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Education for All

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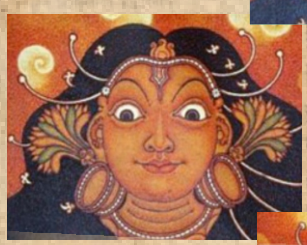
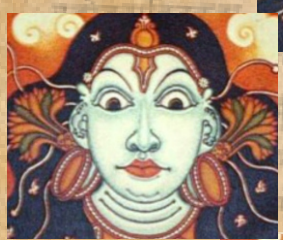
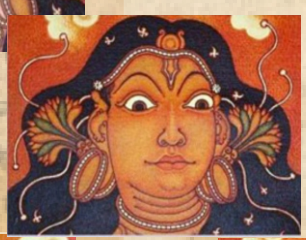
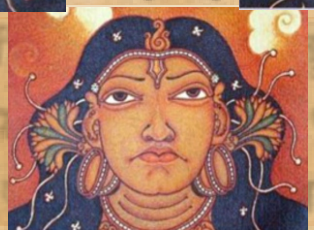
Open University
(Established by Government of Gujarat)

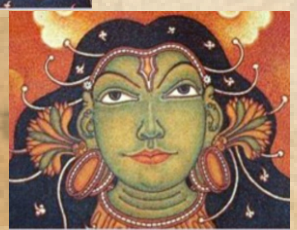
Certificate in Indian Poetics







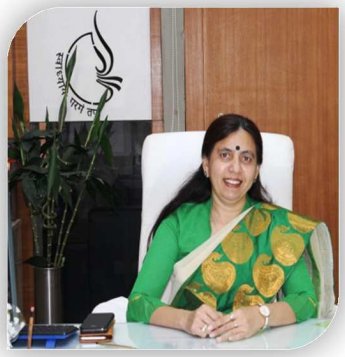




CIP-04

Indian Poetics and Contemporary Discourses

Message for Students



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is the only state Open University, established by the Government of Gujarat by the Act No. 14 of 1994 passed by the Gujarat State Legislature; in the memory of the creator of Indian Constitution and Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. We stand at the seventh position in terms of establishment of the Open Universities in the country. The University provides more than 70 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, Post Graduate Diplomas, Under Graduate, Post Graduate, as well as Doctoral degree, to strengthen Higher Education across the state.

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Gujarat government secured a quiet place with the latest convenience for University, and erected a building with all the modern amenities named 'Jyotirmay' Parisar. The Board of Management of the University has greatly contributed to the making of the University and will continue to this by all the means.

Education is the perceived capital investment. Education can contribute more to improving the quality of the people. Here I remember the educational philosophy laid down by Shri Swami Vivekananda:

> *"We want the education by which, the character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expand and by which one can stand on one's own feet".*

In order to provide students with qualitative, skill and life oriented education at their threshold, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is dedicated to this very manifestation of education. The university is incessantly working to provide higher education to the wider mass across the state of Gujarat and prepare them to face day to day challenges and lead their lives with all the capacity for the upliftment of the society in general and the nation in particular.

The university, following the core motto 'स्वध्यायः परमम् तपः' does believe in offering enriched curriculum to the student. The university has come up with lucid material for the better understanding of the students in their concerned subjects. With this, the university has widened scope for those students who are not able to continue with their education in regular/conventional mode. In every subject a dedicated team for Self Learning Material, comprising of Programme advisory committee members, content writers and content and language reviewers, has been formed to cater the needs of the students.

Matching with the pace of the digital world, the university has its own digital platform Omkar-e to provide education through ICT. The university has prepared new, need-based and vocational-professional courses as per the guidelines of National Education Policy 2020 and shall be soon launched. The university promotes and implements the use of Open Educational Resources, Academic Bank of Credit, Choice Based Credit System, Flexible Entry and Exit into programmes; for making education truly open, flexible, and student-friendly.

With all these efforts, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is in the process of being core centre of Knowledge and Education and we invite you to join hands to this pious *Yajna* and bring the dreams of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar of Harmonious Society come true.

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Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University

(Established by Government of Gujarat)

Certificate in Indian Poetics
CIP-04
Indian Poetics and Contemporary Discourses

Block

4

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UNIT:18 ORAL DISCOURSE

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Answers

18.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the unit are to let the students know about orality, oral discourse and oral literature. These concepts are defined and explained in simple, easy way. Discourse is a communication in oral or spoken language. It can be described as the expression of thought through language. There are several types of discourse. The unit will also explain the difference between oral and written discourse. We shall also discuss orality and literacy. Walter Ong has written a book titled *Orality and Literacy*. He has explained the importance of orality and described the history of orality and literacy.

We shall also discuss oral literature, oral traditions across the world briefly. India is a rich country where oral traditions played a major role in enhancing culture and knowledge we shall deal with oral literature, oral traditions in India right form the Vedic time. Tribal people across the world have nurtured their culture through oral traditions only. Oral tradition and oral lore are cultural material and traditions transmitted orally from one generation to another. Tradition and culture are transmitted orally through folk sings, folk tales, ballads, chants etc. Oral literature includes ritual texts, curative chants, epics, folk tales, music genres, dance, myths, legends, proverbs, riddles tongue, twisters etc. The unit will deal with these topics with examples.

18.1 INTRODUCTION

Yuval Moah Harari in his famous book *Sapiens- a Brief History of Humankind* says that during the period between 70,000 to about 30,000 years ago, sapiens cultivated cognitive abilities. The appearance of new ways of thinking and communicating constituted the cognitive Revolution. He calls it the Tree of knowledge that could grow due to language. Sapiens was supple and flexible. Human beings today can connect a limited number of sounds and signs to produce an infinite number of sentences, each with a distinct meaning.

