



# Master in de Westerse Literatuur / Master of Western Literature

## Western Literature: Concepts and Questions

Elke D'hoker

Ben De Witte

Raphaël Ingelbien (coordinator)

# Master in de Westerse Literatuur / Master of Western Literature

Combining the study of different literary traditions (defined by either language and/or nationality)

Looking at the interactions between those different literatures

Studying 'literature' as an inter-/transnational phenomenon

Reflecting on the frameworks within which literary traditions and literary canons make sense or can be contested

Reflecting on the meaning of 'the West'

# Western Literature: Concepts and Questions

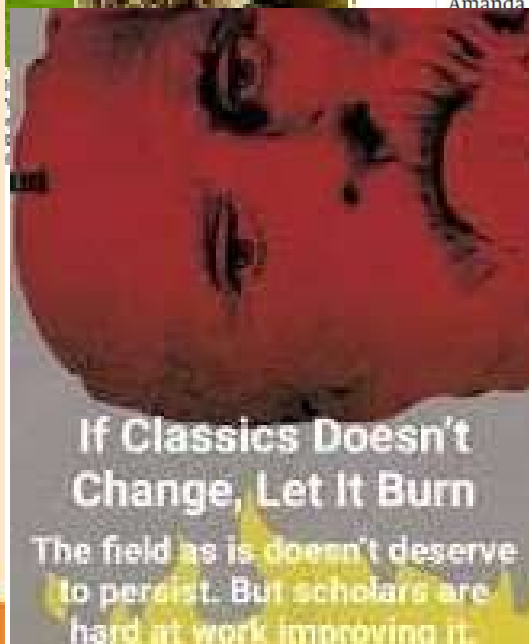
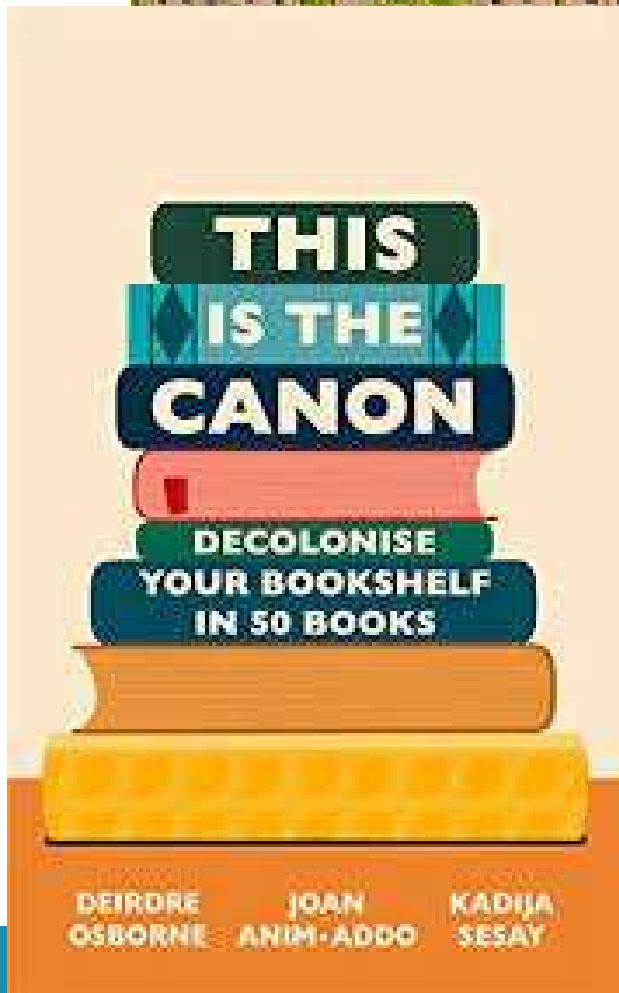
- One of two core compulsory modules in the MA programme (together with 'Texts and Contexts') where all students of the MA programme will be physically present (ideally).
- A theoretical module: reading and reflecting on theoretical texts about 'Western literature'
- English as a working language / *lingua franca*

# Western Literature: Concepts and Questions

- Concepts: how have 'Western literature' and related concepts (e.g. 'European literature', 'the mind of Europe', 'the Western canon') been defined and theorized, when, by whom?
- Questions: which problems arise from those definitions? How have they been challenged, when, and by whom?

→ How do those issues matter for future journalists, teachers, publishers, translators, researchers, lifelong readers, ... ?  
Which contemporary debates can these issues shed light on?

Welcome to the University of WOKE!  
Leicester has ditched Chaucer, is  
'decolonising' its syllabus and marks  
'International Womxn's Week'... no wonder  
it's turning into a first-class failure, says  
GUY ADAMS



## 'Shocked by the uproar': Amanda Gorman's white translator quits

International Booker winner Marieke Lucas Rijneveld will not translate inaugural poet's work into Dutch after anger that a Black writer was not hired



▲ Marieke Lucas Rijneveld and Amanda Gorman. Composite: EPA, Getty

The accla12 Sport Entertainment Zakelijk Lifestyle Vrouw Corona

## Mohammed niet in nieuwe vertaling van Dantes Goddelijke Komedie



Foto: ANP

Een recente vertaling van De Hel, het eerste deel van Dantes meesterwerk De Goddelijke Komedie heeft op sociale media voor ophef gezorgd. In de nieuwe Nederlandse bewerking is namelijk de profeet Mohammed uit een passage geschraapt om te voorkomen dat het boek "onnodig

# Eugène Delacroix, 'La Barque de Dante' / 'Dante et Virgile aux Enfers' (1822)



*ERNST ROBERT CURTIUS*  
EUROPEAN LITERATURE  
AND THE  
LATIN MIDDLE AGES



*With a New Afterword by Peter Godman*

# Organization

12 weeks of classes where specific texts will be discussed

Schedule: see 'Course Information' in the module's Toledo platform

Texts: see 'Course Documents' in the module's Toledo platform. Documents on background and questions for discussion will also be made available for each week.

The questions are food for thought/suggestions for discussion, to which you can add your own personal questions.

**Debate** is essential – your own **input** is important



# Organization

Read the texts carefully and critically, reflect on the questions.

Compare the texts with each other: how similar/different are their arguments, do they respond to each other... ?

How do those arguments echo in current debates about reading lists, school/university curriculums, publishing, translation ... ?

Did those arguments help shape (consciously or not) what you read (and how you read it) / were asked to read / would like to read / would tell others to read ...

# Exam

Written, open book exam: bring as many printed documents or handwritten notes as you like (but no live electronic device). A print copy of all the texts discussed in class is available as a 'Reader' that can be purchased from Babylon copy service (located in the basement of the Erasmus building).

Language: questions will be asked in English, answers can be in either English or Dutch.

Aim: testing the students' insight in the issues dealt with, their critical assimilation of the course, their ability to establish links between the texts, etc.

→ cf. document on the exam in the 'Course Information' area.

# Come to class!

Students who attend classes regularly  
achieve better academic outcomes on average!

- Learning is a **social** event. During, before and after classes, you learn from each other. Give each other this opportunity.
- More **interaction** is possible (via questions, assignments, discussions, feedback...) when we all show up.
- Your presence and participation is also **motivating and stimulating** for us as teachers.
- Participating in classes brings **structure**, both to the learning content and to your day.
- Social contact is important for your **well-being and self-confidence** as well as that of your fellow students.
- You can only get a taste of real campus life when you and your fellow students all participate.

**Let's make our campus buzz with activity!**

More info and tips

[www.kuleuven.be/english/study/stay-healthy-while-studying](http://www.kuleuven.be/english/study/stay-healthy-while-studying)



