

MA 4th Semester Course Description (English) - 2017

Core Course VIII (20th Century: Fiction and Non-fictional Prose)

Unit I (To be Taught by Sri Sagar Taranga Mandal)

Sub-unit I

William Golding: *Lord of the Flies* (1954)

The course seeks to understand Golding's text in the context of the forces that go into the making of a human society. How for instance, or to what extent violence could be implicated in the foundation of a society? How violence and the lust for power are "constitutive" of both the state and the society? Again, could we see Golding's text as a locus of the Simmelian "socializing conflicts" providing us roles or prototypes for social behaviour? To what extent the text mirrors the anxiety evoked by what could be seen as a civilizational crisis? What are the forms, in addition to literary expressions, such a crisis assumes? Besides probing these phenomena as central to *Lord of the Flies*, the lectures intended for this course will also look into the diverse themes populating this novel, like intertextuality, classical myths, and symbolism, redirecting our focus into the complex connections between psychology and material reality.

Sub-unit II

James Joyce: *Dubliners* (1914)

Each Dubliner story sets its own tone and deals with its own particular issues, but there are moments in the volume where Joyce begins to approach techniques he developed and employed with far greater persistence in later works. The course will explore these narrative techniques, and seek to understand how such narrative experiments are bound up with the author's moral and aesthetic design. Hence, the consideration would not be merely to view *Dubliners* as a step towards a more prolific creative oeuvre, but to situate the text within a culturally and politically productive phase in Joyce. As a text to be studied and analysed, *Dubliners* presents the student with an array of interesting questions. What is Joyce's attitude to Dublin and Ireland? Is he sick of it? Or is he obsessed and enchanted by it? What are the epiphanies, or revelations of truth in *Dubliners*, and what roles do they play? How does Joyce use symbols? Are Joyce's stories offering political views? Besides addressing these questions, the course plans to locate the text in the midst of the search for a cultural revival that was central to both Joyce and his contemporaries.

The unit intends to look at the following short stories from *Dubliners*:

‘The Sisters’, ‘A Painful Case’, ‘Clay’, ‘Eveline’, ‘Grace’, ‘The Dead’.

Unit II (Non-fictional prose) (To be taught by Smt Sharmila Majumdar)

Sub unit I

Nations and Nationalism since 1790 by E. J. Habsbawm

- i) Introduction
- ii) Chapter I
- iii) ChapterII

Subunit II

Dancing in Cambodia & Other Essays by Amitav Ghosh

- i) Dancing in Cambodia
- ii)Stories in Stone
- iii) At Large in Burma

The essays in this course have been chosen to give the students some idea of non literary – both creative and critical – prose writing in the twentieth century.

The first book is an exposition of the ideas of nation and nationalism which invade the creative and critical space frequently.

The second book explores the nature of postcolonial experience in Asia in the late twentieth century.

Core Course XI (Twentieth Century Literary Criticism)

Unit I (To be taught by Dr. Dhrubajyoti Sarkar) (Up to the 1960s at least two authors)

In this unit, students will be exposed to a number of representative literary theories from the first half of the twentieth century. Most of the essays are either now celebrated as pioneering essays indicating the beginning of major trends in that particular field of literary criticism or are representative of one or more tenets of a particular branch. During the close reading of the essays it is expected that students will grasp an understanding of that particular essay as well as the larger school of criticism.

Note: Some of the essays will be read in translation. Hence there may be various translations available for these famous essays, students are particularly advised to watch out for the particular texts and translations mentioned in the course description.

Unit I Up to the 1960s at least two authors:

Subunit I (One full book-length texts or three essays):

Creativity

a. “Tradition and Individual Talent”. T. S. Eliot

) “Tradition and the Individual Talent”. T.S.Eliot. 1920/21. from *The Sacred Wood*.

[Apart from the original book, a copy of the essay may be downloaded for free from <http://www.bartleby.com/200/sw4.html> . Even JSTOR has a copy of it at the Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567048>]

b. “The Birth of a Myth: In Memory of Richard Hillary”. Arthur Koestler

c) “Creative Writer and Day-dreaming”. Sigmund Freud. 1908.

