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Faculty of Foreign Languages

**Initiation to Literary Texts:
A Handy Guide to Poetry Before Romanticism:**

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Module: Introduction to Literary Text

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Welcome to Initiation to “Literary Texts: A Handy Guide to Poetry before Romanticism”

This pedagogical support concerns the module “Initiation to Literary Texts,” a two semester course dedicated to the first year License LMD of English with a coefficient of 1 and credit 2. The course serves as a good foundation course in the study of English Literature before Romanticism. It introduces you to different forms of literature and exposes you to its development till the eighteenth century.

Both of the semester programs are complementary. The First is an introduction of basic knowledge about literature and its elements. The second encounters literary texts within different epochs, and therefore, can be said to exemplify and reinforce your knowledge about the first semester. The syllabus has been delivered by the National Pedagogic Committee (CPND), *Le Ministère de L’Enseignement Supérieure et la Recherche Scientifique* ().

Course Aim:

The following aims are to:

- 1) Introduce you to the concept of literature and its elements
- 2) Introduce you to a historical overview of the development of English literature from its beginnings until the eighteenth century.
- 3) Familiarize you with basic knowledge in literature, of literary terms, periods, movements, genres, major texts and their representative authors

Working through this course

To complete each course (01h30min), you are required to study the recommended novels, plays, poems and other related materials. All texts in bold are obligatory, others are optional for self study. The optional will aid you in understanding a subject matter in addition to the course material.

You will be required to undertake some exercises. During the semester, you will be tested twice on a chosen topic. At the end of each semester, you will be required to have an examination on the semester course. It is a two-hour test and you will be examined on all areas of the course. The final examination will constitute 50 % of your final grade.

Course Materials:

The major materials you will need for this course will be found either in:

The Norton Anthology of British Literature, 8th edition. Ed. Stephen Ggreebaltt.

Or will be presented in form of photocopies by the teacher.

Further Readings:

Each course suggests a list of references and further readings. Try to get as many as possible of those references and materials listed about the course. The materials meant to deepen your knowledge of the course.

Lecture 1: Introduction to Literature

The Notion of Literature

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to:

- 1) Introduce you to the notion of literature.
- 2) Introduce you to the literary genres.

Warming Up:

- 1) Do you read books? Magazine articles? Newspapers? Novels? Poems?
- 2) Do you enjoy reading these?
- 3) To which extent you enjoy reading the above mentioned literatures?
- 4) Is there a way to distinguish what literature is?

I/ Introduction:

Understanding literature has always been a challenge, and pinning down a definition is quite difficult, especially in the context of our course.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, literature has two meanings:

- 1) Any piece of writing that is valued as a work of art, especially novels, plays and poems (in contrast to technical books and newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- 2) Literature (on something) pieces of writing or printed information on a particular subject e.g.: *I've read all the available literature on keeping rabbits.*

Both of the definitions demonstrate that literature refers to all what is written. For example, time tables, philosophical articles, dialogues, textbooks, novels, travel brochures, stories, and

so on. But we can divide this large mass of material into two different groups. The first one mainly presents information and the next is mainly aesthetic and gives some entertainment and pleasure.

In this course, we are going to encounter subjects that deal with the first definition. We confront a literature that is imaginative, fictive, and artistic, as opposed to true or historical facts.

5) Give examples of plays, poems, ballads, short stories, novels, in different epochs.

Then, it is clear now what makes Shakespeare different from Plato, or Wordsworth from a scientist of his age?

Literature aims to arouse thoughts and feelings. Its writer expresses his ideas, feelings, and attitudes. He may talk of things, people, life, death, love, wars, justice, a place, a country, an event... etc. He wants to communicate feelings, emotion, not information only. Literature according to many men of letters and writers has fuller and deeper sense.

What is interesting about this course is that the definition of literature calls for other questions. If a five-year-old is asking, it is easy. 'Literature', we answer, 'is stories, poems, and plays.' But if the questioner is a student of literature, it is harder to know how to take the question.

It might be a question about the general nature of literature. What sort of object or activity is it? What does it do? What purposes does it serve? Thus, 'What is literature?' asks not for a definition but for an analysis, even an argument about why one might concern oneself with studying literature at all.

What is Literature?

- * It is sometimes defined as ‘anything written’.
- * However we can surely distinguish between literature in the sense of any writing and literature in the sense of verbal works of art.
- * Robert Frost said once “Literature is a performance in words.”
- * Another view holds that literature has in it, a sense of entertaining display and provides pleasure in addition to the element of ‘truth’ involved.

II/ Literature, its Purpose and Importance

- 6) Why do you read books?
- 7) Do you think that reading a story is like reading a book of history or politics?
- 8) What does a literary work offer and/ or what doesn’t a nonliterary work offer?
- 9) What does a nonliterary work offer and/ or what doesn’t a literary work offer?

Reading literature, whether it be poems, plays, novels, stories, is significant. There is a stigma in our society that implies one who is more inclined toward science and math will somehow be more successful in life, and that one who is more passionate toward literature and art is less intelligent and will be destined to poverty and unsatisfying careers. The world of literature, however, serves as a gateway to learn the past, expand knowledge in a variety of fields, and understand the world. Here are just a few reasons why literature is important:

- 1) Open your eyes to horizons: It helps you realize the wide world outside. With this, you can ask questions and build your mind.

2) Build your critical thinking: For example, some critics like Benedict Anderson, in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, and Terry Eagleton, in his *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983) reflect on literature as a historical and ideological category, having social and political functions. Read for example: The morality play *Everyman*, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty Four*.

Then, literature can be a vehicle of ideology as it can be an instrument to criticize it.

3) A look to the past: History and literature go hand in hand. Read, for example, Dan Brown's novels, War literature like Thomas Hardy's poems,

4) Appreciation of diversity and other cultures. Some researchers¹ claim that African American children's literature helps their students find their way (. Read, for example, American, African-American, African, Indian novels and others. *Saragasso sea* (1966) by Jean Rhys,

5) Understanding humanity. Read, for example, Greek mythology, Shakespeare's plays, Robert Frost's poem, postmodern novels like *The Human Stain* by Philip Roth, *The Remains of the Day*, *Atonement*,

6) Better writing skills

III/ Literary Genres:

According to the Oxford dictionary, a genre refers to "a particular type or style of literature, art, film or music that you can recognize because of its special features" (561). With regard to literature, a genre usually refers to one of the classical literary forms. According to some scholars, the basic distinction between literary genres is made between: **epic**, **drama**, or **poetry** (Klarer 3). This distinction is quite confusing since the epic appears in verse but not categorized as poetry. Such literary genres are the precursors of the novel (that

¹ See (Hefflin & Barkshade); (Colby and Lyon)

is, **prose fiction**) because of its structural features like the *plot*, *characters*, and the *narrative perspective* or the *point of view*. Prose fiction can also include the **short story**, and **novella**.

Definitions:

1) Epic²:

The majority of traditional epics revolve around a hero who has to fulfill a number of tasks of national or cosmic significance in a multiplicity of episodes. Classical epics in particular, through their roots in myth, history, and religion, reflect a self-contained world-view of their particular periods and nationalities. Although traditional epics are written in verse, they clearly distinguish themselves from other forms of poetry by length, narrative structure, depiction of characters, and plot patterns and are therefore regarded by some critics—together with the **romance**—as precursors of the modern novel (Klarer 10).

E.g. Homer's epics the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey* (c. 7th century), *Virgil*, *Beowulf* (around the 8th Century), Dante Alighieri's (1265– 1321) Italian *Divina Commedia* or *Divine Comedy* (c. 1307–21), and the early modern English epics such as Edmund Spenser's (c. 1552–99) *Faerie Queene* (1590; 1596) and John Milton's (1608–74) *Paradise Lost* (1667).

2) Drama: According to *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*, drama is a form of literature judged primarily as “a poem written for representation” (63). In Greek, the term meant simply to act or perform, and the definition is still valid. For example, Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*, The medieval morality and mystery plays, Shakespeare's plays.

3) Poetry:

² For a more elaborated definition of epic, see the section on Old English literature.

The terms ‘poem’, ‘poetry’, ‘poetic’ and ‘poetics’ are frequent in literature and critical writing. The commonest use of ‘poem’ is ‘any composition in verse’ (Child and Fowler 181). It is language sung, chanted, spoken, or written according to some pattern. This pattern is almost always a rhythm or METRE, which may be supplemented by rhyme or alliteration or both (Baldick 198).

4) Prose Fiction:

Prose is different from poetry, i.e. the form of a written language that is not organized according to a formal pattern. In prose fiction, the characters and events are usually imaginary.

a) **Novel:** neither the Greek, nor the Romans, or even the Europeans knew about the novel till the 17th century. It is a long prose fiction story enough to complete a whole book.

It was established in Spain during the 17th century by Miguel de Cervantes in his *Don Quixote* (1605), the greatest work in the Golden Age of Spanish literature). It appeared in England during the 18th century with Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740). The newly established novel is often associated with the terms “realism.” While the traditional epic exhibited a cosmic and broad setting, the modern novel distinguishes itself by grounding the plot in a distinct historical and geographical reality.³

Until now, the novel still maintains its leading position as the genre which produces the most innovations in literature and receives national and international prizes.

The term “novel” brings into discussion a variety of subgenres, among them, **picaresque novel** ([from the Spanish *pícaro*] the novel that depicts the adventure

³ For a detailed insight on the idea of the novel, see the section 13 on the rise of the novel.

of a roguish character in his conflict with the principles of society. The picaresque novel tries to lay bare social injustice in a satirical way, as for example, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884)); **Buildungsroman** (meaning, novel of education, or a didactic novel, describes the psychological and the moral development of a protagonist from childhood to maturity, including such examples as George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss* (1860), or more recently Doris Lessing's *Cycle Children of Violence* (1952–1969)); **epistolary novel** (which uses letters as a means of first-person narration, as for example Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740–41) and *Clarissa* (1748–49)); **detective novels** (Crime fiction, one of the best known is Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934)), **historical novel** (such as Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) by Charles Dickens, the Russian novel *War and Peace* (1869) by Tolstoy, and whose actions take place within a realistic historical context); **satirical novel (Dickens)**; **utopian novel (and relatively dystopian novel)**: which create alternative worlds as a means of criticizing real sociopolitical conditions, as in the classic *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) by George Orwell); .

Science fiction novels ((Sci-fi) often refer to speculative fiction, and deals with the potential consequences of science and innovation, like G. H. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895) and Jules Verne *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864); **gothic novels** (which includes supernatural elements combining fiction and horror such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1823), Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), and Anne Rice's vampire novels).

b) Short Story: The short story emerged as a more or less independent text type at the end of the eighteenth century, parallel to the development of the novel and the

newspaper. Regularly issued magazines of the nineteenth century exerted a major influence on the establishment of the short story by providing an ideal medium for the publication of this prose genre of limited volume. Forerunners of these journals are the *Tatler* (1709–11) and the *Spectator* (1711–12; 1714), published in England by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, who tried to address the educated middle class in short literary texts.

A crucial feature commonly identified with the short story is its impression of unity since it can be read (in contrast to the novel) in one sitting without interruption. Due to restrictions of length, the plot of the short story has to be highly selective, entailing an idiosyncratic temporal dimension that usually focuses on one central moment of action. The slow and gradual build-up of suspense in the novel must be accelerated in the short story by means of specific techniques.

- c) **Novella/ novelette:** According to the Oxford Dictionary, a novella is “a short novel” (904). Such as Joseph Conrad’s (1857–1924) *Heart of Darkness* (1902), the novella holds an intermediary position between novel and short story, since its length and narratological elements cannot be strictly identified with either of the two genres.

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Lecture 2

Introduction to “literature”

What Shapes Literature?

Course Objectives:

- 10) To present important ideas/ conditions that helped writers produce a piece of literature?
- 11) To present an interdisciplinary framework that may help deepen the students’ understanding of literature.

I/ Introduction:

- 1) Among the literary works that you know, recall their most important thematic concerns.
- 2) Do you think that writings in the nineteenth century, or in the Middle Ages, are different from writings in the contemporary period?
- 12) What makes the difference?
- 13) Identify some of the ideas (historical, intellectual, cultural, political, scientific,...) that contribute in shaping a unity of consciousness in the writers’ minds.

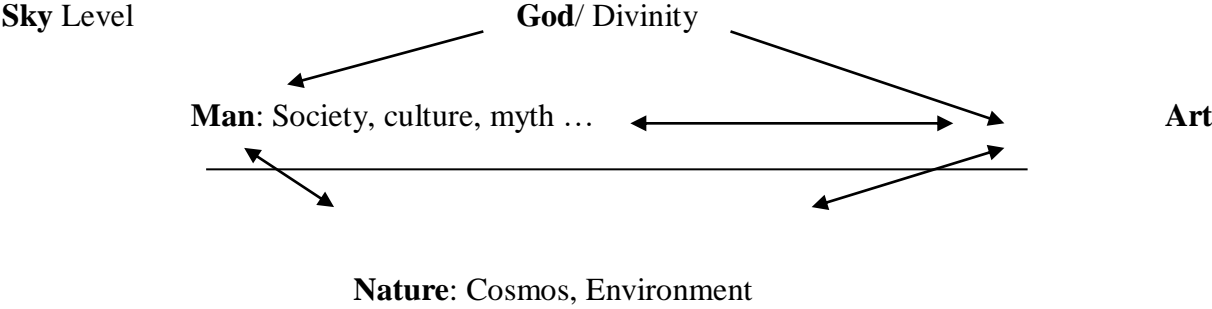
II/ What Makes Literature?

Friederich Nietzsche said once that “the world is deep, and deeper than day has ever grasped” (133)⁴. In the context of literature, we can safely note that literature is a world, and it is as deep as the world, in the same Nietzschean way of defining a world’s depth. Our attempt to understand literature and the ideas that shape it, whether in England, or America, or any part of the world, involves entering into frames of references that sometimes are alike and/ or radically different from our own.

Such understanding of literature invites a certain intellectual flexibility, perhaps a metaphysical imagination, a capacity to view the world from the eye of men and women who wrote literature in other places and other times.

⁴ Nietzsche, Friederich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Ed and Trans. Andrian Del and Robert Pippin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Print.

For example, if we ask the question, what helped in the production of Shakespeare’s poetry and tragedies? What makes Shakespeare’s literature? Definitely, one cannot but think of Shakespeare as part of his **historical, political, social, religious, and intellectual world-views**. Our understanding of Shakespeare’s literature must remain faithful to the above stated contexts that allow us build a perspective on the various ideas that build Shakespeare’s literature. One would think of Shakespeare as a Renaissance man who owes much to the Greek antiquity, including mythology and philosophy as sources of his intellectual framework in literature. In this sense, I propose to you the following simple diagram, which might help you find your way in thinking about the ideas that shape the mind of a writer:



Earth Level

The above arrows might help you discuss the link between each element and the influence of each on the other.

1) Mythology has always fed literature

Let us examine one of its most striking characteristics. As one scholar understands, **myth** is perhaps featured by a sustained, highly diversified tendency to interpret the world (Tarnas 1). This tendency is evident throughout Greek culture from the Homeric epics onward, though it developed into philosophical and intellectual backgrounds; for example, Ionians,

Pythagoreans, Stoics, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, and others. But indeed **Homer** and **Hesiod**, **Aeschylus** and **Sophocles** all expressed something like a common literary vision, reflecting a typically Greek tendency to portray life. Western literature, including English, American, French, Spanish, and many others, has found Greek and Roman mythologies as sources to feed their literature.

14) **Related Task:** Read one/ two of the Greek stories in Homer's the *Iliad*.⁵

2) **An Interdisciplinary Understanding of Literature:**

The history of a people, either on the political, social, cultural, or religious levels, has always helped form literature. The latter can be said to be richly related to all aspects of people's lives, as one of the critics proposes (Habib1)⁶. Yet, literature, in a way or in another, relate to the realms of **morality**, **knowledge**, and **learning**. If we separate literature from all these categories, we cannot classify a given writer as Romantic, classical, or modern. We cannot even know how some writers were influenced by Homer, Plato, Dante, or Arabic literature.

Regardless to its object of entertainment, much literature written in the context of human civilization and its problems has always sought an objective, to defend a certain idea and fight against some social ideologies.

⁵ Suggested Readings: Hamilton. Edith. *Mythology*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1942.

⁶ Habib, M. A. R. *Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

When we explore claims about what literature does and how it works as a social practice, we find many arguments. As Terry Eagleton⁷ puts it, literature has been given diametrically opposed functions (8). Is literature an ideological instrument: a set of stories that seduce readers into accepting the hierarchical arrangements of society? If stories take it for granted that women must find their happiness in being inferior to men; and if readers accept class divisions and totalitarian authorities as natural, literature can be claimed to legitimize contingent historical arrangements.

