

## **Cultures of Retelling**

**5 ECTS**

**Hilary Term**

**Module convenor:** Dr Rosie Lavan

**Assessment:** Exam

**Learning Outcomes:**

On successful completion of this module, students will have:

1. Developed a clear sense of the different interpretations of ‘retelling’ this module advances, and recognised how these processes of retelling shape the way we read and respond to texts
2. Explored a diverse range of significant texts, with sensitivity to their different forms, genres, media, contexts, languages and traditions
3. Gained appreciation for the ways in which writers and texts work across boundaries of form, genre, media, context, language and tradition, and reflected carefully on the principle of comparison in literary studies
4. Considered a range of critical and theoretical perspectives on the texts and issues covered, and developed confidence in engaging with, deploying, and critiquing such perspectives
5. Identified connections between texts and issues encountered here with those raised in the study of English to date
6. Attained and enhanced skills in literary analysis which will support and enable advanced studies in English and cognate disciplines in subsequent years of the degree

### **Module Description**

On this team-taught module, students will consider the relationships between literary texts and their various retellings, across the boundaries of form, genre, media, context, language and tradition. The module covers concerns such as literature in translation; retellings and reworkings; allusion and parody; the production and circulation of texts; and literature on film. It will also address other key factors in the lives of a text, including questions of authorship, manuscripts and editions, and the evolution of its critical reception. It introduces students to a range of theoretical issues raised by these texts, and connects with other modules on the programme including Genres and Literary Theories. Using a number of significant texts from the Classical to the contemporary periods, the module incorporates many different genres from various disciplines, draws upon a range of authors from diverse backgrounds, and explores the journeys texts make across cultures and time periods.

### **Module Outline**

**1:** Introduction: Defining ‘Cultures of Retelling’ [RL]

- 2: Beyond the Source: Madame Leprince de Beaumont, *Beauty and the Beast* [Dr Pádraic Whyte]
- 3: Translations and Reworkings: Patience Agbabi, *Telling Tales* [Dr Brendan O'Connell]
- 4: Adapting Shakespeare: Nahum Tate, *The History of King Lear* [Prof Andy Murphy]
- 5: Editions: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* [Prof Aileen Douglas]
- 6: Adapting Austen: Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* [Prof Aileen Douglas]
- 7: **Reading Week**
- 8: Narrative and Fiction: Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* [Prof Stephen Matterson]
- 9: Reinventing Character: Sherlock Holmes, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* [Dr Clare Clarke]
- 10: Myth, Manuscript, and Legacy: Sylvia Plath, *Ariel: The Restored Edition* [RL]
- 11: Revising Feminisms: Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* [Dr Bernice Murphy]
- 12: Conclusions [RL]

### Indicative Bibliography

Over the course of the lectures detailed reading suggestions will be provided to help students focus their research on individual texts and authors. To begin to explore some of the issues raised by this module, the following books are recommended:

Patience Agbabi, *Telling Tales* (London: Canongate, 2015).

Derek Attridge, *The Singularity of Literature*, new edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).

Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen, *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

Umberto Eco, *The Open Text* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

Angela McRobbie, *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change* (London: Sage, 2009).

Matthew Reynolds, *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer and Petrarch to Homer and Logue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, new edn. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

Kathryn Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

John Stephens and Robyn McCallum, *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture: Traditional Story and Metanarratives in Children's Literature* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

Marina Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and their Tellers* (London: Vintage, 1994).