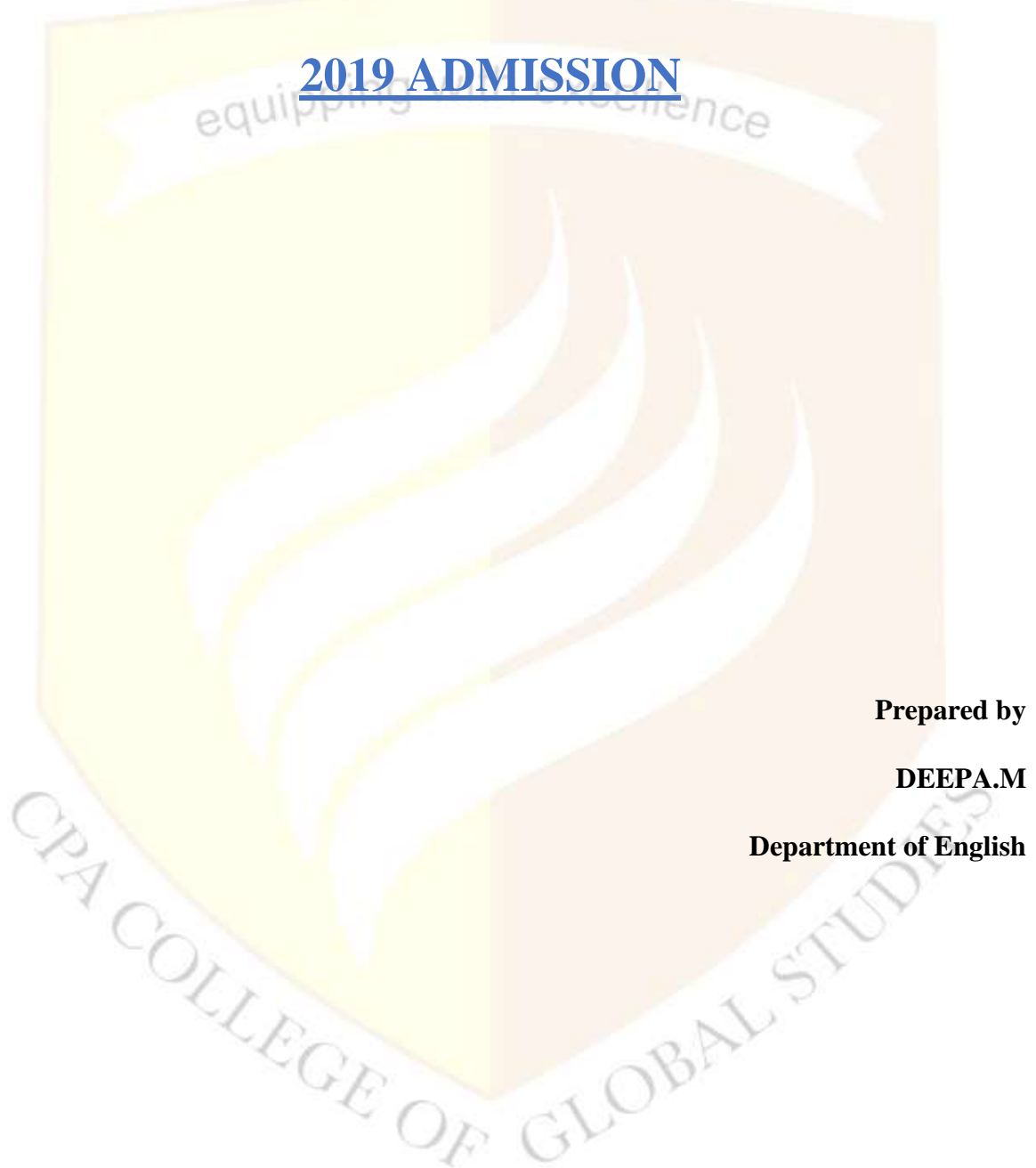


ENG6B12- CLASSICS OF WORLD LITRTATURE

2019 ADMISSION



Prepared by

DEEPA.M

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TITLE OF THE COURSE	CLASSICS OF WORLD LITERATURE
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SEMESTER IN WHICH THE COURSE IS TO BE TAUGHT	6
NO. OF CREDITS	4
NO. OF CONTACT HOURS	90 (5 hrs per week)

AIM: To hone the sensibility of the student to appreciate the great classics, to understand their universal quality and thereby achieve a broader perspective of life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

- a. To acquaint the students with the classic literatures and thereby composite cultures of the world
- b. To enable students to develop cross cultural perspectives
- c. To enhance the literary sensibility of students

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A. COURSE SUMMARY:

Module 1: 10 hrs

Module 2: 30 hrs

Module 3: 18 hrs

Module 4: 20 hrs

Evaluation: 12 hrs

Total: 90 hrs

B. COURSE DETAILS:

Module 1: Introduction to the ancient world

Introducing epics of the world and conventions: The Iliad, Odyssey, Aeneid, The Epic of Gilgamesh, The Mahabharata and Ramayana – Introduction to Greek theatre and Indian theatre

Module 2: Poetry

1. Dante: Divine Comedy Canto IV
2. Goethe: The Violet
3. Alexander Pushkin: A Flower Shrivelled Bare of Fragrance
4. Rilke: Adam
5. Omar Khayyam: The Rubaiyat: 68-72
6. Rumi: Let Go of Your Worries, Look at Love, I died from Minerality
7. Matsuo Basho: In the Twilight Rain

