

AH-LITR 304 Film and Text –  
topics in theory and practice of film adaptation of literature  
Fall 2019



**Classroom no: E7**

**Class times: Mon 13:45-15:45; Thur 8:45-10:45;**

**Instructor:** dr. Ewa Tak-Ignaczak

**Email:** [e.tak-ignaczak@roac.nl](mailto:e.tak-ignaczak@roac.nl)

The instructor checks her mail every day at 19:00 except weekends.

**Tel: 655-526**

**Office no. & location: E104**

**Office hours: by appointment, preferably Mon, Wdn, Thur 11:00-13:00**

## **I. Track information**

a) Prerequisites for this course:

One of the following:

- AH-LITR 103, AH-LITR 104, AH-LITR 205
- or with the instructor's consent

a) This course serves as prerequisite for: n/a

b) Other courses which are relevant to this course – e.g. as part of a minor – recommended to students of Art History as well as students with an interest in cultural studies and journalism.

## **II Course description**

It is a researched fact that more than 50% of films have their literary originals. More than three-quarters of the American Academy Awards have been granted to films based on novels, short stories and dramas. There are plentiful examples of famous films based on no less famous literary texts, from the already hackneyed *Pride and Prejudice*, through *Bridget Jones' Diary*, *The Lord of the Rings*, the *Narnia* cycle, *A Passage to India*, *Batman*, *A Thousand and One Nights* to *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Ninety Eighty-Four* and *Hamlet*.

This close relation between literature and film becomes even clearer when we realize that film is itself a text that tells a story. Keeping this in mind, in this course we will discuss various ways in which a literary original is translated on screen, and where fidelity to the literary source is understood as but a general parameter of a broad comparative study. AH-LITR 304 Film and Text is interested in various links between literary and film narration, and in various intertextual dimensions of film adaptation. It offers instruction in a methodology of film analysis, building on students' knowledge of literature, media and popular culture. As it studies manifold transactions between the adaptor, the critic and the viewers, it is vital to every student interested in literature, media, popular culture and journalism.

Our first step is the basic formalist analysis of a literary text along with its plot, structure, character, setting, and a formalist analysis of the multi-track film (image, acting, music, sound effects) along with its "syntax" and "diction" which all contribute to its tone and themes. Our further discussions will concern various other aspects of adaptation studies,

with a special emphasis on intertextuality. Studying complex relations between literature and film, we use filmic, bibliographic and Internet resources in order to master key terminology, concepts, methods, and theories of adaptation.

The course is addressed to AH students interested in literature, journalism, media, and art history as well many SSC majors who intend to pursue qualitative social science studies at an MA level such as Cultural Analysis, Modern Sociology, Visual Anthropology and Cultural Studies.

### III Study load

The course earns students four credits (equivalent to 7.5 ECTS). The class meets twice a week for two hours. Preparation time is approximately 10 hours.

### IV Course materials

- Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan (eds.) 2007. *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge (available at MyUU)
- Corrigan, Timothy. (ed.) 2012. *Film and Literature. An Introduction and Reader*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Routledge
- Ishiguro, Kazuo. 1989. *The Remains of the Day*. Faber &Faber
- Selected theoretical and critical texts to be accessed by students independently following the instructor's advice

### V. Course organization and requirements

- Class meets twice a week for two hours
- Students are expected to check the content of the manual before every class.
- Students are required to complete all reading before the class meets and attend all classes.
- If a student is unable to attend class, he or she must in advance inform the course instructor and his/her tutor of the reason for the absence.
- Course-instructor records attendance and informs a student's tutor of absences if a student has missed four classes.
- Course instructor will deduct grades for repeated absence from class.
- If there is a valid reason for the absence, such as illness, the student is urged to contact his/her tutor as early as possible. If the student is forced to miss too many classes, s/he can apply to the Board of Studies for a withdrawal from the course.
- A student who is absent from a course for more than 6 (six) classes of that course will receive a fail grade. For full clarity, a student who has missed 6 classes and comes late to class fails the course.
- Missing more than 20 minutes from class means missing the whole class.
- An F received for any particular component cannot be compensated but will be weighed fully in determining the final grade.
- Student's presentations (PowerPoint) have to be uploaded to Moodle (Students Presentations) already **before** presentation is given. Not having done so means scoring half a grade less for the assignment.

