

The Art, Language, and Culture of Flamenco (LIGN 187GS - 4 Units)

Syllabus

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Proposed UCSD Global Seminar – Cádiz, Spain

Prerequisites: Upper-division standing

This course will introduce the structure, history, language and culture of flamenco - a highly structured music and dance form from Southern Spain (Andalucía). The course will integrate ethnomusicology, linguistics, and history to gain an understanding of the Andalusian and Andalusian Gypsy cultures that gave rise to this complex art form.

The course will be roughly structured around two topics: FLAMENCO STRUCTURE and FLAMENCO HISTORY. These topics will be approached from the methodology of linguistics - the structure will be described in terms similar to the description of grammars. We will see how this structure informs communication among flamenco performers. We will also use historical reconstruction to gain insight into the evolution of the art form. In addition, aspects of Andalusian and Gitano language and culture will be discussed.

Since the course will be conducted in English and no knowledge of Spanish will be assumed, the readings will be in English (but readings in Spanish will be mentioned and summarized in lectures, including *Mil y una noches de Pericón de Cádiz* – a narrative about the flamenco scene in Cádiz in the early 20th century). Coursework will include readings, a midterm, video/audio labwork, a group class presentation, a quiz, and a final paper.

This course is the companion course for my other proposed global seminar on Spanish dialectology. Flamenco is integrally tied with the language and culture of Andalucía, particularly in the province of Cádiz. Therefore, these courses complement one another. In addition, particular attention will be paid to the content of flamenco verses. These verses represent a type of folk poetry and, therefore, contain significant cultural references. They are also composed in Andalusian Spanish, hence, the language of flamenco dovetails with the content of the dialectology course.

Cádiz, both the city and the province, are at the very epicenter of flamenco culture. Holding this seminar in Cádiz opens up numerous possibilities for fieldtrips, excursions, and performances. Many flamenco festivals take place throughout Andalucía during the summer. Additionally, numerous *peñas* (social clubs) sponsor regular public performances – there are several important *peñas* in Cádiz proper, and even more in Jerez de la Frontera (a short train ride from Cádiz). Also in Jerez is a publicly-accessible flamenco research institute, *Centro Andaluz de Flamenco*, where students can access books, articles, documents, recordings, and films.

This course will satisfy an area studies upper-division elective for Spanish Language Studies majors. It also counts as an upper-division elective for the Linguistic major.

Topics:

Week 1: Flamenco Structure

Three flamenco arts:

Cante (singing)

Toque (guitar playing)

Baile (dancing)

the role of *jaleo* (percussion, shouts, etc.)

The forms of flamenco:

criteria for distinguishing the 50+ *palos* (forms):

aire - *cante jondo* vs. *cante chico*

compás (rhythmic patterns)

melodies

letras (verses)

READING: Howson, Chapters 1-3; Pericón, Pohren pp. 48-89

Week 2: The forms – continued

READING: Pohren pp. 99-159, Howson 4-5

Week 3: QUIZ on forms

Flamenco venues:

fiesta (private gatherings, personal and paid)

cuadro (club performances)

festival (larger-scale public performances)

teatro (choreographed theatrical productions)

READING: Pohren, 90-96; Howson 5-8

Week 4: Flamenco History

Moors, Jews, Christians, and Gitanos - the post-reconquest cultural landscape

The early origins of flamenco (1700s- mid 1800s):

- *Gitanista* versus *Antigitanista* positions

- *Cante Gitano* versus *Cante Andaluz*

The emergence of commercial flamenco (mid-1800s):

- *Café Cantantes*

- Melding of *cante gitano* and *cante andaluz*

- Flamenco guitar

- Flamenco dance

The Golden Age of flamenco (late 1800s):

- *Cante libre* (*Malagueñas*, *Fandangos*, *Cantes de Levante*)

- *Bulerías*

- *Cantes de Ida y Vuelta*

- Mellizo, Breva, Chacón, Torre, Los Pavones
- Beginnings of solo flamenco guitar
- Basic dance forms established

READING: Leblon

Week 5: History, continued

The Opera Flamenca Period (1920s-1950s):

- *Opera Flamenca*
- *Antigitanismo*
- Lorca, de Falla, and the Granada *Concurso*
- Theatrical dance companies
- Concert flamenco guitar
- Carmen Amaya

Resurgence of *Cante Gitano* (1960s):

- *Mairenismo*
- Foreign aficionados, Diego del Gastor and Morón de la Frontera
- Tourist Flamenco

The Paco/Camarón Revolution (1970s-1980s):

- Madrid as a flamenco melting-pot
- The rise and fall of *tablaos*
- the role of *festivales*

Flamenco Nuevo (1980s-present):

- Paco adopts a jazz format
- Flamenco's popularity increases
- traditional flamenco in 'neo- *café cantantes*'
- *sevillanas* discos
- *flamenco nuevo* (Ketama, Gipsy Kings, Pata Negra, and others)

PAPER DUE

READING: Pohren, pp.13-36

- Howson, Gerlad. 1994. *The Flamencos of Cádiz Bay*, The Bold Strummer, Westport, CT.
- Leblon, Bernard. 2003. *Gypsies and Flamenco: The Emergence of the Art of Flamenco in Andalusia*, Interface Collection Volume 6. Gypsy Research Centre, University of Herfordshire Press, Hatfield.
- Pericón de Cádiz (José Luis Ortiz Nuevo) *Mil y una historias de Pericón de Cádiz* (translation).
- Pohren, Donn E. 2005. *The Art of Flamenco*. The Bold Strummer, Westport, CT.