



IIT Mandi Proposal for a New Course

Course number	: HS546
Course Name	: Readings in World Literature
Credit Distribution	: 3-0-0-3
Intended for	: Undergraduate and Postgraduate
Prerequisite	: None
Mutual Exclusion	: None

1. Preamble:

This course is designed to introduce students to the history and evolution of world literature studies through essays and articles, and to engage them in contemporary debates within and around the discipline of comparative literature. The close readings of a selection of literary texts will expose students to a range of renowned authors, playwrights and poets from around the world and make students aware of the different cultural, historical and socio-economic contexts. The course will moreover explore issues related to the processes of canonization; nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and the planetary; key issues of translation; and the relevance of adaptation as a result of inter-cultural circulation, while also reflecting on the characteristics that make certain texts globally relevant.

2. Course Modules with quantitative lecture hours:

Topic 1: Concepts of “World Literature” – an overview (6 hours)

- *Weltliteratur*
- Comparative / world literature
- Vishwa-sahitya
- Centres and peripheries
- Distant reading
- Untranslatability

Topic 2: Reading across time (9 hours)

- The classics
- The literary canon
- Prize-winning authors
- Forms and mutations
- Colonial / postcolonial writing

Topic 3: Reading across space (9 hours)

- The nationalist and the provincial

- The cosmopolitan writer
- Planetary and universalism
- The literary marketplace
- Travel, migration, and diaspora
- Alternative communities

Topic 4: Reading in translation (9 hours)

- Role of the translator
- The bilingual / multilingual writer
- Hierarchies of languages
- Translation and gender
- Untranslatability

Topic 5: Reading across cultures (9 hours)

- World literature as a mode of reading
- Resistance and diffusion
- The multicultural text
- Globalization
- New media and the World Wide Web

3. Text books:

1. Damrosch, D. et al., *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature*, Princeton University Press, USA, 2009/2021.
2. Martin Puchner, *The Norton Anthology of World Literature (Shorter 4th Edition)*, Vol. 1 & 2, W. W. Norton & Company, USA, 2021.

4. References:

Suggested Reading:

For Topic 1

- Johann Wolfgang Goethe, ‘Conversations on *Weltliteratur*’
- Rabindranath Tagore, ‘Vishwa-Sahitya’
- Frederic Jameson, ‘Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism’
- Franco Moretti, ‘Conjectures on World Literature and More Conjectures’
- David Damrosch, ‘Conclusion’ from *What is World Literature?*
- *Writing About World Literature* by Karen Gocsik (first two chapters)

For Topic 2

- Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 1 (The Wrath of Achilles)
- Vyasa, *The Mahabharata*, Book 5 (The Temptation of Karna)
- Tales from *The Thousand and One Nights*
- Doris Lessing, ‘The Old Chief Mshlanga’
- T. S. Eliot, ‘What is a Classic?’ and ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’
- Ankhi Mukherjee, ‘Introduction’ in *What is a Classic?*

For Topic 3

- W. B. Yeats, 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'
- Louis Aragon, 'The Rose and the Reseda'
- Sadat Hasan Manto, 'Toba Tek Singh'
- Julio Cortázar, 'House Taken Over'
- Sheldon Pollock, 'Cosmopolitanisms'
- Judith Butler, 'Universality in Culture'
- Pheng Cheah, 'What is a World? On World Literature as World-making Activity'

For Topic 4

- Rabindranath Tagore, 'The Hungry Stones'
- Nikolai Gogol, 'Diary of a Madman'
- Lu Xun, 'Diary of a Madman'
- Samuel Beckett, *Not I*
- Gayatri Spivak, 'The Politics of Translation'
- Emily Apter, 'A New Comparative Literature'

For Topic 5

- J. M. Coetzee, 'The Dog'
- Yoko Tawada, 'The Bridegroom was a Dog'
- Kow Shih Li, 'Peach Blossom Luck'
- Marjane Satrapi, selections from *Persepolis*
- Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Argentine Writer and Tradition'
- Salman Rushdie, 'Imaginary Homelands'

Further references:

- Apter, E. 2013. *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability*. London: Verso.
- Bassnett, S. (Ed) 2019. *Translation and World Literature*. New York: Routledge.
- Casanova, P. 2004. *The World Republic of Letters*. Trans. M. B. DeBevoise. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Damrosch, D. 2003. *What is World Literature?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Dev, A. and Das, S. K. 1988. *Comparative Literature: Theory and Practice*. Shimla: IAS.
- Mufti, A. 2016. *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literatures*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mukherjee, A. 2014. *What is a Classic? Postcolonial Rewriting and Invention of the Canon*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ramakrishnan, E. V. et al (Eds). 2013. *Interdisciplinary Alter-Natives in Comparative Literature*. New Delhi: Sage.

- Zepetnek, S., & Mukherjee, T. (Eds.). 2014. *Companion to Comparative Literature, World Literatures, and Comparative Cultural Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

5. Similarity with the existing courses:

(Similarity content is declared as per the number of lecture hours on similar topics)

S. No.		Course Code	Similarity Content	Approx. % of Content
1.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

6. Justification of new course proposal if cumulative similarity content is >30%: N/A.