- Students are expected to **both** use the Urkund plagiarism detector to upload their written work **and** deliver a hard copy of their work (to the instructor's pigeon hole in Eleanor or in person). The instructor does not print students' work.
- For all late assignments, one-third of a letter grade will be deducted per 24-hour period (for example, a 'B' paper that is submitted two days late will receive a 'C+' grade), up to a maximum of seven days. Any assignment that is submitted more than seven days after its original due date will receive an automatic 'F' grade. These rules do not apply if the respective student applies for, and receives, an official extension.
- Plagiarism (i.e, presenting the ideas and words of another without crediting the source, and thus passing off others' work as your own) is an extremely serious violation of the academic code of conduct. Students will fail the course if caught plagiarizing. If in doubt, please consult a member of the faculty.
- English is the only medium of communication.
- Please turn off your cell phones, laptops (etc.) before entering the classroom.
- No typing in class – unless for note taking.
- No eating in class.
- No chewing gum in class.

Courses abroad, off-campus courses, other UCR courses, field-trips and/or holidays are not accepted as a reason to miss an exam.

## VI Assessment

- exam – 20%
- essay – 5% (outline) +20% = 25%
- first presentation – 15%
- final presentation – 20%
- participation – 20% (10% +10%)

### First presentation

Students in groups of two or individually prepare a presentation on a topic of their choice.

Please note the following

- You need to sign up for your topic for presentation in class 1.
- Your presentation should take ca. 60 minutes including questions.
- Do not forget to mention the author and the title of your text.
- Prepare text-focused interesting questions that should lead to a fruitful discussion. They should not be either too speculative or enable a 'yes/no' answer.
- If you decide to introduce a film fragment into your presentation, please avoid trailers (!) because they tend to be Hollywood-generic and obscure rather than illustrate the film or text.
- If you need to summarize the text(s), always present (distribute) samples of it.
- Do not forget to acknowledge sources you have consulted.
- Do not forget to set a short meeting with the course instructor about a week before your presentation is scheduled and have your outline of your presentation ready for the meeting.

## Examination

The examination will be in-class, closed book format with essay questions. An F for any particular component cannot be compensated but will be weighed fully in determining the final grade. There is no possibility for writing the exam on days other than set in the course outline.

## Essay

It is to be delivered in both digital form (Moodle) and hard copy (instructor's mailbox in Eleanor) and has to be uploaded to Urkund for a plagiarism check.

- Quality of argumentation: convincing, original, well-exemplified, based on concepts and categories learnt in the course – 50%
- Sources – 30%
- Language and composition – 20%
- ca. 3000 words

Please note: it is your responsibility to deliver a hard copy of your essay! The instructor does not print students' essays.

## Final presentation

Students (in groups of two) prepare their final presentation departing from a selected text from Cartmell, D. and I. Whelehan. 2007. *Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. This final presentation will occupy an entire class (120 minutes) and will lead to a focused discussion in which the whole group will test their ability to apply concepts and theories explained during the course. The chosen critical text from Cartmell and Whelehan (2007) on a particular topic in adaptation (e.g., a historical period, a literary and/or film genre, style, theme etc.) serves as a starting point for a session that discusses other films and texts and possibly topics that students find particularly appealing. The presentation has to make meaningful links to theoretical texts discussed during the course and raise discussions centred around these theoretical texts' core ideas. Students are encouraged to look for extra critical / theoretical text in Corrigan's anthology *Film and Literature*, Routledge, 2012.

Mandatory components of the final presentation:

- providing a comprehensive account of the article from which you depart preparing your presentation
- demonstrating an adequate understanding of concepts and topics discussed in the first part of the course and linking your presentation to the course literature (cf. course outline and articles for first presentations)
- providing film fragments for in-group viewing and analysis
- providing a critical / theoretical / contextual text to the group for an in-class discussion - beyond the CC (!)
- providing literary text fragments relevant for the topic presented

Please note that each member of each presenting group will be graded individually depending on his/her contribution.

Additional guidelines for the final presentation:

- Find a research topic you feel passionate about: something that you find especially original, relevant, fascinating, odd, worth pondering. To be in time with your research do get familiar with Cartmell and Whelehan (2007) well before the mid-term break! Pick a topic that really interests you and which you want to research on your own and together with your partner, and about which you intend to do extensive extra reading. Brainstorm in your group about what seems the best topic and presentation structure for the three/four of you. Be always ready to justify your choices of both the chapter in the *Cambridge Companion* and particular films and literary text(s).
- Do independent research into sources that deal with your topic.
- Your presentation should represent thoroughly and comprehensively main ideas of the critical text from Cartmell and Whelehan (2007) – do not cut corners!
- Relate your topic to relevant critical / theoretical texts discussed.
- Choose a specific aspect of adaptation you would like to develop in this context, one that has been discussed in the course.
- Find relevant literary and film fragments. Use YouTube. Use your own resources.
- Include at least three relevant and focused questions for a group discussion.