Module 3: Drama and Film

1. Sophocles: Oedipus Rex
2. Bhasa: Urubhangam
3. Les Misérables: dir. Bille August

Module 4: Fiction

1. Maupassant: Mother Savage
2. Tolstoy: The Three Questions
3. Firdausi: Shahnamah: The Story of Sohrab and Rustum
4. Ryunosuke Akutagawa: In a Grove
5. PU Songling: The Painted Wall

MODULE 1: EPICS OF THE WORLD AND CONVENTIONS

EPICS

- Originated in Greece-comes from “epos”, means word or songs.
- Long narrative about a serious and worthy conventional subject, originally oral literature.
- Focus on the exploits of a hero or demi-god.
- The action contains a superhuman display of strength and military powers.
- Begins with an invocation of the muse to inspire the poet.
- Repositories of culture, and to appreciate and understand these treasures troves will help us analyze and underline the symbiotic relationship between language, literature and culture in all milieus and traditions.
- Helps us understand how there is a connection and continuity between the great epics belonging to different cultures as they interrogate the meaning of life, question of identity and the clash between good and evil.

HOMER-THE ILIAD

- Homer, blind bard, born between 12th and 8th centuries BC.
- Famous works-Iliad and Odyssey, which had an enormous impact on western culture.
- His works is evident even in contemporary world literature.
- Iliad ranks as one of the most influential works in world literature, established literary standards and conventions that writers have imitated over the centuries.
- The Iliad provides a lot of information about Greek customs and ideals deeply ingrained in mythology.
- The story provides an important insight into early human society.
- In the poem, some of the significant events in the final weeks of Trogen War and Greek siege of the city of Troy, also known as Ilion, or Ilium in ancient times.
- It consists of 24 books and 15693 lines and sometimes referred to as the “Song of Ilion” or “Song of Ilium”.
- The main cause of Trogen War was the elopement of Paris, the young Trogen Prince and son of king Priam, with Helen, wife of king Menelaus and daughter of Zeus and Leda.

- Paris reaches Sparta, and takes Helen to Troy.
- King Menelaus and his friends assembled to make war against Troy and reclaim Helen.
- War lasts 10 years involved great heroes and warriors like Achilles, Patroclus and Odysseus on Greek side and Hector, Priam and Aeneas on Trogen side, and often intertwined with various Gods and Goddesses.
- It includes episodes like Achilles' duel with Hector and his dispute with Agamemnon over Brisies, the withdrawal of Achilles from Greek side and rejoining after the assassination of his childhood friend, Patroclus, to avenge his brother Hector's death, Paris, aided by Apollo, kills Achilles by shooting a poisoned arrow at his weak point- "heel". Paris killed by the Greek army and win the war after killing King Priam and other Trogens and eventually Helen is taken back to Greece.

ODYSSEY

- Probably written in Homer's mature years, composed in an oral tradition and sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument.
- There are interesting parallels between many of the elements of the Odyssey and the older Sumerian legends in the epic of Gilgamesh.
- The epic delineates the long adventurous wanderings made by Odysseus, the king of Ithaca for ten years before returning to his kingdom after the Trogen War.
- It does not follow the linear style of narration and begins in medias res or in middle of things.
- The reader gets previous events through the flashback in Book X to XII.
- The first four books of the epics are set in Ithaca where the absence of Odysseus make people assume that he is dead.
- The epic centres mainly on Odysseus and other characters with the exception of Telemachus have only secondary importance.
- The first four books of the *Odyssey* are known as *Telemachy* as they follow Telemachus' own journey.
- Books V to VIII introduce the hero Odysseus; books IX to XII tells the Phaeacians of the ordeals and his crew had to face during their journey home; books XIII to XXIV narrates the events that happen when Odysseus reaches his home island Ithaca.

- Odysseus is an embodiment of the ancient Greek ideals of valour, loyalty, piety, intelligence, human who making mistakes getting into tricky situations, losing his temper and also moving to tears.
- Themes- homecoming, vengeance, the restoration of order, loyalty, hospitality and respect for the Gods.

VIRGIL- THE AENEID

- Virgil (70-19 BCE) is a Roman poet, and devoted his life entirely to poetry.
- Popular works- *Eclogues*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid*
- His themes dates and subjects he selected were very close to Homer's Iliad and Odyssey
- He could establish a relationship with his contemporary Augustan world by presenting Aeneas as the prototype of the Roman way of life; in fact, Aeneas is the last of Trojans and first of the Romans.
- The poem, he, operates on a double time scale; it is heroic and yet Augustan.
- Aeneid is a typical epic, telling the legendary story of Aeneas' journey in search of the land where he is destined to build the city that will one day become the great Roman Empire.
- The Aeneid consist of 12 books in hexameter verse which describe the journey of Aeneas, the prince fleeing to Italy after the destruction of Troy, his battle with the Italian prince Turnus and the foundation of a city from which Rome would emerge.
- The Aeneid's first six books describe the journey of Aeneas from Troy to Rome.
- The Aeneid end in boom XII with the taking of Latinus city, the death of Amata, and Aeneas' ultimate victory after killing Turnus by unceremoniously rejecting his pleas for mercy.

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

- It is an epic poem from ancient Mesopotamia and is considered as the oldest epic tale in the world.

