

LITERARY THEORY AND BRITISH AND AMERICAN LITERARY HISTORY TOPICS

1. OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERATURE

periodisation; major points in the historical, cultural and ideological/philosophical background; the oral tradition of poetry: poetic diction; medieval variants of the epic, lyric and drama (heroic epic, romance, tales; religious and secular lyric poetry, medieval drama); Beowulf, Chaucer, Everyman, Marlowe

2. THE RENAISSANCE WORLDVIEW AND SONNET-WRITING

historical, cultural and ideological/philosophical background; renaissance variants of the lyric; the Elizabethan sonnet: Shakespeare, Spenser, Sidney

3. THE RENAISSANCE DRAMA AND SHAKESPEARE

comparison of the medieval and the Renaissance stage; Elizabethan and Jacobean drama; Shakespearean genres and works: tragedies, histories, comedies and romances

4. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

historical, cultural and ideological/philosophical background; Puritanism in Britain and America; major trends in the epic, lyric, and drama of the age (heroic epic, allegorical narrative, metaphysical poetry, Restoration drama); "New world" narratives; Donne, Marvell, Milton, (Dryden, Congreve) Winthrop, Bradstreet, Mather

5. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Enlightenment in Britain and America; features of neoclassicism, sensibility, and preromanticism; Augustan satire; the rise of the novel; Pope, Swift, Defoe, Austen; Franklin

6. ROMANTICISM

the influence of the industrial and political revolutions; the picturesque and the sublime; characteristic lyric genres; Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats

7. 19TH-CENTURY FICTION

Britain as 'the workshop of the world' and America finding her distinct voice: historical, cultural and ideological/philosophical background; major trends in the novel and the short story; Realism, Naturalism, Regionalism and Aestheticism; (Mary Shelley), the Brontës, Dickens, (Wilde), (W. Irving), Poe, Hawthorne, (Melville, Kate Chopin), H. James

8. 19TH-CENTURY POETRY AND LITERARY THEORY

historical, cultural and ideological/philosophical background; Aestheticism: l'art pour l'art; the Transcendentalist Movement; Tennyson, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Ruskin, (Carlyle), Arnold, (Pater), Poe, Emerson, Whitman, Dickinson

9. MODERNIST FICTION

the historical, philosophical and scientific context; the acknowledged and unacknowledged roots; the outbreak of artistic innovation; the narrative point of view ('the intense perceiver'), stream of consciousness, interior monologue; 'the supreme pattern'; the question of sequential structure (the metaphysics of time); the question of meaning and design; Conrad, Foster, Joyce, Woolf, Hemingway, (Fitzgerald, Faulkner)

10. MODERNIST POETRY

unifying agents (myth, music, etc.); the pattern of internal and external references; Imagism; Harlem Renaissance; (Frost), T.S. Eliot, Pound, (W.C. Williams, Wallace Stevens, e.e. cummings, L. Hughes), Yeats, Auden

11. MODERNIST DRAMA

the Theatre of the Absurd; American experimental drama; the Angry Young Men; Beckett, (O'Neill); T. Williams

12. POSTMODERN LITERATURE

the postmodern condition: the cultural and intellectual climate; the question of continuities and discontinuities: the revaluation of Modernism; the renegotiation of the 'contract' between author, reader and text; the apparatus of representation; the infinite possibilities of technique; the autonomy of language; plurality, "recycling"; new voices: African-American and female writers; Golding, (Orwell, Burgess), Stoppard, Vonnegut, (Alice Walker)