Recommended journals available at MyUU:

- *Adaptation*. Published by Oxford University Press. 2008-present.
- *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance*. Published by Intellect Publications. 2008-present.
- *Literature/Film Quarterly*. Published by Salisbury University. 1973-present

### Participation

Participation consists of attendance in class and meaningful, focused and intelligent contributions to class discussions and presentations.

### VII Course schedule

		Topic	Literary texts and films	Theoretical texts and activities  in red: texts for presentations
Week 1	Session 1 Mon 26-08-19	Introduction – course content and format;  literature and film – an example of comparative literary study;  a history of ‘splitters and lumpers’; film as a narrative art form;		

		<p>literary- critical terms in film analysis;</p> <p>novel – film – play: some similarities and differences;</p> <p>what is film adaptation? the 'fidelity' issue;</p> <p>varied cinematic potentials of the original work; dialogue and the other five film tracks;</p>		
<b>W1</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 29-08-19</b>	<p><b>Close reading of literature and rudiments of narrative – towards a meeting of formalisms</b></p> <p>the building blocks of fiction: plot, structure, character, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrators, setting, tone, symbol, theme; story and plot;</p> <p>adequate and inadequate narrators;</p> <p>shifting points of view;</p>		<p><b>McFarlane, B. 'Reading film and literature', in: Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:15-28)</b></p> <p><b>Corrigan, T. 'Literature on screen, a history: in the gap', in: Cartmell and Whelehan (2007: 29-43)</b></p>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 02-09-19</b>	<p><b>Formalisms cd.: cinematography</b></p> <p>the story being told through visuals;</p> <p>image composition;</p> <p>the camera and space: height, angle and shot distance;</p> <p>light and sound effects;</p>	analyzing film materials	<b>Corrigan, T. 'Part 1 Film and literature in the crosscurrents of history', in: Corrigan 2012, pp.5-51</b>

		<p>image and mood;</p> <p>major periods in film history and visual stylistics related to the developments in cinematography;</p>		
<b>W2</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 05-09-19</b>	<b>Formalisms cd.: cinematography - discussion</b>	discussing cinematography in selected film materials;	<p><b>Benjamin, W. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproduction' in: Corrigan, T. 2012, pp.147-156</b></p> <p><b>Astruc, A. 'The birth of a new avant-garde: La camera-stylo', in: Corrigan, T. 2012, pp.181-184</b></p>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 09-09-19</b>	<p><b>Formalisms: editing</b> the invisible and the visible cuts: continuity editing and montage;</p> <p>editing and perception of time and space;</p> <p>principal continuity editing strategies;</p> <p>a brief history of editing: milestones in its development;</p>		
<b>W3</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 12-09-19</b>	<b>editing cd.</b> <p>emplotment, multiple plot lines, scene choreography and handling time;</p> <p>thematic montage;</p>		



		Soviet and American montage;		
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 16-09-19</b>	<b>Specificity, fidelity and related debates</b>		<p><b>Bluestone, G. 'The Limits of the Novel and the Limits of the Film', Corrigan, T. 2012, pp. 239-250</b></p> <p><b>Chatman, Seymour. 'What Novels Can Do That Films Can't (And Vice Versa)', 1980, pp. 121-140</b>  <a href="http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.uu.nl/stable/pdf/1343179.pdf?acceptTC=true">http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.uu.nl/stable/pdf/1343179.pdf?acceptTC=true</a></p>
<b>W4</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 19-09-19</b>	<p>A close reading of a literary text and a close viewing of the adaptation;</p> <p>formal analysis of a film and its constituent elements: mise-en-scène, camera work, lighting, editing, sound, screenplay, acting;</p>	Luigi Pirandello 'The Oil Jar' [pdf Workspaces library]	Table 21. 'Formal Analysis of a Film'
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 23-09-19</b>	<p><b>Narrative in text and film</b></p> <p>Aristotle's <i>The Poetics</i> and a Hollywood plot</p> <p>Art film</p>		<p><b>Tierno, M. 2002. <i>Aristotle's Poetics for Screenwriters</i> – selected fragments</b></p>
<b>W5</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 26-09-19</b>	<p><b>Intertextuality:</b> adaptation as an intertextual process;</p> <p>multiplicity of sources in text and film</p>		<p><b>Stam, Robert. 'Beyond Fidelity. The dialogics of adaptation', in: Corrigan, T., 2012, pp.74-87</b></p>