Oral language was used to communicate information about the surrounding world in the time of sapiens. They also conveyed information about humans and Harari says that our language evolved as a way of gossiping. Gossip theory can be applied to modern communication also where chats, emails, message, newspaper columns are full of gossips.

Thus, oral discourse is a basic theory of cognitive development. Discourse to a term that explains the transfer of information from one person to another. Discourse happens in two ways: Orally and written language. Oral discourse uses speech acts that include thanking, congratulating, promising, demanding, warning or greeting, written discourse is also transfer of information in written words. In this discourse, the writer must have proper skill of delivery of information and the reader should have enough knowledge and skill of reading. Written discourse is often tied with genres.

Orality was the important characteristic of Homosapiens. The first script was developed in Mesopotamia around the year 3500 B.C. Due to writing, humans escaped form the chains of memory which they had preserved during the period of orality. Literacy is only about 6000 years old. Oral cultures depend on memories and if the knowledge is not repeated, it disappears. That is the reason why oral culture used repetition to preserve their knowledge and culture. Oral culture depended on songs, epic recitation, myths and proverbs.

Epic, ballads, prose tales, songs, ritual and lyric songs existed orally before writing came into existence. Oral traditions focused on performance like dance, acting, recitation, singing etc. Oral traditions are quite rich in India. Orality dominated in India for over thousand years. The *Mahabharata* was transmitted in oral form for over a millennium. Brahmin priests recited the mantras and shlokas of the *Vedas* and *Upanishadas*. In India, even the rural, tribal people had rich heritage of oral traditions. Oral tradition is a system that preserves the beliefs, customs and history. Oral tradition is thus cultural material that is transmitted orally from one generation to another.

18.2 WHAT IS DISCOURSE?

Discourse is any written or spoken communication. It can be described as the expression of thoughts or feelings through language. The word discourse is derived from Latin word 'discursus' which means "running here and there, to and fro." Discourse is like a physical act of moving to and fro transferring information from one person to another.

18.2.1 Definitions of Discourse

- Discourse is defined as communication of thought by words; talk; conversation.
- It is a formal discussion of a subject in speech or writing as a dissertation, treatise, sermon etc.
- Cambridge Dictionary defines discourse as "communication in speech or writing".
- It is also defined as "a speech or piece of writing about a particular, usually serious subject."
- Merriam Webster Dictionary defines it as a "verbal interchange of ideas especially conversation".
- Webster Dictionary defines it as a "formal and orderly and usually extended expression of thought on a subject."
- It can also be defined as a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas or experience.
- Oxford dictionary defines discourse as "written or spoken communication or debate." It is a formal discussion of a topic in speech or writing.

- Michel Foucault developed the idea of discourse as "System of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak." Foucault traced the role of discourses in social and political processes. Later he theorized discourse as a means through which power relations are produced.
- In linguistics, discourse refers to a unit of language longer than a single sentence.

18.2.2. Types of Discourse

There are four primary types of discourse:

(1) Argument
(2) Narration
(3) Description
(4) Exposition

Argument is a form of communication that convinces the audience/listeners by the speaker about certain ideas using logical language and evidence. Narration is a form of communication that tells a story involving emotions and empathy of the listeners or readers. Description is a form of communication that appeals to five senses of the audience making them visualize something. Exposition is used to inform the audience of something with neutral language. It has no purpose of persuading or evoking emotions. It is just to expose some ideas neutrally.

Literary scholars have divided the types of discourse into three categories: expressive, poetic and transactional. Expressive discourse is literary and creative, yet non-fictional. It includes letters, memoirs and online blogs. Poetic discourse is creative and fictional. It includes poetry, lyrics, novels and drama. It gives priority to emotions, imagery, themes and tone. It uses figures of speech like smile, metaphor, hyperbole, etc. It uses symbolism to enhance its creative power. Transactional discourse is a practical discourse that propels something into action. For example, advertisement motivates a customer to buy some products. This kind of discourse has no use of literary devices but advertisements are often creative and artistic. On TV or radio, they are musical and melodious.

18.2.3. Examples of Discourse

Jokes are examples of discourse like other communication. Funny ideas are presented by some stand-up comedians and speakers. In serious speeches, ther are arguments, propaganda or narration. Martin Luther King, Jr's speech "I have a Dream" presents the idea of liberty and equality through logical arguments. Charlie Chaplin's famous speech "As I began to love myself" presents the virtues of authority, respect,

maturity, self-confidence, simplicity and 'love of on self' besides modesty, fulfilment, and wisdom of the heart etc. He says that these virtues made him love life.

In his final speech in "The Great Dictator", he presents very touching ideas. Like a great philosopher, he presents his views of humanism and universalism. Some of the quotes from that speech are highly thought provoking. Here are some of the contemplative quotes:

"We think too much and feel too little"

"The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way."

"You are men! You have the love for humanity in your hearts! You don't hate."

"In the name of democracy let us use that power-let us all unite."

Chaplin's speech is simple but highly appealing. It contains philosophical ideas of democracy, equality, humanity and peace.

18.3 ORAL DISCOURSE-DEFINITION

Discourse is a term which is used to explain the transfer of information from one person to another. It implies the use of words and sentence in the context of the purpose of conveying the meaning. Discourse can take place either orally or through written format. In oral discourse, a person speaks to deliver information, thoughts or feelings. Oral literature uses speech acts which are the functions or communication. It may include the expression of thanking, congratulating, promising, demanding, ordering, hinting, warning and greeting.

