

Module Title: European Tragedy

Module Code: COM507

Credit Value: 15

Level: 5

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

Tragedy is one of the most vital and enduring European literary genres. Tragic dramas are often perceived as among the most significant achievements of different national literatures. Not only are there outstanding examples of the genre in the national literatures drawn on in this programme, tragedy has from antiquity been the object of intense theoretical reflection. It has been discussed by such major philosophers as Aristotle and Nietzsche; it has been treated by literary theorists of all schools. What do we gain from and why can we take a kind of pleasure in the spectacle of human misfortune? Are the benefits psychological, spiritual, intellectual? What kind of pleasure is produced? What kinds of misfortune produces the effect proper to tragedy? What can tragedy tell us about the cultures in which it flourishes? What kind of theoretical approaches (social, psychoanalytical, historical) are most fruitfully applied to it?