Religious literature was strictly written to teach morality and religion to individuals. An example of that are the medieval morality plays which were written by the Church for the sake of educating men to feed the soul and avoid worldly prosperity. Though such morality plays, like *Everyman*, were believed to be written for a desire to clarify faith of the believers, they were admittedly considered as a tool by the medieval church to hide its own hypocrisy and preoccupation with wealth.

Some theorists reflect on literature as a historical and ideological category, having social and political functions. Benedict Anderson argues, in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*⁸, a work of political history that has become influential as theory, that works of literature – particularly novels – helped to create national communities by their postulation of and appeal to a broad community of readers, bounded yet in principle open to all who could read the language (36). ‘Fiction’, Anderson writes, ‘seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community in anonymity which is the hallmark of modern nations’ (36).

⁷ Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

⁸ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Many works by writers sought to defend the rights of men in a class society. Yet, it is not surprising to meet Marxist critics presenting readings of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* or *Nineteen Eighty Four*. As many **countries have been colonized**, literature has served as an object of resistance. You can encounter in many writings by African novelists like Chinua Acheebee, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and many Algerian and Indian writers.

Literature can describe **world wars and political upheavals**; such is the case of many of Thomas Hardy's poems. In that frame also, it helped criticize man's doings against human race and against divinity, as in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

In the context of patriarchal societies, **feminist literature**, that which sought women's liberation and equality with men, has shaped a wide range of writings in different epochs. As early as the 18th century, some educated women wrote to avoid poverty and the workhouse. Aphra Benn was one of the first women writers to earn her living by her pen, opening the door to other professional women writers in the 18th century. Most famously, Jane Austen, the Brontë sisters and George Eliot shaped 18th- and 19th-century literature. Feminist literature has been subject to "development" and change, as women's ideas has also changed throughout the centuries, from primarily seeking to defend their rights, searching equality between men and women, to defending the extremist idea of imperial feminism over men, as in the case in Ellen Cixous's theoretical texts. **African-American literature** and **slave narratives**, as its title designates, has defended the rights of African-Americans in the New World, and led to a distinguished body of literature that includes writings by Phillis Weatley, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Alex Haley, and many others.

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Lecture 03

The Elements of Fiction

Course Objectives:

- 1) Define the elements of a story: Setting, characters, plot, theme and style.

I/ Introduction:

In the same way that a painter uses shape, color, perspective, and other aspects of visual art to create a painting, a fiction writer uses character, setting, plot, point of view, theme, and other elements to create artistic effect in fiction. These aspects are known as the elements of fiction. An understanding of these elements will enhance your appreciation any piece of fiction, and help you share your perception of a story with others. Usually these elements of fiction are important in story stories, novels, and novellas.

To illustrate the use of the elements of fiction and their significance within a literary work, we have selected two short stories that are strong in illustration and that we intend to study in the following two courses.

1) Setting:

Stories actually have two types of setting: Physical and Chronological. The physical setting is of course where the story takes place. The “where” can be very general—a small farming community, for example—or very specific—a two story white frame house at 739 Hill Street in Scott City, Missouri. Likewise, the chronological setting, the “when,” can be equally general or specific. The author’s choices are important. Shirley Jackson gives virtually no clues as to where or when her story “The Lottery” is set. Examination suggests

that she wants the story to be universal, not limited by time or place. The first two stories you will read each establish a fairly specific physical setting; consider what each setting brings to each story.

2) **Plot:**

The plot refers to the series of events that give a story its meaning and effect. It is a causal sequence of events; it simply tells us what happened and in what order. The story consists of **events** (things that happen) which can be either brought about actively; and so they are called **actions** (one character kills another one) or they just happen (someone dies of heart-attack).

Manfred Jahn thus gives the following definition of the plot/ **story**: “a sequence of events and actions involving characters. ‘Events’ generally include natural and non-natural happenings like floods or car accidents; ‘action’ more specifically refers to willful acts by characters.”⁹

A narrative can have one or more **plot-lines**, that is events can centre around one or more groups of characters. In S. Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, for instance, there is the plot-line which centers on Gatsby and his quest to win back Daisy, his lover who left him when he went to the war and who married Tom Buchanan. There is also the plot-line which centers around Myrtle and her secret love affair with Tom until her murder by Daisy. At certain levels these two plot lines merge, as Daisy discovers her husband’s betrayal on her.

Some narratives are very **tightly plotted**, everything happens for a reason or a purpose and one event is the consequence of another. Quest-stories or fairy tales are usually tightly plotted. This is often the case in Victorian novels where there is frequently an entire chapter at the end, tying up all the loose ends of the plot and giving a short glimpse of the characters’ future (see for example George Eliot, *Middlemarch* or Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*).

⁹ Jahn, Manfred. *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative*. Cologne: University of Cologne, 2017. (see: <http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/pppn.htm#N2>)

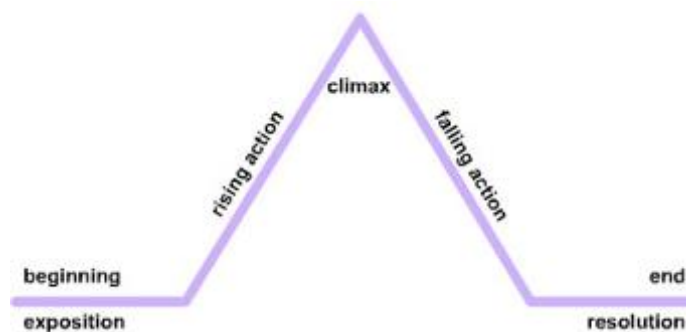
This kind of narration generally contributes to an increase in **suspense**. Conversely, lack of suspense or tension in a narrative can in part be explained by the absence of a tight plot. There is very little tension, for instance, in Virginia Woolf's short story "Kew Gardens," mostly because practically nothing happens: A person sits down on a park bench, watches people go by, gets up again. There is a similar lack of events in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Many modern and postmodern writers deliberately try to flout the traditional model of the plot

Some narratives place less emphasis on the causal connection between events, though there are still plenty of events and action. Instead, episodes might be linked by a common character, such as Moll Flanders in Daniel Defoe's novel *Moll Flanders* or Sam Pickwick in Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, or a common theme. Such narratives are described as **loosely plotted** or **episodic**. Plots that are not brought to a final or preliminary conclusion are called **open-ended** plots or just open plots.

One essential element that contributes to the development of the plot is the **conflict**. It may come from something external, like a dragon or an overbearing mother, or it may stem from an internal issue, such as jealousy, loss of identity, or overconfidence. As the character makes choices and tries to resolve the problem, the story's action is shaped and plot is generated.

In some stories, the author structures the entire plot chronologically, with the first event followed by the second, third, and so on, like beads on a string. However, many other stories are told with **flashback techniques** in which plot events from earlier times interrupt the story's "current" events. All stories are unique, and in one sense there are as many plots as there are stories. In one general view of plot, however—and one that describes many works of fiction—the story, after **exposing** the characters and events, begins with **rising action** as the characters experience conflict

through a series of plot complications that entangle him or her more deeply in the problem. This conflict reaches a **climax**, after which the conflict is resolved, and **the falling action** leads quickly to the story's end. Things have generally changed at the end of a story, either in the character or the situation; drama subsides, and a new status quo is achieved.



3) **Character/ Characterization:**

The people in a narrative are called 'characters' rather than persons to emphasize the fact that they are only representations of people, constructed by an author to achieve a certain function in a certain context. Characters in literary works also include animals like the famous fables of Ibn El Moukaffa *Kalila wa Dimna*; La Fontaine's *Les Fables*, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

1) Characters can be a(n):

- **Protagonist** - Clear center of story; all major events are important to this character.
- **Minor Characters:** Characters who contribute in the development of the event and are less central than the hero, or the protagonist.
- **Antagonist** - Opposition or "enemy" of main character.

2) Characteristics of a character can be revealed through:

- his/her physical appearance

- what he/she says, thinks, feels, dreams and what he/she does or does not do
- what others say about him/her and how others react to him/her

4) **Theme:**

Theme isn't so much an element of fiction as much as the result of the entire story. The theme is the main idea the writer of the poem or story wants the reader to understand and remember. You may have used the word "Moral" in discussing theme; but it's not a good synonym because "moral" implies a positive meaning or idea. And not all themes are positive.

5) **Point of view/ Narration:**

The point of view refers to who tells the story and how it is told. The possible ways of telling a story are many, and more than one point of view can be worked into a single story. However, the various points of view that storytellers draw upon can be grouped into two broad categories:

Third-Person Narrator (uses pronouns he, she, or they):

1. **Omniscient:** The narrator is all-knowing and takes the reader inside the characters' thoughts, feelings, and motives, as well as shows what the characters say and do.
2. **Limited omniscient:** The narrator takes the reader inside one (or at most very few characters) but neither the reader nor the character(s) has access to the inner lives of any of the other characters in the story.
3. **Objective:** The narrator does not see into the mind of any character; rather he or she reports the action and dialogue without telling the reader directly what the characters feel and think.

First-Person Narrator (uses pronoun I):

The narrator presents the point of view of only one character's consciousness, which limits the narrative to what the first-person narrator knows, experiences, infers, or can find out by talking to other characters.

The main aspect to be considered in reading fiction is the **narrative voice** (who speaks in the story). The characters generally speak directly. When one examines narrative voice, one basically wants to know **who speaks**, or more precisely, who tells the story.

Types of narrators:

a) **homodiegetic narrator**¹⁰ : a narrator who is also a character in the story, see for example Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, or Nick Carraway in S. Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

b) **heterodiegetic narrator**: a narrator who is NOT a character in the story but in a way hovers above it and knows everything about it.

c) If the homodiegetic narrator is also the protagonist of the narrative, it is an **autodiegetic narrator**.

Works Cited and Further Readings:

Bell, James Scott. *Elements of Fiction Writing: Conflict and Suspense*. Cincinnati:

Writer's Digest Books, 2011.

Bickham, Jack. *Elements of Fiction Writing: Scene and Structure*. Cincinnati:

Writer's Digest Books, 1993.

Broman, Eva. "Narratological Focalization Models: A Critical Survey." *Essays on*

Fiction and Perspective. Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2004. 57-90.

¹⁰ For more elaboration on "homodiegetic narrator," see (Broman 57-90); (Merman 70, 98); (Phelan 112).

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Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 2010.
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University Press, 1994.

Lecture 04

Selected Texts:

(setting/characters)

“The White Girl”

by Luis Alberto Urrea

Course Objectives:

This course is meant to be in touch with a literary text while considering the previously mentioned elements of fiction.

A Note on the Author:

Luis Alberto Urrea was born in Tijuana, Mexico, to a Mexican father and an American mother. His first book, *Across the Wire*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book and winner of the Christopher Award. He won an American Book Award for his memoir, *Nobody's Son: Notes from an American Life*; and his short-story collection, *Six Kinds of Sky*, received a Book of the Year award from *ForeWord* magazine. His nonfiction book *The Devil's Highway* won the 2004 Lannan Literary Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the Pacific Rim Kiriyaama Prize. His historical novel, *The Hummingbird's Daughter*, won the Pacific Rim Kiriyaama Prize for fiction. He lives with his family in Naperville, Illinois, where he is a professor of creative writing at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Read the story a couple times and annotate for:

- a) What's important (main characters, events)
- b) What are you interested in (We can focus on character and theme, but if you are intrigued by something other than these, go for that.
- c) When you are trying to make sense of an element of fiction, jot down EVERYTHING you know about it, and try to make claims based on the information you have collected.

- List everything you know about the character 2Short:

his likes/dislikes	his father	his actions	what he says	what he thinks	where he lives
.....
.....
.....

- d) Now, jot some ideas down about themes/major messages that the author is trying to send us?

Why would Urrea write about a tagger?	What might Urrea want us to learn about tagging?
.....
.....

- e) What is Urrea saying about recognizing/honoring people?
- f) What else do you think is important from this story?
- g) Based on the above, which theme do you believe is Urrea’s most important and why?

Lecture 05
 Selected Texts (**conflict/ Plot**)
“The Monkey’s Paw”
 by **W. W. Jacobs**

Course Objectives:

This course is meant to reinforce the students' knowledge about the conflict and the plot.

A Note on the Author:

William Wymark Jacobs (1863–1943), known as W. W. Jacobs, is an English short story writer and novelist. Although much of his work was humorous, he is most famous for his horror story "The Monkey's Paw."

Class discussion:

Read 'The monkey's paw,' then answer the questions:

- 1) In a few lines, discuss the importance of the setting in the opening of the story. How did it prepare you for the story?

.....
.....

- 2) How did the sergeant-major build up the White's (and our) interest in the monkey's paw?

.....
.....

- 3) Select phrases that tell us the changes that took place in Major Morris's behaviour as he talked about the paw.

.....
.....

- 4) Did all the Whites believe in the power of the monkey's paw? How can you tell?

.....
.....

5) What words can you use to describe the fulfilling of the first wish?

.....
.....

6) Mr White calls his son's accident a coincidence. What do you think?

.....
.....

7) Do you think it was Herbert at the door? Why or why not?

.....
.....

8) Why didn't Mr White want to open the door?

.....
.....

9) What do you think was his last wish?

.....
.....

10) What techniques does the writer use to keep our interest?

.....
.....

11) In what ways are plot, characters and setting important in 'The monkey's paw'?

.....

.....

Lecture 06

Selected Texts (**Theme/symbolism**)

Course Objectives:

The object of this course is:

- 1) To reinforce the students' knowledge about the thematic concern of a literary text
- 2) To introduce students to the meaning of "symbolism" theoretically and within the text.

A story may have all the features that we have discussed and still not be interesting. What ultimately makes a story memorable is the writer's art as a storyteller. When you read a story you like, ask yourself how the writer handles detail, dialogue and description. Symbolism is one element that adds to the meaning of the story and fortifies its theme(s).

A **symbol** is a person, object, image, word, or an event that evokes a range of additional meanings beyond and usually more abstract than its literal significance. Conventional symbols have meanings that are widely recognized by a society or culture, i.e., the Christian cross, the Star of David, a nation's flag. Carl Jung's archetypes are, interestingly, believed to be universal, being developed of the collective unconscious¹¹.

The Fall of the House of Usher by Edgar Allan Poe

A Note on the Author:

Edgar Allan Poe (January 19, 1809 – October 7, 1849) an American writer, best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre. He is widely regarded as a central figure of Romanticism in American literature as a whole, and he was one of the country's earliest practitioners of the short story.

Study Questions:

¹¹ See Jung, Carl. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Trans. Hull R.F.C. 2nd ed. New York: Princeton University Press, 1981.

I) After reading Poe's short story, identify the followings:

Characters	Setting
-.....	Time:
-.....
-.....	Place description:

II)

Identify from the text the possible meanings that can be associated with the following:

1) The house of

Usher:.....

.....

2) The collapse of the house:

.....

.....

.....

3) The dark atmosphere:

- a) "I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain—upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows—upon a few rank sedges—and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees."
- b) "I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down"
- c) "an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn—a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued."
- d) "I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all."
- e) "the many *fungi* which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long-undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls."
- f) "the rank miasma of the tarn"

.....
.....
.....

4) The painting and the poem: (In the middle of the story, Roderick paints a picture of the inside view of a vault. Later, he and the narrator place the supposedly dead Madeleine in an almost identical real vault. In the same passage, there is a poem or ballad called "The Haunted Palace." It describes a once-beautiful palace in a once-green setting in which "evil things, in robes of sorrow / Assailed the monarch's high estate." The Usher mansion immediately comes to mind, while the "robes of sorrow" are reminiscent of Madeleine's burial robes.)

III) With respect to symbolism used by Poe in the story, and according to your reading, what messages does "The Fall of the House of Usher" are meant to be underlined?

Lecture 08

Figures of Speech (In Selected Texts)

Course Objectives:

- 1) To introduce students to figurative language
- 2) To familiarize students with the different figures of speech

1) Introduction to Figurative Language:

The term “figurative” language was traditionally referred to language which differs from everyday (“nonliterary”) usage. Figures were seen as stylistic ornaments with which writers dressed up their language to make it more entertaining, and to clarify the meanings they wanted to convey. According to this view, literary devices such as metaphor, simile, rhythm, and so on embellishes ordinary language, and so forced readers to work harder at making meaning in the text. Nowadays, we recognize that all language is in some sense figurative.

15) Further readings on Figurative language:

- Gibbs, Raymond W. *The Poetics of Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Giora, Rachel. *On Our Mind: Salience, Context, and Figurative Language*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Katz, Albert N., Christina Cacciari, Raymond W. Gibbs, and Mark Turner. *Figurative Language and Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

2) Figures of Speech¹²:

A figure of speech is a broad term for the use of a word or a phrase to heighten and clarify the meaning of an idea. Most figures of speech are based on the use of **comparison**, **contrast**, or **emphasis**.

