# From novel to film: Britain

Prof. Arturo Cattaneo; Prof. Cristina Vallaro; Prof. Federico Bellini

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

The course aims to introduce students to the relation between novels (specifically, British novels) and their adaptations for the cinema. This will be achieved through a general introduction to the rise of the novel as a genre and the differences in narrative methods between novels and films, and through a comparative study of three British novels highly representative of their historical period (the Regency, the beginning of Cold War in the late 1940s, England at the turn of the 20th century) and their filmic versions. At the end of the course, students will have the necessary tools to discuss the relation of novel to film and to analyse a given case study.

***COURSE CONTENT***

I SEMESTER

The novel as the first literary genre to be based on the modern idea of realism. The novel as the first form of popular narration. The crisis of the realistic linear narration in the twentieth century: did the cinema have anything to do with it? Modern writers: David Nicholls as novelist and writer for film and TV. David Nicholls’ *One Day*: an analysis of the novel. Lone Scherfig’s film from *One Day*: a comparative analysis. Twenty-century novels between highbrow and lowbrow culture. George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: an analysis of the novel. Michael Radford’s film from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: a comparative analysis. The Big Brother legacy of Orwell’s novel.

II SEMESTER

The relation of novels to films: realism, popular entertainment, narrative methods. How most films are based on novels. Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*: an analysis of the novel. *Pride and Prejudice* and the novel of manners. Jane Austen’s novel in film adaptations (from BBC TV series to Bollywood) and their success. Laurence Olivier’s and Joe Wright’s films from *Pride and Prejudice*: a comparative analysis.

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

J. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (any complete English edition, preferably with Introduction and suggested readings) [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/austen-jane/pride-and-prejudice-9780141439518-228655.html)

G. ORWELL, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (any complete English edition, preferably with Introduction and suggested reading) [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/orwell-george/1984-9780452284234-228658.html)

D. NICHOLLS, *One Day*, Hodder & Stuoghton, 2009 [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/nicholls-david/one-day-9780340896983-242813.html)

Suggested reading list:

A SANDERS, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, Oxford University Press (any edition)

A. Cattaneo, *A Short History of English Literature,* Mondadori Università, Milan, 2019. [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/cerca.php?s=a%20short%20history%20of%20english%20literature%20cattaneo)

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, ed*.* byM.H. Abrams and S. Greenblatt*,* W.W. Norton & Company, New York-London, 8th edition (any edition). [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/cerca.php?s=norton%20anthology)

*DVDs*

*Pride and Prejudice,* directed by Robert Z. Leonard, 1940

*Pride and Prejudice,* directed by Simon Langton, 1995 (BBC)

*Pride and Prejudice,* directed by Joe Wright, 2005

*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, directed by Michael Radford, 1984

*One Day*, directed by Lone Scherfig, 2011

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course has a duration of one academic year (3 hours per week). During the course, students will be invited to workshops dedicated to the topics or the historical periods under analysis. Further information might be made available on the lecturers’ webpage and on Blackboard before the beginning of the course. Beside studying the reading list mentioned above, students are invited to regularly check the lecturers’ webpage and Blackboard to download further material for the exam.

During the course, students will have the opportunity to meet some cinema and TV experts and compare the different transpositions through other media, such as films and TV series.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Final assessment, to be held during the official exam sessions. It will consist in an oral exam.

During the oral assessment, students will be asked to comment on the novels and on the films indicated in the course programme. Students will be tested on their ability to analyse and contextualise the novels and films (50% of total marks), also in relation to the culture of the historical periods under analysis (50% of total marks).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course is specifically addressed to students attending the curriculum “The Art and Industry of Narration”. In order to get the most out of this course and successfully complete the final assessment, students should have adequate English skills and an efficient method of study. However, the intended learning outcomes of this course will be reached progressively, with a gradual introduction of the different topics. Students with little literary background are strongly advised to consult the preparatory reading list available on the lecturerers’ webpage and on Blackboard. All students are advised to read the novels and watch the films indicated in the programme before the beginning of the course.

Students are expected to respect the Code of Ethics issued by the Catholic University and accepted during the enrolment phase.

Further information can be found on the lecturers’ webpage or on the Faculty notice board.

*Office Hours*

Prof. Arturo Cattaneo: in his office c/o the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (via Necchi, 9 third floor). Dates and times will be posted on Blackboard and on his account online in due time.

Prof. Cristina Vallaro: in her office c/o the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (via Necchi, 9 third floor). Dates and times will be posted on Blackboard and on her account online in due time.

# Module of Comparative Literature: Stories across Borders: *Prof. Federico Bellini*

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

The course aims to discuss the enduring vitality of ancient myths by analyzing several modern retellings and adaptations of ancient Greek tragedies. Even in the modern times myths and ancient Greek drama have often served as archetypes of narration, by means of which enduring existential questions, as well as new issues, have been addressed. At the end of the course, students will be able to analyse and discuss a variety of reconfigurations of ancient myths in the twentieth century.

***COURSE CONTENTS***

The notion of myth between philosophy and anthropology. Intertextuality, remediation and rewriting. Ancient and modern myths: Cesare Pavese and Roland Barthes. Myths as archetypes of narration. Over the course of the semester the following texts will be discussed: Euripides' *Medea* and the modern versions by Christa Wolf, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Lars Von Trier and Jean Anouilh; Sophocles' *Antigone* and the modern versions by Jean Anouilh and Sophie Deraspe; Sophocles's *Philoctetes* and the modern versions by André Gide and Kae Tempest.

***READING LIST[[2]](#footnote-2)***

J. ANOUILH, *Antigone*

EURIPIDES, *Medea*

A. GIDE, *Philoctetes or the Treatise on Three Ethics*

SOPHOCLES, *Antigone*

SOPHOCLES*, Philoctetes*

K. TEMPEST, *Paradise*

C. WOLF, *Medea*

Additional reading material will be made available on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures and seminars. Students will be strongly encouraged to read the texts detailed on the syllabus before each meeting so as to be able to discuss them in class. Students who will not attend classes are invited to get in touch with the lecturer before the end of the course to discuss an individual program.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The oral examination will assess the knowledge of the topics discussed in class (60% of the value of the final assessment) and the ability to analyse literary texts and to offer personal interpretations (40% of the value of the final assessment).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course does not have any specific prerequisite, apart from a general understanding of the basics of literary analysis.

*Office Hours*

By appointment.

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)