- The literary history of Gilgamesh begins with five Sumerian poems about Bilgamesh, king of Uruk, belong to the third dynasty of Ur.
- Most of the Gilgamesh poems were lost during the Persian invasion of Iraq. The first surviving version of this epic, known as “Old Babylonian”.
- The epic of Gilgamesh is 12 incomplete Akkadian.
- The epic begins with a prologue in praise of Gilgamesh, part divine and part human, the king of Uruk city, the great builder and warrior, knower of all things on land and sea.
- He challenges all young men to physical contests and combat and proclaims his right to have sexual intercourse with all new brides.
- Enkidu, a wild man who at first lives among animals was created by Anu, the supreme God in Sumerian tradition.
- After the trial of strength between the two men in which Gilgamesh the victor, Enkidu is the friend and companion of Gilgamesh.
- The two men set out together against Huwawa (Humbaba)
- In the second half, Gilgamesh seeks immortality as he deeply mourns Enmkidu’s death and worries about his own,
- He searches for Utnapishtim, an immortal man, who survive the great Babylonian flood, in order to learn from him how to escape death.
- The epic ends with the return of the spirit of Enkidu, who promises to recover the objects (pukku and mikku given by Ishtar) and gives a grim report on the underworld.
- Themes- friendship, the role of the king, enmity, immortality, death, male-female relationship, city versus rural life, civilization versus the wild and relationships of humans and gods.

VYASA- MAHABHARATHAM

- It is the greatest and longest epic of India, composed by Vyasa and is revered as the fifth Veda by Hindus, with more than 74000 verses in addition to long prose passages, it is one of the longest epic poems in the world.
- It is the largest single literary work in existence.
- It contains 18 parvas or sections, each parva contains many sub-parvas.
- The epic starts with the marriage of Santanu with a woman whom he finds by river Ganga.
- Amba's curse leads to the destruction of Bhishma's dynasty.
- The epic is essentially an ongoing feud between the Kauravas and Pandavs. Lord Krishna who is the charioteer of Arjuna plays an important role in the war by instigating the reluctant warrior to do his duty and carry on with the battle against his relatives and gurus.
- At the end of the war, Kauravas is defeated and Yudhishtira is crowned king of Hastinapura.
- In addition to recounting a heroic tale, the Mahabharata contains a collection of writings on a broad spectrum of human learning, including ethics, law, philosophy, geography, genealogy and religion. It also features a number of legends, moral stories, and local tales-all woven into an elaborate narrative.

VALMIKI- THE RAMAYANA

- Ramayana is one of the two largest epics of ancient India and it belongs to the genre of Itihasa, narratives of past events, interspersed with teaching on the goals of human life.
- It has had a great impact on art and culture in the Indian subcontinent, enriched much secondary literature in various languages.
- The name Ramayana is composed of two words- rama and ayana, means journey; thus, Ramayana means Rama's progress.
- It consists of nearly 24000 verses having 7 sections:
 - Bala kanda – Rama's childhood events
 - Ayodhya kanda – Rama's supreme sacrifice and exile
 - Aranya kanda – Rama's eventful life with Sita and Lakshmana at the Panchavati forest
 - Kishkindha kanda – Set in Kishkindha
 - Sundara kanda – Hanuman's adventure in Lanka

Yuddha/Lanka kanda – war between Rama and Ravana

Uttara kanda – Conclusion, unveils Rama's reign of Ayodhya-birth of Lava and Kusha

INTRODUCTION TO GREEK AND INDIAN THEATRE

- Theatre is a branch of performing arts concerned with presentation of plays and musicals.
- Theatre manifests in varied contents and forms as sanctioned by the socio-political and geographical milieu.

The Greek Theatre

- Theatre comes from the Greek word 'theasthai' means 'behold' or to 'view'
- Theatron or Ancient Greek theatre consists of 3 sections- stage, orchestra and the audience.

Structure of Greek Theatre

- The Theatron -the area in which the audience sat was shaped like a horse-shoe; first row for principal citizens.
- The Orchestra – the circular area at ground level which was enclosed on these sides by the U-shaped theatron
- The Skene – on the side of orchestra which formed the open end of the theatron stood a wooden structure, the skene or scene building, was the dressing room for the actors and also used for entrance and exit.
- The Proscenium – the level area in front of the skene on which most of the play's action took place, may have been raised one step higher than the orchestra, and there were no curtain.

The Indian Theatre

- It is the one of the most ancient forms of theatre, and it features detailed textual, sculptural and dramatic effects that emerged in mid first millennium BC.
- Indian dramatic traditions are preserved in Bharata's Natyasastra of Bharata is the principal work of dramatic theory, dance and music in classical India.
- Great playwrights- Bhasa, Kalidasa, Vishakadatta and Harsha.

- The glory of ancient Sanskrit drama ended with the first millennium. The medieval period witnessed the emergence of regional language literature which do not produced dramatic works comparable to ancient classics. Folk and ritualistic theatres flourished this period.
- Innovations in drama: Bhakti Movement, Urban entertainment theatre or Parsi theatre, Proscenium theatre, Adaptations of western classics.
- Entertainment theatre was gradually replaced by popular cinema by 1970s.
- The emergence of socialist realism, associated with IPTA (Indian Political Theatre Association) experiments is noteworthy.
- In the south, efforts were made to reconcile social message with traditional forms.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi played a key role in giving new shape to Indian theatre through a popular scheme of financial assistance to those theatre directors who tried to revive forms, both folk and classical, on modern stage.
- Another important development in post-Independence theatre was the emergence of drama school theatre following the establishment of National School of Drama, an autonomous institution funded by the Govt. of India.
- Performed in 24 major languages and in many tribal languages and in English, Indian theatres today has infinite varieties and potential, which still attracting audience in spite of the overwhelming popularity of its rival-cinema and television.it is therefore one of the most potent expressions of contemporary India and the world.

