

PREFACE

In the curricular structure introduced by this University for students of Bachelor Degree Programme, the opportunity to pursue Honours course in any Subject introduced by this University is equally available to all learners. Instead of being guided by any presumption about ability level, it would perhaps stand to reason if receptivity of a learner is judged in the course of the learning process. That would be entirely in keeping with the objectives of open education which does not believe in artificial differentiation.

Keeping this in view, study materials of the Honours level in different subjects are being prepared on the basis of a well laid-out syllabus. The course structure combines the best elements in the approved syllabi of Central and State Universities in respective subjects. It has been so designed as to be upgradable with the addition of new information as well as results of fresh thinking and analysis.

The accepted methodology of distance education has been followed in the preparation of these study materials. Cooperation in every form of experienced scholars is indispensable for a work of this kind. We, therefore, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to everyone whose tireless efforts went into the writing, editing and devising of a proper lay-out of the materials. Practically speaking, their role amounts to an involvement in 'invisible teaching'. For, whoever makes use of these study materials would virtually derive the benefit of learning under their collective care without each being seen by the other.

The more a learner would seriously pursue these study materials, the easier it will be for him or her to reach out to larger horizons of a subject. Care has also been taken to make the language lucid and presentation attractive so that they may be rated as quality self-learning materials. If anything remains still obscure or difficult to follow, arrangements are there to come to terms with them through the counselling sessions regularly available at the network of study centres set up by the University.

Needless to add, a great deal of these efforts is still experimental—in fact, pioneering in certain areas. Naturally, there is every possibility of some lapse or deficiency here and there. However, these do admit of rectification and further improvement in due course. On the whole, therefore, these study materials are expected to evoke wider appreciation the more they receive serious attention of all concerned.

Professor (Dr.) Subha Sankar Sarkar
Vice-Chancellor

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BACHELORS DEGREE PROGRAMME: ENGLISH

[BDP: EEG]

New Syllabus effective from July 2015 Session

Paper - 6

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Notification

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Mohan Kumar Chattopadhyay
Registrar

General Editors' Foreword

It has been a rewarding experience coordinating the syllabus revision exercise and the induction of new Self Learning Materials (SLM) for the EEG Programme under the aegis of the newly-ramified School of Humanities of our University. The new syllabus and its attendant study materials are the result of concerted endeavours through workshops, repeated interactions, shared leadership and above all, protracted labour on the part of everyone who has been associated with this project.

The need for a thorough syllabus revision for BDP English was a long standing one, as the existing framework had long stood its time and needed to take a fresh look at the dynamically altered literary scenario. In framing the new syllabus, experts have been guided by the rationale of putting in place a curriculum that would effectively serve as proper foundations for a Graduation level course in English Literature, which by itself has come to be seen as a widely interdisciplinary area. The Learning Objectives envisaged in this syllabus include a periodic knowledge of History of English Literature spread across Papers that will be divided mainly in a chronology – genre pattern; acquaintance with literary texts in a similar sequence and logic; primary knowledge of relevant literary criticism/theory; essentials of History of Language and basics of pronunciation; and an introduction to the basics of Indian Writing in English which is the least that one can think of from the New Literatures arena at this level.

Being a University dedicated to Open and Distance Learning, the creation of SLM's is a corollary to the formulation of a new syllabus. This has traditionally been the mainstay of Student Support Services at NSOU and efforts have been made to produce SLM's that can be as learner friendly as possible. While the print material shall be inducted to begin with, there is in the pipeline a project for introducing multimedia learning aids for relevant portions of the syllabus, to augment SLM's at the earliest possible instant. This could include live audio-video interactions on select topics, on-screen and on-stage footage clips, readings of poetry and prose, recordings from classrooms and the like; all of it for widest possible dissemination among our learners. We would welcome suggestions on this from our BDP counsellors as well. It is hoped that since our Study Centres are now mostly ICT enabled, learners will be able to enjoy their studies with the help of both versions of study tools. While they can look upon NSOU materials thus provided on offline and online modes as primary aids, they will however be expected to equip themselves with thorough reading of texts and references on the lines indicated in the SLM's. After all, we presume that as a student of literature by choice, one has a predilection for literary texts and has taken up this Programme to augment his/her levels of understanding, along with the necessity of acquiring a degree that shall stand in good stead in life.

On behalf of the School of Humanities, Netaji Subhas Open University, we stand to thank the experts on the Syllabus Committee, the content writers and the Paper editors for their constant support and adherence to timelines, the valuable academic inputs they have provided, and the numerous ways in which they have embellished the final print materials, their own engagements notwithstanding. It has, we are sure, been a labour of love for all of you, and we acknowledge your support for enabling us to see through the successful implementation of the entire project.

To all our learners, my dear students, we congratulate you on your choice of NSOU as the preferred institution for enhancing your academic pursuits. Here's hoping and wishing that you will make the most out of our blend of the serious acquiring of knowledge amidst flexible conditions and achieve your cherished goals in life. Let us make learning an enjoyable activity.