Oral discourse markers are the words like, "so", "anyway", "you know", "ok" etc. Positive characterises of oral discourse are as follows:

(1) Meaning is communicated non-verbally through other factors like tone or intonation.
(2) It can be done spur of the moment.
(3) Anyone who is delivered the message is known as audience.
(4) Pace of communication is decided by the speaker only.
(5) Oral discourse is personal in nature and there is a shared situation between speaker and listener.

There are some negative features of oral communication also. They are as follows:

(1) Words have no value until they are spoken.
(2) It is unplanned and structure less in nature.
(3) Words with few syllabus are used in oral discourse. There are no complex sentences or compound words-generally.

(4) Once oral discourse is delivered, it cannot be changed or withdrawn.
(5) The receiver of information must listen to the whole speech or presentation at once in order to get full meaning.
(6) Oral discourse can be sustained for longer period if it is passed from one person to another or one generation to another like Vedic mantras etc.

18.3.1. Difference between Oral and Written Discourse

Written discourse is also transfer of information but it is written and not oral. For successful transfer of information, both speaker and listener must have certain skills and knowledge. Written discourse is tied with genre or the type of language and structure. Important characteristics of written discourse are as follows.

(1) Written discourse chooses precise and meaningful words to convey information. Words are chosen carefully unlike oral discourse.
(2) Written words are changed or re-arranged if the writer wants to do so. In oral discourse, spoken words are like arrows that do not return. They are unwithdrawable.
(3) There is a general tendency in written discourse to use larger words and complex sentences to convey the message. In oral discourse, the language is simple, easy and colloquial.
(4) Writing takes more time unlike oral discourse. Writing requires contemplation, logical thinking and effective expression. In oral discourse, there is no time for contemplation and therefore, there are often disputable discourses in oral discourse. In politics, religion etc. such things often happen crating chaos and even riots or agitation.
(5) The reader of the writing takes time in reading giving full attention to meaning.
(6) Writing is a permanent record of information. Oral discourse is generally short-lived and transitory.
(7) The audience of written discourse is unknown and unseen. In oral discourse, the audience is present and visible.

Check your Progress-I

1. What is discourse? Define in brief.

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2. Discuss the types of discourse in brief.

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3. What is oral discourse? Define and explain in brief.

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4. What is the difference between oral and written discourse. Explain in brief.

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18.4. WHAT IS ORALITY?

Orality is thought and verbal expression in human societies where technologies of literacy especially of writing and printing are unfamiliar and unavailable. The study of orality is closely related to the study of oral traditions.

The term 'orality' has been used in a variety of ways to describe the structures of oral traditions and oral culture. Walter J. Ong wrote a remarkable book titled *Orality and Literacy*. This work is foundational for the study of orality and he says that orality is far more powerful than written discourse.

Walter, J. Ong distinguishes between primary and secondary orality. Primary orality is defined as oral culture influenced by the written or printed words. It also includes oral culture made possible by technology such as a newscaster who reads news orally on television.

18.4.1. Definition of Orality

Orality can be defined as "the quality of being verbally communicated."

It is also defined as, "Thought and verbal expression in societies where the technologies of literacy (especially writing and print) are unfamiliar to the most of the population. The study of orality is closely allied to the study of oral tradition.

Orality is the use of speech rather than writing as a means of communication, especially in communities where tools of literacy are

unfamiliar among people. In his book *Orality and Literacy*, Walter J. Ong identifies some of the distinctive ways in which people in a primary oral culture think and express themselves through narrative discourse. Their expression is co-ordinate and polysynthetic rather than subordinate and analytic. The speaker often uses epithets and anti-thetical phrases. Presentation is concrete rather than abstract. Expression is toned and competitive rather than co-operative. Finally, proverbs, riddles and maxims are predominant in oral cultures that convey beliefs and cultural attitudes.

18.4.2. Orality and Literacy

Orality is a predominant mode of communication in the world and the literacy is a recent technological development in human history. Orality does not depend on media processes or techniques. Orality refers to experience of words through speech in the habitat or sounds. Walter J. Ong in his book *Orality and Literacy* discusses orality and literacy in details. He says that writing is a modern technology which is shaped and powered by modern. It developed around the year 3500 B.C.

Ong says that humans escaped the chain of memory due the literacy. Literacy is only 6000 years old. Writing transforms thoughts and speech into visible script. Oral culture is dependent on memory. In literacy, knowledge was not repeated or chanted. Oral cultures used repetition to preserve knowledge and remain connected with past.

Oral cultures remembered everything they need to know like hunting, cooking or performing rituals: Oral cultures invested energy in repeating their knowledge. They said the same thing repeatedly and passed it to the next generation. Oral culture also used a lot of proverbs, idioms, riddles, slogans, mantras, shlokas, etc.

Early writing liberated people from limitations of memory. Plato argued that writing destroyed memory and people forgot many things. However, there are benefits of writing. Ong highlights the benefits of writing and literacy. He says that literacy is necessary for development of science, history, philosophy, literature and art.

Alphabet influences the pattern of thinking. According to psychology, the alphabets favour left-hemisphere of activity of the brain. It fosters analytical as well as abstract mindset. Writing is also associated with official documents, books, contracts, charts, lists etc.

Speech is not storable except recording. It is difficult to spread information through speech. In oral communication, message often gets changed or even distorted. In writing, the message remains unchanged

Ong says that writing created history and logic, the foundation of rationality, facts and truths.

