *La edad de oro*. First edition. Facsimile.
3. Graffiti on the Versos sencillos: From musicalization to urban art.

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Morales, Carlos Javier. *La poética de José Martí y su contexto*. Madrid: Verbum, 1994.
2. Rama, Ángel. *Las máscaras democráticas del modernismo*. Montevideo: Arca, 1985.

Unit 3. Theatre and Film

Main works

1-*Abdala*

2-*Crónicas teatrales (Fragments)*

Visual Representations in class (selection)

1. Muerte de un burócrata. Tomás Gutiérrez Alea. (1966)
2. El ojo del canario. Fernando Perez. (2010)

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Álvarez Álvarez, Luis. *La crítica teatral de José Martí*. La Habana: Letras Cubanas, 2010.
2. Pavis, Patrice. *De la crítica teatral ante la puesta en escena*. Traducción de María Teresa Ortega Sastrique. Conjunto: Revista de Teatro Latinoamericano. La Habana: Casa de las Américas, n. 144, p. 8-13, jul.-set.
3. *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Unit 4. Intimate Martí: Diaries

Main works

1- *Diario de Cabo haitiano a Dos Ríos*

2- Selected Letters

Visual Representations in class (selection)

1. Páginas del diario. José Massip
2. Film: La Rosa Blanca (fragment)
3. Selection of Martí's letters and photographs

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Emilio Bejel: *Images of Memory and Mourning*.
2. Atencio, Caridad. *Los Cuadernos de apuntes de José Martí o la legitimación de la escritura*.

Unit 5. Political Discourse

Main works

1-Nuestra América

2-Manifiesto Montecristi

Visual Representations in class

1. *Marcha de las antorchas 1990. Acto de recordación de José Martí. 27 de enero 1990. Speech by Fidel Castro on national T.V.*
2. *Visual art selection in Cuba: Special Period in Time of Peace: Sandra Ramos, Michel Blázquez and Franklin Alvarez Fortún (Painting, Art installation, Sculptures and busts (Photography selection)*
3. *Cult Hero by Ernesto Sánchez.*
4. *Recent digital perspectives on Martí: the case of Aldo -Maldito- Menéndez*

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Lillíán Guerra: The myth of Martí (Introduction)
2. Emilio Bejel: Images of Memory and Mourning
3. Anderson, Benedict: *Comunidades imaginadas. Reflexiones sobre el origen y la difusión del nacionalismo.* México: Fondo de cultura Económica, 1993.

Unit 6. Digital Humanities: Final reflections on recent depictions of a National Emblem

Main works & Visual Representations

- Presentations of Final Projects
- Final reflections

Complementary required readings (selected chapters)

1. Lillíán Guerra: *The myth of Martí*
2. Emilio Bejel: *Images of Memory and Mourning*
3. López, Alfred J. *José Martí and the Future of Cuban Nationalisms.* Gainesville:University Press of Florida, 2006. Oriente, 2003.
4. Rojas Rafael. *José Martí: la invención de Cuba.* Madrid: Colibrí, 2010.

Bibliography

- Álvarez Álvarez, Luis. *La crítica teatral de José Martí*. La Habana: Letras Cubanas, 2010.
- Anderson, Benedict: *Comunidades imaginadas. Reflexiones sobre el origen y la difusión del nacionalismo*. México: Fondo de cultura Económica, 1993.
- Atencio, Caridad. Los Cuadernos de apuntes de José Martí o la legitimación de la escritura. La Habana: Ediciones Unión, 2012.
- Bejel Emilio: *José Martí: Images of Memory and Mourning*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Guerra Lillian. *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalism in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba*. University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
- López, Alfred J. *José Martí and the Future of Cuban Nationalisms*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006.
- Martí, José. *Obras Completas*. Edición crítica. La Habana: Centro de Estudios Martianos, 2010.
- Mirzoeff Nicholas, Introduction. *The Visual culture reading*. Psychology Press, 2002.
- Montero, Susana. *La cara oculta de la identidad nacional*. Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2003.
- Morales, Carlos Javier. *La poética de José Martí y su contexto*. Madrid: Verbum, 1994.
- Rotker, Susana. *The American Chronicles of José Martí: Journalism and Modernity in Spanish America*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000.
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- Otheguy Emma. *Martí's Song for Freedom-Martí y sus versos por la libertad*. Children Book Press, 2017.
- Pavis, Patrice. *De la crítica teatral ante la puesta en escena*. Traducción de María Teresa Ortega Sastrique. Conjunto: Revista de Teatro Latinoamericano. La Habana: Casa de las Américas, n. 144, p. 8-13, jul.-set.
.-*Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
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