

## **What Poetry Knows (CL 9011)**

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The course will focus on the works of six poets: Dante, Baudelaire, Pessoa, Caproni, J. Guillén and Ashbery. These works have in common an enquiry of philosophical nature concerning the criteria that define knowledge and the very possibility of its acquisition, possession and transmission. The corollary of this enquiry is a common tension to define the space occupied by poetry amongst other cultural instruments that also contribute to the creation and the communication of such a knowledge. The poets conduct their exploration from a specific angle, that is: by reflecting on the possibilities of understanding and expressing man's relationship with his own world.

The course will aim at illustrating how the specificity of the poetic discourse brings its own contribution to the development of this philosophical enquiry and increases the intelligibility of the object to which it is applied. Two main lines will guide our monographic lecture of the work of each author. The first line of analysis, "how to know poetry", examines the way in which an increment of knowledge is produced by the interaction between the work and the cognitive universe of its reader. To do that, we examine the expressive strategies used in the poetic text, as well as the resulting behavior of a 'model reader'. The second line of research, "how and what poetry knows", analyses rhetorical and stylistic procedures peculiar to poetry and focuses on the thematisation of knowledge in a variety of compositions.

The texts will be considered in their own cultural space and time and the assumption according to which the poetic discourse possesses a universal and a-temporal nature will be object of discussion.

Readings issued from theoretical and critical approaches to literature, among which Hermeneutics, Reader Response Criticism, Semiotics, Rhetoric, etc. will support our analysis of the texts.