

Teatro e espetáculo em França / Theater and Spectacle in France (LAC2.99785)

4^ªs-feiras, 14.00-15.30 (C215)

6^ªs-feiras, 14.00-15.30 (C236)

Prof. Chiara Nifosi

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Atendimento: por marcação.

GENERAL PRESENTATION

In this course, students will be introduced to some of the most important works in 20th-century French theater, while also becoming familiar with its main aesthetic sources. Besides acquiring the tools to carry out a critical analysis of the texts in the syllabus, students will gain comprehensive understanding of the cultural relevance of theater in French society in said period of time, its ties to the main philosophical approaches that marked the history of the genre, and the evolution of theatrical performances over the century. More specifically, this module aims to retrace the evolution of the tragedy in 20th-century French theater. After framing the notion of tragic within classical theater, we will work towards a modern definition of this concept based on the writings of 19th-century philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Course taught in English. Reading skills in French are nonetheless recommended.

Neste curso, apresentaremos aos alunos algumas das obras mais importantes do teatro francês do século XX, bem como as suas principais fontes estéticas. Além de acederem a ferramentas de análise crítica dos textos, os alunos adquirirão uma compreensão abrangente da relevância cultural do teatro na sociedade francesa da época, do seu vínculo às principais abordagens filosóficas que marcaram a história deste género e da evolução das apresentações teatrais ao longo desse período. Mais especificamente, este módulo pretende traçar a evolução da tragédia no teatro francês do século XX. Depois de enquadrar a noção de trágico no teatro clássico, trabalharemos com vista a uma definição moderna desse conceito com base nos escritos de filósofos oitocentistas como Kierkegaard e Nietzsche. Curso em inglês. Competências de leitura em francês são, no entanto, preferenciais.

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Texts (all texts will be available on the Course website)

Anouilh, J. (1946). *Antigone*.

Beckett, S. (1957). *Fin de partie*.

Delbo, Ch. (1966). *Qui rapportera ces paroles?*

Lagarce, J.-L. (1995). *J'étais dans ma maison et j'attendais que la pluie vienne*.

Sartre, J.-P. (1943). *Les Mouches*.

Yourcenar, M. (1954). *Électre ou, La Chute des masques*.

Selection of Secondary Sources (all excerpts will be available on the Course website)

Cascetta, A. (2015). *Modern European Tragic. Exploring Crucial Plays*. Anthem Press.

Evrard, F. (1995). *Le Théâtre français du XX^e siècle*. Ellipses.

Hegel, G.W.F. (1975). *Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Art*. Clarendon Press.

Kierkegaard, S. (1992). *Either / Or. A Fragment of Life*. Penguin Books.

Nietzsche, F. (2000). *The Birth of Tragedy*. Oxford World's Classics.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be graded based on the following components:

- Course attendance and participation in the class discussion (20%): students are required to attend regularly during the semester, read the materials assigned for each class, and actively participate in the class discussion. Participation in the discussion may entail comments on the texts, questions, and written notes emailed directly to the instructor. I appreciate and am willing to reward any effort in this sense.
- Close reading midterm exam (1h30, 20%): the written midterm exam will consist in the close reading of a passage drawn from one of the plays encountered in the first five weeks of the semester.

- 10 to 15-minute oral presentation (15%): each student will choose one play in the program and present it to the rest of the class (plot, main characters, setting in time and space, etc.). The presentation must finish with two to three questions aimed at starting the class discussion. The use of Power Point and group presentations are warmly encouraged.
- Creative assignment (15%): each student will submit a creative piece consisting in the construction of a short dialogue and based on the idea of reworking preexisting sources. More details will be shared during the semester.
- Final argumentative paper (30%): each student will submit a final paper centered on an original argument based on the materials and topics discussed during the semester. Students are encouraged to meet with me to develop their argument and brainstorm ideas.

Optional Activity: *Estava em casa e esperava que la chuva viesse, Teatro da Politénica* (September 21 – October 21). For more info: <https://artistasunidos.pt/estava-em-casa-e-esperava-que-a-chuva-viesse-de-jean-luc-lagarce-2/>

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 - Introduction

Sept. 13 – Preliminary remarks

Sept. 15 – Aristotle, *Poetics* [excerpt]

Week 2 – The Modern Tragic

Sept. 20 – **No class due to the instructor’s absence for a conference**

Sept. 22 – A. Caschetta, “The Tragic, Tragedy, and the Idea of the Limit” and S. Kierkegaard, *Either / Or* [excerpt] **[longer session?]**

Week 3 – Reworking Classical Sources

Sept. 27 – F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* [excerpt]

