

EN101-30 Epic into Novel

22/23

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

John West

Credit value

30

Module duration

23 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module will enable students to learn about European epics alongside epics from other cultures. It will investigate the ways in which the aims of the Epic were transformed as the Novel, often presented as the modern heir of the epic, became the major narrative literary mode. The module will prepare students for work on novels and long poems later in the degree.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module will enable students to learn about European epics alongside epics from other cultures. It will investigate the ways in which the aims of the Epic were transformed as the Novel, often presented as the modern heir of the epic, became the major narrative literary mode. The module will prepare students for work on novels and long poems later in the degree.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Indicative syllabus

Autumn term

Weeks 1-3: Introduction and Homer, Iliad

Weeks 4-7: Virgil, Aeneid

Weeks 8-10: Milton, Paradise Lost

Spring term

Weeks 1-2: The Mahabharata (extracts from J.D. Smith's edition)

Weeks 3-5: Fielding, Tom Jones

Weeks 7-8: Eliot, Middlemarch

Weeks 9-10: Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat

Summer term

Weeks 1: Revision (The Epic)

Week 2: Revision (The Novel)

Week 3: Revision (Epic into Novel)

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module students should be able to:- Demonstrate a good working knowledge of two European classical epics, Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid.
- Discuss the nature of the classical epic and trace its influence and transformations in later European literature.
- Show knowledge of the English seventeenth-century epic Paradise Lost and of its relation both to the classical epic and to the culture and events of seventeenth-century England.
- Show knowledge of two classic English novels and understanding of the nature of the novel and of the way in which novelists have built on and varied the traditions of the epic.
- Show knowledge of non-Western epic and novel, of the cultural conjunctions in which they are composed and of their similarities with and differences from European epics and novels.
- Show knowledge of the typical structures, motifs and aims of epics and novels and the way in which these are modified to accord with distinct cultural, political and religious circumstances.
- Show some understanding of the nature of literary genres and the ways in which genres change over time and as a result of different cultural circumstances.

Indicative reading list

Homer, The Iliad, trans Lattimore

Virgil, The Aeneid, trans Fitzgerald

Fielding, Tom Jones

G. Eliot, Middlemarch

The Mahabharata, ed. J.D. Smith

Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat

C. Bates ed., The Cambridge Companion to the Epic

J. Griffin, Homer on Life and Death

R. Heinze, Virgil's Epic Technique

E. Auerbach, Mimesis

K. W. Gransden, *The Aeneid*
C. Burrow, *Epic Romance*
I. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*
M. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel*
H. Power, *Epic Into Novel*
K. Chase, *Middlemarch*
R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*
D. A. Miller, *The Epic Hero*
Richetti ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*
D. Quint, *Epic and Empire*
Ogude, *Ngugi's Novels and African History*
Ngugi, *Writers in Politics*
A. Sharma, *Essays on the Mahabharata*
R. Dandekar, *The Mahabharata Revisited*
J. Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*
A.D. Nuttall, *Openings: Narrative beginnings from the Epic to the Novel*
F. Moretti, *The Novel*
F. Moretti, *Modern Epic*

Subject specific skills

Demonstrate knowledge of two European classical epics, Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. Discuss the nature of the classical epic and trace its influence and transformations in later European literature.

Show knowledge of the English seventeenth-century epic *Paradise Lost* and of its relation both to the classical epic and to the culture and events of seventeenth-century England.

Show knowledge of two classic English novels and understanding of the nature of the novel and of the way in which novelists have built on and varied the traditions of the epic.

Show knowledge of non-Western epic and novel, of the cultural conjunctions in which they are composed and of their similarities with and differences from European epics and novels.

Show knowledge of the typical structures, motifs and aims of epics and novels and the way in which these are modified to accord with distinct cultural, political and religious circumstances.

Show some understanding of the nature of literary genres and the ways in which genres change over time and as a result of different cultural circumstances.

Transferable skills

TBC

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	23 sessions of 1 hour (8%)
Seminars	23 sessions of 1 hour (8%)
Private study	254 hours (85%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading & research.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Assessed Essay 1	50%		Yes (extension)
1 x 2500-word essays on epics written in response to titles published by the module convenor.			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Assessed Essay 2	50%		Yes (extension)
1 x 2500-word essay on novels written in response to titles set by the module convenor.			

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Written comments on formative and assessed work, discussions in seminars.

Formative work will be: 1 x 1000-word commentary on epic due in Term 1 and 1 x 1000-word commentary on novels due in Term 2.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UENA-Q300 Undergraduate English Literature
- Year 1 of UENA-QP36 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UFRA-QR3A Undergraduate English and French
- Year 1 of UHPA-QR34 Undergraduate English and Hispanic Studies
- Year 1 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 1 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of ULNA-QR37 Undergraduate English and German
- Year 1 of ULNA-QR38 Undergraduate English and Italian
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics