



LITERARY CRITICISM (FROM PLATO TO LEAVIS)

PROF. MERIN SIMI RAJ

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
IIT Madras

INTENDED AUDIENCE : Students of English Literature

INDUSTRIES APPLICABLE TO : Only academics

COURSE OUTLINE :

The course is designed as an advanced level course in Literary Criticism focusing on the texts that laid the foundations of Western literary critical thought. The course intends to situate the relevance of the texts historically, within the literary traditions in which it was originally written and thereby contextually examine its relevance and significance in shaping contemporary literary criticism. Throughout the course, the learners will be encouraged to closely read the texts prescribed and understand specific concepts, frameworks and literary traditions.

ABOUT INSTRUCTOR :

Prof. Merin Simi Raj is an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Madras. She specializes in Postcolonial Writing, Modernity Studies and Historiography Studies. Her teaches History of English Language and Literature, Indian fiction in English, Literary Criticism, World Literature and Feminist Writings.

COURSE PLAN :

Week 1 : Classical Criticism, Aristotle's Poetics

Week 2 : Longinus' On the Sublime, Criticism in the Middle Ages

Week 3 : Sir Philip Sidney's Apology for Poetry

Week 4 : John Dryden's Preface to The Fables Samuel Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare

Week 5 : William Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads, Samuel Taylor Coleridge Coleridge's Biographia Literaria (Chapter 13-14), Keats' Letters, Shelley's Defence of Poetry

Week 6 : Matthew Arnold's Preface to the Poems, Henry James' Art of Fiction, Edgar Allan Poe's The Poetic Principle

Week 7 : Eliot's Tradition and Individual Talent, Eliot's Metaphysical Poets

Week 8 : Woolf's A Room of One's Own, Practical Criticism and IA Richards

Week 9 : Leavis' The Great Tradition, Wellek's The New Criticism: Pro and Contra

Week 10 : Shklovsky's Art as Technique, Walter Benjamin's Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Week 11 : Barthes's Death of the Author, Foucault's What is an Author

Week 12 : Showalter's Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness, Kolodny's Dancing through the Minefield