- **Examples:**

- 16) The wind cuts like a knife
- 17) She is as quiet as a mouse
- 18) He was the lion in the battle

a) Figures based in Comparison or Resemblance:

¹² Selected and annotated from Knight, T. W. *A New Comprehensive English Course*. London: University of London Press, 1960.

(Simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe)

Simile(=likeness)	A comparison made between persons, animals, or things differing in most characteristics, but alike in one or more points. e.g.- - He runs <i>like</i> a hare - He is as deaf <i>as</i> a post
Metaphor(=transference)	A similar comparison with the word “like” or “as” omitted, i.e. it is an implied or condensed simile. E.g.: Jones is a veritable <i>hare</i> on the running track.
Personification(=Making onto a person)	Attributing life and consequent actions to intimate objects or abstract ideas. E.g. The moonlight <i>crept</i> over the grass Murders <i>stalked</i> through the village
Apostrophe (=an address)	A special kind of personification, in which the object or idea is addressed as if a living person; or an address to an absent, and usually deceased, person. This occurs chiefly in poetry. e.g.: O cruel North Wind! Hail, smiling Morn! Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour.

b) Figures Based on Emphasis by Contrast or Surprise:

(Antithesis, Epigram, Hyperbole, Paradox, Oxymoron)

Antithesis (=placing against)	Setting one word or idea against another. e.g. more haste, less speed. Prosperity discovers vice; adversity, virtue.
Epigram (=Inscription)	A pointed saying, often employing contrast. More proverbs are epigrams, the essence of which should be brevity and unexpectedness. E.g.: Vulgarity is the conduct of other people. There is no fool like an old fool. Necessity is the mother of invention
Hyperbole (=exaggeration)	An exaggerated comparison e.g.: He is as old as the hills His speech brought the house down
Paradox (=contradiction)	An apparent contradiction of accepted facts, hence all the more striking by its truth. E.g.: The child is father of the man Our enemies are often our best friends. (Because they tell us the truth, often hidden and painful, out ourselves)
Oxymoron (=sharp and dull)	A contrast of exact opposites united in the same phrase, and so more compressed and sharper than a paradox. e.g. One must often be cruel to be kind His honor rooted in dishonor stood

c) **Figures based on Emphasis by saying the opposite:**

(Irony, Sarcasm, euphemism)

Irony (=simulated ignorance)	Conveying one's real meaning by saying the opposite. E.g. Brutus is an honorable man (Brutus is meant to have acted dishonorably)
Sarcasm	Very similar to irony, but is more obvious (or less clearly concealed, and generally accompanied by emphasis of voice. e.g. What! A <i>born linguist</i> like you cannot order a drink in French.
Euphemism (=speaking pleasantly)	Another form of understatement in which pleasant terms are used to describe an unpleasant fact. e.g. : He passed away (=died) The dog was put to sleep (=painlessly killed)

d) **Figures based on the appeal or effect of sound!;**

(Alliteration, onomatopoeia, pun)

Alliteration	The use of a sequence of words beginning with the same sound, a device chiefly employed in verse. E.g.: The wind in the willow whispers
Pun	A play on words of similar sound, but different meaning E.g.: Is life worth living? That depends upon the liver. The poet Thomas Hood employed this device most successfully and amusingly. A canon ball shot off his legs So he laid down his arms

Practice:

Identify the figure of speech used in each sentence below.

1. He has a heart of gold.
2. Dale's smile was as bright as the sun shine.
3. Life is a journey; travel it well
4. A wicked whisper came and changed my life.
5. Men's words are bullets that their enemies take up and make use of against them.
6. He roared with the force of a thousand lions.
7. The theater is his home.
8. There had been no rain for months and all the crops were death. Some parts of the farm were beginning to look like a desert.
9. After a good night sleep, I felt like a million dollars.

10. Everyone wanted Ken on the swim team because he could swim like a fish.

Answer:

1. Metaphor
2. Simile
3. Metaphor
4. Personification
5. Metaphor
6. Hyperbole
7. Metaphor
8. Simile
9. Simile & Hyperbole
10. Simile & Hyperbole

Further Readings:

Alm-Arvius, Christina. *Figures of Speech*. Studentlitteratur AB, 2003.

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Quinn, Arthur. *Figures of Speech: Sixty Ways to Turn a Phrase*. London: Routledge, 1982.

Lecture 09
Figures of Speech
Selected Texts:

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to:

- To allow students detect figures of speech in a literary text.

Sonnet 18 and 130
by William Shakespeare

Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare.

Shall I compare **thee*** to a summer's day?
Thou **art*** more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed*;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair* thou **ow'st***,
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st.
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Glossary:

ow'st: you

Art: beauty

dimmed: covered by clouds

fair: beauty

ow'st: ownest

An Overview on the Shakespeare's sonnet 18:

Sonnet 18 is perhaps the best known of all sonnets. Shakespeare wrote 154 of them but this one tends to top most popular lists, mainly due to the opening line which every romantic knows off by heart.

His sonnet 18 focuses on the loveliness of a friend or lover, the speaker initially asking a rhetorical question comparing them to a summer's day. He then goes on to introduce the pros and cons of the weather, from an idyllic English summer's day to a less welcome dimmed sun and rough winds.

In the end, it is the poetry that will keep the lover alive forever, defying even death.

Study Questions:

- 1) Who is the speaker in this sonnet?
- 2) To whom is the sonnet dedicated?
- 3) Tow what does the speaker compare his lover?
- 4) Explore the metaphors and comparisons present in the poem.
- 5) What does the speaker mean by “the eye of heaven”?

Read the following sonnet, **sonnet 130** by William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd*, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go*;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare*
As any she belied* with false compare.

Glossary:

damask'd: variegated

go: walk

rare: admirable extraordinary

belied: misrepresented

An overview on sonnet 130 by Shakespeare:

An anti-Pertrarchan sonnet dedicated to Shakespeare’s mistress, generellay refered to by critics as the Dark Lady, in which all of the details of common beauty are challenged and denied.

Study Questions:

- 1) To what things is the Dark Lady compared?
- 2) Quote words and/ or phrases that would exemplify the following figures of speech:

Figure of speech	Quote
Metaphor
Hyperbole
Irony

Lecture 10
Figures of Speech
Selected Texts

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Allow students detect figures of speech in a literary text

Below is a review of what we discussed in the previous lecture about figures of speech. Read the excerpt from “The Shell” by Colin Thiele, then, answer the following questions. The author, in his story, has used an abundance of figurative language to make the sea powerful and introduce it as a main character in the story.

The green sea swept into the shallows and **seethed** there like **slaking quicklime**. It surged over the rocks, tossing up spangles of water **like a juggler** and catching them deftly again behind. It raced knee-deep through the clefts and crevices, twisted and tortured in a thousand ways, till it swept **nuzzling and sucking** into the holes at the base of the cliff. The whole reef was a shambles of foam, but it was bright in the sun, bright as a shattered mirror, exuberant and leaping with light.

The shell lay in a saucer of rock. It was a green cowrie, clean and new, **its pink undersides as delicate as human flesh**. All around it the rocks dropped away sheer or **leaned out** in an overhang streaked with dripping strands of **slime like wet hair**. The waves spumed over it, hissing and curling, but the shell **tumbled the water off its back** or just rocked gently **like a bead in the palm of the hand**.

One of the characters, a woman, is introduced in the second paragraph, but we hear only her reaction to the scene. Notice how effectively Thiele uses comparisons to create the movement of the wave.

Thiele uses skilful devices to create this picture of the sea. The very first sentence contains words beginning with the letter ‘s’—*sea, swept, shallows, seethed, slaking*—which echoes the sounds made by the sea on the shore. The verbs, *swept* and *seethed* together with *surged* in the next sentence, vividly describe the action and sound of the sea.

Thiele also uses imaginative comparisons to make the picture clearer: *tossing up spangles of water like a juggler and catching them deftly again behind; bright as a shattered mirror, and slid slowly like a boy on his stomach slipping backwards down the steep face of a gable roof.* He gives life to the sea by speaking of it as if it were something alive: *It raced knee-deep through the clefts and crevices, twisted and tortured in a thousand ways.*

No wonder the woman on the tiny white beach in the tuck of the cliffs pressed her sunglasses close and puckered the corners of her eyes into creases. Before her, the last wave flung itself forward up the slope of the beach, straining and stretched to the utmost, and then just failing, slid back slowly like a boy on his stomach slipping backwards down the steep face of a gable roof.

The shell, the title of the story, is introduced in the third paragraph and we see it from the point of view of the woman. Again Thiele paints word pictures so we can visualise the shell on the rock. We are tempted to ask: What is the significance of the shell? What will the story reveal about it?

The shell lay in a saucer of rock. It was a green cowrie clean and new, **its pink undersides as delicate as human flesh.** All round it the rock dropped away sheer or **leaned out** in an overhang streaked with dripping strands of **slime like wet hair.** The waves spumed over it, hissing and curling, but the shell **tumbled the water off its back** or just rocked gently **like a bead in the palm of the hand.** Its clean gleam caught the woman's eye as she squinted seawards, and her heart stirred acquisitively. It was something she could wade out for when the tide went back; a way of **bringing the sea right into the living room.** Just one shell to give artistic balance to her specimen shelf for parties or bridge afternoons with her friends.

Figurative Language	Quote	Effect
Simile	'tossing up spangles of water like a juggler'	Comparing the movement of the sea to the actions of a

		juggler creates the impression of a lively performance, and one that the reader can easily visualise.
Personification
Metaphor

Lecture 11

Figures of Speech

Selected Texts

Course Objectives:

This course allows students detect different figures of speech in a literary text

Sir Philip Sidney, in his sonnet series *Astrophil and Stella*¹³, addresses sleep:

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,

The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,

The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,

Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,

The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,

The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,

Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,

The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,

The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,

Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,

¹³ Probably composed in the 1580's, Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* is an English sonnet sequence containing 108 sonnets and 11 songs. Astrophil is the star lover, and Stella is his star. Sidney partly nativized the key features of his Italian model Petrarch. He also adopts the Petrarchan rhyme scheme, though he uses it with such freedom that fifteen variants are employed.

The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.
Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.

In the above verses, the speaker asks sleep to come to him, and describes it as if it were a fair judge, a protector, a peace maker who deserves tribute.

- 1) To whom is the above poem addressed?
- 2) What features does Sidney ascribe to "sleep"?
- 3) What figure(s) of speech does the poem show?

The followings are excerpts selected from different literary texts:

From "*As I Walked Out One Evening*" by W.H. Auden

As I walked out one evening,
Walking down Bristol Street,
The crowds upon the pavement
Were fields of harvest wheat.

And down by the brimming river
I heard a lover sing
Under an arch of the railway:
'Love has no ending.

'I'll love you, dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,

'I'll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky.

'The years shall run like rabbits,
For in my arms I hold
The Flower of the Ages,
And the first love of the world.'

A Birthday

BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

“Presentiment is that long shadow on the lawn” by Emily Dickinson

Presentiment — is that long Shadow — on the Lawn —
Indicative that Suns go down —

The Notice to the startled Grass
That Darkness — is about to pass —

From sonnet 135 by Shakespeare.

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will,
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus;
More than enough am I, that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?

- 1) Identify from each poem, the following figures of speech:
Metaphor, hyperbole, simile, metaphor, pun.

SEMESTER II

Lecture 1

Overview: Development of English/ Emergence of Movements

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Introduce students to the history of England by the time of Anglo-Saxon invasion.
- Introduce students to the Middle Ages and its major divisions in literature.
- Introduce students to the major changes that occurred in Medieval Britain, on the historical, cultural, religious, and social perspectives.

43—ca. 420:	Roman invasion and occupation of Britain
ca. 450:	Anglo-Saxon Conquest
597:	St. Augustine arrives in Kent; beginning of Anglo-Saxon conversion to Christianity
871-899:	Reign of King Alfred
1066:	Norman Conquest
1154-1189:	Reign of Henry II
ca. 1200:	Beginnings of Middle English literature
1360—1400:	Geoffrey Chaucer ; Piers Plowman; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
1485:	William Caxton's printing of Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur , one of the first books printed in England

1) Introduction¹⁴:

Like the people of our own country, the population of England is composed of various racial elements. Each race has contributed social customs, traditions, historical facts, or other materials out of which literature is made. As centuries passed, these various

¹⁴ Edited and annotated from Tom Peete Cross et al. *English Writers*. Boston: The Athenaeum Press, Ginn and Co., 1940.

elements gradually became mingled together, so that we have at least come to speak of British civilization. It is in the literature that the ancestors of the English people have left traces most clearly. In English literature, we not only find recorded the hopes, aspirations, the ideals, and thoughts of the various races that made the complex English people, but we get also, if we read intelligently, a better estimate of the various contributions that Celts, Saxons, Danes, Normans, and other peoples have made to the national ideals of the English.

2) Characteristics of the Age:

a) Pre-Anglo-Saxon Britain:

From the first to the fifth century, England was a province of the Roman Empire and was named Britannia after its Celtic-speaking inhabitants, the Britons. The Britons adapted themselves to Roman civilization, of which the ruins survived to impress the poet of *The Wanderer*, who refers to them as “the old works of giants.” The withdrawal of the Roman legions during the fifth century, in an attempt to protect Rome itself from the threat of Germanic conquest, left the island helpless to seafaring Germanic invaders.

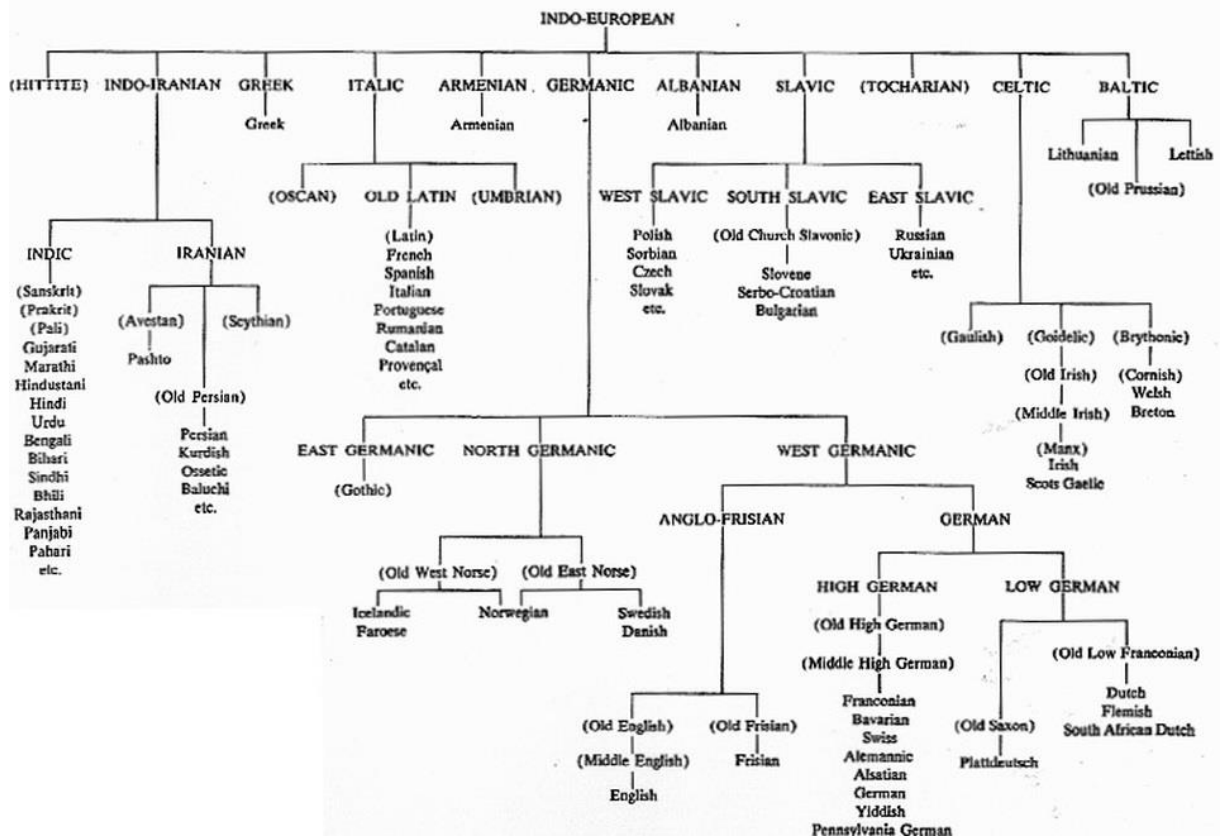
b) Anglo-Saxons:

These belonged primarily to three related tribes, the **Angles**, the **Saxons**, and the **Jutes**. The name *English* derives from the Angles, and the names of the counties Essex, Sussex, and Wessex refer to the territories occupied by the East, South, and West Saxons.