[Chapter IX, from *Collected Papers*, Vol. 4 by Sigmund Freud. Authorized translation under the supervision of Joan Riviere. This paper also appears in Volume 9 of *The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, edited and translated by James Strachey.]

Subunit II (One full book-length texts or three essays):

Language in Literature

a. “The Comic Element in Situations and the Comic Element in Words” (1900). Henri Bergson.

[Chapter II of *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. Authorised translation by Coludesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell. New York: Macmillan, 1914. A digital copy of this book is available on the public domain]

b. B. iv. “The Mechanism of Pleasure and the Psychological Origins of the Joke” (1905). Sigmund Freud.

[Section B.iv. *The Joke and its Relation to the Unconscious*. Tr. By Joyce Crick. Penguin, 2002. A copy of the book is available in the KUCU]

c. “Linguistic Value”. Ferdinand de Saussure. 1916.

[available in the *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*]

Detailed course description and week-by-week plan of the course can be found at

<https://sites.google.com/site/dsatclass/plans>

Unit-II (To be taught by Prof. Ashok Sengupta)
(Six schools of Modern criticism and theory)

Subunit I

1. Russian Formalism: “The Theory of the Formal Method” by Boris Eichenbaum.
2. Semiotics: “Some Points in the Semiotics of the Cinema” by Christian Metz
Film: *Pushpak* (1987) Dir.: Singeetam Srinivasa Rao
Film: “Feviquick” Advertisement Shorts.
3. Structuralism: “From Work to Text” by Roland Barthes

Subunit II

4. Deconstruction: “Exergue” From *Of Grammatology* by Jacques Derrida.
5. Reader Response theory: “Is There a Text in This Class?” by Stanley Fish.
6. Marxist literary theory: “Literature” From *Marxism and Literature* by Raymond Williams
Part I,

Chapter 3.

All the above essays are available in the *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* except for the essays by Christian Metz and Stanley Fish. These will be provided by the teacher.

Students are expected to come to class with copies of the texts prescribed.

Optional Course XII. ix. (Film and Literature: Adaptation)

Unit I (To be taught by Sri Kuntal Bag)

Subunit I

Film Adaptations of European Texts:

- a) Source Text (Novel): *Tess of D’Urbervilles* (1891) by **Thomas Hardy**;
Film adaptation: *Tess* (1979)-**Roman Polanski**.
- b) Source Text (Novella): **Thomas Mann’s** *Death in Venice (Der Tod in Venedig)*, 1912;
Film Adaptation: *Death in Venice (Morte a Venezia)*, 1971- **Luchino Visconti**.
- c) Source Text (Novel): **Alberto Moravia’s** *The Conformist (Il Conformista)* 1951;
Film Adaptation: *The Conformist (Il Conformista)*, 1970- **Bernardo Bertolucci**.

Course Description: In this subunit three major European novels, and their screen adaptations will be studied. A comparative interpretation of the source texts and their film adaptations in the light of specificity of literary and cinematic discourse will be aimed at while contextualizing both the works in terms of their social, historical and political provenances.

Subunit II Film Adaptations of American Texts

Course Content:

- a) Source Text (Novel): *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by **F. Scott Fitzgerald**;
Film Adaptation: *The Great Gatsby* (2013) - **Baz Luhrmann**
- b) Source Text (Novel): *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (1962) by **Ken Kesey**

Film Adaptation: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) - **Milos Forman**

c) Source Text (Novel): *Fight Club* (1996) by **Chuck Palahniuk**;

Film Adaptation: *Fight Club* (1999) – **David Fincher**

Course Description: The above mentioned American novels and their film adaptations will be studied with reference to the following topics:

- a) An essentially American classic, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) had been adapted into five feature films respectively in 1926, in 1949, in 1974, in 2000, and recently in 2013. This part of the course will concern the recent one by Baz Luhrmann (2013) while considering the earlier ones as references in an attempt to understand the dynamic nature of film production as a site subject to constant changes and shifts conforming to the consumer based capitalist mode of production.
- b) Both the novel and its film adaptation are to be studied by taking the following topics into consideration: Disability and Native American counter culture, madness and misogyny, hipster and psychic frontier.
- c) Both the source text and the screen adaptation of the same will be scrutinised closely by taking the following topics into account: Productive repetition (Deleuzian philosophy will be applied for reading both the texts), existentialism, creation of an authentic self, consumerism, masculine and national anxiety.