According to Walter J. Ong, writing changed the relationship between humans and communication. In oral communication, speaker and listener are always present with one another. It is a process of give and take. In writing, the reader is absent when the reader reads. Writing and reading are solitary activities, as opposed to oral communication. Writing raises human thinking, cognitive approach and consciousness.

Unlike oral speech written words can be revised and reconsidered while spoken words cannot be revised or changed. Speech fades instantly even before words are uttered. Writing has a definite beginning, middle and end. It is well-organized and coherent. Oral epics had no plots, they had only long narratives orally. With the development of writing, plots and coherent plot construction came into existence.

Written words sharpen analysis and it inspires new ways of engaging with the world from story-telling to conversation. The power or writing as a tool to store knowledge is highlighted by Friedrich Hayek who said, "Civilization rests on the fact that we all benefit from knowledge which we do not possess." Writing provides knowledge enhancing human culture and civilization.

18.5 The Oral Literature: Definition

Oral literature is the literature that is spoken or sung. It is not written though now oral literature has been transcribed. It is mainly folk literature the literature of illiterate or uneducated people. It is also the literature of the tribals and nomadic people, however, in ancient India, the rishis taught their students orally mantras and shlokas performing rituals like Yajna.

There is no standard definition of oral literature. The broader concept of oral literature refers to oral transmission and the absence of fixed from. Oral literature includes tales, legends, myths and history passed from one generation to another in written form. The characteristics of oral literature are verbal variability, performance, audience and dynamism.

Oral literature is a broad term which includes ritual texts, curative chants, epics, musical genres, folk tales, songs, myths, legends, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters, word games, recitations and historical narratives.

Oral literature originated from early stage of human history when literacy was not invented. When literacy was invented, it replaced oral

tradition. Oral literature was written in fixed texts. The source of oral literature is oral traditions which are cultural narrative like myths, legends, history and tales.

18.5.1 Nature and Types of Oral Literature

Epics, ballads, tales, lyric songs existed before writing was invented. Oral literature can be defined as "carefully constructed verbal expression." Thus oral literature consists of songs, stories, proverbs, riddles etc. The creators of oral literature were not educated or literate. The receivers or listeners were also not literate generally. They heard the stories and songs and enjoyed as oral entertainment. These songs and stories were not only oral but aural. They were not just narrated orally but heard with attention and interest.

In oral literature, performance is very important. There were traditional setting and audience. The word traditional is important in traditional and oral literature. Text and context are inseparable and without the knowledge of context, the text would be misunderstood. For example, when the story of Rama is narrated orally, the audience must have knowledge of the Ramayana.

Oral literature is a repository of the critical knowledge, philosophy and wisdom in illiterate societies. It deals with songs, legends, narratives, religious rituals and dance. They are all connected with the culture or the people. It is also an artistic expression with beauty and harmony. It also enhanced religious beliefs and faith. It is a form of entertainment and moral message.

Types of oral literature as follows:

(1) **Myth:** Myth is a story that explains objects or events in the natural world through supernatural world.

(2) **Legends:** Legends are stories from the past often based on real characters and events in a historical but fantastical manner.

(3) **Folk Tales:** Folk tales are brief stories passed by words from one generation to other. They are related masses and common people.

(4) **Tall Tales:** They are also folktales but they are funny and light hearted. They are full of exaggeration and unrealistic elements.

(5) **Fairy Tales:** they are the stories that deal with mischievous spirits and supernatural events. They are often in medieval setting.

(6) **Parables:** Parables are brief stories that teach moral lessons.

(7) **Fables:** Fables are brief stories often with animals as characters that express some moral lessons.

(8) **Folk Songs:** They are traditional songs with refrain and melody sung by the people. They also have some stories and moral message.

(9) Rituals: Rituals are the part of traditions in different countries. In India, there are religious rituals in which mantras, shlokas and bhajans or kirtan are sung together.

(10) Epics: Epics are long stories told in verse involving great heroes and gods. They represent the national tradition and culture.

(11) Proverbs: Proverbs are saying that contain practical message. It is short, pithy saying that state general truth or moral lessons.

(12) Riddles: Riddles are questions or statements intentionally phrased. They require answers which are difficult to find. They are surprising, amusing and entertaining. Riddles can be called puzzles or amusing jokes.

18.5.2. Oral Genres

According to Britannica, beyond epic, the major oral genres include folk tale; song, folk drama, myth, legend and historical recitation. Proverbs and riddles are minor genres. In oral literature, not only the speaker but the audience situational contexts are very important. Intention, form and content make difference in recitation. Let us discuss major genres of oral literature briefly.

(1) Folk tales: Folk tales are virtually universal. They are brief and generally in verse. The characters consist of humans, animals, gods and even monsters. They interact with one another by speech. Vast numbers of folk tales are intended for children like fairy tales. The folk tales are related with local culture and traditions.

(2) Song: Songs play a very important role in oral literature. The words of songs are generally lyrical and melodious. They are generally reused with musical instruments. Songs include folk tales, rituals and laments are someone's death. The ballad is a form of narrative song that originated in Europe during the medieval times. During 15^{th} and 16^{th} centuries, the Scottish-English border ballads celebrated heroes and out laws.

(3) Folk drama: Theatre in the modern sense is an outcome of written tradition in Greece, Europe and India etc. Nevertheless, folk plays played an important role in local, popular culture and traditions.

(4) Myth: Myth is a particular form of oral literature. Its subject is cosmological. Myths and rituals are often connected with one another. Claude Levi Strauss sought underlying structure of the structure of abstract similarities in myths. Myth is often considered as the highest achievement of oral literature.

