DEFINITIVE SYLLABUS: Representations of Otherness from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century

The course accompanies students along a path through British literature from Shakespeare to today focusing on a selection of authors and texts that deal with the theme of “other” – either from or within oneself – from various historical and cultural perspectives. The course structure reflects the chronological sequence of the works analysed, each examined (in the original language and mostly through anthological samples) in its structural, stylistic and thematic aspects, always in relation to the historical and aesthetic context in which it was produced, to its genre (poetic, narrative or theatrical), as well as to specific literary and cultural phenomena that developed from the Elizabethan age to the present day. Starting from Shakespeare, through Romantic poetry and the Victorian novel up to the postcolonial discourse, students will be guided along a path of readings allowing them to understand the historical-cultural dynamics and the ideological assets underlying the ever-present differentiation between the self and the other. After studying works representative of seventeenth-century colonialism, they will be introduced to texts essential to the understanding of the discourses of Orientalism, exoticism and imperialism dominating throughout the nineteenth century. Finally, the reading of contemporary works will allow them to analyse similarities and differences in the representation of “other” after the twentieth-century processes of decolonization, which led to phenomena such as migratory flows and multiculturalism.

COMPULSORY REFERENCE TEXTS:

1) The Norton Anthology of English Literature, vols. I and II (Seventh edition) or vols C, D, E (ninth edition) (both in the Library in V.le San Michele)


C. **NEW.** Introductions to these authors: Aphra Behn, S. T. Coleridge, Mary Shelley, Alfred Tennyson, R. L. Stevenson, J. M Coetzee.

2) L. M. Crisafulli e E. Keir (a cura di) *Manuale di letteratura e cultura inglese* (Bononia UP 2009)


**Further materials recommended for non-attending students:**

The sections from the *Manuale* can be replaced with the following: R. Carter and J. McRae, *The Routledge History of Literature in English* (available from the Library). In particular:

- From the chapter “Restoration to Romanticism 1660-1789”, the sections: “The Novel” and “The Gothic and the Sublime”
- From the chapter “The Nineteenth Century”, the sections: “Victorian thought and Victorian Novels”; “Late Victorian Novels”
PRIMARY TEXTS (* = from The Norton Anthology)

Racial Otherness
- William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (full text; Arden edition or also an edition with parallel original text and Italian translation, e.g. edizione Garzanti. Both available from the Library). Extracts examined in class will be available on the online archive Elly.
- Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (extracts on Elly, but read the selected parts in the Norton Anthology)

Psychic Otherness – Romantic poetry
- Coleridge, *Christabel* (extracts on Elly, but read the selected parts in the Norton Anthology)

Psychic Otherness – the Romantic Gothic Novel [texts available from the Library]
For the exam: choose only one full text.
- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
- James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*

Psychic Otherness – the Victorian Gothic Novel [text available in the Library]
- R. L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

The Search for Otherness
- Alfred Tennyson, “Ulysses”*

Other(s)’ Perspectives: the Postcolonial Novel [texts available from the Library]
For the exam: choose only one full text.
- Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*
- M. Coetzee, *Foe*
SECONDARY MATERIALS – CRITICISM AVAILABLE AT http://elly.alef.unipr.it/2016/

CRITICAL ESSAYS

For each of the authors/texts that they will examine for the exam, students WILL HAVE TO READ (=STUDY) at least ONE CRITICAL ESSAY out of a selection of essays available on the Unipr online platform in the folder called “Critical essays to prepare the exam”.

FURTHER MATERIALS

1) All the slides shown during the lectures;
2) (only recommended, NOT compulsory, especially for non-attending students) Further materials in support of the preparation of the exam, included in the folder “Further materials for the exam”.

ORAL EXAMINATION – METHODS

THE EXAM WILL BE ENTIRELY HELD IN ENGLISH.

1) 5-6 minute presentation of a topic chosen by the student from the course contents, in particular: 1 text (or more texts, if they can be thematically linked) which must be contextualised in the historical-cultural period in which it was produced.
2) 2-3 questions on other texts included in the syllabus, also in this case to be linked with the relevant historical-cultural contexts and the authors’ lives.

FOR PRECISE ASSESSMENT METHODS SEE THE COURSE CATALOGUE IN THE UNIVERSITY WEBSITE (http://www.unipr.it/ugov/degreecourse/135394)