<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 30-09-19</b>	<b>Intertextuality cd.</b>		
<b>W6</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 03-10-19</b>	<p><b>Adaptation: short story</b> elements kept, dropped and added;</p> <p>strategies for a short story adaptation: concentration; interweaving; point-of-departure</p> <p><b>Visual and filmic intertexts</b></p>	e.g., Washington Irving 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' and Tim Burton 'Sleepy Hollow''	
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 07-10-19</b>	<p><b>'Knowing and unknowing audiences' and 'pleasures of watching an adaptation'</b> <i>Babette's Feast</i> – Karen Blixen's text and the 1987 film dir. by Gabriel Axel</p> <p>Art film and Hollywood film;</p> <p>Narrative structure</p> <p>Narrating through visuals</p>		<b>Hutcheon, L. 'How? (Audiences)', in: Corrigan, T., 2012, pp. 385-400</b>

<b>W7</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 10-10-19</b>	<b>cd.</b>		
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 14-10-19</b>	<b>break</b>		
<b>W8</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 17-10-19</b>	<b>break</b>		
	<b>Session 1 Monday 21-10-19</b>	<b>Reading and research week</b>		
	<b>Session 2 Thursday 24-10-19</b>	<b>Reading and research week</b>		<b>Deadline essay outline</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 28-10-19</b>	<b>Adapting novel – auteurism</b> themes in text and film  Merchant Ivory productions	Kazuo Ishiguro. 1989. <i>The Remains of the Day</i> . Faber & Faber	<b>Bywater, T. and Th.Sobchack, 'Chapter 3 The Auteurist Approach: Analysis of Individual Films in Relation to Groups of Films', 1989, pp.51-79</b>
<b>W9</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 31-10-19</b>	<b>Moderation – no class</b>		

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 04-11-19</b>	<b>Auteurism cd.</b>		<b>Leitch, Thomas. 'Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory', in: Corrigan, T., 2012, pp. 104-119</b>
<b>W10</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 07-11-19</b>	<b>extras</b>		
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 11-11-19</b>	<b>Students' presentations 1<sup>st</sup> group – suggested topics 'Gospel narratives on silent film'</b>		<b>deadline essay</b> Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:47-60)
<b>W11</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 14-11-19</b>	<b>Students' presentations 2<sup>nd</sup> group 'The nineteenth-century novel on film: Jane Austen'</b>		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:75-89)
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 18-11-19</b>	<b>Students' presentation 3<sup>rd</sup> group 'Modernism and adaptation'</b>		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:90-106)
<b>W12</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 21-11-19</b>	<b>Students' presentation 4<sup>th</sup> group 'Heritage and literature on screen: <i>Heimat</i> and heritage'</b>		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:123-197)
		<b>Students' presentation</b>		

<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 25-11-19</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> group</b> “Don't let's ask for the moon!": reading and viewing the woman's film'		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:138-153)
<b>W13</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 28-11-19</b>	<b>Students' presentation 6<sup>th</sup> group</b>  'Post-classical fantasy cinema: <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> '		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:154-166)
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 02-12-19</b>	<b>Students' presentation 7<sup>th</sup> group</b> 'Adapting children's literature'		Cartmell and Whelehan (2007:181-195)
<b>W14</b>	<b>Session 2 Thursday 05-12-19</b>	<b>spillover</b>		
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Session 1 Monday 09-12-19</b>	<b>exam</b>		
<b>W15</b>	<b>12-12-19</b>	<b>closing</b>		

### VIII Student learning outcomes

Teaching activities	Student is able to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lecture</li> <li>• exam</li> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• essay</li> <li>• discussion</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know main strategies of formalist and intertextual literary and film analyses               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do a formalist analysis of a literary text as a source of adaptation</li> <li>b. Do a basic formalist analysis of a film</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lecture</li> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• exam</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Is familiar with main technical problems of adaptation of literary plots</li> </ol>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discussion</li> <li>• essay</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. identify narrative elements dropped in film adaptation</li> <li>b. Identify narrative elements added</li> <li>c. Identify elements condensed and fused</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lecture</li> <li>• discussion</li> <li>• exam</li> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• essay</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Is familiar with major topics in the history and theory of film adaptation of literature.       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Can present a historical overview of famous film adaptations</li> <li>b. Is conversant with several authors and texts foundational of adaptations studies</li> <li>c. Can exemplify important genres of adaptations</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essay</li> <li>• presentation</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Is able to write critically about literary and film narration       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Can do research into critical sources in literary and film criticism</li> <li>b. Can integrate critical texts into individual research in both fields.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>