



# Symbiosis College of Arts and Commerce

(An Autonomous College under Savitribai Phule Pune University)  
Senapati Bapat Road, Pune (Maharashtra) 411 004.

## M.A. ENGLISH (SEMESTER – 3)

### Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies

#### Objectives and Learning Outcome:

Dramas are meant to be performed and not to be read like a novel. The script (text) of a play is surely its starting point but it is not a play until it is performed in front of an audience. This course strives to break the conundrum in the class-room teaching of drama and introduce a new approach wherein plays will be analysed through their performative elements along with the literary elements. The objective of the course is to equip the students with an understanding of the much overlooked aspect of drama enabling them to appreciate dramas with a holistic view.

**Introduction:** The evolution of drama.

#### Unit 1: Elements of Theatre

This unit will introduce the basic elements that together create theatre: Literary, Technical, Performance. For e.g. different theatre spaces, their utility & impact; The Elizabethan 'Thrust Stage', Proscenium Theatre etc. Noh actors' silk costumes '*shozoku*' (robes) along with wigs, hats, and props such as the fan.

#### Supporting Text:

- Oscar G. Brockett- *The Essential Theatre* (Selections)
- Keir Elam- *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (Selections)
- Colette Conroy- *Theatre & Body* (Selections)
- Richard Schechner and Willa Appel – *By Means of Performance* (Selections)

#### Unit 2: Theatre Theories

Theories from around the globe will be studied to get an insight into technicalities used behind the staging of a play and its screen adaptations by practicing theatre theorists. Brecht's 'alienation theory', Stanislavski's 'Method Acting' etc.

#### Selections from

- Constantin Stanislavski- *An Actor Prepares*
- Bertolt Brecht- *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*
- Eugenio Barba- *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*
- Jerzy Grotowski- *Towards a Poor Theatre*
- Peter Brooks- *The Empty Space: A Book about the Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate*

#### Unit 3: Theatre Practices

Popular Theatre forms from different parts of different continents will be studied and plays from each will be discussed while teaching the theatres of the regions with the help of audio visuals. For e.g. 'Commedia dell'arte' of Italy, 'Tamasha' from India, 'Ghanaian Theatre' of Africa, and 'Broadway' of America etc.

European: Greek, Roman, Italian Commedia dell'arte, French Baroque, Spanish Golden age, British (Medieval, Renaissance, Restoration, Neoclassical, Modern, post-modern), Avant-garde.

African: Ancient Egyptian, Ghanaian, Yoruba

Asian: Indian (Sanskrit, Folk, Modern, Street theatre), Japan (Noh, Kabuki)

American: Broadway, Theatre of the oppressed

### **Selections from**

- Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin Hildy- *History of Theatre*

### **Unit 4: Drama under Study**

Popular plays will be analysed through the understanding students have developed in the previous units. The plays will be analysed thematically as well as theatrically. This will serve as a prototype for the students in the application of theatrical understanding of drama on plays.

#### **Drama under Study:**

- Sophocles *Oedipus Rex*
- William Shakespeare *Julius Caesar*
- Bertolt Brecht *Mother Courage and her Children*
- Samuel Beckett *Endgame*
- Harold Pinter - *The Birthday Party*
- Vijay Tendulkar - *Ghasiram Kotwal*
- Garcia Lorca – *Blood Wedding*
- Wole Soyinka - *The Lion and the Jewel*

#### **Performances:**

- Oedipus Rex - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLeagWjOPek>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9uV7gCU4Ig>
- *Julius Caesar* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5X2lIYFuM-w>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnDnakh9hPY>
- *Ghasiram Kotwal* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-buDTixgc0>
- *Blood Wedding* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgGdwW8LkZA>
- *The Lion and the Jewel* - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdcrJqHNI\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdcrJqHNI_Y)
- *Endgame* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ok7Vc3jczNg>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNoRxYuBAN4>
- *The Birthday Party* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ap1g5AqMhy0>
- *Mother Courage and Her Children* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysyQwTnbpZE>

#### **Recommended Readings:**

- Alternberd, Lynn, Lewis, Leslie L. *A Handbook for the Study of Drama*. New York: Macmillan, 1966.
- Argyle, Michael. *Bodily Communication*. London: Methuen, 1974.

- Artaud, Antonin. *The Theater and Its Double*. Mary C. Richards (Translator). New York: Grove Press, 1994.
- Aston, Elaine. *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Banham, Martin, James Gibbs, Femi Osofisan. *African Theatre: Soyinka. Blackout, Blowout and Beyond*. James Curry Publishers, 2005.
- Bentley, Eric (ed.). *The Theory of Modern Stage*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968.
- Calson, Marvin. *Theories of the Theatre*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.
- Cave, Richard Allen. *New British Drama in Performance on the London Stage: 1970-1985*. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1987.
- Kennedy, Dennis. *The Oxford Companion to Theatre and Performance*. Oxford: OUP, 2010.
- Law, Jonathan. *The Methuen Drama Dictionary of Theatre*. Great Britain: Methuen Drama, 2011.
- Nair, Sreenath. *The Natyasastra and the Body in Performance: Essays on Indian Theories of Dance and Drama*. United States: Mcfarland Publishers, 2014.
- Ortolani, Benito. *The Japanese Theatre: From Shamanistic Ritual to Contemporary Pluralism*. United States: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Stanislavski, Constantin. *Building a Character*. India: Bloomsbury Revelations, 2013.
- Stynan, J.L. *Drama, Stage and Audience*. New York: Cambridge University press, 1975.

#### Recommended Viewings:

- Greek Theatre - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CVO9Vd067U>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPS9uPewB7c>
- Globe Theatre – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0SBg-KG4C4>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVmOric9nUo>
- Uioro Uri (The Medicine Peddler) - Kabuki Play <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eh4NedzxqZg>
- Cat Musicals – Broadway <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ny-Lko5lO-0>
- Kalyansougandhikam – Kathakali <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8idtfmcF2sQ>
- Mahabharata - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhqkRGISQr8>