The Anglo-Saxon occupation was no sudden conquest but extended over decades of fighting against the native Britons. The latter were, finally, largely confined to the mountainous region of Wales, where the modern form of their language is spoken alongside English to this day. The Britons had become Christians in the **fourth century after the conversion of Emperor Constantine** along with most of the rest of the Roman Empire, but for about 150 years after the beginning of the invasion, Christianity was maintained only in the remoter regions where the yet pagan Anglo-Saxons failed to penetrate. In the year 597, however, a Benedictine monk (afterward St. Augustine of Canterbury) was sent by Pope Gregory as a missionary to King Ethelbert of Kent, the most southerly of the kingdoms into which England was then divided, and about the same time missionaries from Ireland began to preach Christianity in the north. Within 75 years the island was once more predominantly Christian. Before Christianity there had been no books. The **impact of Christianity on literacy is evident** from the fact that the first extended written specimen of the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) language is a code of laws promulgated by Ethelbert, the first English Christian king.

Aryan-European Languages



Aryan-European Languages¹⁵

3) Introduction to the development of Movements: The Middle Ages

The Middle Ages designate the time span roughly from the collapse of the **Roman Empire** to the **Renaissance** and the **Reformation**. The adjective “**medieval**,” is coined from Latin “**medium**” (middle) and “**aevum**” (age), to refer to whatever was made, written, or thought during the Middle Ages. Some scholars emphasized the continuities between the Middle Ages and later time now often called the Early Modern Period. Others stress the ways in which 16th century writers in some way created the “Middle Ages,” so that to highlight what they saw as the brilliance of their own time. It is not surprising that this time span is also generally referred to as the **Dark Ages**. Medieval authors, of course, did not think of themselves living in the “middle;” they sometimes expressed the idea that the world was growing old and that theirs was a declining age, close to the end of time.

While Europe was in the Dark Ages, Muslims achieved what is remembered as the [golden age](#) of knowledge.

¹⁵ From <https://whiterace.weebly.com/>

4) **General Characteristics:**

Although the Roman Catholic Church provided continuity, the period was marked by an enormous historical, social, and linguistic change. To emphasize these changes, some have divided the period into three basic sections: **Anglo-Saxon Literature- Anglo-Norman Literature**, and **Middle English Literature** (in the 14th and 15th century).

a) **Anglo-Saxon Literature:**

The Anglo-Saxon invaders began their conquest of the Southern part of Britain around 450 A.D. They spoke an early form of language: Old English. Here is an example Old English verse taken from Caedmon's *Hymn* (650), when Caedmon began to sing verses in praise of God:

Nu sculon hergean	heofonrices Weard
Meotodes meahte	and his modgeþane
weorc Wuldor-Fæder	swa he wundra gehwæs

The following is the translation according to Stephen Greenblatt¹⁶:

Now we must praise	Heaven-kingdom's Guardian,
The Measurer's might	and his mind-plans,
the work of the Glory-Father	when he of wonders of every one,

Old English displays its features with other Germanic languages (Gor Dutch) much more clearly. In form and content, Old English Literature has much in common with other Germanic literatures with which it shared a common body of **heroic as well as Christian stories**. The major characters of *Beowulf* are **pagan Danes** and **Geats**, and the only connection to England is an obscure allusion to the ancestors of one of the kings of the Angles.

b) **Norman-English Literature:**

This section is featured by the Norman Conquest of 1066. The domination of a French-speaking ruling class had the effect of adding a vast number of French loan words to the English vocabulary. Because of the Anglo-Norman interest in British history before

¹⁶ Greenblatt, Stephen, ed. "From An Ecclesiastical History of the English People." *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006. Print

the Anglo-Saxon conquest, King Arthur and his knights became a staple subject of medieval French, English, and German literature.

Before the 14th century, the literature in English (both written and oral) during the Middle Ages did not reach a pride and awareness in a uniquely English literature. After 100 years of war (By Edward III for the question of his claims to the throne of France), part of England's nobility lost their English heritage and identity. However, it was becoming possible to gain a patronage of literary achievements in English thanks to Chaucer (1400).

c) Middle English Literature (14th and 15th centuries):

The production of books throughout the medieval period was expensive. Books were reproduced by hand in manuscript. These were written on carefully prepared animal skin (parchment, vellum). The institution of book production developed across the period and so the market of books started to develop.

Middle English Literature started around 1200 and was continuously changing. Shortly after the introduction of the printing machine at the end of the 15th century, it attained the form designated as Early Modern English. So, by 1360's, the linguistic, political, and cultural climate had been prepared for the flowering of Middle English Literature through writings of Chaucer, Langland, and others. Before, French was the principle language of the Parliament, law, business, and high culture.

Study Questions:

- 1) What is the origin of the English Language?
- 2) Comment on the major divisions of the Middle Ages and identify the transformation occurring in culture, society, politic, religion, and language.
- 3) Do you think that Medieval literature is a primitive kind of literature? Discuss

Lecture 2

Old English Literature: A historical Survey¹⁷ (450 AD-1066)

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to

- introduce students to the history of Old English literature

1) Anglo-Saxon Literature¹⁸:

The Anglo-Saxon invaders brought with them a tradition of **oral** poetry. Because nothing was written down before the conversion to Christianity, only circumstantial evidence of what that poetry must have been like has survived. Generally, the earliest records in the English language are in **manuscripts produced at religious establishments, beginning in the seventh century**. Literacy was mainly restricted to servants of the church, and so it is natural that **the bulk of Old English literature deals with religious subjects** and is mostly drawn from Latin sources.

Examples of Germanic heroic poetry:

- *The Battle of Brunaburh*, which celebrates an English victory over the Danes in traditional alliterative verse, preserved in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.
- *The Battle of Maldon*, which commemorates a Viking victory.
- *Beowulf*
- *Caedmon's Hymn*
- *The Dream of the Rood*
- *The Seafarer*
- *The Wanderer*
- *Bede*
- *The Ruin*
- *Widsith, the Minstrel*
- *Waldere*
- *Deor's Lament*
- *The Whale*
- *The Husband's Message*
- *The Wife's Lament*

¹⁷ Edited and annotated from Hamilton, Edith, ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8th ed. London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006. Print.

¹⁸ Inspired from selected Old English texts like, *Beowulf*, *The Wanderer*, *Caedmon's Hymn*, and *The Dream of the Rood*.

A) The Anglo-Saxon Warrior Ethics:

These poems show that the aristocratic heroic and kinship values of Germanic society continued to inspire both clergy and laity in the Christian era. As represented in the body of Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry that survived, this world shares many characteristics summarized as follows:

- The tradition of Germanic tribes glorified battle. The lord of a tribal society was expected to lead them courageously in war and provide for them peace.
- A reciprocal loyalty between a retainer and a warlord,
- The exchange of gifts for services and services for gifts
- Revenge obligation regarding injury or death on behalf of kinsmen as well as for one's lord
- Fame-assuring battle courage, especially if a successful outcome or battlefield victory seems impossible.

Remarks:

- A retainer needs not always be loyal especially to one lord. A retainer can shift loyalties from one lord to another without necessarily incurring some sort of responsibility. Similarly, lords can treat their retainers differently, depending upon changing circumstances. They can even recruit and elevate an outsider other longstanding, loyal retainers. This is what Hrothgar seems to have done for Beowulf's father, Ecgtheow, as is something he certainly tries in Beowulf's case after the great victory over Grendel.
- In peacetime, life of the comitatus had its focus in the mead-hall, where meals were served and the drinking was done, the king held court, dispensing gifts and administrating justice.

b) Characteristics of Old English Literature:

- 1) **Oral:** As stated above, nothing was written down before the conversion to Christianity.
- 2) **The Bulk of Old English Literature deals with religious subjects** because literacy was restricted to the servants of the Church.
- 3) It celebrate also heroic ideals
- 4) **It is difficult to draw a line between heroic/ pagan ideals and Christian teachings:** Even though the heroic world of poetry could be invoked, it was already remote from the Christian world of Anglo-Saxon England. Nevertheless, Christian writers like the *Beowulf* poet were fascinated by the distant culture of their pagan ancestors and by the inherent conflict between the heroic code and a religion that teaches that we should “forgive those who trespass against us.”

In the *Dream of the Rood*, the Cross speaks of Christ as "the young hero,... strong and stouthearted." In Csedmon's *Hymn* the creation of heaven and earth is seen as a mighty deed, an "establishment of wonders."

- 5) Old English poetry is often **elegiac**, describing fear, fatalism, and the inevitable doom of Anglo-Saxon England: Anglo-Saxons believed in **fate**. They saw man as partly free: within certain limits he was the master of himself. But his destiny was always in the hands of “Wyrd,” the Germanic personification of fate. Wyrd was never kind, and was not to be placated; the best one (most courageous) accepted with dignity the misfortune of fate.
- 6) **Kenning:** it is one of the most obvious distinguishing characteristics of Old English. It is a kind of short, condensed metaphor composed of two words. The king is the “ring-

giver,” the sea is the “whale-road,” a boat is a “wave-walker.” The nature of Old English literature encouraged this, for it had the German habit of linking two words together to make the third (as we do in “streetcar”).

Lecture 03

Selected Texts

*Beowulf*¹⁹

Excerpts from

“Prologue: The Rise of the Danish Nation”

“Heorot is Attacked”

Course objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Introduce students to an Old English text, *Beowulf*.
- Allow students appreciate the epic as an Old English genre.

Beowulf is the oldest of the great long poems written in English, may have been composed more than twelve hundred years ago, in the first half of the eighth century, although some scholars would place it as late as the tenth century. As is the case with most Old English poems, the title has been assigned by modern editors, for the manuscripts do not normally give any indication of title or authorship. In 1731, before any modern transcript of the text had been made, the manuscript was seriously damaged in a fire that destroyed the building in London that housed the extraordinary collection of medieval English manuscripts made by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571 —1631). As a result of the fire and subsequent deterioration, a number of lines and words have been lost from the poem.

Terms to Remember, Pertinent to *Beowulf*:

Comitatus: band of loyal retainers serving a brave leader

Mead-Hall: Social hall, center if royal festivities for drinking, eating, entertainment. The Danish mead hall is called Heorot (Herot). Mead is a drink, like beer or ale, but made from honey.

Scop²⁰: One of the most important members of the warrior court was the scop.

A respected man by the king and the comitatus, the scop is a professional poet and

¹⁹ For a detailed description and analysis of *Beowulf*, see (Farell, R. T. *Beowulf: Swedes and Geats*. London: Viking Society of for Nothern Research, 1972. Print.)

singer. In a way, the scop was a door way to immortality. For he sets in heavily masculine rhythm the glorious deeds of master and men for the admiration of generations to come. He builds tribal pride (boasts) by recounting the marvelous exploits of national heroes. The scop built long narrative poems which truly deserve to be classed as epics. Some scholars consider a scop the author of *Beowulf*.

Thane: An Anglo-Saxon word meaning follower, attendant, retainer, warrior.

Lord/ Warlord: (a word derived from Old English hlaf, "loaf," plus weard, "protector") surrounds himself with a band of retainers (many of them his blood kindred) who are members of his household

Characters to Remember in *Beowulf*:

Beowulf: The protagonist of the epic, Beowulf is a Geatish hero who fights the monster Grendel, Grendel's mother, and a fire-breathing dragon. Beowulf's boasts and encounters reveal him to be the strongest, ablest warrior around. He represents all of the best values of the heroic culture.

Ecgtheow - Beowulf's father, Hygelac's brother-in-law, and Hrothgar's friend. Ecgtheow is dead by the time the story begins, but he lives on through the noble reputation that he made for himself during his life and in his dutiful son's remembrances.

Grendel : A demon descended from Cain, Grendel preys on Hrothgar's warriors in the mead-hall, Heorot.

Grendel's mother : unnamed, Grendel's mother seems to possess fewer human qualities than Grendel, although her attack of Heorot is explained by her desire for vengeance, a human motivation.

²⁰ For a fascinating and informative discussion on the scop, see (Anderson, *The Anglo-Saxon Scop*)

The dragon: An ancient, powerful serpent, and an enemy of Beowulf. It guards a horde of treasure in a hidden mound.

Hrothgar: The king of the Danes. Hrothgar enjoys success and prosperity until Grendel terrorizes his realm. A wise and aged ruler, Hrothgar represents a different kind of leadership from that exhibited by the youthful warrior Beowulf.

Wealththeow: Hrothgar's wife, the gracious queen of the Danes.

Unferth: A Danish warrior who is jealous of Beowulf he is unable or unwilling to fight Grendel, thus proving himself inferior to Beowulf.

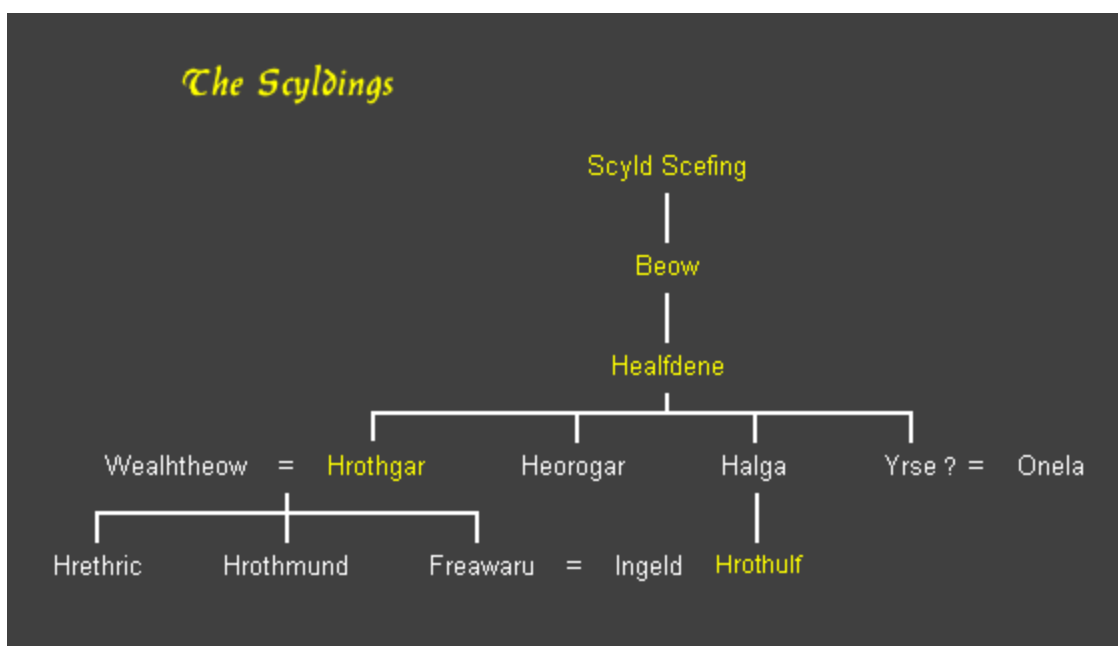
Hygelac: Beowulf's uncle, king of the Geats, and husband of Hygd. He dies soon after Beowulf's return from Heorot, leaving his kingdom to Beowulf.

Wiglaf : A young kinsman and retainer of Beowulf who helps him in the fight against the dragon while all of the other warriors run away. Wiglaf adheres to the heroic code better than Beowulf's other retainers, thereby proving himself a suitable successor to Beowulf.

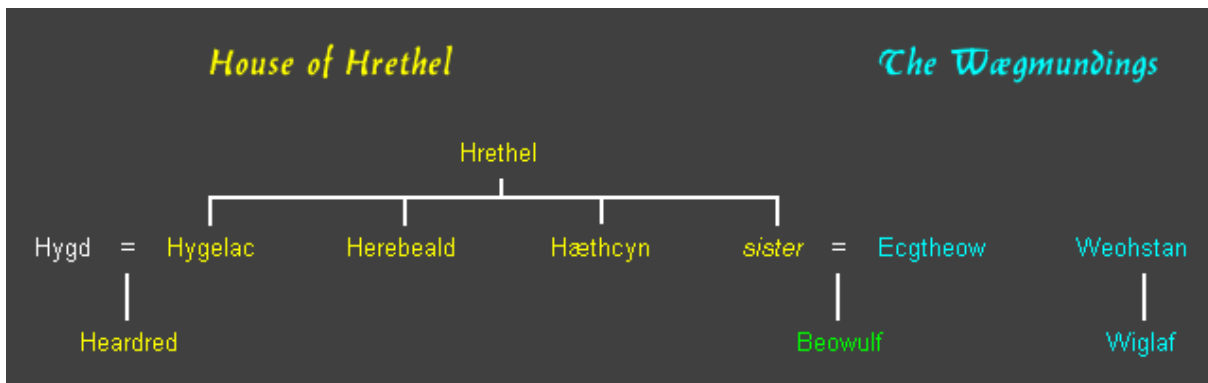
Breca: Beowulf's childhood friend, whom he defeated in a swimming match. Unferth alludes to the story of their rivalry, and Beowulf then recounts it in detail to boast himself.

