Module Title: Epic Remakes: Ancient Hero(in)es and Modern Society

Module Code: COM6212

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

Epic poems, such as *Gilgamesh* and the *Iliad*, are some of the oldest mythical narratives. Many thousands of years ago, they circulated through oral tradition before being recorded in writing. These myths are constantly re-made. We'll explore how ancient mythical figures have been adapted, from antiquity to today, to suit new contexts. We'll focus on the Trojan War myths as re-imagined in a diverse range of media. How have these ancient Western characters been repurposed for contemporary social debates? What can we learn about myth and storytelling, identity and representation? Our case studies -- see the weekly tabs below -- encompass intersectional perspectives and we'll think about how divergences between source and adaptation can perpetuate, or challenge, implicit bias and ideological assumptions.

Below, in the drop-downs, you'll find weekly summaries, reading (set and recommended), resources to watch/explore, class resources, and links to the library TALIS lists. The descriptions below explain my thinking behind the selection and organisation of material for this module: the selections are *representative*, rather than *definitive*, based around principles of key skills, theories, and themes to explore, and you're warmly encouraged to find further examples of reception and adaptation, or to explore alternative sources as extension work!

Content warning

This course is based on **adaptations of myths about war and touches on sensitive topics** (including depictions of violence and rape). You may find individual texts/sources triggering for various reasons. Whereas ancient myths can offer a 'safe space' to process difficult topics, recent adaptations can be more immediate and therefore more upsetting. **The course design means that you can choose which topics and sources you study in the most detail for assignments, without any explanation necessary. If possible, if you can let me know that you aren't able to discuss/attend for a particular text or topic (no details/disclosure) that's helpful** for attendance records or to avoid groupwork on a specific passage. Remember you can get help from **Advice and Counselling** onsite (https://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/counselling/how-we-can-help/) and online via **Togetherall 24/7** http://www.dds.qmul.ac.uk/mentalhealth/togetherall/ as well as **24/7 helplines such as Samaritans (116 123) , NHS 111 option 2, or text *Shout* 85258**.

Module Aims

Aims:

1. To introduce students to some of the key challenges in reworking Ancient Greek literature, especially in terms of its political and social implications
2. To make students aware of the significance of specific strategies and linguistic choices adopted in retellings, translation, adaptations and cultural transfer
3. To explore the relationship between textual retellings of Ancient Greek literature and other areas of cultural production, in antiquity and today

Students will gain knowledge of:

1. Key aspects of adaptation of texts from Greek antiquity and scholarly theories surrounding these 'afterlives' (classical reception)
2. The relationship between classical Greek antiquity and successive adaptations
3. The broader cultural impact of classical Greek antiquity within and beyond Europe