Unit II (To be taught by Dr. Sandip Mondal)

Subunit I

a) *Charulata* (*Nashtoneer*) – Satyajit Ray

b) *Guide* – Vijay Anand

c) *Maqbool* – Vishal Bhardwaj

The subunit will be related to the following topics

- i) Nationalism/ National integrity
- ii) Culture Studies
- iii) The use of music
- iv) Gender
- v) Violence and criminality
- vi) Parenthood

Subunit II

a) *Ran* (King Lear) – A. Kurosawa

b) *The Yacoubian Building* – Marwan Hameed

c) *Throne of Blood* – A. Kurosawa

The subunit will be related to the following topics

- i) Deviations from the text
- ii) The use of music
- iii) Violence

- iv) The use of indigenous culture

Optional Course XII (Post colonial Writing: Theory)

Unit I (To be taught by Sri Sagar Taranga Mandal)

Sub-unit I

Haiti's revolution, from 1791 onward, had a world-historical significance which is perhaps only now beginning properly to be understood and explored. Its impact has sounded across more than two countries, and not only in the Caribbean or in France, but globally. In his classic *The Black Jacobins*, C. L. R. James noted the profound influence of the Haitian Revolution, the momentous struggle that yielded the first post-colonial independent black nation and the only nation to gain independence through slave rebellion: "The revolt is the only successful slave revolt in history, and the odds it had to overcome is evidence of the magnitude of the interests that were involved. The transformation of slaves, trembling in hundreds before a single white man, into a people able to organise themselves and defeat the most powerful European nations of their day, is one of the great epics of revolutionary struggle and achievement" (ix). In studying this history, the present course attends carefully to the debates that revolve around the notions of race, economics, freedom, collaboration, writing, and, especially, taking a cue from Césaire, "the colonial problem". It was the first country where the problem was woven and the first where it was unwoven. A jewel of the Atlantic economy, Haiti's impact on modern political culture allows us a unique opportunity to study the forces and the lessons that lie in the broader paradox of Imperial Europe shaped as it is by its interaction and confrontation with other cultures.

The following essays will be taken up in the course:

1. Laurent Dubois, "In Search of the Haitian Revolution"
2. Joan Dayan, "Haiti, History, and the Gods"
3. E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, "Re-introducing the 'People without History: African Historiographies'"

Sub-unit II

The course has been designed to make the student understand the imperatives behind the empire's need to collect, organize and museumize indigenous cultures, and how cataloguing the colony into manageable categories through investigative modalities were both a means of control and production of knowledge that legitimizing the Western principles of governance and Christianity. Interestingly, there were blind spots to this administrative appropriation of such studies for policy-making. The advent of the white female into the colonies triggered an entire gamut of responses ranging from anxiety, xenophobia, creation of sanitized spaces and preventive policies, through to the emergence of an "intimate politics" of sexuality regulating gender roles and relations in colonial situations. The practice of concubinage and the threat of the "black peril" simultaneously inhabited the colonial space and imaginary. Finally, the unit seeks to explore the notion of the "historical event" and its relation to nationalist history writing in India, and how the close inter-connection between nation, state, history, and literary practice was reimagined by some Indian novelists to bring about a specific version of modernity that ran counter to the foundationalist versions of history.