Tribes and Genealogy in *Beowulf*

1) The Scyldings/ The Danes:



2) The Geats



Study Questions:

- 1) What made the king Hrothgar sad?
- 2) According to your intelligent reading, what was the reason for the attack of Heorot by Grendel.
- 3) What is kenning? Point out several.
- 4) For how many years did Grendel continue to eat people in Heorot?
- 5) What old Germanic values can you derive from your reading of the excerpts?
- 6) Who was the king of the Danes in the time of Beowulf?

Lecture 04

Selected Texts

Beowulf

“Beowulf Fights Grendel’s Mother”

“Beowulf Attacks the Dragon”

Course objectives:

This course is a continuation of the previous. Therefore, its objectives are to carry the same objectives of lecture 03.

Study Questions:

- 1) What is the main theme of *Beowulf*? Suggest other themes.
- 2) As you have read *Beowulf*, you have undoubtedly met with the elements of gold and gifts as a token for showing gratitude or encouragement.
 - a) What gifts did Beowulf get from the king?
 - b) Discuss the other roles of gold in *Beowulf*. Documenting from the text.
- 3) What are the chief conflicts in *Beowulf*? How are they related?
- 4) Discuss *Beowulf* as a great epic.
- 5) Why is or isn't Beowulf a tragic hero? Discuss.

Characteristics of the Great Epic:

The epic is the most **majestic** type of poetry. Generally, it is usually **long** and made up of many distinct **episodes**. This large number of stories out of which an epic is made probably at first circulated **orally**, as a tradition, being sung by minstrels.

Initially, the epic starts **in medias res** and establishes a kind of historical background and a genealogy for a clear understanding of the setting and the characters

of the epic. Mainly, its theme is so **mighty in its scope** that it gets to matters concerning **the entire people, nation, or even the world as a whole**. In other words, the epic is told in a grand scale and in ceremonial style using a **heightened language**. Its subject matter is taken from history, religion, legend, or mythology.

In addition to that, the **supernatural element** is usually very pronounced, events being often under its control. Therefore, the characters are powerful heroes or demigods. Its events enter in a **marvelous struggle** to carry out some **purpose** against a powerful opposing force.

In the great epic, deep elemental **passions** are set forth, such as hate, revenge, jealousy, dignity, ambition, love of power, and glory. Another interesting feature of the great epic is **the invocation of the muse/ God** for a spiritual power. Finally, the **author of the great epic never obtrudes himself upon the reader**. The story seems almost to be telling itself.

Finally, these conventions of an epic are followed by writers in varying degrees and are not necessarily present in one epic.

What is a Tragic Hero?

In his *Poetics*, Aristotle suggests that a hero of a tragedy must evoke in the audience a sense of pity or fear (qtd. in Butcher 45)²¹.

Aristotle spoke of the tragic hero as: “a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgement, of the number of those in the enjoyment of great reputation

²¹ S.H. Butcher, *The Poetic of Aristotle* (1902), pp. 45-47

and prosperity; e.g. Oedipus, Thyestes, and the men of note of similar families” (qtd. in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* 731)²².

²² *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 5th ed. Ed. J. A. Cuddon. London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2013.

Lecture 5

Middle English Literature: A Historical Survey (12th century-1485)

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to allow students

- Be familiar with mediaeval social estates.
- Have a historical Survey of Middle English

Throughout the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, there are many kinds of evidence that, although French continued to be the principal language of Parliament, law, business, and high culture, English was gaining ground. Several authors of religious and didactic works in English state that they are writing for the benefit of those who do not understand Latin or French. Most of the nobility were by now bilingual, and the author of an English romance written early in the fourteenth century declares that he has seen many nobles who cannot speak French. Children of the nobility and the merchant class are now learning French as a second language.

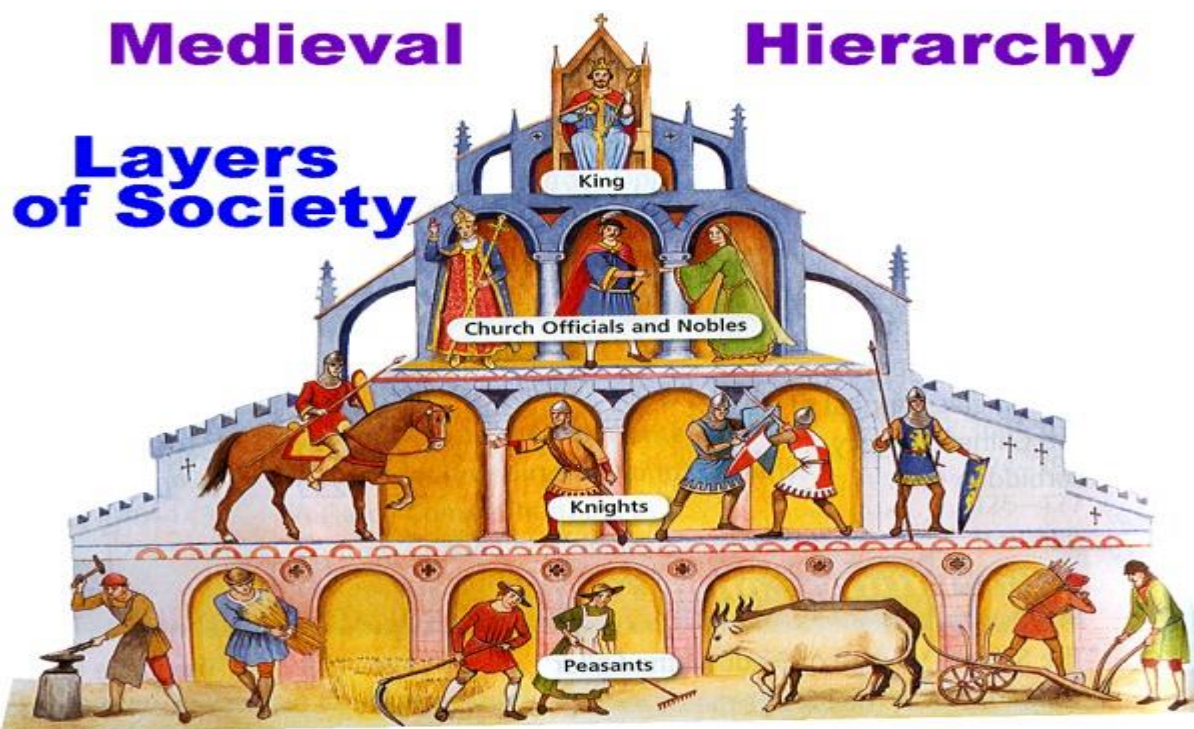
By the 1360s the linguistic, political, and cultural climate had been prepared for the flowering of Middle English literature in the writings of Chaucer, Gower, Langland, and the *Gawain* poet.

Characteristics of the Age:

1) Social estates:

Medieval social theory held that society was made up of **three "estates"**: the **nobility**, composed of a small hereditary aristocracy, whose mission on earth was to rule over and defend the body politic; the **church**, whose duty was to look after the spiritual welfare of

that body; and **everyone else**, the large mass of commoners who were supposed to do the work that provided for its physical needs. By the late fourteenth century, however, these basic categories were layered into complex, interrelated, and unstable social strata among which birth, wealth, profession, and personal ability all played a part in determining one's status in a world that was rapidly changing economically, politically, and socially. Chaucer's life and his works, especially *The Canterbury Tales*, were profoundly influenced by these forces. A growing and prosperous middle class was beginning to play increasingly important roles in church and state, blurring the traditional class boundaries, and it was into this middle class that Chaucer was born.



2) The Hundred Year's War (1337-1453):

In the wars against France, the gains of two spectacular English victories, at Crecy in 1346 and Poitiers in 1356, were gradually frittered away in futile campaigns that ravaged the French countryside without obtaining any clear advantage for the English.

3) Plague/ the Black Death (1348):

In 1348 the first and most virulent epidemic of the bubonic plague—the Black Death—swept Europe, wiping out a quarter to a third of the population. The toll was higher in crowded urban centers. Giovanni Boccaccio's description of the plague in Florence, with which he introduces the *Decameron*, vividly portrays its ravages: "So many corpses would arrive in front of a church every day and at every hour that the amount of holy ground for burials was certainly insufficient for the ancient custom of giving each body its individual place; when all the graves were full, huge trenches were dug in all of the cemeteries of the churches and into them the new arrivals were dumped by the hundreds; and they were packed in there with dirt, one on top of another, like a ship's cargo, until the trench was filled."

4) Increasing Popular Discontent and Taxation by the Church:

In 1381 attempts to enforce wage controls and to collect oppressive new taxes provoked a rural uprising in Essex and Kent that dealt a profound shock to the English ruling class. The participants were for the most part tenant farmers, day laborers, apprentices, and rural workers not attached to the big manors. A few of the lower clergy sided with the rebels against their wealthy church superiors; the priest John Ball was among the leaders. The movement was quickly suppressed, but not before sympathizers in London had admitted the rebels through two city gates, which had been barred against them. The insurgents burned down the palace of the hated duke of Lancaster, and they summarily beheaded the archbishop of Canterbury and the treasurer of England, who had taken refuge in the Tower of London. The church had become the target of popular

resentment because it was among the greatest of the oppressive landowners and because of the wealth, worldliness, and venality of many of the higher clergy.

5) The Rising of the Merchant Class:

In the portrait of Geoffrey Chaucer's merchant, we see the budding of capitalism based on credit and interest. Cities like London ran their own affairs under politically powerful mayors and aldermen. Edward III, chronically in need of money to finance his wars, was obliged to negotiate for revenues with the Commons in the English Parliament, an institution that became a major political force during this period. A large part of the king's revenues depended on taxing the profitable export of English wool to the Continent. The Crown thus became involved in the country's economic affairs, and this involvement led to a need for capable administrators. These were no longer drawn mainly from the church, as in the past, but from a newly educated laity that occupied a rank somewhere between that of the lesser nobility and the upper bourgeoisie. The career of Chaucer, who served Edward III and his successor Richard II in a number of civil posts, is typical of this class—with the exception that Chaucer was also a great poet.

6) The Rise of Poets and Intellectuals:

In the fourteenth century, a few poets and intellectuals achieved the status and respect formerly accorded only to the ancients. Marie de France and Chretien de Troyes had dedicated their works to noble patrons and, in their role as narrators, address themselves as entertainers and sometimes as instructors to court audiences. Dante (1265—1321) made himself the protagonist of *The Divine Comedy*, the sacred poem, as he called it, in which he revealed the secrets of the afterlife. After his death,

manuscripts of the work were provided with lengthy commentaries as though it were Scripture, and public readings and lectures were devoted to it. Francis Petrarch (1304—1374) won an international reputation as a man of letters. He wrote primarily in Latin and contrived to have himself crowned "poet laureate" in emulation of the Roman poets whose works he imitated, but his most famous work is the sonnet sequence he wrote in Italian. Giovanni Boccaccio (1313—1375) was among Petrarch's most ardent admirers and carried on a literary correspondence with him.

Chaucer read these authors along with the ancient Roman poets and drew on them in his own works. Chaucer's *Clerk's Tale* is based on a Latin version Petrarch made from the last tale in Boccaccio's *Decameron*

Study Questions:

- 1) What is "estate"?
- 2) Describe the social structure of the Middle Ages.
- 3) What is the role of the Church in the medieval period?
- 4) Do you think that the king represented the major authority of fourteenth and fifteenth century Britain?

Lecture 6
Selected Texts: Chaucer's *The Prologue*.

Course Objectives:

- To be familiar with "estate satire" as a literary genre.
- To be familiar with Chaucer as "the father of English" and a representative of his age.

A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:

GEOFFREY CHAUCER
ca. 1343-1400

Chaucer was the **son of a prosperous wine merchant** and probably spent his boyhood in the mercantile atmosphere of London's Vintry, where ships docked with wines from France and Spain. Here he would have mixed daily with people of all sorts, heard several languages spoken, become fluent in French, and received schooling in Latin. Instead of apprenticing Chaucer to the family business, however, his father was apparently able to place him, in his early teens, as a page in one of the great aristocratic households of England, that of the countess of Ulster who was married to Prince Lionel, the second son of Edward III. There Chaucer would have acquired the manners and skills required for a career in the service of the ruling class, not only in the role of personal **attendant in royal households but in a series of administrative posts.**

Throughout his life Chaucer also **wrote moral and religious works**, chiefly translations. Besides French, which was a second language for him, and Italian, Chaucer also read Latin. He made a prose translation of the Latin *Consolation of Philosophy*, written by the sixth-century Roman statesman Boethius while in prison awaiting execution for crimes for which he had been unjustly condemned. The *Consolation* became a favorite book for the Middle Ages, providing inspiration and comfort through its lesson that worldly fortune is deceitful and ephemeral and through the platonic doctrine that the body itself is only a prison house for the soul that aspires to eternal things. The influence of Boethius is deeply ingrained in *The Knight's Tale* and *Troilus*. The ballade *Truth* compresses the Boethian and Christian teaching into three stanzas of homely moral advice. Thus long before Chaucer conceived of *The Canterbury Tales*, his writings were many faceted: they embrace prose and poetry; human and divine love; French, Italian, and Latin sources; secular and religious influences; comedy and philosophy. Moreover, different elements are likely to mix in the same work, often making it difficult to extract from Chaucer simple, direct, and certain meanings. This Chaucerian complexity owes much to the wide range of Chaucer's learning and his exposure to new literary currents on the Continent but perhaps also to the special social position he occupied as a member of a new class of civil servants. Born into the urban middle class, Chaucer, through his association with the court and service of the Crown, had attained the rank of "esquire," roughly equivalent to what would later be termed a "gentleman."

His career brought him into **contact with overlapping bourgeois and aristocratic social worlds**, without his being securely anchored in either. Although he was born a commoner and continued to associate with commoners in his official life, he did not live as a commoner; and although his training and service at court, his wife's connections, and probably his poetry brought him into contact with the nobility, he must always have been conscious of the fact that he did not really belong to that society of which birth alone could make one a true member. Situated at the intersection of these social worlds, Chaucer had the gift of being able to view with both sympathy and humor the behaviors, beliefs, and pretensions of the diverse people who comprised the levels of society.

The Prologue

In the main, Chaucer's *Prologue* can be seen as *an estate satire*. It is a **satiric**²³ representation of all classes of the British society of the late fourteenth century. It aims to juxtapose the "pillory typical examples of corruption at all levels of society." In this respect, Chaucer's *The Prologue* is a collection of portraits. They are pilgrims: "wel nine and twenty in the compaignye." Their facial features, the cloths they dress, the food they like to eat, the things they say and the works they do, all reflect not merely their social status, but also their moral and spiritual "condicioun." Chaucer's heavy description, accordingly, contributes to the verisimilitude of the personas themselves, and hence, to the realism of the poem.

A final note to be added is that Chaucer follows an ordinary way of description, from the top to the bottom of the social scale, in his explosion of the personas. A support of this can be illustrated by Chaucer's apparent admission at the end of the prologue, that he is unusual in ignoring social ranking:

Also I praye you to foryive it me
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Here in this tale that they sholde stoned
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde. (744- 748)

²³ It is relatively important to understand "satire" as a literary tool. According to *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*, a satire is the use of wit or humor that is either fantastic or absurd in order to mock and criticize people's vices (211). What distinguishes satire from comedy is its lack of tolerance for folly or human imperfection. The word "irony" can immediately be called here, as it refers to a subtly humorous perception of inconsistency (Baldick 130).

Study Questions:

- 1) According to your careful and intelligent reading, what the vices denounced by Chaucer of the following characters: The Knight- The Prioress, and the Monk.
- 2) Why are the pilgrims going to Canterbury?
- 3) What does the Squire wear?
- 4) For which social classes did Chaucer write?

Course 7

The Elizabethan Period/ the Renaissance and the reformation (1485-1603): A Historical Survey

Course objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Present for students a historical survey on the Elizabethan period.
- Introduce students to the “Renaissance” as a cultural, artistic, and intellectual revolution.
- Introduce students to the reformation

1485: Accession of Henry VII, Inauguration of the Tudor dynasty

1509: Accession of Henry VIII

1517: Martin Luther’s Wittenberg Theses, beginning of the Reformation.

