

Time:	Friday	9:00 – 11:50 am
Venue:	5508	
Instructor:	Xiaolu Ma	Rm.3377; hmxlma@ust.hk
Office hours:	By appointment	

Course Description

This course explores the complex interplay between literature and cinema. Selected novels, short stories and plays are analyzed in relation to their cinematic adaptations to gain an understanding of the masterpieces of world literature, and the possibilities and challenges involved in their cinematic manifestations. We will consider what happens when a variety of literary texts are made into films, and how we should approach cinema and literature differently. We will also consider the cultural backgrounds that give birth to literature and cinema: Does it make a difference if the work was written in the nineteenth century but was filmed in the twenty-first century? What happens if the story was originally written by a British writer, but filmed by a Japanese director? This course aims to help students cultivate their reading and appreciation of world literature. It also aims to deepen students' understanding of cultural hybridity and transcultural negotiation.

Intended learning outcomes:

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. analyze literary works in terms of plot structure, setting, characterization, theme, and narrative point of view
2. develop an understanding of film analysis through careful examination of cinematic adaptations of literary texts
3. understand the possibilities and challenges involved in the transposition of literature to film in different cultural contexts

Schedule

Week 1 (Feb 7)

Introduction

PART I WORDS AND PICTURES

Week 2-3 (Feb 14, 21)

The Name of the Rose (Dir: Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1986)

Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose* (1980) (Selected)

Week 4 (Feb 28)

Kafuka: Inaka Isha or *A Country Doctor* (Dir: Kōji Yamamura, 2007)

Franz Kafka, "A Country Doctor" (1917)

<https://thespace.lrb.co.uk/article/a-country-doctor-by-franz-kafka-translated-by-michael-hofmann/>

Week 5-6 (Mar 6, 13)

Ran (Dir: Akira Kurosawa, 1985)

William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (1605?) (Act 4, 5)

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/lear/full.html>

PART II LOVE IN TRANSCULTURAL CONTEXT

Week 7-8 (Mar 20, 27)

Sorekara, or *And Then* (Dir: Yoshimitsu Morita, 1985)

Sōseki Natsume, *And Then* (1909) (Chapters 16,17)

Week 9-10 (Apr 3, 17)

L'amant (Dir: Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1992)

Marguerite Duras, *The Lover* (1984) (pp.3-48)

Week 11-12 (Apr 24, May 8)

Letter from an Unknown Woman (Dir: Xu Jinglei 2005)

Stefan Zweig, "Letter From an Unknown Woman" (1922)

<https://www.prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article958>

Week 13

Presentation

Assessment

Class Participation	5%
In-class quiz	30%
Final Group Presentation	25%
Final Examination	40%

Requirements

You are expected to attend all classes and stay for the entire class. I measure class participation based on the following criteria: arriving to class on time, completing required reading (10-30 pages per week), engaging in class discussion, and respectfully listening when your classmates speak.

Class Participation

In-class participation are weighed heavily in this course. Students are expected to complete the reading assignment prior to coming to class and be ready to discuss and engage in class. You are expected to speak up 3 times in class (final presentation not included).

In-class quiz

Pop quizzes will be given from time to time at the start of class without prior notice. The quiz usually consists of 5 questions and would take no more than 15 minutes. The quizzes are used to test your understanding and comprehension of our weekly readings.

Final Group Presentation

The group presentation needs to be conducted in some form of multi-media style (PowerPoint, iMovie, video clips, etc). The duration of video clips should not exceed 30% of your presentation. Please choose a literary piece and its cinematic adaptation as your topic. Apart from content summary, please choose at least one or two details for comparison and close analysis.

Academic Honesty

Acts of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Please go to our university webpage on academic dishonesty policy (<http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/index.html>), and read definitions of plagiarism and acts of dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty will lead to a failing grade in this course.