



BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, PILANI (RAJASTHAN)

INSTRUCTION DIVISION

Course Handout

Course Number HSS F338
Course Title Comparative Indian Literature
Instructor In-Charge SOMDATTA BHATTACHARYA

Course Description

Analysis of the title of the course, "Comparative Indian Literature", itself--introduction to the concepts and theories related to the discipline of comparative literature--interrogation of the idea of "India" and "Indian" and relating them to the theories of nation, nationalism and nationality. Introduction to the genre of short story--interpretation of select Indian short stories, originally in English and in translation--understanding fiction--setting, point of view, plot and character, style and coherence. Introduction to concepts such as "canon", "identity-politics", "mainstream", "minority"--use of social, political, religious and regional perspectives to interpret the texts in the class

1. Scope and Objective of the Course

The course consists of samples from the genre of short story, from various Indian languages and English, covering some of the significant movements and styles in Indian literature. The focus of the course is the twentieth century, and hence modernism is a major theme. Students will be required to closely read and analyze these texts not only in terms of genre and style, but also in terms of the historical and political contexts in which these texts were/are (re)produced. The range of themes and styles are suitably varied, reflecting the vast differences in linguistic, regional and historical context. The texts are divided into two sets and the first set focuses on the texts produced in the pre-1970s period beginning early twentieth century, covering roughly the nationalist period, the traumatic partition and the Nehruvian era. The sixties and the seventies was also the period during which "progressive literature" flourished, samples of which will be interpreted in the class. The second set focuses on the texts that are representative of the post-1970s period, which in some ways mark the breakup of the Nehruvian consensus and the political assertion of the various marginalized groups such as Women, Dalits, Tribals, Muslims and so on, who have been pushed to the margins of the grand "Indian" narrative.





2. Text Book

T-1 Alter, Stephen, and Wimal Dissanayake, eds. *The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Short Stories*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2001.

T-2 Chaudhuri, Amit, ed. *The Picador Book of Modern Indian Literature*. London: Picador, 2001.

Reference Books

R-1 Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2006.

R-2 Nayar, Pramod. *Studying Literature: An Introduction to Fiction and Poetry*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2013.

R-3 Chandra, Bipan, et al. *India Since Independence*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2008.

3. Course Plan

Lecture No.	Learning Objectives	Topics to be covered	Reference to Chap/Sec/Book
1-2	General Introduction: Introduction to the discipline of Comparative Literature	Definition and theories related to the discipline	Reading Material, Class Discussion





Lecture No.	Learning Objectives	Topics to be covered	Reference to Chap/Sec/Book
3-4	Understanding the Indian nation	Concepts and ideas related to nation, nationalism and nationality	R-1, class discussion
5	Understanding the genre of short story	Features of the genre with examples	R-2
6-7	Features of Literary Works: Meaning, Message, Style, Coherence, Theme, Symbolism, Imagery	Understanding literary works	R-2,
8-9	A concise understanding of the twentieth century Indian history	Events from early twentieth century to the contemporary times	R-3, class discussion
10-16	Understanding short fiction of the early twentieth century	Analyzing works from the early twentieth century --nationalistic period	T-1 and T-2
17-23	Understanding short fiction of the period of the Indian Independence and the Partition	Analyzing works from the time of the Indian Independence	T-1 and T-2
24-30	Understanding short fiction of the decades immediately following the independence--Nehruvian era	Analyzing works from the decades after the independence	T-1 and T-2





Lecture No.	Learning Objectives	Topics to be covered	Reference to Chap/Sec/Book
31-37	Understanding short fiction representing the various minority movements	Analyzing works from more contemporary times	T-1 and T-2
38-40	Comparative analysis of the texts already read	Comparative analysis	T-1 and T-2
41-43	Summing up		

4. Evaluation Scheme

Sl.no	Evaluation Component	Weightage (%)	Date & Time
1	Mid Semester Test	30	18/3 2:00 -3:30 PM
2	Class test/Short assignment	10	
3	Term paper	20	
4	Comprehensive Exam	40	13/5 FN

- Students are expected to read newspapers and journals and have a general awareness of the current socio-political scenario of the country
- Chamber Consultation Hour:** To be announced in the class
- Make-up** will only be granted in **genuine** cases
- Plagiarism will be **highly** penalised

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