The following essays will be discussed:

1. Bernard Cohn, "Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India"
2. Ann Laura Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule"
3. Neelam Srivastava, "The historical event in the postcolonial Indian novel –I"

Unit II (To be taught by Smt Ishita Roy)

Subunit I

The course aims to achieve a somewhat near complete overview of post colonial theory at large. It aims to have some of the basic questions regarding post colonial theory answered through different theoretical readings and attempts to situate post colonial studies in contemporary political, social and literary discursive politics and practices. What is post colonial theory(its origin,development)? What conceptual orientations does it involve towards various perspectives of knowledges? How far can it be called a self conscious political philosophy? What are the debates and deliberations informing its body? How is it in itself an area of contestation? Through addressing such questions the course shall further deliberate upon the revolutionary impact post colonial theory had on literary criticism(history forming an essential part of textual meaning), historical study(for historical writing is not devoid of hierarchies, strategies that are involved in other narratives) and cultural studies.

The course requires us to study at least two theorists from Africa.

Sub unit 1

The primary texts involved for this sub unit: Frantz Fanon, **The Wretched of the Earth** along with Amilcar Cabral's 'National liberation and Culture'

Sub unit II

Ngugi Wa Thiongo, **Decolonising the Mind.**

Background discussions for both the sub units will involve extracts and selections from the following texts: 1. Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/ Post Colonialism*

2. Ashcroft, Griffith, Tiffin, *The Post Colonial Studies Reader*

3. Robert Young, *A very short Introduction to Post Colonialism*

4. Arun Prabha Mukherjee, *Post colonialism, My Living*

Optional Course XII xiii (Women's Literature: Theory and History)

Unit – I. Feminist Theory & Criticism (To be taught by Prof. Sharmila Majumder)

An overview of major tenets of feminist theory and criticism

Subunit I

Course Content: Virginia Wolf, *A Room of One's Own*

I. CONTEXT

1. Times –

- (a) Intellectual milieu: The Bloomsbury Group
- (b) The World Wars and their impact

2. A brief biography

II. TEXT

1. Men's attitude to women

- (a) In life
- (b) In literature – Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Johnson, Coleridge, Romantics, Galsworthy, Kipling etc.

2. Women's history and the history of women's writing

3. Women as authors

- (a) Major requirements – space and income
- (b) Major hindrances – lack of space, income, tradition.
- (c) Fate of women authors – Judith Shakespeare, Mary Cavendish, Mary Carmichael

4. Androgynous author

5. Feminist perspective – idealist aesthetics, materialist observation

6. Style and structure

Sub Unit II

Instructor: Dhruvajyoti Sarkar (DS)

Description: This selection of women's writing in Britain will focus on discussion and depiction of woman's self-hood and education over the centuries. This selection does not have the presumption to be a representative one of two centuries of writing it includes, but hopefully will generate a discussion along with the topics in Unit II that will allow an immersion of students in many more issues rather than only ones that are part of this selection.

Texts:

a) *Fantomina*. 1725. Eliza Heywood.

The text edited by Prof Jack Lynch of Rutgers University which is available in the public domain for academic purposes may be used for the course.

b) *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Chapter XII ("On National Education") and Chapter XIII ("Some instances of the folly & c."). 1792. Mary Wollstonecraft.

You may use any of the printed and online editions available. One reliable online source is Barleby.com. But the Norton critical edition will, of course, be the most helpful text regarding understanding both the historical and critical contours of the text.

c) *Jane Eyre*. Chs. IV and V. 1847- '48. 3rd Edn. 'Curren Bell'.

Many paperback editions of the novel is widely available, so are the online ones. The one prepared and offered in public domain by the University of Adelaide is a reliable one and can be used for the course. However, as mentioned above, Norton critical edition will, of course, be the most helpful text regarding understanding both the historical and critical contours of the text.

Requirement: Since it is an optional paper, there will be little exposition and the class proceedings will be entirely dependent on discussion of required reading. So it is absolutely necessary that students acquire and read the material assigned to discussion of each class. A class-by-class required reading list and plan of the development of the course can be found at the following link <https://sites.google.com/site/dsatclass/plans>

Active participation in the course requires all four of the following from the students (a) attendance (b) having a copy of the reading material in the class, (c) prior acquaintance with the reading material assigned to the class and (d) preparedness to join the discussion in the classroom. Mere physical presence in the classroom furthers the attendance requirement and nothing else.