(5) Legends and historical recitations: Legends are historical stories based on reality. However, they are exaggerated in recitation or presentation. These genres are associated with totetism. Totetism

to a system of belief that humans have mystical relationship with animals and plants. Legends and historical recitation occur everywhere in all cultures and traditions. Historical recitation are based on factual history. They are not imaginary story but recorded history orally. In a state like Rajasthan, there are many legendary heroes and their histories are recited orally by local folk singers and reciters. In modern times, light and sound show also presents history reused along with visual pictures.

18.5.3. World Oral Literature:

Oral literature is a broad term which includes ritual texts, curative chants, epics, musical genres, folk tales, songs, myths, legends, proverbs and riddles etc. It also includes oral history. Oral literature generally refers to any verbal form of art that is transmitted orally.

Jane Nandwa and Austin Bukenya define oral literature as, "Those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung…" The Canadian Encyclopaedia suggests that oral literature is often used as a synonym of folklore.

The world oral literature project is an urgent initiative to document and disseminate endangered oral literature across the world. The project supports local communities and study their oral traditions and culture. For many communities around the world, the transmission or oral literature from one generation another lies at the heart of their cultural practice.

Of the world's living languages, currently over 6000, around half of them will cease to be spoken by the end of this century. The World Oral Literature project tries to save these languages and oral traditions. World Oral Literature refers to Indian, Chinese, African and other countries with ancient civilization. Red Indians in America has oral traditions like all tribal people. The World Oral Literature project focuses on the study and research of such old traditions.

Check your Progress-II
Answer the following:
1. Define orality in brief.

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2. Differentiate between orality and literacy.

_____
_____

3. Define oral literature in brief.

4. Describe the nature and types of oral literature.

5. Write a brief note on oral genres.

6. Discuss in brief "The World Oral Literature" project.

7. Write a brief note on folk tales.

18.6. DEFINITION OF ORAL TRADITION

Oral tradition is cultural knowledge and information that passes through one generation to another orally. It is a mode of communication. The transmission through speech or song is included in oral tradition. It also includes folktales, ballads, chants, prose or verses.

The characteristics of oral tradition are as follow:

(1) Sharing of stories, cultures and ideas orally.
(2) Themes, central messages are revealed through the stories that appeal to the audience.
(3) There are universal themes that are repeated across many cultures during many periods.
(4) Lessons about how to live are taught by the story.
(5) Heroes and heroines are lofty characters whose virtues and deeds are celebrated in oral tradition.
(6) The performance of story-teller is very important who brings narrative to the audience appealing their thoughts and emotions.
(7) The importance of oral tradition is passing knowledge across generations without writing or literacy.

Oral traditions have two major forms:

(1) Verbal/spoken: Verbal lore is the most pervasive of the traditional arts. There are six basic genres in oral or verbal traditions. They are the part of folk life. They consist of verbal, materials, custom, belief, motion, music and song.

(2) Material Traditions: Material traditions are related to art and craft involving the use of wood, clay, glass, metals and other physical materials. They include sculpture, architecture, metal-art, handicraft etc. They beautify physical materials enhancing aesthetic delight to the viewers.

The advantages of oral traditions are providing information about the ancient culture without written sources. It is accessible to even the illiterate society. The disadvantages of oral traditions are a narrator can hide certain important information and exaggerate some unimportant information. Some information or facts are omitted and then forgotten as oral tradition depends on human memory only.

18.6.1. Oral tradition in India\

Oral tradition is an aspect of the evolution of human society. The origin of oral tradition is in pre-historic times. The band of hunters hunted for food whole day and brought some killed animals. They lit fire and prepared their meal sitting round the fire. While waiting for food or after eating food, some artists narrated the stories orally. They used simple words and expressive gestures. Gradually language became more sophisticated and imagination of the people developed. The story-teller

wove strands of beliefs, myths, values, superstitions, rituals and traditions in their story-telling.

In India there was a radical difference in developed spiritual and philosophical oral tradition. Indian civilization is one of the oldest living civilizations. The Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization (3300 to 1300 BCE), there was the first major civilization in India which is known as Vedic civilizations. The Vedas were the oldest written texts which were written around 1500 BCE.

Originally, the Vedas were orally transmitted from Gurus to Shishyas. The Gurus in Guru-shishyas parampara passed down the teachings to their shishyas orally. Mantras and shlokas were chanted. Religion and philosophy were the core elements of teachings in Ashram or Gurukula. In the Pre-literate period, the most effective way of spreading knowledge of culture was story telling. People listened to the Kathas, Akhyanas and religious Puranas. For common people, this oral tradition passed down to modern times and even today, the Ramayana and Bhagawat etc. are presented orally through Kathas. Even travelling actors presented famous religious stories through music and acting in different parts of the country. Thus, India is quite rich in oral traditions.

18.6.2. Impact of oral tradition on and literature in India:

Orality is not only the absence of literacy but oral cultures have their own characteristics. Orality dominated Indian culture for many centuries. The Mahabharata existed and was transmitted in oral form for over a millennium before it was written. Brahmin priests recited mantras and shlokas orally and transmitted them to next generation. Vedas, Upanishadas and Puranas were written of transcripted later but they were orally recited. In Indian astronomy and astrology were not separate subjects. Even Ayurveda was connected with nature cure and Yoga.

In North India, Brahmins and priests dominated by insisting on Varna System propagated by Manu in his book *Manusmriti* - People were divided into four Varnas-Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Knowledge transmission and education were monopolised by Brahmins or priests who taught the princess and Brahmin students at their ashrams or Gurukuls.