MODULE 2: POETRY

THE DIVINE COMEDY: PARADISE CANTO IV Dante Alighieri

- Dante, the father of the Italian language, was a poet, writer and philosopher is often referred as “the supreme poet”.
- In Italian literature, Dante along with Petrarch and Boccaccio are called “three crowns”.
- Divine Comedy is the greatest literary work in Italian language.
- His depictions of Hell, Purgatory and Heaven provided inspiration for the larger body of Western art and literature.
- In Paradise, Dante and Beatrice ascend through the nine spheres of the Universe and then pass into the Empyrean beyond the boundary of time and space.
- While ascending, Dante feels every sphere is more joyful than the previous and Beatrice explains more about the working of God and the Universe.
- He describes heaven and the secrets of the Christian Universe in the 33 cantos of Paradiso.
- The words of Piccarda have aroused in Dante two doubts:
 - (i) If both she and Constance were forcibly prevented from fulfilling their vows, how they were on that account less deserving of beatitude?
 - (ii) Piccarda spoke of the moon as her allotted sphere; was Plato then right after all in teaching that souls returned to the stars after death?
- Beatrice explains that:
 - (i) All the souls of the blessed dwell only in the Empyrean, where all share ‘sweet life, diversified’. They have appeared to Dante in the moon not because they reside there but in order that their less exalted state may thus be signified to him.
 - (ii) His doubts concerning heavenly justice is removed when Beatrice distinguishes between what we wish to do and what under pressure, we consent to do, for ‘our least acquiescence signs a pact with force’
- Dante’s mind, now clarified as to his two doubts, conceives yet a third and Beatrice gives her answer in Canto V.

THE VIOLET-Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe:

- Goethe (1749-1832) is remembered as the greatest among German writers.
- He was a writer, theatre director and aesthetic critic, philosopher, diplomat and civil servant.
- His works reflect a smart combination of emotions and formal approach.
- His works are defined by his belief in cultural autonomy, self-developing individualism, humanism and cosmopolitanism.
- Works: *Faust*, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, *Elective Affinities*, *Zur Farbenlehre* and *Italienische Reise*.
- The poem "The Violet" begins with the imagery of a grassy mead and a modestly beautiful violet, who is shy yet happy in its beauty.
- The opening lines create the setting for a puzzling plot that enquires ideal, innocence and destructive commitment.
- A shepherdess represents the idea of youthfulness and idea of feminine beauty.
- The violet is enchanted by the woman's beauty and desire to be with her.
- The poet uses the flower's subjective perspective to intensify the emotion of enchantment.
- The shepherdess fails to notice the flower and she tramples it, in this way the flower's dream remains unfulfilled. Even though, the flower consoles itself by finding solace in the idea, that it has been trampled by the maiden's foot.
- Theme: Disenchantment

A FLOWER SHRIVELLED, BARE FRAGRANCE – Alexander Sergeyvich Pushkin

- Most prominent Russian writer of Romantic era, and the founder of modern Russian literature.
- Works: 'Ruslan and Lyudmila', 'Boris Godunov', 'The Bronze Horseman', 'The stone Guest', etc.
- Pushkin was more of a neo-classicist than a romantic. He added aspects of realism to express romantic and neo-romantic ideals.

- The UN Russian Language Day is celebrated on 6 June since 2010, coincides with Pushkin's birthday.
- *The Flower* engages a very personal tone and use the first-person perspectives.
- The poet is moved by the sight of a withered and long forgotten flower in the pages of book.
- The dry flower arouses many emotions such as love, anxiety and worry about love, and the pain of lost love.
- The poem is direct address to the forsaken flower. The poet thinks of the time and place of the flower bloomed and wonders who picked it for whom. Here the flower is the testimony of their forgotten, lost love.

ADAM -Rainer Maria Rilke

- Rene Karl Wilhelm Johann Josef Maria Rilke has been described as highly lyrical prose and verse writer and was a travel enthusiast.
- He facilitated the transition from traditional ideologies to modern literary convictions.
- He often used images of solitude and anxiety in his words.
- He is much appreciated for his contribution to German Language. He wrote more than 400 poems in French.
- Themes- existential themes, quest for individuality, significance of death and time before death, human limitations fractured human consciousness and man's loneliness.
- The poem Adam begins with an omniscient narrator describing the physical and mental state of a man gazing at a Cathedral.
- The poem describes characters thought and emotions and shows the confusion, complexity and awe stemming in the character's mind.
- The poem the steep ascent of the cathedral towers and the rose windows are the symbols of the growth of Catholic Church and recording the lives of saints and building cathedral are considered holy works.
- The man here has nothing more than what his ancestor had when he began as a farmer. Adam became a farmer when he was expelled from the Paradise.

- The poem is a heroic epic on journey of mankind which shows the poets unwavering faith in mankind. Though he come across as a believer, it seems he trusts mankind more than God.

