



INDIAN FICTION IN ENGLISH

PROF. MERIN SIMI RAJ

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
IIT Madras

TYPE OF COURSE : Rerun | Core | PG

COURSE DURATION : 12 weeks (29 Jul'19 - 18 Oct'19)

EXAM DATE : 17 Nov 2019

INTENDED AUDIENCE : M.E/M.Tech, M.S, M.Sc, PhD

COURSE OUTLINE :

The course intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of fiction written in English in India since its emergence in the 19th century and to introduce the learners to the literary ground covered in major literary histories, anthologies and critical discussions from the 1960s onwards. Apart from a chronological survey, the course will focus on the historical and literary origins of the genre, its political and economic underpinnings, the debates and controversies within the field and the crisis in contemporary literary studies. The objective of the course is also to expose the students to questions of nation, secularism, caste, gender, region and identity inherent in the writings. To enable a more nuanced engagement selected novels will be read and analysed within current critical frameworks such as postcolonialism, feminism, caste studies, historiography studies etc. the new trends in writing and publishing are also discussed in order to give a perspective of the genre in the present century. The pedagogy will include lectures, discussions and presentations by students. The locus of the course will be on peer learning and also on developing the skills for critical enquiry and academic research. The students are expected to read the prescribed novels and critical material.

ABOUT INSTRUCTOR :

Prof. Merin Simi Raj teaches in the Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Madras. Her teaching and research interests include literary historiography, Literary Criticism, Indian writing in English, Postcolonial literature and Narratives of marginality.

COURSE PLAN :

- Week 01** : Introduction, background and literary history - From Srinivasa Iyengar, M.K.Naik and Arvind Krishna Mehrotra - Questions of language, legitimacy and nationalism - Regional writing vs. writing in English.
- Week 02** : Early novels of the 19th century - Discussions based on Meenakshi Mukherjee's works - the genealogy of Indian novel - Indulekha - Rajmohan's Wife .
- Week 03** : 'Gandhi Novels' of the 1930s-1940s and beyond - From Priyamvada Gopal and Rumina Sethi - Kanthapura - Waiting for the Mahatma .
- Week 04** : Novels of the 1950s and 1960s - dominant themes and traditions – Post-independence writing - Heat and Dust - The Strange Case of Billy Biswas.
- Week 05** : Women and Indian Fiction in English - The question of gender, feminist concerns, the idea of 'home' - Cry, the Peacock - Nayantara Sehgal .
- Week 06** : Post-1980s and Rushdie: Writing the Postcolonial Nation - Midnight's Children - The Shadow Lines.
- Week 07** : Post-1980s and Rushdie: Writing the Postcolonial Nation - Ice Candy Man - The Hungry Tide - Riot.
- Week 08** : The region vs. the nation in Indian Fiction in English - Bombay in IE fiction - Writings from the North East - Tamsula Ao's short stories - "The Remains of the Feast" by Gita Hariharan.
- Week 09** : Caste in Indian Fiction in English - Untouchable - The God of Small Things - A Fine Balance.
- Week 10** : The global market, Booker events and literary canon - The 'Stefanian' writers - Arvind Adiga and Kiran Desai .
- Week 11** : Indian fiction in English in the contemporary.
- Week 12** : 'Other' writings.