Unit II

(To be taught by Dr. Dhrubajyoti Sarkar)

Description: This historical survey will try to strike a balance between theorization and factual enumeration of a tradition of women's writing in Britain. Broadly speaking, four centuries of women's writing will be treated as structurally equivalent to two subunits.

Requirement: Since it is an optional paper, there will be little exposition and the class proceedings will be entirely dependent on discussion of required reading. So it is absolutely necessary that students acquire (if necessary, contact teacher latest by 11 January 2017) and read the material assigned to discussion of each class. A class-by-class required reading list and plan

of the development of the course can be found at the following link <https://sites.google.com/site/dsatclass/plans>

Active participation in the course requires all four of the following from the students (a) attendance (b) having a copy of the reading material in the class, (c) prior acquaintance with the reading material assigned to the class and (d) preparedness to join the discussion in the classroom. Mere physical presence in the classroom furthers the attendance requirement and nothing else.

Reading List (combined list for both sub-units): Excerpts from various sources will be used during the course. Students are not required to buy/acquire entire books, but relevant portions of the following books will be helpful for referencing.

- a) *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain 1660-1789*. Susan Staves. U of Cambridge P. 2006.
- b) *Weaker Vessel: Woman's Lot in Seventeenth-century England*. Antonia Fraser. Phoenix. 2002.
- c) *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1920*. Catherine Gallagher. U of California P. 1995.
- d) *Women and the Enlightenment*. Margaret Hunt. Haworth Press. 1984.
- e) *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. Sandra Gilbert, Susan Gubar. Yale UP. 1979.
- f) *The Oxford Guide to British Women Writers*. Joanne Shattock. Oxford UP. 1994.
- g) *Modern British women writers*. Vicki K. Janik and Del Ivan Janik (Eds.). Greenwood Press. 2002.

Important Topics

Sub-Unit I (17th & 18th Century)

1. Beginning and growth of a private network of letters of women
2. Civil War Narratives by Women
3. Women and the lyric tradition
4. Problems and negotiations: Enlightenment, Empiricism and Gendered division of the literary sphere
5. Women Playwrights of the Eighteenth Century; Eliza Heywood, Elizabeth Inchbald, Delarivier Manley, Hannah Cowley, Catherine Trotter
6. Cambridge Platonists and Women Philosophers; Damaris Cudworth Masham
7. Author emphasis: Margaret Cavendish, Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, Mary Montagu, Elizabeth Rowe Singer, Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft

Subunit II (19th & 20th Century)

1. Critical contour: three phases: (a) feminine, (b) feminist and (c) female

2. Critical issues: (A) Philosophical impossibility of Female Authority/authorship; (B) Sense of lack, inferiority, subjectivity; Electra Complex □Anxiety of Authority; (C) Double Standard of 19th C LitCriticism; pseudonyms, male/+female authority
3. Victorian Women Novelists: Brontë Sisters, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell
4. Victorian Women Poets: Browning, Rossetti, Augusta Webster, Edith Nesbit
5. Suffragists and Women's Writing
6. Supplementary Reading (19th C): Margaret Oliphant, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Rosa Nouchette Carey, Charlotte Mary Yonge, Rhoda Broughton, Ellen Wood, Harriet Martineau, Frances Milton Trollope, Florence Nightingale, Olive Schreiner
7. A chronology of aesthetic evolution: (A) The Female Aesthetic; (B) Woolf and the Androgynous Flight; (C) Beyond the Female Aesthetic
8. Major Feminist Theorists: Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Juliet Mitchell, Eli Zaretsky, Ellen Moor [Supplementary Reading: Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous, Michelle Barrett]
9. Supplementary Reading (20th C): Dorothy Richardson, Edith Sitwell, Doris Lessing