

TR
IGDIR UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
SYLLABUS

Course Title: British Drama
Lecturer: Assist. Prof. Özden DERE
Course Schedule: Thursday / 13:00 –15:45 – 405
E-mail: ozdendere@gmail.com
Office Hours: By appointment

1. Course Description, Aim and Contents

This course introduces students to the historical development, major genres, theatrical conventions, and representative playwrights of English theatre from its origins to the contemporary period. It examines selected plays from medieval drama, Renaissance theatre, Restoration comedy, modern drama, the Theatre of the Absurd, and contemporary British theatre. Particular attention is paid to the relationship between dramatic texts, theatrical performance, and their historical and cultural contexts. The course aims to provide students with a foundational knowledge of the major periods and movements in English theatre. It seeks to develop their ability to identify dramatic genres and conventions, analyse plays as both literary texts and performance works, and discuss how English theatre responds to changing conceptions of society, class, gender, morality, identity, power, and violence. The course covers the origins of English theatre; medieval mystery, miracle, and morality plays; Renaissance drama; Restoration comedy; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatrical developments; modern British drama; the Theatre of the Absurd; political theatre; and contemporary movements such as in-yer-face theatre. Selected works by playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe, William Congreve, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, and Sarah Kane are examined through close reading, classroom discussion, and selected stage or screen performances.

2. Weekly Outline

Week	Subject and Reading	Basic Concepts
1	Introduction to Theatre and Drama	Text and performance, tragedy, comedy, stage, audience
2	The Origins of English Theatre	Ritual, liturgical drama, mystery and miracle plays
3	Medieval Morality Theatre: <i>Everyman</i>	Allegory, morality, sin, salvation, personification
4	Renaissance Theatre and Christopher Marlowe	Elizabethan stage, humanism, blank verse, tragedy
5	Marlowe, <i>Doctor Faustus</i>	Knowledge, ambition, free will, damnation
6	Restoration Theatre and William Congreve	Restoration stage, comedy of manners, wit

Week	Subject and Reading	Basic Concepts
7	Congreve, <i>The Way of the World</i>	Marriage, money, gender, social performance
8	Nineteenth-Century Theatre and Oscar Wilde	Well-made play, melodrama, social comedy
9	Wilde, <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	Identity, class, marriage, hypocrisy, language
10	Modern Drama: Shaw'dan savař sonrası tiyatroya	Realism, social problem play, political drama
11	Samuel Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i>	Theatre of the Absurd, repetition, time, meaninglessness
12	Harold Pinter, <i>The Dumb Waiter</i>	Comedy of menace, pauses, silence, power
13	Caryl Churchill, <i>Far Away</i>	Political theatre, gender, authority, dystopia
14	Sarah Kane, <i>Blasted</i> or selected scenes from the play	In-yer-face theatre, violence, war, spectatorship

3. Assessment

- Participation – 10%
- Midterm Exam – 40%
- Final Exam – 50%

Method of Instruction: There will be an introductory lecture each week followed by a close reading of and a class discussion of the plays.

Requirements: Attendance is obligatory. More than 12 hours of absence will result in failure. Each student is obliged to read in advance every text listed here, and those that the lecturer will name during the class. Internet is useful, but do not solely depend on it.