

Metamorfosis, animalidad y voces más-que-humanas en escritoras del Río de la Plata de los siglos XX y XXI

This seminar will explore depictions of animals, metamorphosis or crossbreeding between species in the works of a corpus of authors from the Río de la Plata region in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries: Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), Silvina Ocampo (Argentina, 1903-1993), Julio Cortázar (1914-1984), Elvira Orphée (Argentina, 1922-2018), and Marosa di Giorgio (Uruguay, 1932-2004).

Metamorphoses are a literary topic with a vast and rich genealogy, from Ovid's μεταμόρφωσις and Apuleius' *Asinus aureus* to Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* (1915). It is both ancient and contemporary. In the present, it encapsulates a reflection on what it means to be human in relation to other spheres of existence, both living and non-living (vibrant matter and deaf matter, more precisely).

Metamorphoses focus on the unstable, the changing, and the multiple, and in that sense they resonate with contemporary subjectivities. From Kafka onwards, they function as a critique of the Cartesian subject of modernity, characterized by its stability and unity with itself. Insofar as the idea of a subject in control of itself, its “natural environment,” and the “savage others” associated with a state of nature is at the root of the capitalist plundering of the planet, we understand that rethinking these issues from a contemporary perspective will allow us to reflect on pressing ecological, but also social, economic, and political issues.

	Date	Subject	Bibliography
1	21/11 Part 1	Metamorphosis: An overview of a theme that runs through the history of literature. Classical studies and contemporary assessments.	Andermann, Jens (2011). “Tesis sobre la metamorfosis”. <i>Aletria. Revista de Estudios de Literatura</i> . Massey, Irving (1976). “Introduction”. <i>The Gaping Pig</i> . California, University of California Press, pp.: 1-33.
	21/11 Part 2	Introductory overview of the animal issue.	Yelin, Julieta (2020). “Biopolíticas de la interpretación” (Capítulo 2). <i>Biopoéticas para las biopolíticas</i> . Latin America Research Commons. Giorgi, Gabriel (2014). “Introducción: Una nueva proximidad”. <i>Formas comunes</i> .

			Buenos Aires, Eterna Cadencia. (11-36)
	21/11 Part 3	The dichotomy between civilization and barbarism in 19th-century Argentine literature: What role does the human-animal conflict play?	- Sarmiento, Domingo F. (1845). “Capítulo V”. <i>Facundo</i>. - Rodríguez, Fermín (2013). “El ser llamado animal: una fábula del siglo XIX”. <i>No retornable</i>. Buenos Aires.
	21/11 Part 4	<i>El niño pez</i> by Lucía Puenzo as one of the “new proximity” cases.	- Puenzo, Lucía ([2004] 2008). “Capítulo 1” <i>El niño pez</i>. Rosario, Beatriz Viterbo.
2	22/11 Part 1	Cont. <i>El niño pez</i> by Lucía Puenzo – Reflexions on hybridity, metamorphoses and different forms of discrimination.	- Reflexion on fragments of the movie <i>El niño pez</i> (2009).
	22/11 Part 2	The crisis of the “animal metaphor.” What does the human-animal contagion mean after the crisis of the self in the 20th century?	Yelin, Julieta. 2015a. “Kafka y el ocaso de la metáfora animal. Notas sobre la voz narradora en ‘Investigaciones de un perro’”. <i>La letra salvaje. Ensayos sobre literatura y animalidad</i> . Rosario: Beatriz Viterbo, 59-97.
	22/11 Part 3	The fantasy/neo-fantasy genre in Argentina and the Río de la Plata region. Silvina Ocampo, Elvira Orphée. Cortázar, Borges, Bioy Casares.	- Cortázar, Julio. “El sentimiento de lo fantástico”. <i>Clases de literatura</i>. Madrid, Alfaguara, 2013.
	22/11 Part 4	The fantasy/neo-fantasy genre in Argentina and the Río de la Plata region. Continuation.	- Cortázar, Julio. “Axolotl”. <i>Final del juego</i>. (1956). “Lejana”. <i>Bestiario</i>. (1951).
3	28/11 Part 1	Silvina Ocampo: the animal voice, the metamorphic.	- Ocampo, Silvina. “Hombres animales enredaderas”, “Kief”. <i>Los días de la noche</i>. (1970). “Fuera de las jaulas”. <i>Las invitadas</i>. (1961) - García, M. (2008). Pasiones metamórficas: la transformación en algunos relatos inéditos de Silvina Ocampo. <i>Trilce. Revista De Filología Hispánica</i>, 24(2), 306-322.
	28/11 Part 2	Silvina Ocampo and the reception/appropriation of Kafka in Argentina.	- Yelin, Julieta (2010). “Kafka en Argentina”. <i>Hispanic Review</i>, SPRING, Vol. 78, No. 2. University of Pennsylvania Press
	28/11 Part 3	Elvira Orphée: fantastic, unorthodox, forgotten?	Orphée, Elvira (1981): “Las viejas fantasiosas”. <i>Las viejas</i>

			<i>fantasiosas</i> . Buenos Aires, Emecé.
	29/11 Part 1	Student presentations.	
4	29/11 Part 2	The animal subject in 20th-century Uruguayan literature. The unclassifiable work of Marosa di Giorgio.	- Garbatzky, Irina (2008). "Un cuerpo poético para Marosa di Giorgio". <i>Orbis Tertius</i> . vol. 13 no. 14.
	29/11 Part 3	The transmedia/hybrid as a correlate of crossbreeding between species in Marosa di Giorgio's "queer gender/genre" (Amícola).	- Proyección de pieza de video arte "Lobo" (Di Giorgio, Eduardo Casanova).

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to complete the course, class attendance and participation are strongly recommended. At the end of the course (29/11) students will prove their acquired knowledge through an oral presentation in class. This exposition is mandatory to pass the course and it must adhere to the following principles:

- An approximate duration between 25 and 30 minutes.
- A material proof of the presentation that will be delivered as part of the evaluation: e. g. written structure, summary or Power Point.
- This exposition will include a short analysis of one of literary pieces of one of the authors studied in the course (see list of options below), within the theoretical-historical framework of the Seminar.

Silvina Ocampo:

"La hija del toro", "Isis" (*Las invitadas*: 1961)

"El sombrero metamórfico" (*Y así sucesivamente*: 1987)

Julio Cortázar:

"Axolotl", "La noche boca arriba", "Carta a una señorita en París".

Marosa di Giorgio:

Los papeles salvajes, *Misales*.

This list is only an example; students may choose works outside of it, provided they are authors from the period and countries covered.