1534: Henry VIII declares himself head of the English church

1557: Publication of Tottel’s *Songs and Sonnets*, containing poems by Sir Thomas Wyatt; Henry Howard, earl of Surrey; and others

1558: Accession of Elizabeth I

1576: Building of The Theater; the first permanent structure in England for the presentation of plays.

1588: Defeat of the Spanish Armada

1603: Death of Elizabeth I and accession of James I, the first of the Stuart kings

1) The Elizabethan Period:

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the English language had almost no prestige abroad, and there were those at home who doubted that it could serve as a suitable medium for serious, elevated, or elegant discourse. It is no accident that one of the first works in this selection of sixteenth-century literature, **Thomas More’s *Utopia***, was not written in English.

The development of the English language in the sixteenth century is linked at least indirectly to the consolidation and strengthening of the English state. The social and economic

health of the nation had been severely damaged by the so-called Wars of the Roses, a vicious, decades-long struggle for royal power between the noble houses of York and Lancaster. The struggle was resolved by the establishment of **the Tudor dynasty that ruled England from 1485 to 1603**. After some dynastic wars, this period was interestingly featured by the reign of Henry's granddaughter, **Elizabeth I**.

The court was a center of culture as well as power: **court entertainments** such as **theater** and masque (a sumptuous, elaborately costumed performance of dance, song, and poetry); court fashions in dress and speech; court tastes in **painting, music, and poetry**—all shaped the taste and the imagination of the country as a whole. **Culture and power were not, in any case, easily separable in Tudor England.**

The monarch's chief ministers and favorites were the primary channels through which patronage was dispensed to courtiers who competed for offices in the court, the government bureaucracies, the royal household, the army, the church, and the universities, or who sought titles, grants of land, leases, or similar favors.

Sixteenth-century poets had much to learn from courtiers: the Elizabethan critic George Puttenham observed, indeed many of the best poets in the period, **Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh**, and others, were courtiers.

If court culture fostered performances for a small coterie audience, other forces in Tudor England pulled toward a more public sphere. Markets expanded significantly, international trade flourished, and cities throughout the realm experienced a rapid surge in size and importance.

2) **The Renaissance and the Reformation**²⁴

Introduction into the Renaissance Period

The Early Modern Period

As the sky hung low in Medievalism, which suggested a close bound between man and God and between philosophy and theology, the man of the Renaissance started to be secular. The stressed humanism of the age was a return to nature and a rediscovery of man and the natural world. Artists, like Michelangelo and Raphael pronounced humanism in their painting of physical nudity in the Vatican. Man, who was strictly submitting to the power of the Church, declared his subjectivity, sovereignty, rebellion, skepticism, and strong will. This

²⁴ Inspired from Richard Tarnas. *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That have Shaped Our World* Vie7w. Auckland: Pimlico, 1991.

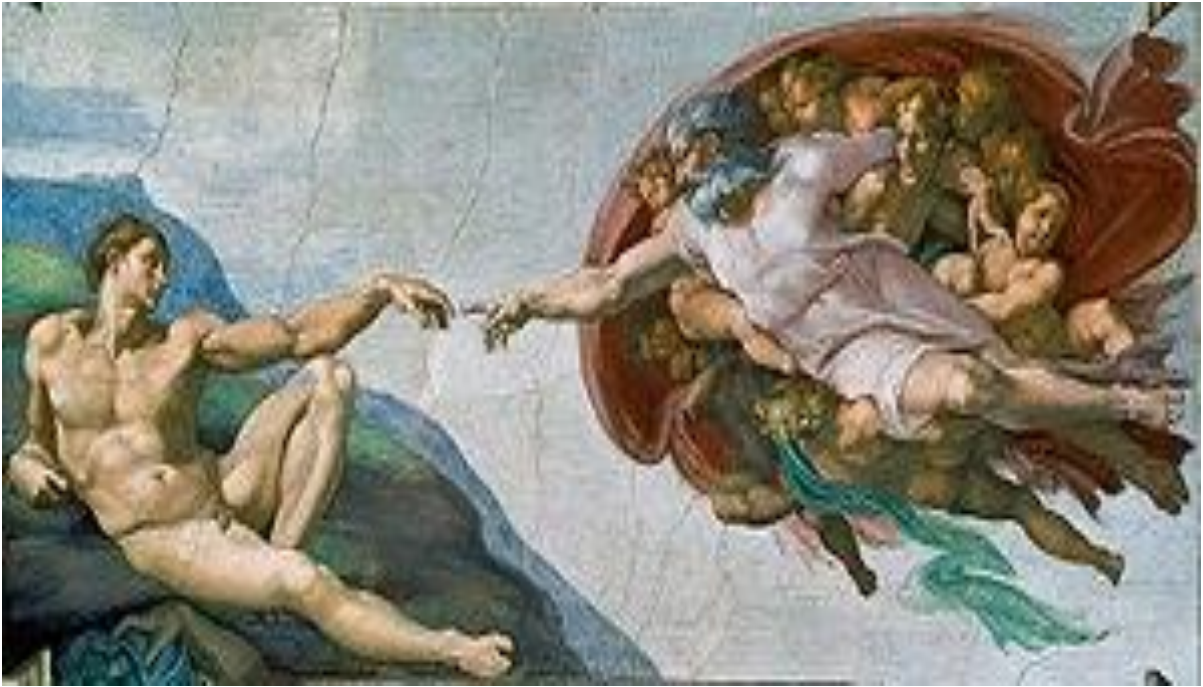
declared dignity and “raison d’être” was the fuel behind the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. Man revived the classical thought. In Florence, for instance, Plato was the chief subject of study. This decisive change is believed to be motivated by a variety of innovations like the magnetic compass, which led to exploration and political expansion, the printing press, which made the revolution accessible, and the mechanical clock which “rhythmed” man till now.

If the Renaissance would be regarded as skeptical in essence, one might be tempted to say that Martin Luther is the Renaissance. His skepticism and that of Calvin and Zwingli led to questioning the New Testament. Luther was convinced that man can earn salvation for free if he has faith in God. The Reformation, which is a Judaic reaction against the Hellenic, opened a door for religious disunity and have introduced a model of religious skepticism, a problem which will never be solved.

When considering the creativity and scientific flow brought by humanism, we can also agree that man’s separation from the authority of the Church cannot be set aside as negative. The Renaissance cannot be understood as an absolute revival of the pagan. Though Copernicus refuted the Platonic the Ptolmaic theory and constituted a threat for the Church and for the safety of the scientists, the natural science based on observation launched by Copernicus proved God to be the Master, the clock Maker and the Architect. Fresh reason, though centered on the concrete, presented series of epiphanies for Galileo, Newton, Leibiniz, and later philosophers; differently from medieval thinkers who read biblical texts only. With this in mind, it can be said that true humanist ideals are attained in equating between the glory of the human mind and faith in God. However, man, being gradually proud of his intellectual capacity as less dependent on God has led to the slow death of God. This finds expression in the duo between the Empiricist and the Rationalist schools of thought.

Study questions and reflective thoughts:

- 1) The following two paintings are different and from two different epochs. Identify the differences.
- 2) Tip: Think of the following four categories when commenting on the paintings:
God/ Divinity:
Nature/ Earth/ comos:
Man:
Art:
- 3) Compare between the two paintings and attempt to contextualize each in its appropriate age.



The Creation, by Michelangelo. 1512.



Madona and Child, by Barnaba Agocchiari. c.1300.

Lecture 08

Selected Texts: Shakespeare, and others.

Course Objectives:

This course is intended:

- To be familiar with Shakespeare as a representative of his epoch.
- To be familiar with the themes treated by Shakespeare his sonnets
- To be familiar with the sonnet as a poetic form.

1) **The Sonnet** (comes from the Italian *sonnetto*, meaning song):

The **Italian**, or **Petrarchan sonnet**, named after **Francesco Petrarch**, was introduced in English poetry in the early 15th century by Sir Thomas Wyatt. Its **fourteen lines** which break into an octave, which usually rhyme **abba abba** and a sestet, which may rhyme **xy xy xy** or **cde cde**, or any of the multiple variations possible using two rhyme sounds, is what distinguished it as a sonnet.

However, **Shakespeare's sonnet**, or the **English sonnet**, invented early in the century by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, is a fourteen lines divided into **three (03) quatrains** and a concluding **couplet** (of two 02 verses). It generally rhymes: **abab cdcd efef gg**. The quatrains state a subject and the couplet sums it up.

Example:

Sonnet 73

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by-and-by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

Task:

- 1) Read the above sonnet by Shakespeare and identify its rhyme structure.
- 2) In few lines, summarize the theme of each rhyme division.

Shakespeare invokes a series of metaphors to characterize the nature of what he perceives to be his old age. In the first quatrain, the poet compares himself to the autumn leaves; in the second, to the twilight; and in the third, to the dying embers. Gathering together these images, and the poet's application of them to himself, we understand the idea of approaching death. Then, the couplet comes to address the friend, or the young man. Shakespeare tells the young man he must perceive these things, and that his love must be strengthened by the knowledge that he is subject to decay and death.

The Spenserian Sonnet, named after Edmund Spenser, rhymes **abab bcbc cdcd ee**. It contains three quatrains followed by a couplet.

Shakespeare and the Sonnet

Shakespeare's sonnets are quite unlike the Petrarchan sonnets. He selects an unprecedented choice of a beautiful young man (rather than a lady) as the principle object for praise and love.

An introductory series (from sonnet 1 to sonnet 17) celebrates the beauty of a young man and urges him to marry and beget children who will bear his image.

From sonnet 18 to 126, Shakespeare patiently focuses on the beloved young man and develops prominent themes: the transience and destructive power of **time towards** age and **beauty**, countered only by the power of **love** and the permanence of poetry as an eternal form of **art**.

Shakespeare also is the first who presented a revolutionary approach to writing on women. He idealizes in his portrait of a Dark Lady (instead of the blond Lady as his predecessors did). Shakespeare's description of his mistress is sensuous and physical. His mood is not confined to the old or renaissance mood of addressing an unattainable lady.

He challenges the Petrarchan lover who showed delight, melancholy, shame, disgust, and fear. He celebrates instead dignity, pride, and honor.

From sonnet 127 to 154, Shakespeare focuses chiefly on the dark lady as an alluring object of desire.

The biographical background of the sonnets has inspired a mountain of speculation, but very little of them has any factual support.

Example:

Sonnet 3:

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother,
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shall see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

Discussion:

The sonnet reflects the man's beauty, sweetness, and fixed bachelorhood which forbids the immortality which children can present. The poet presents a resolution to immortalize the young man in poetry.

In the first quatrain, the sonneteer suggests to the unnamed young man to see his face in the mirror, for it is time to father a child. He describes him with the quality of "freshness" to admire him. Then, the sonneteer focuses on the young man's future. He says that if he

won't reproduce a child, he will be cheating the world and curse a woman who can be a mother.

In the 2nd quatrain, Shakespeare insists that after all, with the bachelor beauty, there is no woman who does not accept his husbandry. He says, who is he foolish to love himself so much and let himself decay.

In the 3rd quatrain, he supports that the young man himself is his mother's mirror and she is his mirror, who, through him, she recalls her youth. Despite her past and the advancement of time, she sees golden times.

He concludes with a negative outcome of his fixed bachelorhood. He says if he won't immortalize himself, he will die with his beauty.

Task:

- 1) Select three of Shakespeare's sonnets and discuss them in relation to the following four themes: Time, Beauty, Love, Art.
- 2) After you have read about the Renaissance, what features would you identify to fit Shakespeare's sonnet as a Renaissance art?

Lecture 09

The Golden Age of Drama: Selected Texts (plays):

The Merchant of Venice, Othello, and others.

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Review “drama” as a literary genre.
- Introduce students to one of Shakespeare’s plays
- Allow students appreciate Renaissance drama

Introduction:

The highest glory of the English Renaissance is marked by great playwrights like **Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson**. If other forms of literature were less attractive to readers, the works of playwrights have perhaps attained their golden age at this period.

The **medieval religious drama** had been written and acted in many towns throughout the country, and was a far less important feature in the life of London than of many other places. But as the capital became more and more the center of national life, the drama, with other forms of literature, was more largely appropriated by it; **the Elizabethan drama** of the great period was altogether written in London and belonged distinctly to it.

Reminder:

- 1- What is a drama?
- 2- What are its elements?

Drama²⁵ comes from the Greek word meaning “a deed,” and the Greek noun itself comes from a verb, *dran*, “to do” (Barnet, *et al.* 3). The idea of drama is to show something in “the doing,” something being done. Drama is not simply an interest in the presentation of interesting ideas and plots (like in *Macbeth* and *Othello*); rather, it is the presentation of human beings engaged in action. Although a play usually tells a story, as Ezra Pound observes, “the medium of drama is not words, but persons moving about on a stage using words” (qtd. in Snyder²⁶ 171). An equally brief statement about the essence of drama is Lope de Vega’s assertion that the essence of drama comes from three boards, two actors, and a passion, that is, a **place** (a playing-space, or stage) where **impersonators** (two actors) engage in a **conflict**, which is passion (qtd. in Barnet, *et al.* 3).

The place, in most of the times, is a permanent theatre, like in the Greek and Roman traditions. For a play is written to be seen and to be heard, not just to be read. People go to see a play in *theater* (which derives from a Greek word meaning “to watch”), which means they become an *audience* (it derives from a Greek term meaning “to hear”). Hamlet, speaking the ordinary language of his day, said “We’ll hear a play tomorrow” (Shakespeare 2.2. 496).

To bear in mind:

In reading a play, it is not enough to read the lines. We should try to notice the **characters**, **costumes**, and their **movements** in a given **setting**; **sets** and **gestures** are parts of the language of drama. When we are in theater, our job is much easier, of course.

William Shakespeare and Drama

²⁵ For more interest in drama, see Barnet, *et al.* *Types of Drama: Plays and Contexts*. New York: Longman, 1997. Print.

²⁶ Snyder, Susan. *Othello : Critical Essays*. New York: Routledge, 1988. Print.

Nothing of interest is known about Shakespeare's early years, but by 1590 he was acting and writing plays in London. He early worked in all three Elizabethan dramatic genres (Tragedy, comedy, and history). *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, was written about 1599, the year of *Richard II*, and in the following year he wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. *Julius Caesar* (1599) probably preceded *As You Like It* by one year, and *Hamlet* probably followed *As You Like It* by less than a year. Among the plays that followed *King Lear* (1605-1606) were *Macbeth* (1605-1606) and several romances²⁷.

The Works of William Shakespeare

History plays	Comedies	Tragedies
<i>Henry VI Part I, II & III</i>	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
<i>Richard III</i>	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>King John</i>	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>Edward III</i>	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>Richard II</i>	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Othello</i>
<i>Henry IV Part I & II</i>	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Henry V</i>	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Henry VIII</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
Romances	<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>

²⁷ Plays that have happy endings but that seem more meditative and closer to tragedy. In modern criticism of Shakespeare, the term is applied to four of his last plays—*Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*—which are distinguished by their daring use of magical illusion and improbable reunions (Baldick 221).

<i>Pericles</i>	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
<i>Cymbeline</i>	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	
<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	
<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>		

*Othello*²⁸

About *Othello*:

Othello is a tragedy by William Shakespeare, believed to have been written in 1603. The story revolves around two central characters: **Othello**, a Moorish²⁹ general in the Venetian army and his unfaithful ensign, Iago. Given its varied and enduring themes of **racism, love, jealousy, betrayal, revenge** and **repentance**, *Othello* has been the source for numerous operatic, film, and literary adaptations.

Reading excerpts from

- Act I: Scene I. Venice. A street.
- ACT IV : SCENE I. Cyprus. Before the castle.
- ACT V : Scene II: A bedchamber in the castle: DESDEMONA in bed asleep
- a "thief"? What kinds of assumptions about daughters are being made here?

Essay questions:

- 3- Reflect on “drama” as a typically Renaissance art.
- 4- Do you distinguish any element of Shakespeare’s play as illustrative to the meaning of the Renaissance?

²⁸ Source Material:

<https://www.emcp.com/previews/AccessEditions/ACCESS%20EDITIONS/Othello.pdf>

²⁹ Check in the dictionary the word “moore” and think about its possible associations with racism in general, and Orientalism and colonialism in particular. For further reading on this, see Anderson; Zabidi; Latter;

5- Who was your favorite character and why?

Lecture 11

The Seventeenth Century, a Survey

Selected Texts: The Metaphysical School

Course objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Introduce students to the 17th century
- Introduce students to the metaphysical school
- Allow students distinguish the differences between 17th century literature and the previous century's literature.

