



TransCanadian Literatures: Representations of the City

3 ECTS

1st semester

Dr. Ana María Fraile Marcos
Universidad de Salamanca
anafra@usal.es

Aims and Objectives

The myth of the wilderness and the North has haunted the Canadian imaginary to the extent that Canadians think of their national distinctiveness in terms of Nature. This emphasis on nature led the thematic criticism of the 1960s and 1970s to construct a literary canon where the natural landscape figures prominently, to the detriment of the cityscape and the representation of urban life and its influence on Canadian identity. All this, disregarding the fact that 80 per cent of Canadians live in cities and that the city has long played a paramount role in the production of Canadian literature.

This course aims to find answers to the following questions:

- Why have the city and urbanism been absent so often from critical discussions about Canadian literature and culture?
- What is unique, or not, about the literary representation of the city in Canada?
- How do literary representations of the city affect the way Canadians think of themselves?
- How does the urban impinge on the aesthetic?
- How does Canadian literature negotiate the transitions between the local, the regional, the national and the global in aesthetic, cultural and political terms?

Course Program

1. Critical approaches to the city: urban theory and philosophies of space, sociology, cultural studies, globalization theory.
2. The Turn to the City in Canadian Literature and criticism: from the cultural nationalism of the 1960s and '70s to the urban glocality of the new millenium.
3. Representations of interstitial spaces in the city in contemporary Canadian literature

Required Readings

A selection of texts will be specified at the beginning of the course for class discussion on given dates. All the information will be available via STUDIUM and the students' use of the online platform will be monitored by the instructor. Among the set critical readings are:

- Bauman, Zygmunt. "City of Fears, City of Hopes." London: Goldsmith College, University of London, 2003.
- Edwards, Justin D and Douglas Ivison, eds. "Introduction: Writing Canadian Cities." *Downtown Canada: Writing Canadian Cities*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2005. 3-13.
- Rosenthal, Caroline. "Articulating Urban Spaces." *New York and Toronto Novels after Postmodernism: Explorations of the Urban*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2011. 49-72.
- Sugars, Cynthia & Laura Moss. eds. "Contemporary Canada, 1985-Present: The Local, the National, and the Global." *Canadian Literature in English: Texts and Contexts*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, 2009. 517-538.

Methodology

Class meetings will consist of lectures, group discussions, and oral presentations.

Assessment

- Students are required to read each assigned text before class and come prepared to discuss it.
- In addition, each student will have to prepare two oral presentations, one on a critical text and another on a literary work.
- Students will be evaluated on a combination of their participation in class, their oral presentations, and written assignments. There will be a final paper or project.
 - Participation and oral presentations: 50 %
 - Final project 50%

The final project proposal will be presented in class on DECEMBER 19th

Bibliography and Resources

- Augé, Marc 1992. *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. London and New York: Verso.
- Bachelard, Gaston 1994 (1958). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston. Beacon Press.
- Ball, John Clement, Robert Viau, and Linda Warley, eds. *Writing Canadian Space/Écrire l'espace Canadien. Studies in Canadian Literature* 23.1 (1998).
- Bauman, Zygmunt. "City of Fears, City of Hopes." London: Goldsmith College, University of London, 2003.
- Brydon, Diana and Marta Dvorak, eds. *Crosstalk: Canadian and Global Imaginaries in Dialogue*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012.
- Castells, Manuel. 1977 (1972). *The Urban Question*. London: Arnold.
- Cavell, Richard. *McLuhan in Space: A Cultural Geography*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2003.
- .. "McLuhan, Glocalism, and Canadian Literature"

http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~prime/pdf/prime27/p123-130_Cavell.pdf

- Cuder Domínguez, Pilar & Belén Martín Lucas, et al, eds. *Transnational Poetics: Asian Canadian Women's Fiction of the 1990s*. Toronto, TSAR, 2011.
- Davey, Frank. *Post-national Arguments: The Politics of the Anglophone -Canadian Novel since 1967*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993.
- De Certeau, Michel. "Walking in the City." *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven F. Rendall. Berkeley: U of California P, 1984. 91-110.
- Deleuze and Guattari 1992 (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London & New York: Continuum.
- Dobson, *Transnational Canadas: Anglo-Canadian Literature and Globalization*. Waterloo (On): Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2009.
- Foucault, Michel 1986. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 22.7.
- Edwards, Justin D and Douglas Ivison, eds. *Downtown Canada: Writing Canadian Cities*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2005.
- Emberley, Julia. *Defamiliarizing the Aboriginal: Cultural Practices and Decolonization in Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2007.
- Lefebvre, Henri, 1991. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell: Oxford.
- Harris, Amy Lavender. *Imagining Toronto*. Toronto: Mansfield P, 2010.
- Kamboureli, Smaro and Roy Miki, eds. *Trans.Can.Lit: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature*. Waterloo (On): Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2007.
- Kanaganayakam, Chelva, ed. *Movable Margins: The Shifting Spaces of Canadian Literature*. Toronto: TSAR, 2005.
- Moss, Laura, ed. *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2003.
- New, William H. *Land Sliding: Imagining Space, Presence, and Power in Canadian Writing*. Toronto: University Toronto Press. 1997.
- . *Borderlands: How We Talk about Canada*. Vancouver: U of British Columbia P, 1998.
- Niedzviecki, Hal, ed. *Concrete Forest: The New Fiction of Urban Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1998.
- Omhovère, Claire. *Sensing Space: The Poetics of Geography in Contemporary English Canadian Writing*. Canadian Studies/Etudes Canadiennes (vol. 11). Peter Lang, 2007.
- Rosenthal, Caroline. *New York and Toronto novels after Postmodernism: Explorations of the Urban*. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2011.
- Sassen, Saskia. *The Global City*. New York, London, Tokyo. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Soja, Edward 1989. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso.
- Soja, Edward 2000. *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Sugars, Cynthia, ed. *Unhomely States: Theorizing English-Canadian Postcolonialism*. Broadview Press, 2004.
- Sugars, Cynthia & Laura Moss. eds. *Canadian Literature in English: Texts and Contexts*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, 2009.
- Walcott, Rinaldo. "The Desire to Belong: The politics of Texts and their Politics of Nation." *Floating the Borders: New Contexts in Canadian Criticism*. Ed. Nurjehan Aziz. Toronto TSAR, 1999. 61-79.
- Wyle, Herb. *Anne of Tim Hortons: Globalization and the Reshaping of Atlantic-Canadian Literature*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2011.