THE RUBAIYAT – Omar Khayyam

- Omar Khayyam was a Persian polymath, mathematician, philosopher, poet and astronomer and belongs to the schools of Islamic mathematics, Persian poetry and Persian Philosophy.
- He contributed to classification and solution of cubic equations and to the understanding of parallel axiom.
- His interest and knowledge in astronomy is reflected in the Jalali calendar he had designed.
- He is attributed to writing poetry in the form of quatrains'
- 'Rubaiyat' is the plural form of 'rubi' which means four lines
- The *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* is a lyric poem in quatrains (four-line stanzas). Rather than telling a story with characters, a lyric poem presents the deep feelings and emotions of the poet on subjects such as life, death, love, and religion.
- The *Rubaiyat* was published in March 1859 but received little attention. With the publication of Edward Fitzgerald's English translation in 1959 *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* became popular throughout the world.
- Themes: The poet, who refers to himself as "old Khayyam," is unable to commit himself to belief in an afterlife. Consequently, he believes in living for today.
- His verses depict his philosophic attitude towards life as a combination of pessimism, nihilism, fatalism and agnosticism.
- This poetry also reflects his deeply rationalistic ideology and essential Sufi elements in verses.
- The Rubaiyat is a philosophical poem which reflects the poet's pondering on the mystery of creation, life's brevity the futility of worrying and the difficulty in understanding life's purpose.
- The poets want people to enjoy life till it lasts. The poet speaks a cup of existence being filled with the "wine of Life"

- Poet symbolizes that people will be gone for ever and spring refers to regeneration of life but the poet strongly believes in living the presents life once lost can never be reclaimed.
- Green grass and other vegetarian remind the poet of the cyclic nature of life, spring renews the earth but vanishes as fast as a rose. One is a puppet in the hands of the creator, no one can overcome death.
- The poet advocates wine as the best antidote for reason's inability to see into the hidden truths. The poet knows that the wine has spoiled his reputation but he says that it is wine that has given him the courage to accept life.
- The reference to spring and winter shows that life is a journey and the poet is thinking about the mystery of human existence.

LET GO OF YOUR WORRIES – Jalal al-Din Rumi

- Mawlana Jalaloddin Balkhi, known in Persia as Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi and in the West as Rumi, was born on September 30, 1207 C. E. in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, on the eastern edge of the Persian Empire.
- Rumi descended from a long line of Islamic jurists, theologians, and mystics, including his father, who was known by followers of Rumi as "Sultan of the Scholars."
- His work Masnavi, a text in 25000 verses that teaches Sufis how to reach their goal of getting united with the God, it is known as "the Quran in Persian"
- Rumi's poetry speaks of love and its omnipresence in the world. He believed that humanity ought to seek oneness with God. His verses present a mystical journey of spiritual ascent through mind and love to become one with God.
- Through the poem "Let Go of Your Worries", Rumi conveys the idea of responsible and self-aware.
- Through use of diction, syntax, and figurative language Rumi conveys a tone of responsible carelessness.
- The syntax used in this poem involve the usage of short sentences to make the message clear, explicit, and concise. It's very direct because sometimes when things are getting hard you have to be forceful. With syntax like this there's no way to interpret it other

than how he intended. The reader can take it into the context of his own life but the overall theme of releasing worries and approaching inner truth still shines through.

- Rumi's choice of Diction is very straightforward and articulate as well. It's easy to understand and easy to follow. "Let go of your worries" is a command, not a question. There's no confusion as to what he's wanting. When he says "be clear-hearted", "behold yourself", and "See the shameless truth" you understand exactly what he is trying to express.
- In this poem he uses the symbol of the mirror. He says "if you want a clear mirror, behold yourself and see the shameless truth, which the mirror reflects" and in this Rumi uses the mirror to show how pure the heart, soul, and mind is. This mirrors show the truth of who you are.
- The whole theme of this poem is that people need to explore the inner transparency of their existence. To not get caught up in all the mud life throws at them and focus on their inner truth. Rumi wants the reader to release negative energy and worries, and look inside themselves.

IN THE TWILIGHT RAIN-Matsuo Basho

- Basho is recognized as the greatest contributor towards haiku- a Japanese verse form, prevalent in the sixteenth century.
- A typical haiku has seventeen syllables in lines of five, seven, five syllables. This verse form is suitable to express single idea or thought in a cryptic and elliptic manner.
- The haiku "In the Twilight Rain" is on the beautiful nature and its effects on the human mind.
- Nature with its colours, textures, shapes and ambiance is able to calm the human mind.
- The twilight with its luminous quality sets the mind on a course of tranquility.
- Hibiscus evokes a sense of vibrancy, sunset shows the introspective stance of the narrator, colours create a mood of serenity.
- The beauty of the poem lies in its natural observations without any imaginary interventions.
- Intuition and insight make the haiku impressive.