Dated: Kolkata

15th November, 2016

Srideep Mukherjee

Assistant Professor in English
School of Humanities

Dr Oindrila Ghosh

Assistant Professor in English
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Paper Editors' Introduction to Paper VI

Dear Learners,

After having traversed the literary centuries through the five books of your Self Learning Materials, by the time you approach Paper VI of your EEG course, you have already travelled across a fairly broad expanse of the rich realm of English literature. We are sure you have loved your reading experience till now and when you first turn the pages of this Self Learning Material too, you will be delighted to recognise a few familiar names from your school English textbooks. This SLM attempts to introduce you to the wide literary output of the Victorian age, named after Queen Victoria the Empress who ruled Britain from 1837-1901, because it was an age which was especially prolific in its production of novels/ fictional prose, non-fictional prose and poetry. You may all have heard of or read one novel at least by Charles Dickens—was it *Oliver Twist* and the painful saga of orphans in Victorian England or *A Tale of Two Cities*, set during the time of the French Revolution? Or maybe you have also had some brief acquaintance with the poetry of Alfred Tennyson from your school syllabi? Our task has been to reconnect you with these familiar authors and introduce you to other select literature of the age. Along with the written word there will be pictures, related to the age and its authors, and learner activities which will encourage you to pause and to think as you read.

Module 1 takes you through the socio-economic, political and historical backdrop of Nineteenth century Britain, which was the setting for the literary pieces that you will be taught to read and appreciate. The Victorian age was an age of transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy, a time of the burgeoning of population and an exodus from rural centres to the city of London. It was thus no wonder then, that the age also witnessed the attendant evils of overpopulation, lack of hygiene, poverty, prostitution and illegitimate children, casting long shadows over the displays of apparent progress and prosperity. Module 1 seeks to give an overview of the changes in society and political legislation attending them, which are integral to an understanding of the age and its literature. It also outlines the major trends in the Poetry and Prose of the period, pointing out the chief writers and their styles. Module 2 takes up the individual poets and their major concerns. The poetry of the age, for instance Arnold's 'Dover Beach', is a testament to the deep clash between religious faith and the newly emerging challenges posed by the inferences of scientific discoveries, while Tennyson's 'Ulysses' at one level holds a mirror to the *zeitgeist* (spirit of the age), of relentless discovery and progress. Module 3 will take the learners into the concerns of novelists—early and Later. The fictional writings of the early Victorian novelists such as Charles Dickens probingly bring out the social maladies affecting a society in transition and reveals how literature can act as, a tool

for reform and the author as a social apothecary (doctor). This idea is prevalent in the non-fictional works of socio-political writers such as Carlyle, whose *Hero Worship*, discussed in Unit 3 is a series of lectures which represent Carlyle's idea that all history is the handiwork of great persons, gifted with supreme power of vision or action. According to him, only when persons of heroic temperament step forward to lead the masses can true progress for society occur. The thrusts shift slightly with the later Victorian novelists who bring into the foreground wider issues about individual liberty, protesting the sexual double standards maintained by Victorian society or championing women's rights. One such novelist being Thomas Hardy, whose novels created memorable women characters in an age where patriarchal assumptions rendered them into mere shadows or puppets. You will read one of his early novels *Far From the Madding Crowd* in this module.

The Final module, Module 4, rightly ends with a record of the contribution of the women writers of the nineteenth century. The novels by women writers of the Victorian age bear testimony to their suppressed life which finds vital expression in her literary creations. The pieces in this module have been chosen with this objective, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* bears testimony to this. The love sonnets of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, recording her eventful relationship with her husband the poet Robert Browning reveal the fierce passion of the female heart and the artist, to be intensified in the devotional poetry of Emily Bronte. Christina Rossetti, sister of the famous Pre-Raphaelite poet and painter D G Rossetti, in her 'A Dirge' and 'A Birthday' once again blends mourning with jubilation, voicing the unvoiced through poetry, that was an integral part of women's writing of the age.

Having spoken at length about the elements of your syllabus we now come to the vital part, about its application in the examinations. For both the assignment and term-end questions on this paper, covering all four modules, you will have to answer

2 (out of 4) essay-type questions of 20 marks each

3 (out of 6) mid-length questions of 12 marks each

4 (out of 8) short answer type questions of 6 marks each

Please read the texts carefully, because detailed textual questions will be asked and textual acquaintance will be expected.

So, happy reading!

DISCLAIMER:

All the plates used in this Self Learning Material have been taken with due acknowledgements from Open Sources on the Internet (Google images, Wikipedia) to be used purely for educational purposes.

Kolkata,

3rd January, 2017

Editors



Bachelors Degree Programme : English
Netaji Subhas
Open University

[BDP : EEG]

EEG 6 : The Victorians

Module

1 The Victorian Scene

Unit - 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Society, Culture and Politics	11 - 33
Unit - 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Poetry	34 - 53
Unit - 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Prose – Fictional and Non Fictional	54 - 70

Module

2 Reading Victorian Poetry

Unit - 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Alfred Lord Tennyson: ‘Ulysses’, ‘Break, Break, Break’	71 - 87
Unit - 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Matthew Arnold: ‘Dover Beach’, ‘To Marguerite’	88 - 106
Unit - 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Robert Browning: ‘My Last Duchess’, ‘Porphyria’s Lover’	107 - 123

Module

3 Reading Victorian Prose

Unit - 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Charles Dickens: <i>David Copperfield</i>	124- 143
Unit - 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Hardy: <i>Far From the Madding Crowd</i>	144 - 165
Unit - 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Carlyle: <i>The Hero as Poet</i>	166 - 199

Module

4

Victorian Women Writers

Unit - 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Charlotte Brontë: <i>Jane Eyre</i>	200 - 214
Unit - 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Barrett Browning: 'I Thought Once'; Emily Brontë: 'No Coward Soul'	215 - 230
Unit - 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Christina Rossetti: 'A Dirge'; 'A Birthday'	231 - 240
Timeline Chart (The Victorian Period)		241 - 255
