# Culture and Civilisation in English-Speaking Countries

## Prof. Giuliana Bendelli

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to explore the historical, cultural, literary, and linguistic aspects of the English-speaking world. It will start from a methodological premise, which is necessary to introduce concepts like *culture, civilisation, interculturality, multiculturalism, local and global, journey of discovery, journey of education, migration, and exile* (with reference to the English-speaking world), and then it will focus on the experience and the representation of the concept of *journey*, intended both in physical and cultural terms, within the culture and the civilisation of the English-speaking countries.

At the end of the course, students will be able to define the main aspects of this subject, and follow an individual research path based not only on their previous knowledge, but also on their specific personal interests. In fact, this course has a transversal nature, meaning that it is addressed to students of different curricula (this aspect will be taken into account during the final assessment).

***COURSE CONTENT***

*Culture and civilisation on a journey.* The course will analyse the vast and varied historical, cultural, literary, and linguistic experience in the English-speaking countries, using the filter of journey as a literary metaphor. The concept of journey represents a physical and mental experience of confrontation, growth, and knowledge. The course aims to analyse the main trends in the evolution of the relationship between literary culture and English-speaking civilisation, and examine classical, modern, and contemporary adaptations to different genres, places, and codes of expression: from literature in prose and in verse, to the theatre, and the cinema. From Shakespeare *(The Tempest, Pericles, Prince of Tyre)* to Defoe (*Robinson Crusoe*)*,* Conrad *(The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', Heart of Darkness),* Joyce *(A Portrait of the Artist, Exiles, Ulysses)*, and Derek Walcott *(Omeros).*

The course will also focus on the idea of journey made by the text and in the text, where writing becomes the path, the transit, and the vehicle of different models, genres, cultures, and civilisations.

***READING LIST***

– W. Shakespeare, *Pericle,* *Principe di Tiro / Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (with facing-page Italian translation by Roberto Sanesi), Lemma Press Edizioni, Bergamo 2018.

– W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest.*

– D. Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe.*

*–*  J. Conrad, *The Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’.*

*–* J. Conrad, *Heart of Darkness.*

*–* J. Joyce*,* Ulysses.

and one of the following textbooks

– W. Shakespeare, *La Storia di Enrico V*/ *The life of King Henry the Fifth* (testo a fronte con traduzione di Roberto Sanesi), Jaca Book, Milano, 2023..

– M. Wollstonecraft, *Thoughts on the education of daughters.*

– J. Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*

*–* J. Joyce, *Exiles.*

– E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India.*

*–*  B. Kennelly, *The Young Are Desperate,* A&A Farmar, Dublin, 2012 (one of the two novels).

– D. Walcott, *Omeros (with facing translation),* Adelphi, Milan, 1990.

– Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind.*

If students wish to choose an alternative text from those listed here, they can arrange to do so with the lecturer.

N.B.The textbooks indicated in the reading list can be read either in English or in Italian (where the Italian translation is available).

**Critical reading list**

– G. Bendelli, *Joseph Conrad: la figura del mare*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2012.

– G.Bendelli, *La Veglia di Joyce*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2012.

– G. Bendelli, *Leggere l’Ulisse di Joyce*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2017.

All students must choose one of the three abovementioned texts.

Students are allowed to choose a different text from the following list, if they wish to:

a) the novels written by the authors Elizabeth Bowen, John Banville, Patrick McCabe, analysed in the monograph *La Veglia di Joyce*;

b) the works by the authors contained in the following two sections of the Norton Anthology (that is to say, the second volume of the edition divided into two volumes, or the volumes E and F of the edition divided into six volumes):

"Empire and National Identity";

"Nation, Race, and Language";

Students choosing different texts have to give prior notice to the lecturer.

***TEACHING METHOD***

During the course, students will be provided with the key concepts that are necessary to carry out an adequate interpretation of the texts analysed in class, and their historical, sociocultural, and literary background.

The course will be held in Italian and in English, with frontal lectures. There will be ten hours of practical classes exploring the themes, authors and works on the syllabus. These sessions will be held by the lecturer. Furthermore, the Faculty Board has allocated two ECTS credits for “other educational activities” available to students on the three-year and master’s programmes who attend a ten-hour series of seminars as part of the **Culture and Civilisation of English-Speaking Countries** course.

Further information on any other activities will be made available on the lecturer’s webpage and on Blackboard.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral assessment, to be held in English or Italian (students may choose), on the material indicated in the reading list. Since this is not an English literature course, students will be tested only on their knowledge of the topics explained in the texts. No stylistic/formal analysis will be required (unless it is necessary to explore a specific topic).

Since the course syllabus is very rich, students are invited to elaborate a personal learning path that will be evaluated (40%) together with their knowledge of the different topics. The final assessment (60%) evaluates the knowledge of the compulsory topics of the course.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

This is a preliminary description of the course, so it may be subject to changes during the academic semester. The final version of the course syllabus will be made available on Blackboard and on the lecturer’s webpage before the end of the course. Therefore students are invited to regularly check them both.

A basic/literary/historical knowledge of English culture is a useful prerequisite for attending this course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.