Oral tradition made huge impact on art and literature. Folktales, epic and narratives became major genres of literature. Other arts like sculpture, architecture, painting, music and dance, oral tradition influenced largely. For examples, sculptures were based on ancient scriptures, puranas etc. Painting, music and dance were amply influenced by oral tradition.

Influence of orality on cinema also cannot be underestimated. In the most famous movies, the characters and plots are like epics. This means that epics and ancient oral literature have made huge impact on cinema, drama, theatre and other audio-visual arts.

In Africa, India, and native America and in many other countries, tribal literature is folk lore. When slaves arrived in the new world from Africa in the 1700's and 1800's, they brought with them oral traditions. African oral traditions consisted of parables, folk tales, fables which conveyed ideals, morals and cultural values. African oral traditions have made great impact on modern literature. In early 20th century, writers like Amos Tutuola of Nigeria, D.O. Fagunwa in Yoruba, Violet Dube in Zulu, S.E.K. Mahayi in Xhosa and Marlo Antonio in Portuguese were influenced by African oral traditions.

In India also, there are rich oral traditions. However, tribal dialects in oral forms are now on the verge of extinct. Ganesh Devy has done remarkable research about tribal traditions and oral literature. He advocated the preservation of oral culture and literature. In tribal community named Maduvan, they had rich heritage of oral literature. Maduvan are one of the most imminent tribal communities in India. Their oral literature is related to their life, personal experience and reminiscences.

Jawaharlal Handoo, A.K. Ramanujan and S. Sakthiva were the earliest scholars who collected oral literatures and took initiative to put them into print. Later Ganesh Devy made scholarly research and translated various indigenous languages in English and Hindi. In India, there are multiplicity and diversity of languages. Even today, there are more than 1600 languages that belong to seven different language families spoken in the country. Indian oral tradition is as old as 3500 years and it has been maintained till today. There are more unwritten language than written ones. These languages are spoken by tribals, migrant, and marginalized people.

To conclude, it can be said that tribal oral literature may be varied but basically, there is symmetry and equality in their societies so, their literature has basic commonality. Therefore, African scholars, called 'orature' which refers to oral culture. Their concept is that their written literature today is also the literature of their oral traditions. The concept of orature was first proposed by Ugandan tribal writer Pio Jirimy.

In India, there are several tribal communities who have oral traditions and oral literature is quite noteworthy Tribals of India were deeply involved in nature, environment, religion and rituals. Their songs and folklore were connected with childhood, lullaby, elegy, folk tales and heroic tales.

18.6.3. Significance of oral tradition in India:

Oral tradition refers to folklore, songs, rituals, music, dance, stories, culinary art, medicines transmitted from one generation to another. They are different in many ways from written information. In general oral tradition is the transmission of cultural material in oral manner. In India, before the script was invented, the Vedas, Puranas,

Upanishadas and epic like the Mahabharata and the Ramayana were learnt by recitation orally. There are multiple 'Ramayanas' in different parts of India which were transmitted orally when written scripts were not in existence. Oral tradition was preserved through memory and passed on to the succeeding generations. After literacy came into existence, this oral traditions began to diminish and folk literature, songs, myths etc. were lost.

However, in India, folk literature, songs, ballads, myths etc. still exist in rural society. In India, there are rituals related to religion like katha, Puja, Stuti, Bhajan , Kirtans etc. Festivals like Diwali, Holi, Navaratri, Rama Navami, Janamashtami etc are celebrated as the part of oral culture.

In India, oral form of literature is quite privileged and its impact is still powerful. The epics like the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, the *Puranas*, etc. are recited and explained orally by Kathakars and in dance forms, drama and Akhyanas. Oral tradition in India has preserved ancient culture, literature and art. Oral traditions play an important role in preservation and survival of the culture and art of the communities. Thus, oral traditions have significant role in preservation of heritage of different communities.

18.6.4. Examples Representing Oral Traditions

In India, the narratives were transmitted orally. Mantras and Shlokas were taught by the Gurus to the Shishyas through oral recitation and chanting. In 2003, UNESCO recognised the Vedic chants as the most valuable oral tradition in the entire world.

In India, there were rituals like Yajna which worshipped various gods and goddesses. It also preserved environment and purified air. The education system of ancient India was that of Gurukul or ashrams. Ashrams of the rishis were in the forest amidst beauty of nature. The students learnt different subjects orally and practically. They learnt through shlokas in Sanskrit recited by the Gurus. They were taught philosophy, archery, wresting, astrology, astronomy, culinary art etc in Gurukuls.

In India, there was a rich Bhajan-Kirtan tradition. This tradition was quite powerful in Maharashtra. There were great saints in Maharashtra like Eknath, Namdev, Tukaram, sant Gyaneshwara etc. In North India, there were great saints like Nanak, Kabir and in the western India, Mirabai and many remarkable saints in Gujarat. Natha Parampara was developed in Gujarat. Guru Parampara was popular across India. In Tamil, there are around 4000 bhajan composed by 12 Alvars.

In India, there are also oral tradition related to rituals like Garbhadhana (simant), Celebration of the birth of a child, Namakarana (giving a name), Vidyarambha (beginning of education), Upanayana (yajnopavita), Vedarambha (Introduction to Vedas), Samavartana

(graduation), Antyeshti (Funeral rites). They are known as Sanskaras. They are sixteen in number. There are also ancestor rituals like shraddha, Pitru Puja, etc. Several rituals and sacraments are performed with oral recitation of mantras, shlokas and Kirtans. In India, there are wedding songs in different parts of the country which are the part of oral tradition.

