In this course we will analyze the role that literature and the arts have played in Spain, from the consolidation of consensual democracy in the 1980s (the period of “democratic normalization”) to the recent economic and social crisis that has shaken the regime of 1976. We will start by exploring theoretically some key issues that will be examined throughout the semester: the ideas of democratic consensus and dissent; the relationship between aesthetics and politics; the impact of cultural policies on cultural production; the role that artistic practices can play in advancing projects of social justice and radical democracy. Along those lines, we will read works by J. Rancière, Habermas, C. Mouffe, R. Esposito, Laval and Dardot, Martin-Barbero, S. Federici, among others. The course will then focus on the type of national imaginary constructed in canonical works of the democratic period, as well as on recent alternative, often collaborative, cultural practices whose goal is also a different conceptualization of “the common”, unrelated to a specific patrimony or national brand. While the course will be focused on Spanish cultural production, its broader implications lead to a type of inquiry that is trans-national and interdisciplinary (final papers can be adapted to a number of fields and interests). The class will be taught in Spanish.