MODULE III: DRAMA AND THEATRE

OEDIPUS REX- Sophocles

- Sophocles is one of the most famous tragedians of ancient Greece. He was not only a poet but also a diplomat, a general and even a priest to a god of healing
- He wrote more than 120 plays but only 7 complete plays survive.
- Tragedies of Sophocles- Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus and Antigone.
- Oedipus, in Greek mythology, the king of Thebes who unwittingly killed his father and married his mother. Homer related that Oedipus's wife and mother hanged herself when the truth of their relationship became known, though Oedipus apparently continued to rule at Thebes until his death.
- Oedipus the king is the story of patricide and incest. Sophocles emphasizes the irony of a man determined to track down, expose and punish an assassin, who turns out to be himself.
- Characters:
 - Oedipus – King of Thebes
 - Creon – Brother of Jocasta
 - Teiresias – A blind prophet
 - Jocasta – The queen, wife of Oedipus
 - A messenger from Corinth
 - A Shepherd
- **Themes:**
 - The Power of Unwritten Law
 - The Willingness to Ignore the Truth
 - The Limits of Free Will
- **Motifs:**

Suicide

- Jocasta hangs herself in Oedipus the King, incest motivates or indirectly brings about all of the deaths in these plays

Sight and Blindness

- The references to eyesight and insight in these plays form a meaningful pattern in combination with the references to literal and metaphorical blindness.
- Oedipus is famed for his clear-sightedness and quick comprehension, but he discovers that he has been blind to the truth for many years, and then he blinds himself so as not to have to look on his own children/siblings. Though blind, the aging Oedipus finally acquires a limited prophetic vision.
- Tiresias is blind, yet he sees farther than others. Overall, the plays seem to say that human beings can demonstrate remarkable powers of intellectual penetration and insight, and that they have a great capacity for knowledge, but that even the smartest human being is liable to error, that the human capability for knowledge is ultimately quite limited and unreliable.

Graves and Tombs

- The plots of *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus* both revolve around burials, and beliefs about burial are important in *Oedipus the King* as well.
- At the end of *Oedipus, the King*, Oedipus cannot remain in Thebes or be buried within its territory, because his very person is polluted and offensive to the sight of gods and men.

Symbols

Oedipus's Swollen Foot

- Oedipus gets his name, as the Corinthian messenger tells us in *Oedipus the King*, from the fact that he was left in the mountains with his ankles pinned together.
- Jocasta explains that Laius abandoned him in this state on a barren mountain shortly after he was born. The injury leaves Oedipus with a vivid scar for the rest of his life.
- Oedipus's injury symbolizes the way in which fate has marked him and set him apart. It also symbolizes the way his movements have been confined and constrained since birth, by Apollo's prophecy to Laius

The Three-way Crossroads

- In *Oedipus the King*, Jocasta says that Laius was slain at a place where three roads meet. This crossroads is referred to a number of times during the play, and it symbolizes the crucial moment, long before the events of the play, when Oedipus began to fulfil the dreadful prophecy that he would murder his father and marry his mother.

- A crossroads is a place where a choice has to be made, so crossroads usually symbolize moments where decisions will have important consequences but where different choices are still possible.
- In Oedipus the King, the crossroads is part of the distant past, dimly remembered, and Oedipus was not aware at the time that he was making a fateful decision. In this play, the crossroads symbolizes fate and the awesome power of prophecy rather than freedom and choice.

Chorus

- In Oedipus Rex, the chorus is concerned about the fate of the city and finding a cure for the plague.

Gods and Goddesses

- The most important god for Oedipus Rex is Apollo, whose oracle at Delphi gives the important prophecies to Oedipus and Creon. Laius was killed by Oedipus when he was going to see this oracle.

Miasma

- The Plague in Thebes at the beginning of the play was a punishment as Oedipus has killed his father and committed incest by marrying his mother, he did quite unknowingly.

THE BROCKEN THIGHS -Bhasa

- Bhasa, one of the oldest Sanskrit dramatists of India.
- Most of his plays were lost and Mahamahopadhyaya rediscovered the manuscripts of 13 plays, written in archaic Malayalam script.
- He did not adhere to the principles of Natyasastra and often broke the conventions of Sanskrit drama.
- He used physical violence on stage was not allowed by Natyasastra. His dialogues are short and sparkling.
- “Urubhangam” is one of the two most tragic plays in Sanskrit language. In this play Duryodhana is considered to be the actual hero and not a villain as shown in the epic Mahabharata.

- He is shown as the repenting in the play for all the treacheries he has done and all the lies he had spoken in his life.
- Based on the well-known epic, the Mahabharata, by Vyasa, Urubhanga focuses on the story of the character Duryodhana during and after his fight with Bhima. Although Urubhanga contains the same core storyline as that in the Mahabharata, Bhasa's altering of certain aspects results in a different presentation of the story.
- The play centers around events that happen preceding his death; Duryodhana is shown repenting his past, reconciling with his family, and realizing the futility of war.
- In the beginning of the play there are three soldiers that are marveling at the battlefield between the Kauravas and Pandavas. They describe the scene before them in gory detail.
- The soldiers then proceed to describe the fight between Bhima and Duryodhana. The audience is seeing the battle entirely through the description of the three soldiers; ultimately, Bhima falls from Duryodhana's incessant blows. Duryodhana, refusing to kill Bhima while he is on the ground, instead has his thighs crushed by Bhima from false play and violation of rules.
- After Duryodhana has fallen, Bhima is carried away hurriedly by the other Pandavas, and Duryodhana is left on the battleground. This act of false play incites the anger of Baladeva, who wants to seek justice. However, Duryodhana stops him, having become resigned; this begins the part of the play that starts to emphasize the heroic qualities of Duryodhana.
- Duryodhana blames Krishna and forgives Bhima, as the play progresses, he is reconciled with his blind parents, then his queens (Malavi and Pauravi), and his son. Duryodhana is distressed about his situation, as he can no longer salute his father, nor can he let his son sit on his thigh. He also rejects the futility of war.
- At the end of the play, Ashvatthaman, the preceptor's son, appears with the intent to seek revenge for Duryodhana and kill the Pandavas during the night, and Ashvatthaman names Durjaya, Duryodhana's son, as king of the kingdom right before Duryodhana dies. However, it needs to be noted that the play does not end completely in a tragic note, as there are signs of hope for the future, since it is unorthodox for Indian Sanskrit dramas to end only on a sad note.