Sept. 29 – J.-P. Sartre, *Les Mouches*

Week 4 – Reworking Classical Sources

Oct. 4 – J.-P. Sartre, *Les Mouches*

Oct. 6 – J.-P. Sartre, *Les Mouches*

Week 5 – Reworking Classical Sources

Oct. 11 – M. Yourcenar, *Électre ou, La Chute des masques*

Oct. 13 – M. Yourcenar, *Électre ou, La Chute des masques*

Week 6 – Reworking Classical Sources / Absurdism

Oct. 18 – M. Yourcenar, *Électre ou, La Chute des masques*

Oct. 20 – A. Camus, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* [excerpt] and the first cycle of the absurd

Week 7 – Exam

Oct. 25 – **Midterm Exam (1h30)**

Oct. 27 – **No class due to the instructor’s absence for a conference [optional activity?]**

Week 8 – Theater, Resistance, and Testimony

Nov. 1 – *Feriado, no class*

Nov. 3 – J. Anouilh, *Antigone*

Week 9 – Theater, Resistance, and Testimony

Nov. 8 – J. Anouilh, *Antigone*

Nov. 10 – J. Anouilh, *Antigone*

Week 10 – Theater, Resistance, and Testimony

Nov. 15 – Ch. Delbo, *Qui rapportera ces paroles ?*

Nov. 17 – Ch. Delbo, *Qui rapportera ces paroles ?*

Week 11 – The Crisis of Language on Stage

Nov. 22 – A. Artaud and the theater of cruelty [excerpt]

Nov. 24 – S. Beckett, *Fin de partie*

Sunday, Nov. 26: Submission of Creative Assignment

Week 12 – The Crisis of Language on Stage

Nov. 29 – S. Beckett, *Fin de partie*

Dec. 1 – *Feriado, no class*

Week 13 – The Crisis of Language on Stage

Dec. 6 – S. Beckett, *Fin de partie*

Dec. 8 – *Feriado, no class*

Week 14 – End-of-the-Century Familial Tragedy / Conclusion

Dec. 13 – J.-L. Lagarce, *J'étais dans ma maison et j'attendais que la pluie vienne*

Dec. 15 – J.-L. Lagarce, *J'étais dans ma maison et j'attendais que la pluie vienne*

Saturday, Dec. 16: Submission of Final Assignment

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

This is a discussion-based course. As the main instructor of this module, I am fully committed to creating for the students a safe environment based on the values of inclusion, non-discrimination and mutual respect. The course is not conceived as a rush to a good final grade, but as a thorough learning experience, after which students will have developed skills that are reusable in other contexts. The other idea underlying this course is that taking pleasure from learning is one of the several ways to survive these complicated times. Any suggestions on how to enhance such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Attendance to classes is mandatory and punctuality is highly appreciated. I acknowledge that life is often unpredictable, so I will certainly be very flexible whenever this is possible. Please notify me your absence **before** class. More than **four unexcused absences** will impact your participation grade.

If necessary, please consider the resources offered by the University of Lisbon, who can help you manage any kind of difficult or stressful situation: <https://www.lettras.ulisboa.pt/pt/estudantes/desporto-saude-e-bem-estar>.

Accessibility

The University of Lisbon is committed to ensuring equitable access to our academic programs and services. Students with disabilities who have been approved for the use of academic accommodations (see the section of the institutional website *Apoio a alunos com necessidades educativas especiais*: <https://www.lettras.ulisboa.pt/pt/estudantes/apoio-ao-estudante/estatutos-especiais>) and need accommodations to participate fully in this course should follow the procedures established by ULisboa for using them. Timely notifications are required in order to ensure that your accommodations can be implemented. Please meet with me to discuss your access needs in this class after you have completed the NEE procedures for requesting accommodations and I will be happy to fulfil your requests.

Plagiarism and academic integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on academic integrity, which applies to this course. This policy can be found in the document *Regulamento de Avaliação dos Estudantes Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa (RAE)*, Article 12, that you can find here: <https://www.lettras.ulisboa.pt/pt/sobre-a-flul/legislacao#servicos-academicos-dsa>. In the unlikely event that any concerns do arise regarding this matter, I will forward all related materials to the designated office for further review and action.

Some specific recommendations include what follows:

- In this course, students are expected to produce original work. This means that all sources used in written work (including articles, books, blog posts) should be properly cited. Please note that an important element of academic integrity is fully and correctly attributing any materials taken from the work of others. Feel free to consult with me before completing assignments if you have concerns about the correct way to reference the work of others.
- The University policy on academic honesty is central to the ideals that undergird this course. Students are expected to be independently familiar with the policy and to recognize that their work in the course is to be their own original work that truthfully represents the time and effort applied. Violations of the policy are taken seriously and will be handled in a manner that fully represents the extent of the policy and that befits the seriousness of its violation.
- Students in this class should not use AI tools in any of their course work. Using these tools constitutes a violation of the class academic integrity policy and defeats the purpose of the assignments. AI tools like ChatGPT can enhance writing, clarify grammar, and offer sample sentences. Yet, it is important to understand their limits. ChatGPT often lacks precision and contextual grasp. The blind and overconfident use of ChatGPT and other AI tools for writing, organization, or translation can hinder your growth as students and researchers.