Music and dance are also connected with oral traditions. There is a huge influence of Bharata's Natyasatra and Rasa Theory on various forms of dance like Kathak, Bharat-Natyam, Kathakali etc. Indian classical music is based on ancient tradition which was transmitted orally by singing by the Gurus to the Shishyas.

Finally, India is very rich in folklore. It consists of folk-literature, songs, bhajans, story-telling etc. Gujarat is also quite rich in folklore which consists of Garba, Raas, bhajans, narration of stories, etc. Zaverchand Meghani the famous Gujarati poet and writer revived folk literature and oral traditions in Gujarat.

Check Your Progress-III

Fill the blanks with appropriate options:

(1) The Vedas were the oldest written texts which were written around _____. (1500 A.D., 1500 BCE, 3000 BCE)
(2) The Mahabharata is an _____. (elegy, orature, epic)
(3) Africa is famous for _____ oral literature. (Urban, rural, tribal)
(4) Mario Antonio is a _____ writer. (French, German, Portuguese)
(5) Maharashtra and Gujarat are famous for _____ traditions. (bhajan, folksongs, epic)
(6) Oral traditions preserves_____ (oral discourse, oral culture, oral literature)
(7) Guru-Shishya parampara is the part of _____ culture. (European, English, Indian)
(8) Tukaram was a bhakti-kavi of _____ (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu)
(9) Rasa theory was propagated by _____ (Kuntaka, Mammata, Bharat Mani)
(10) There are _____ sanskaras according to Hindu theory. (15,17,16)

18.7 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the oral discourse, written discourse, oral literature, oral genres, oral traditions by defining them and explaining them in details. At the end, we also explained the impact of oral traditions on literature and art in India and other countries. We discussed the significance of oral traditions providing some very important examples in Indian culture. In short, oral traditions have a significant role in human culture and evolution.

18.8. KEY WORDS

Discourse	Discourse refers to the transfer of information from one person to another.
Orality	Orality is thought verbal expression in ancient human societies when writing and printing technologies were not invented.
Oral Discourse	Oral discourse is oral communication through factors like tone or intonation.
Oral tradition	Oral tradition is cultural knowledge and information that passes through one generation to another orally.
Written discourse	It is transfer of emotions or thoughts in written script
Literacy	Literacy is learning of writing script which is storable.
Oral literature	Oral literature is a broad term that includes folktales, songs, myths, legends, chants and rituals etc.

18.9 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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- Foley, John Miles. *The Theory of Oral Composition*. Indiana University Press, 1988.
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- https://www.britannica.com/contributor/Jack-Goody/5832
- https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Oral_tradition_(literature)
- *Oral Traditions, Myths and Legends*. Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development, New Delhi, 2017. https://www.itrhd.com/magazine/oral-tradition.pdf
- Walter Ong, S. J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of Word*. London: Methuen, 1982.

Answers:

(1) 1500 BCE
(2) Epics
(3) Tribal
(4) Portuguese
(5) Bhajan
(6) Oral culture
(7) Indian
(8) Maharashtra
(9) Bharata Muni
(10) 16

UNIT:19 DALIT DISCOURSE

Structure

19.0 Objectives
19.1 Meaning of the term 'Dalit'
19.2 What is 'Dalit Writing'?
19.3 Understanding Fundamental Terms: *Jāti, Varna* and Caste
Check Your Progress-I
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19.5 Prominent Dalit Writers and their Works
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19.8 Some Paradoxes in Dalit Discourse: Towards defining a Dalit text
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Answers

19.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall understand:

- Meaning of the 'Dalit', Dalit literature and basic terms related to Dalit discourse
- A brief history of Dalit discourse
- Characteristics of Dalit writing
- Dalit Aesthetics and some paradoxes in Dalit literature

By the end of this unit, you will be able to understand:

- What is Dalit literature and the difference between *varna*, *jāti* and caste
- How Dalit discourse flourished over the years
- Features of Dalit discourse and Dalit aesthetics
- The existing paradoxes in Dalit literature

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19.1 MEANING OF THE TERM 'DALIT'

'Dalit' is originally a Sanskrit word deriving from the root दल् (*dal*) which means 'to break', 'to tear', 'to rip into pieces', 'to fade away', etc. Thus, the word 'Dalit', according to *Brihat Kosha,* etymologically means 'that which is broken, crushed, suppressed'. In the present context, the term is used for those castes / communities that have remained suppressed or marginalized throughout India's social history, suffering from socio-economic backwardness and evil consequences of unjust practices like untouchability. It is to be understood at the very onset that "Dalit is not a caste but a socio-economic category of discriminated people belonging to many castes and social groups speaking many languages." (Dadawala 12)

The term 'Dalit' was first used by the Marathi reformer Jyotiba Phule in the 19th century, for the lower castes facing untouchability from the upper castes. After that, it remained in currency during the British rule as a translation for what they called 'Depressed Classes'. Gandhi used the term '*Harijan*' (meaning 'children of God') for the untouchables. Ambedkar was not in favour of Gandhi calling them *Harijan,* since he wanted a separate status for the Dalits. 'Scheduled Castes', the constitutionally approved term used presently to refer to these communities, was first used in 1935 by the British, which, according to Ambedkar, was a neutral and respectful term for the untouchables. However, the term 'Dalit' gained wide currency and political implications when a group of Bombay youths including Namdeo Dhasal and Raja Dhale organised the Dalit Panther Movement in 1972, under the influence of the Black Panthers Movement in America and Dr Ambedkar in India. Since then the term has been an integral part of Indian politics, and used to refer to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and various other groups discriminated and exploited on socio-economic grounds.