1603: Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I, first Stuart king of England

1605: The Gunpowder Plot, a failed effort by Catholic extremists to blow up Parliament and the king

1607: Establishment of first permanent English colony in the New World at Jamestown, Virginia

1625: Death of James I; accession of Charles I

1642: Outbreak of civil war; theaters closed

1649: Execution of Charles I; beginning of Commonwealth and Protectorate, known inclusively as the Interregnum (1649—60)

1660: End of the Protectorate; restoration of Charles II

Introduction:

As James's accession marks the beginning of "the early seventeenth century," his grandson's marks the end. Literary periods often fail to correlate neatly with the reigns of monarchs, and the period 1603—60 can seem especially arbitrary. Many of the most important cultural trends in seventeenth century Europe neither began nor ended in these years but were in the process of unfolding slowly, over several centuries. The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was still ongoing in the seventeenth, and still producing turmoil. The printing press, invented in the fifteenth century, made books ever more widely available, contributing to an expansion of literacy and to a changed conception of authorship. Although the English economy remained primarily agrarian, its manufacturing and trade sectors were expanding rapidly. England was beginning to establish itself as a colonial power and as a

leading maritime nation. From 1550 on, London grew explosively as a center of population, trade, and literary endeavor. All these important developments got under way before James came to the throne, and many of them would continue after the 1714 death of James's great-granddaughter Queen Anne, the last of the Stuarts to reign in England.

From a literary point of view, 1603 can seem a particularly capricious dividing line because at the accession of James I so many writers happened to be in midcareer. The professional lives of William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Donne, Francis Bacon, Walter Raleigh, and many less important writers—Thomas Dekker, George Chapman, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Heywood, for instance—straddle the reigns of Elizabeth and James.

Literature and Culture (1603-1640)

In the first part of the seventeenth century, exciting **new scientific theories** were in the air, but the older ways of thinking about the nature of things had not yet been superseded. Writers such as **John Donne**, **Robert Burton**, and **Ben Jonson** often invoked an inherited body of concepts even though they were aware that those concepts were being questioned or displaced. The Ptolemaic universe, with its fixed earth and circling sun, moon, planets, and stars, was a rich source of poetic imagery. So were the four elements—fire, earth, water, and air—that together were thought to comprise all matter, and the four bodily humors—choler, blood, phlegm, and black bile—which were supposed to determine a person's temperament and to cause physical and mental disease when out of balance. Late Elizabethans and Jacobeans (so called from *Jacobus*, Latin for James) considered themselves especially prone to melancholy, an ailment of scholars and thinkers stemming from an excess of black bile. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is melancholic, as is Bosola in John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and Milton's title figure in "II Penseroso" ("the seriousminded one"). In his panoramic *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Burton argued that melancholy was universal.

1) The Metaphysical School

The metaphysical poetry is a term coined by Samuel Johnson to refer to a lightly intellectualized poetry written in the 17th century England. It is characterized by the use of a rational idea, generally concrete to analyze feelings in an analytical manner and with a simple. It essentially uses a conceit (or wit) by which we are forced to think through the argument of the poem. It is marked by a complexity and subtlety of thought and a frequent use of paradox

and complex metaphors. The most notable of the metaphysical poets is John Donne. Others include George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, and Henry Vaughan.

John Donne (1572-1631)

A Note on the Poet:

John Donne's poems abound with startling images, some of them exalting and others grotesque. With his strange and playful intelligence, expressed in puns, paradoxes, and the elaborately sustained metaphors known as "conceits," Donne has enthralled and sometimes enraged readers from his day to our own. The tired clichés of love poetry— cheeks like roses, hearts pierced by the arrows of love—emerge reinvigorated and radically transformed by his hand, demanding from the reader an unprecedented level of mental alertness and engagement. Donne prided himself on his wit and displayed it not only in his conceits but in his grasp of learned and obscure discourses ranging from theology to alchemy, from cosmology to law.

A Valediction³⁰: Forbidding Mourning³¹

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say
The breath goes now, and some say, No:

So let us melt, and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears,
Men reckon what it did, and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined,

³⁰ A farewell poem, one of four so titled in the *Songs and Sonnets*. Another is "A Valediction: Of Weeping" (1633).

³¹ Izaak Walton speculated that this poem was addressed to Donne's wife on the occasion of his trip to the Continent in 1611, but there is no proof of that. Donne was, however, apprehensive about that trip; Walton also heard that, while abroad, Donne had a startling vision of his wife holding a dead baby at about the time she gave birth to a stillborn child.

That our selves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the other do.

And though it in the center sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

As you read, you will notice that Donne supports his argument by two striking comparisons. In the first, their souls do not separate, but undergo “an expansion,/ like gold to airy thinness beat” (23-24). In the second, even if their souls are logically two, they are united like the feet of a drawing compass. His lover’s soul, the fixed foot, occupies the center of an imaginary circle. If Donne’s soul, the other foot of the compass, moves outward, his lovers’ soul leans and harkens after it. This exploration of metaphor results in a metaphysical **conceit**³².

Class Discussion:

- Discuss Donne’s “A Valediction: Dorebidding Mourning,” as a metaphysical poem.

The poem’s structure resembles a logical argument, but the logic supports an irrational texture consisting of the lover’s soul as compared to the beaten gold and to the feet of a drawing compass. This combination of rational structure and sensuous texture illustrates the characteristic of metaphysical poetry, of thought and feeling, ingenuity and emotional intensity.

Literature and Culture in the Late Seventeenth Century (1640-1660)

³² A characteristic feature of much Renaissance poems. It refers to a long metaphor that starts from the beginning of the verse till its end. See “Love that Doth Reign and Live Within my Thought” by Henry Howard.

The English civil war was disastrous for the English theater. One of Parliament's first acts after hostilities began in 1642 was to **abolish public plays and sports**, as "too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levity." Some drama continued to be written and published, but performances were rare and would be theatrical entrepreneurs had to exploit loopholes in the prohibitions by describing their works as "operas" or presenting their productions in semiprivate circumstances.

Seventeenth-century poetry, prose, and drama retains its hold on readers because so much of it is so very good, fusing intellectual power, emotional passion, and extraordinary linguistic artfulness. Poetry in this period ranges over an astonishing variety of topics and modes: highly erotic celebrations of sexual desire, passionate declarations of faith and doubt, lavishly embroidered paeans to friends and benefactors, tough-minded assessments of social and political institutions. English dramatists were at the height of their powers, situating characters of unprecedented complexity in plays sometimes remorselessly satiric, sometimes achingly moving. In these years English prose becomes a highly flexible instrument, suited to informal essays, scientific treatises, religious meditation, political polemic, biography and autobiography, and journalistic reportage. Literary forms evolve for the exquisitely modulated representation of the self: dramatic monologues, memoirs, spiritual autobiographies, sermons in which the preacher takes himself for an example. Finally, we have in Milton an epic poet who assumed the role of inspired prophet, envisioning a world created by God but shaped by human choice and imagination.

Additional information about the Early Seventeenth Century, including primary texts and images, is available at Norton Literature Online (www.norton.com/literature).

Online topics are:

- Gender, Family, Household
- *Paradise Lost* in Context
- Civil Wars of Ideas
- Emigrants and Settlers.

Lecture 12

Introduction to Restoration and the 18th century (1660-1785): Neoclassicism and Satire:

John Gay: Trivia, Pope: The Rape of the Lock, Dryden: Epigram on Milton, Pope: Essay on Man, Epistle 2, and others.

Course objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Present a historical survey on the Restoration and 18th century Britain.
- Introduce students to the Neo-classicism as a literary movement.

1660: Charles II restored to the English throne

1688—89: The Glorious Revolution: deposition of James II and accession of William of Orange

1700: Death of John Dryden

1707: Act of Union unites Scotland and England, creating the nation of "Great Britain"

1714: Rule by House of Hanover begins with accession of George I

1744-5: Deaths of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift

1784: Death of Samuel Johnson

Introduction:

Politics:

The Restoration of 1660—the return of Charles Stuart and, with him, the monarchy to England—brought hope to a divided nation, exhausted by years of civil war and political turmoil. After the abdication of Richard Cromwell in 1659 the country had seemed at the brink of chaos, and Britons were eager to believe that their king would bring order and law and a spirit of mildness back into the national life. Political stability in this period, interestingly, led to the opening of theatres, libraries, and coffeehouses.

Phylosophy:

The main philosophers of the age are: **Emmanuel Kant**, and empiricists like **David Hume**, **John Lock**, **George Bberkley**.

Ideas and Contexts³³:

³³ For further reading, see Greenbaltt (2057- 2080).

Much of the most powerful writing after 1660 exposed divisions in the nation's thinking that derived from the tumult of earlier decades. As the possibility of a Christian Commonwealth receded, the great republican John Milton published *Paradise Lost* (final version, 1674), and John Bunyan's immensely popular masterwork *Pilgrim's Progress* (1679) expressed the conscience of a Nonconformist.

Far from inhibiting fresh thinking, however, the distrust of old dogmas inspired new theories, projects, and explorations. In *Leviathan* (1651), Thomas Hobbes jettisoned the notion of a divine basis for kingly authority, proposing instead a naturalistic argument for royal absolutism begun from the claim that mere "matter in motion" composes the universe: if not checked by an absolute sovereign, mankind's "perpetual and restless desire of power after power" could lead to civic collapse. Other materialist philosophies derived from ancient Epicurean thought, which was Christianized by the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi (1592—1655). The Epicurean doctrine that the universe consists only of minuscule atoms and void unnerved some thinkers—Swift roundly mocks it in *A Tale of a Tub*—but it also energized efforts to examine the world with deliberate, acute attention. This new scientific impulse advanced Francis Bacon's program of methodical experimentation and inductive reasoning formulated earlier in the century.

Charles II gave official approval to the scientific revolution by chartering the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge in 1662. But observations of nature advanced both formally and informally in an eclectic range of areas: the specialized, professional "scientist" we know today did not yet exist. And new features of the world were disclosed to everyone who had the chance to look. Two wonderful inventions, the microscope and telescope, had begun to reveal that nature is more extravagant—teeming with tiny creatures and boundless galaxies—than anyone had ever imagined. One book that stayed popular for more than a century, Fontenelle's *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds* (1686; translated from French by Behn and later by Burney), suggested that an infinite number of alternate worlds and living creatures might exist, not only in outer space but under our feet, invisibly small. Travels to unfamiliar regions of the globe also enlarged understandings of what nature could do: Behn's classifying and collecting of South American flora and fauna in *Oroonoko* show how the appetite for wondrous facts kept pace with the economic motives of world exploration and colonization.

Scientific discovery and exploration also affected religious attitudes. Alongside "natural history" (the collection and description of facts of nature) and "natural philosophy" (the study of the causes of what happens in nature), thinkers of the period placed "natural religion" (the study of nature as a book written by God). Newly discovered natural laws, such as Newton's laws of optics and celestial mechanics, seemed evidence of a universal order in creation, which implied God's hand in the design of the universe, as a watch implies a watchmaker. Expanded knowledge of peoples around the world who had never heard of Christianity led theologians to formulate supposedly universal religious tenets available to all rational beings. Some intellectuals embraced Deism, the doctrine that religion need not depend on mystery or biblical truths and could rely on reason alone, which recognized the goodness and wisdom of natural law and its creator. Natural religion could not, however,

discern an active God who punished vice and rewarded virtue in this life; evidently the First Cause had withdrawn from the universe He set in motion. Many orthodox Christians shuddered at the vision of a vast, impersonal machine of nature. Instead they rested their faith on the revelation of Scripture, the scheme of salvation in which Christ died to redeem our sins. Other Christians, such as Pope in *An Essay on Man* and Thomson in *The Seasons*, espoused arguments for natural religion that they felt did not conflict with or diminish orthodox belief.

The widespread devotion to the direct observation of experience established empiricism as the dominant intellectual attitude of the age, which would become Britain's great legacy to world philosophy. Locke and his heirs George Berkeley and David Hume pursue the experiential approach in widely divergent directions. But even when they reach conclusions shocking to common sense, they tend to reassert the security of our prior knowledge. Berkeley insists we know the world only through our senses and thus cannot prove that any material thing exists, but he uses that argument to demonstrate the necessity of faith, because reality amounts to no more than a perception in the mind of God. Hume's famous argument about causation—that "causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason but by experience"—grounds our sense of the world not on rational reflection but on spontaneous, unreflective beliefs and feelings. Perhaps Locke best expresses the temper of his times in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690):

If by this inquiry into the nature of the understanding, I can discover the powers thereof; how far they reach; to what things they are in any degree proportionate; and where they fail us, I suppose it may be of use, to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities. . . . Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct.

Keyword: Neoclassicism, satire

Known as "the age of reason," Neoclassicism is a mid-eighteenth century movement which looks back to the ideals of the classical times like those of the Romans and the Greeks. This movement takes the issue of Man as a central theme. Poets delivered that Man's nature is imperfect and his achievements are limited. As reason should guide man and societies, Neoclassical art is not meant to be spontaneous, projecting emotions or imagination. Rather, the reintroduction of the past let Neoclassicists to be conservative. Generally, the use of a sharp and brilliant **wit**³⁴ made the age of comedy and **satire**³⁵.

³⁵ For a reminder, see the lecture on Chaucer.

From *An Essay on Man*³⁶

*Epistle 2. Of the Nature and State of Man,
with Respect to Himself, as an Individual*

I. KNOW then thyself, presume not God to **scan**;
The proper study of mankind is Man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the **stoic**'s pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused;
Still by himself abused, or disabused;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Glossary:

Scan: judge

Stoic: An ancient philosophy, a member of the Greek school of philosophy that asserted that happiness can only be achieved by accepting life's ups and downs as the product of unalterable destiny.

Study Questions:

- 1) It is clear that the poem presents a survey of human nature. What is the role of Man on earth according to the poem?
- 2) Identify the major themes of the poem. Consider the four elements: God, Man, Nature, and Art and the relation between them, while reflecting on the theme(s) of the poem.
- 3) Compare this poem to one of the Renaissance sonnets.

³⁶ Pope's philosophical poem *An Essay on Man* represents the beginnings of an ambitious but never completed plan for what he called his "ethic work," intended to be a large survey of human nature, society, and morals. He dedicated the *Essay* to Henry St. John (pronounced *Stn-jun*), Viscount Bolingbroke (1678—1751), the brilliant, erratic secretary of state in the Tory ministry of 1710—14.

Lecture 13

Romanticism and Romantic Literature

William Wordsworth

Course objectives:

This course is intended to:

- Present a historical survey on the Romantic Period and Romantic philosophy.
- understand the difference between “romantic” and “Romantic”
- Introduce students to Romantic literature and art.

1. What is the difference between romantic and Romantic?

Both of the two literary terms “romantic” and “Romantic” are written in a similar way. Students suppose that the terms romantic or Romantic are associated with a love story. However, the term “romantic” is an adjective of “romance” and it is not necessarily capitalized. However, Romantic is related to the Romantic Movement or Romanticism, meaning that the capitalized Romantic refers to all poetry of facts that are framed within the Romantic Period (1785-1890’s).

Examples of romance: the story of Ulysses in Greek mythology- the great epic Beowulf.

2. Romanticism

Romanticism (also the Romantic era or the Romantic period) was an artistic, literary, musical and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century and in most areas was at its peak in the approximate period from 1800 to 1850. Romanticism was characterized by its emphasis on emotion and individualism as well as glorification of all the past and nature, preferring the medieval rather than the classical. It was partly a reaction to **the Industrial Revolution, the aristocratic social and political norms of the Age of Enlightenment**, and the scientific rationalization of nature - all components of modernity. It was embodied most strongly in the visual arts, music, and literature, but had a major impact on historiography, education, and the natural sciences. It had a significant and complex effect on politics, and while for much of the Romantic period it was associated with liberalism and radicalism, its long-term effect on the growth of nationalism was perhaps more significant.

The movement emphasized intense emotion as an authentic source of aesthetic experience, placing new emphasis on such emotions as apprehension, horror and terror, and awe—especially that experienced in confronting the new aesthetic categories of

the **sublimity** and beauty of **nature**. In contrast to the Rationalism and Classicism of the Enlightenment, Romanticism revived medievalism and elements of art and narrative perceived as authentically medieval in an attempt to escape population growth, early urban sprawl, and industrialism.

The events and ideologies of **the French Revolution** were also proximate factors. Romanticism assigned a high value to the achievements of "heroic" individualists and artists, whose examples, it maintained, would raise the quality of society. It also promoted the individual imagination as a critical authority allowed of freedom from classical notions of form in art. There was a strong recourse to historical and natural inevitability, a *Zeitgeist*, in the representation of its ideas. In the second half of the 19th century, Realism was offered as a polar opposite to Romanticism. The decline of Romanticism during this time was associated with multiple processes, including social and political changes and the spread of nationalism.

