

TR
IGDIR UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
SYLLABUS

Course Title: Literary Theory I
Lecturer: Assist. Prof. Özden DERE
Course Schedule: Tuesday / 11:00 –13:45 – 406
E-mail: ozdendere@gmail.com
Office Hours: By appointment

1. Course Description, Aim and Contents

The aim of this course is to present students an overview of the historical and theoretical development of western literary criticism from its origins in Ancient Greece to the early twentieth century. It specifically focuses on Plato, Aristotle, Horace, medieval and Renaissance literary criticism, Neo-classical literary theory, the Romantics, the Victorian literary theory and criticism, and the early twentieth-century literary theory and criticism. It also aims to provide students with a foundation to critically analyse the main issues and principles of literary criticism and theory as well as to appreciate the significance of literary theory and criticism for literary studies. To this end, this course will address questions regarding theory, criticism, and the critic; the nature, function, and value of literature; the criteria used to evaluate literature (what is great literature? what makes a literary work great?); aesthetics (what is beauty? what makes a literary work beautiful?); the language of a literary work, etc.

2. Weekly Outline

Week 1: General Introduction — What is Theory? Why do we need theory?

Week 2-3: Classical literary theory & criticism: Plato from *Ion* and *The Republic* (Books 2, 3, 7, 10) (c. 375 BC)

Week 4-5: Aristotle *Poetics* (c. 335 BC)

Week 6-7: Horace *Ars Poetica* (c. 19 BC), Longinus “On the Sublime” (1st c. AD)

Week 8: Midterm Exam

Week 9-10: Renaissance literary theory & criticism: Sir Philip Sidney “An Apology for Poetry” (“The Defence of Poesy”) (c. 1580)

Week 11-12: Neo-classical literary theory & criticism: John Dryden *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), Alexander Pope *An Essay on Criticism* (1711), Samuel Johnson “Preface to Shakespeare” (1768)

Week 12-13: Romantic literary theory & criticism: William Wordsworth *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1798), S. T. Coleridge from *Biographia Literaria* (1817)

Week 14: Overview of the course

Week 15: Final Exam

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.