



S.P. Mandali's
Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai-19
Department of English



A preliminary course in History of English Literature

Objective - It has been observed that mostly while studying literature we tend to deal with historical factors as “background” and hence a very modest attention is paid to this aspect of literary studies. As a result, students (or even teachers) possess a selective knowledge about history of literature. This trend leads to confusion, inability to identify historical periodization and difficulty to locate writers, works or genres. Keeping this in mind, the present course would try to introduce a model of approaching literary history with special reference to English literature. The intention is to acquaint students with preliminary features of socio-political and cultural elements of England that played vital role in structuring what is known as English Literature and later as British Literature. Along with the historical aspects, the course will also contain a brief introduction to classical works from each era of the History of English Literature.

Duration of the Course - Eight Sessions (1.30 min. for lecture and half an hour for questions or activities)

Who can join? – Undergraduates with English Major, Graduates who wish to join Masters in English, Post-Graduates who wish to Attempt NET/SET in English, Literature Enthusiasts

Course Structure:

Session 1: Understanding Britain: The session will narrate a historical survey of Geopolitical and Sociocultural scenario of England. Its transition from monarchy to Democracy. The monarchs, periods and its relation to periodization of Literature. A chronological outline of Literary Periods.

Session 2: Anglo-Saxons to Middle Ages: Literary forms and European Influences: The session will discuss the journey of literary forms to England. Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and the prominent writes of Middle Ages (so called Dark Ages).

Session 3: Renaissance, Elizabethan Era to Restoration: The session will take the previous thread further with emergence of radical thoughts in Europe. It will touch upon the concept of

Renaissance Man, Elizabethan Drama and emergence of Shakespeare and his peers followed by the discussion on Restoration Literature (Samuel Pepys, Dryden, Aphra Behn etc).

Session 4: Age of Reason/Pope or Enlightenment: The session will enlist various characteristics of the age of reason and literature produced during this period.

Session 5: Romantic Era: The lecture will highlight the concept of Romantic and literary as well as artistic scenario during the period. Importance of European trends while defining English literature during this time.

Session 6: Victorian Period: Features of Victorian England and literature. Colonial history and Industrial development during the period.

Session 7 : Modern Era to Contemporary scenario: What is modern, and how modern literature came into being. The genres and metanarrative of post modernism. Interdisciplinary nature of English literature and the idea of world literature.

Session 8: Test and Conclusion (format of the test will be decided mutually by students and the teachers.)

(Each session will have an interactive model including quizzes and assignments)

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