German idealism is the name of a movement in German philosophy that began in the 1780s and lasted until the 1840s. The most famous representatives of this movement are Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. While there are important differences between these figures, they all share a commitment to idealism. Kant's transcendental idealism was a modest philosophical doctrine about the difference between appearances and things in themselves, which claimed that the objects of human cognition are appearances and not things in themselves. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel radicalized this view, transforming Kant's transcendental idealism into absolute idealism, which holds that things in themselves are a contradiction in terms, because a thing must be an object of our consciousness if it is to be an object at all.

Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, inspired by Karl Leonhard Reinhold, they attempted to derive all the different parts of philosophy from a single, first principle. This first principle came to be known as *the absolute*, because the absolute, or unconditional, must precede all the principles which are conditioned by the difference between one principle and another.

keywords of Romantic philosophy: Dialectics, absolute, logic, idealism, consciousness.

William Wordsworth's

Expostulation and Reply (1798)

"WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books?--that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;

10

As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye--it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will. 20

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"--Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may, 30
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away,"

Homework: Extend your knowledge on Romantic thought on the following famous painting by David Caspar F.



Wanderer above the Sea of Fog
(1818)

Lecture 14
The Rise of the Novel (1700's)
Selected Texts: Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and others.

Course Objectives:

This course is intended:

- To identify some typical features of eighteenth-century fiction.
- To suggest ways in which our understanding of these works can be deepened by a combination of critical approaches – literary, historical and biographical.
- To equip students with general skills in the analysis of fiction, including an appreciation, characterisation, narrative mode and the mingling of fact and fiction.

1) Introduction to the Novel: Definitions and Distinctions

The novel has been the most popular literary form of the last 250 years. The novel is also an especially significant form, in that it has shaped Western understandings of human society and human psychology. Novels are not the only sources of such ideas, but they are the most popular and probably the most influential.

Equally important to our understanding of the novel is its difference from the traditional form of the **romance**. The romance may date back to antiquity, though the most familiar examples are probably the medieval stories of King Arthur and his knights. **Romances**³⁷ vary widely, but they do have some common features:

- b) The setting of a romance is usually remote and, perhaps, exotic, like that of a fairy tale.
- c) The characters in a romance are also sketched broadly—handsome prince, beautiful princess—and may include larger-than-life figures, such as giants and wizards.
- d) Finally, there's often some sort of magic in a romance. The romance is a form that has no trouble with the supernatural or the metaphysical.

However, what are the characteristics of a novel?

It is possible to say that the novel as a literary genre emerged in the **beginning of the eighteenth century**. The **industrial revolution**, can be said, paved the way to the **rise of the middle-class** and it also created a demand for people's desire for reading subjects related to their **everyday experiences**. The novel, therefore, developed as a piece of prose fiction that

presented characters in **real-life events and situations**. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* are some of early English novels. Most critics agree that the English novel tends to focus on **private and personal matters**—notably, the choice of a husband or wife. Thus, despite the popularity of science fiction or mystery stories, the most appropriate novels to be studied are the work of such writers like Daniel Defoe, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and others. Ian Watt (1957), in his book, *Rise of the Novel*, states that Defoe's "fiction" is the first, which presents us with a picture of both-individual life in its larger perspective as a historical process, and in its closer view, which shows the process being acted out against the background of the most ephemeral thoughts and action.

Realism is part of the definition of the novel. According to Watt, the pursuit of **verisimilitude** led Defoe, Richardson and Fielding to initiate that power of "putting man wholly into his physical setting" which in fact constitutes the distinctive capacity of the novel (58). Then, the primary convention of the novel is its full (and authentic) report of human experience: supply the reader with names, places, time, character particulars, and so on.

The Rise of the Novel

The rise of the English novel through the 18th and 19th centuries coincided with a number of major historical developments, including urbanization, industrialization, and democratization.

- ❖ The Rise of Individualism was also very significant in the emergence of the English novel. According to Watt, modern society (18th century onwards) has become "uniquely individualistic," i.e. its individuals have become autonomous (28). For this reason, the novel is more associated with the town rather than to the village. There are two reasons that explain the emergence of modern society and individualism.
- ❖ The rise of modern industrial capitalism led to an increase in/ of economic specialization.
- ❖ This, combined with a social structure that is less rigid and less homogeneous, on the one hand, and a less absolutist and more democratic system helped increase the freedom of choice. The traditional social structure now in total collapsed. It is no longer the family, nor the Church, but the individual (67). He alone was now responsible for determining his own economic, social, political and religious roles or places.
- ❖ The sociology of the novel is based very much upon a market relationship between author and reader, mediated through publications, in contrast to earlier methods of financing publication or supporting authors such as Patronage, or subscription. A market economy increases the relative freedom and isolation of the writer and decreases his immediate dependence upon particular individuals, groups or interests.
- ❖ The reproduction of newspapers in the eighteenth century is evidence on the rise of the novel and so is the popularity of the periodicals. The seed of Richardson's *Pamela* was a plan to write a series of letters, which provided examples of the correct way of continuing in various delicate social situations.

***Robinson Crusoe* by Defoe**

A Note on Daniel Defoe (1660-1731):

By birth, education, and occupations Daniel Defoe was a stranger to the sphere of refined tastes and classical learning that dominated polite literature during his lifetime. Middle class in his birth, Presbyterian in his religion, he belonged among the hardy Nonconformist trades folk who, after the Restoration, slowly increased their wealth and toward the end of the seventeenth century began to achieve political importance. He began adult life as a small merchant and for a while prospered, but he was not over scrupulous in his dealings, and in 1692 he found himself bankrupt, with debts amounting to £17,000. This was the first of his many financial crises, crises that drove him to make his way, like his own heroes and heroines, by whatever means presented themselves. And however double his dealings; he seems always to have found the way to reconcile them with his genuine Nonconformist piety. His restless mind was fertile in "projects," both for himself and for the country, and his itch for politics made the role of passive observer impossible for him. When he was nearly sixty, Defoe's energy and inventiveness enabled him to break new ground, indeed to begin a new career. *Robinson Crusoe*, which appeared in 1719, is the first of a series of tales of adventure for which Defoe is now admired, but which brought him little esteem from the polite world, however much they gratified the less cultivated readers in the City or the servants' hall. In *Robinson Crusoe* and other tales that followed, Defoe was able to use all his greatest gifts: the ability to re-create a milieu vividly, through the cumulative effect of carefully observed, often petty details; a special skill in writing easygoing prose, the language of actual speech, which seems to reveal the consciousness of the first-person narrator; a wide knowledge of the society in which he lived, both the trading classes and the rogues who preyed on them; and an absorption in the spectacle of lonely human beings.

From Chapter I

I WAS born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called - nay we call ourselves and write our name - Crusoe; and so my companions always called me.

I had two elder brothers, one of whom was lieutenantcolonel to an English regiment of foot in Flanders, formerly commanded by the famous Colonel Lockhart, and was killed at the battle near Dunkirk against the Spaniards. What became of my second brother I never knew, any more than my father or mother knew what became of me.

Being the third son of the family and not bred to any trade, my head began to be filled very early with rambling thoughts. My father, who was very ancient, had given me a competent share of learning, as far as house-education and a country free school generally go, and designed me for the law; but I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea; and my inclination to this led me so strongly against the will, nay, the commands of my father, and against all the entreaties and persuasions of my mother and other friends, that there seemed to be something fatal in that propensity of nature, tending directly to the life of misery which was to befall me.

My father, a wise and grave man, gave me serious and excellent counsel against what he foresaw was my design. He called me one morning into his chamber, where he was confined by the gout, and expostulated very warmly with me upon this subject. He asked me what reasons, more than a mere wandering inclination, I had for leaving father's house and my native country, where I might be well introduced, and had a prospect of raising my fortune by application and industry, with a life of ease and pleasure. He told me it was men of desperate fortunes on one hand, or of aspiring, superior fortunes on the other, who went abroad upon adventures, to rise by enterprise, and make themselves famous in undertakings of a nature out of the common road; that these things were all either too far above me or too far below me; that mine was the middle state, or what might be called the upper station of low life, which he had found, by long experience, was the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanic part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy of the upper part of mankind. He told me I might judge of the happiness of this state by this one thing - viz. that this was the state of life which all other people envied; that kings have frequently lamented the miserable consequence of being born to great things, and wished they had been placed in the middle of the two extremes, between the mean and the great; that the wise man gave his testimony to this, as the standard of felicity, when he prayed to have neither poverty nor riches...

... It was not till almost a year after this that I broke loose, though, in the meantime, I continued obstinately deaf to all proposals of settling to business, and frequently expostulated with my father and mother about their being so positively determined against what they knew my inclinations prompted me to. But being one day at Hull, where I went casually, and without any purpose of making an elopement at that time; but, I say, being there, and one of my companions being about to sail to London in his father's ship, and prompting me to go with them with the common allurements of seafaring men, that it should cost me nothing for my passage, I consulted neither father nor mother any more, nor so much as sent them word of it; but leaving them to hear of it as they might, without asking God's blessing or my father's, without any consideration of circumstances or consequences, and in an ill hour, God knows, on the 1st of September 1651, I went on board a ship bound for London. Never any young adventurer's misfortunes, I believe, began sooner, or continued longer than mine. The ship was no sooner out of the Humber than the wind began to blow and the sea to rise in a most frightful manner; and, as I had never been at sea before, I was most inexpressibly sick in body and terrified in mind. I began now seriously to reflect upon what I had done, and how

justly I was overtaken by the judgment of Heaven for my wicked leaving my father's house, and abandoning my duty. All the good counsels of my parents, my father's tears and my mother's entreaties, came now fresh into my mind; and my conscience, which was not yet come to the pitch of hardness to which it has since, reproached me with the contempt of advice, and the breach of my duty to God and my father.

All this while the storm increased, and the sea went very high, though nothing like what I have seen many times since; no, nor what I saw a few days after; but it was enough to affect me then, who was but a young sailor, and had never known anything of the matter. I expected every wave would have swallowed us up, and that every time the ship fell down, as I thought it did, in the trough or hollow of the sea, we should never rise more; in this agony of mind, I made many vows and resolutions that if it would please God to spare my life in this one voyage, if ever I got once my foot upon dry land again, I would go directly home to my father, and never set it into a ship again while I lived; that I would take his advice, and never run myself into such miseries as these any more. Now I saw plainly the goodness of his observations about the middle station of life, how easy, how comfortably he had lived all his days, and never had been exposed to tempests at sea or troubles on shore; and I resolved that I would, like a true repenting prodigal, go home to my father.

Study questions:

- 1) Identify, from the above stated definition of the novel, the elements that distinguish Defoe's text as a novel.
- 2) In what century is *Robinson Crusoe* set?
- 3) From which class society does Crusoe and his family belong?

Essential Readings:

Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*.

Eagleton, Terry. *The English Novel*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

Supplementary Readings:

J. Paul Hunter, "What Was New about the Novel?" in *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*.

John Richetti, *The English Novel in History, 1700–1780*.

Lecture 15

Selected Texts: Extracts from *Robinson Crusoe*, ...etc

Course objectives:

This course is a continuation of the previous, and therefore, carries the same objectives of the previous.

By the best of my calculation, that place where I now was must be that country which, lying between the Emperor of Morocco's dominions and the negroes, lies waste and uninhabited, except by wild beasts; the negroes having abandoned it and gone farther south for fear of the Moors, and the Moors not thinking it worth inhabiting by reason of its barrenness; and indeed, both forsaking it because of the prodigious number of tigers, lions, leopards, and other furious creatures which harbour there; so that the Moors use it for their hunting only, where they go like an army, two or three thousand men at a time; and indeed for near a hundred miles together upon this coast we saw nothing but a waste, uninhabited country by day, and heard nothing but howlings and roaring of wild beasts by night.

Once or twice in the daytime I thought I saw the Pico of Teneriffe, being the high top of the Mountain Teneriffe in the Canaries, and had a great mind to venture out, in hopes of reaching thither; but having tried twice, I was forced in again by contrary winds, the sea also going too high for my little vessel; so, I resolved to pursue my first design, and keep along the shore.

Several times I was obliged to land for fresh water, after we had left this place; and once in particular, being early in morning, we came to an anchor under a little point of land, which was pretty high; and the tide beginning to flow, we lay still to go farther in. Xury, whose eyes were more about him than it seems mine were, calls softly to me, and tells me that we had best go farther off the shore; 'For,' says he, 'look, yonder lies a dreadful monster on the side of that hillock, fast asleep.' I looked where he pointed, and saw a dreadful monster indeed, for it was a terrible, great lion that lay on the side of the shore, under the shade of a piece of the hill that hung as it were a little over him. 'Xury,' says I, 'you shall on shore and kill him.' Xury, looked frightened, and said, 'Me kill! he eat me at one mouth!' - one mouthful he meant. However, I said no more to the boy, but bade him lie still, and I took our biggest gun, which was almost musket-bore, and loaded it with a good charge of powder, and with two slugs, and laid it down; then I loaded another gun with two bullets; and the third (for we had three pieces) I loaded with five smaller bullets. I took the best aim I could with the first piece to have shot him in the head, but he lay so with his leg raised a little above his nose, that the slugs hit his leg about the knee and broke the bone. He started up, growling at first, but finding his leg broken, fell down again; and then got upon three legs, and gave the most hideous roar that ever I heard. I was a little surprised that I had not hit him on the head;

however, I took up the second piece immediately, and though he began to move off, fired again, and shot him in the head, and had the pleasure to see him drop and make but little noise, but lie struggling for life. Then Xury took heart, and would have me let him go on shore. 'Well, go,' said I: so the boy jumped into the water and taking a little gun in one hand, swam to shore with the other hand, and coming close to the creature, put the muzzle of the piece to his ear, and shot him in the head again, which despatched him quite. ...

... He was a comely, handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight, strong limbs, not too large; tall, and well-shaped; and, as I reckon, about twenty-six years of age. He had a very good countenance, not a fierce and surly aspect, but seemed to have something very manly in his face; and yet he had all the sweetness and softness of a European in his countenance, too, especially when he smiled. His hair was long and black, not curled like wool; his forehead very high and large; and a great vivacity and sparkling sharpness in his eyes. The colour of his skin was not quite black, but very tawny; and yet not an ugly, yellow, nauseous tawny, as the Brazilians and Virginians, and other natives of America are, but of a bright kind of a dun olive-colour, that had in it something very agreeable, though not very easy to describe. His face was round and plump; his nose small, not flat, like the negroes; a very good mouth, thin lips, and his fine teeth well set, and as white as ivory.

After he had slumbered, rather than slept, about halfan-hour, he awoke again, and came out of the cave to me: for I had been milking my goats which I had in the enclosure just by: when he espied me he came running to me, laying himself down again upon the ground, with all the possible signs of an humble, thankful disposition, making a great many antic gestures to show it. At last he lays his head flat upon the ground, close to my foot, and sets my other foot upon his head, as he had done before; and after this made all the signs to me of subjection, servitude, and submission imaginable, to let me know how he would serve me so long as he lived. I understood him in many things, and let him know I was very well pleased with him. In a little time I began to speak to him; and teach him to speak to me: and first, I let him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life: I called him so for the memory of the time. I likewise taught him to say Master; and then let him know that was to be my name: I likewise taught him to say Yes and No and to know the meaning of them. I gave him some milk in an earthen pot, and let him see me drink it before him, and sop my bread in it; and gave him a cake of bread to do the like, which he quickly complied with, and made signs that it was very good for him. I kept there with him all that night; but as soon as it was day I beckoned to him to come with me, and let him know I would give him some clothes; at which he seemed very glad, for he was stark naked. As we went by the place where he had buried the two men, he pointed exactly to the place, and showed me the marks that he had made to find them again, making signs to me that we should dig them up again and eat them. At this I appeared very angry, expressed my abhorrence of it, made as if I would vomit at the thoughts of it, and beckoned with my hand to him to come away, which he did immediately, with great submission. I then led him up to the top of the hill, to see if his enemies were gone; and pulling out my glass I looked, and saw plainly the place where they had been, but no appearance of them or their canoes; so that it was plain they were gone, and had left their two comrades behind them, without any search after them.

Study Questions:

- 1) Who is Xury?
- 2) Who is Friday? and how did Robinson describe him?
- 3) Identify the themes of the story.
- 4) According to your knowledge about the elements of fiction, identify from the story of Crusoe each of the followings: Setting, characters, plot description and tone.

Further readings:

Levine, George. *The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterley*. University of Chicago Press, 1981.

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