LES MISERABLES -Film adaptation by Bill August

- Bill August is a Scandinavian director.
- His “Les Miserables” is produced by James Gorman and Sarah Radclyffe, is the most emotionally powerful means of entertainment that keeps the original story intact.
- It is the 3rd biggest screen of adaptation of Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel of the same name.
- Casts-Liam Neeson, Geoffrey Rush, Uma Thurman, Claire Danes, Hans Mathason, Reine Brynolfsson and Peter Vaughn.
- It having 3 Hollywood adaptations, many TV adaptations, Italian and French versions and a long running musical that it is still playing all over the world.
- In the version of Bille August, the film starts with Valjean being released on parole after serving 19- years sentence in Toulon for stealing a loaf of bread and repeated escape attempts.
- Touched by the Bishop’s compassionate act, Valjean breaks his parole and vows to start a new life under new identity.
- Eight years later he becomes a wealthy factory owner and the mayor of the small town Vigau.
- Inspector Javert joins the local police and become suspicious of the identity of the ex-convict, and go to Paris to demand that Valjean be denounced but he lacks sufficient proof.
- The following scenes shows the touching and tender relationship between Valjean and Fantine (Uma Thurman). On her deathbed, Fantine makes Valjean promise to rescue her daughter Cosette and raise her as his daughter.
- After 10 years, the most eventful act focuses Valjean’s life with Cosette, she fallen in love with a militant student Marius.
- True to the original story, the last sequence occurs on the banks of the Seine River. Here Javert threatens Valjean to shoot if he refuses to surrender.
- Unable to reconcile the conflict between his civil and moral duties, Javert commits suicide by jumping into the Seine River from a bridge.
- Bill August has taken great care to do justice to Hugo’s novel by concerning on the main themes of love, forgiveness and redemption.
- August succeeds in exposing the unjust class-based structure of the 19th century France, the criminal justice, treatment of women, complex human nature and the power of conscience.

- The performance of Neeson as Valjean and Rush as Javert is superb.
- Cinematography by Jorgen Persson is excellent,
- As an editor Janus Billeskov-Jansen has done a good job.
- Anna Asp's production design and Gabriella Pescuccis' rich costumes are superb.
- Basil Poledouris' music is very effective.

MODULE IV: FICTION

MOTHER SAUVAGE – Guy de Maupassant

- Guy de Maupassant is regarded as the best French writer of short stories. His 300 stories were written in the naturalist style and often described the life of the lower and middle classes. "Boule de Sufi" ("Ball of Fat") is regarded as his best story, while the best known is "La Parure" ("The Necklace").
- Themes: In Mother Sauvage by Guy de Maupassant we have the theme of loss, revenge, innocence, hardship and control. Taken from his Selected Short Stories collection the story is narrated using a frame narrative and after reading the story the reader realises that de Maupassant may be exploring the theme of revenge.
- Conflict: When her son is killed in action during the Franco-Prussian war, Mother Sauvage, wracked with grief, exacts revenge for her son's death on the innocent young Prussian soldiers quartered with her. Guy de Maupassant's moving "Mother Sauvage" is the haunting story of the tragic choice made by a grieving mother.
- Punishment: Mother Sauvage stands outside with her son's rifle to make sure the Prussians cannot escape. She hears their "clamor of human screams" and stands guard. Then when she is sure the Prussians are dead, she throws the rifle into the fire, and one loud shot goes off.
- The climax of the story: it takes place in the house of Mother Sauvage at the time of the Franco-Prussian war
- Virelogne: explores the uncharted regions of the human mind and the dark recesses of the heart in this chilling tale of life under occupation of enemy forces through inventive physical theatre and beautiful new music.

THREE QUESTIONS- Leo Tolstoy

- Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, usually referred to in English as Leo Tolstoy, was a Russian writer who is regarded as one of the greatest authors of all time.
- Tolstoy is best known for his two longest works, War and Peace (1865–69) and Anna Karenina (1875–77), which are commonly regarded as among the finest novels ever written
- Tolstoy's theory has a lot of charming aspects. He believes that art is a means of communicating emotion, with the aim of promoting mutual understanding. By gaining awareness of each other's feelings, we can successfully practice empathy and ultimately unite to further mankind's collective well-being.
- The story takes the form of a parable, and it concerns a king who wants to find the answers to what he considers the three most important questions in life
- The King- The king is conscientious but ambitious. He just want to know the answers of those three question. When he was not able to find those answer he again continue his search. The question became very much important for him.
- The three-act structure is a model used in narrative fiction that divides a story into three parts (acts), often called the Setup, the Confrontation, and the Resolution
- The three questions were: what was the right time for every action, who were the right people to be with and what was the most important thing to do.
- The analysis of the external conflict in the story of “The Emperor's Three Question” by Leo Tolstoy is “Character vs Character”. The conflict of the emperor between some people, who come to give the answers that was desired by him.
- Themes: In the short story “Three Questions” Leo Tolstoy explores the theme of wisdom, acceptance, kindness, and forgiveness. The story is about a king who wants to know the answer of the three questions so as to get enlightenment.
- "There is only one time that is important—Now! It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power."
- It is only life and no book or any individual that teaches one to make the right decisions. This is the moral message embedded in the short story 'Three Questions'.

RUSTEM AND SOHRAB -Firdausi

- Firdausi was a Persian poet and the author of Shahnameh ("Book of Kings"), which is the world's longest epic poem created by a single poet, and the national epic of Greater Iran. Firdausi is celebrated as the most influential figure in Persian literature and one of the greatest in the history of literature.¹⁸
- The Shahnama or Book of Kings is an epic poem written in 1010 and containing about 60,000 couplets
- Rostam and Sohrab, the story of Rostam and Sohrab is a beloved legend from Zoroastrian mythology popularized by the 11th century Persian poet Abolqasem Ferdowsi in his great epic Shahnameh.
- Rustam, the son of Zal, stands out as the most celebrated and complex character in the Shahnameh and to this day he is considered Iran's greatest folk hero. Known for his extraordinary strength, bravery and loyalty. Rustam is a Negahban, a protector of Iran's monarchy.
- One of the main themes of "Sohrab and Rustum" is the danger that can come from chasing one's personal vainglory too strongly. Sohrab does not realize that Rustum is his father when they fight, nor does Rustum know that Sohrab is his son.
- Rostam did not recognise his own son, although Sohrab had suspicions that Rostam may be his father. They fought in single combat and Rostam wrestled Sohrab to the ground, stabbing him fatally. As he lay dying, Sohrab recalled how his love for his father – the mighty Rostam - had brought him there in the first place.
- Significance: The character of Rostam, who acts dishonorably toward the king by sleeping with his daughter, symbolizes Amir. The character of Sohrab, who does not know who his father is, who becomes Hassan's favorite hero, and who meets an untimely death, symbolizes Hassan.
- The last words of Sohrab to his father were: "carry me to your home and bury me there, so that people who pass by will say: "Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies here, whom his great father did in ignorance kill!"

IN A BAMBOO GROVE- Akutagawa Ryunosuke

- Akutagawa is regarded as the "father of the Japanese short story", and Japan's premier literary award, the Akutagawa Prize, is named after him. He took his own life at 35, inspiring Osamu Dazai's own fascination with suicide. Many of his stories are set in the 12th and 13th centuries, such as "Rashomon", a tale about a man struggling with the temptation to steal in order to avoid starvation.
- Ryunosuke's "In a Bamboo Grove" reflects the world at the time. "In a Bamboo Grove" Akutagawa gives the characters a sense of moral ambiguity. "In a Bamboo Grove" a murder has taken place during the story, there are many different perspectives of what actually happened to the man that was murdered.
- Theme: So Far from the Bamboo Grove is a story about strength, perseverance, and personal victory. At the start of the novel, Yoko, her sister Ko, and her brother Hideyo live with their mother in Nanam, North Korea, during a time of political upheaval when hostilities are raging between the Koreans and the Japanese.
- The story of "In a Grove" is simple. A samurai is dead, his wife has disappeared, and a notorious robber has been arrested. The story proceeds by assembling diverse testimonies to the events that are given in answer to the questions of the high police commissioner.
- Tajomaru lies on his confession because he wants to be remembered as a man who has fought for justice and beaten a samurai, Takehiko, after he dies. The second main character, Masago, betrays her husband, Takehiko.
- The story illustrates that the impossibility of discerning truth from contradictory perspectives may itself be the most profound truth about life.
- Masago thinks of herself as worthless after getting raped. Masago also looked weak because of her lack of virtue by getting raped. Her virtue with her husband was in jeopardy after getting raped. Masago got raped by a man, named Tajomura, who was the robber.
- Despite the lie the woodcutter tells, he tells much of the truth of the story. The narrative that the woodcutter first made to the police is inconsequential because he later tells the above narrative, nullifying his original statements.
- The main external conflicts in both stories are Tajomaru vs the Samurai and Tajomaru vs Masago and the Samurai vs Masago. Tajomaru's conflict with the Samurai is a battle for Masago. Masago's conflict with Tajomaru is caused by him violating her.

THE PAINTED WALL- Pu Songling

- The Painted Wall is a story written by Pu Songling talking about a scholar's encountering with a goddess, who invites the scholar to their kingdom on the painted wall. When he returns to the reality, he could not differentiate the illusion and the real world.
- Pu's impressive collection of 431 tales of the unusual and supernatural was largely completed by 1679, though he added stories to the manuscript as late as 1707. The work departed from the prevailing literary fashion that was dominated by more realistic huaben stories written in the colloquial language. Pu instead wrote his stories in the classical idiom, freely adopting forms and themes from the old chuanqi ("marvel tales") of the Tang and Song dynasties.
- He is credited with having adapted several of his tales into "drum songs," a popular dramatic form of the time. The colloquial novel Xingshi yinyuanzhuan (c. 1644–61; "A Marriage to Awaken the World"; Eng. trans. The Bonds of Matrimony), which realistically portrays an unhappy contemporary marriage, was attributed to him by some scholars.
- The monastery where the incidents in "The painted wall" occur in a Buddhist monastery. There was only one monk there, who takes Zhu and Meng Longtan for a tour of the monastery.
- The murals in the monastery were representations of men and animals. They all seemed as if they were alive. The Apsara in the mural engaging in different sorts of sexual pleasures.
- When Zhu bowed respectfully to the old monk and begged for an explanation about his disappearance and return, the monk said, "The source of illusion lies within man himself. Who am I to explain these things?"