Today, the term 'Dalit' contains wide political and cultural connotations. Dalit discourse is one of the most prominent identity discourses in India, with Dalit literature being the major driving force in the construction and propagation of the discourse.

19.2 WHAT IS 'DALIT WRITING'?

The term 'Dalit Sahitya' (Dalit literature) was first used at the conference of *Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangha* in 1958. Since then, Dalit writing has been one of the most phenomenal and path-breaking forms of subaltern writing that emerged in India during the past five decades. Ideally, Dalit literature would mean the literature focusing on the problems and exploitation faced by Dalits, promoting liberty and equality. Dr. Ambedkar himself was very clear that Dalit literature is not the literature of a particular caste or class. However, the fact of the matter is far from being so simple today.

Various definitions of Dalit literature given by critics are as follows:

- Arjun Dangle, in his *Poisoned Bread* (1992) writes: "Dalit literature is not simply literature; it is associated with the movement to bring about change. It represents the hopes and ambitions of a new society and new people… Dalit literature is one which acquaints people with the caste system and untouchability in India… It matures with a sociological point of view (265-266)

- Sharankumar Limbale, in his book *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (2004) writes: "Dalit literature is precisely that literature which artistically portrays the sorrows, tribulations, slavery, degradation, ridicule and poverty endured by Dalits. This literature is but a lofty image of grief." (30)

- Baburao Bagul, a Dalit activist and writer, defined Dalit literature as "Dalit literature takes man as its centre. It participates in man's joys and sorrows and leads him to a just revolution. It teaches equality to the mass of humanity, that is, society." (qtd in Nagar 128)

19.3 UNDERSTANDING FUNDAMENTAL TERMS: *JĀTI, VARNA* AND *CASTE*

The discussion of Dalit discourse includes frequent use of terms like *Jāti, Varna* and Caste, which are often used synonymously. This gives rise to erroneous understanding, for instance, the common belief that *Shudra*s of ancient time are the present day-Dalits, or that Dalit is a particular caste. Such misunderstanding is bound to arise when terms like

caste, *varna, jāti* etc. are not understood correctly. To avoid the confusion, it is necessary to understand certain basic terms that go into building the foundation of Dalit discourse.

Firstly, the word '*Jāti*', deriving from Sanskrit root '*jā'* meaning 'to be born' refers to a classification based on common birth or origin. ("**समानप्रसवात्मिका जातिः** *Nyāyasutra*). *Veda*s describe a four-fold classification of *Jāti*: *Udbhija* (born by coming out of ground viz. plants), *Andaja* (born from eggs viz. birds and reptiles), *Pindaja* (born of mother's womb viz. Human beings) and *Ushmaja* (born due to temperature variation viz. Virus and bacteria). In this manner, all humans form a single *jāti* that is different from animals (*prāni jāti*). Later, for the sake of convenience, the term *jāti* was used for any kind of classification. Thus, various communities of people were later called *jāti*s.

However, *'Varna'* is different from '*Jāti*' - it is based on the profession a person is involved into. While *jāti* is decided by birth, *varna* is adopted by choice. *Varna* is a system of social ordering based on individual temperament. On the basis of their employment, people in society were divided into *Brahmins* (those involved in intellectual activities), *Kshatriyas* (involved in defence and warfare), *Vaishyas* (involved in economic activities) and *Shudra*s (involved in support function). This system allowed a free movement from one category to another based on meritocracy. Thus, the famous sages Vālmiki and Ved Vyāsa were not *Brahmin*s by birth. Sage Vishvāmitra was a *Kshatriya* who turned into *Brahmin*. Aitreya was the son of a slave who composed an entire *upanishad*, Vidura and Karna were *shudra*s, Gupta kings were *Vaishyas* by birth, Mauryas were *shudra*s and Peshwa kings were *Brahmins*.

The word 'caste' comes from Spanish 'casta' (meaning 'race, lineage, tribe'), and was introduced by the British in 1901 for census purposes. It comes very near to the classification based on *jāti*. Castes were created to stabilize the free movement of people from one *varna* to another. "In one sense, it is rather ironic that the British, who continually accused the Indian people of having a static society, should then impose a construct that denied progress" (Lloyd 116-17). Out of the word caste came the word 'Scheduled Castes' - the official term for Dalits.

Secondly, the word '*Shudra*' in Sanskrit is often confused with the word '*kshudra*', (क्षुद्र) which means 'petty, lowly, small'. This creates a misunderstanding that *shudra*s were considered inferior in the Vedic times.

Check Your Progress-I

I. Fill in the gaps in the statements given below. Check your answers with those given at the end:

a) The term 'Dalit' was first used by _____ in the 19th century.
b) British called the Dalits _____ classes.
c) Gandhi used the term _____ for the untouchables which means _____.
d) The term 'Dalit Sahitya' (Dalit literature) was first used at ____ in the year ____.
e) The _____ is decided on the profession a person is involved into.
f) _____ is a classification based on common origin while _____ is a system of social ordering based on individual temperament.
g) The word 'caste' derives from Spanish word ____ and was introduced by the British in the year ____.

II. Write any two definitions of Dalit literature in the space provided below:

_____
_____
_____
_____

19.4 DALIT DISCOURSE: A HISTORICAL OUTLINE

For the ease of understanding, the historical development of Dalit discourse can be divided into three periods: Ancient period, Medieval period, Modern period

19.4.1 Ancient Period (5th c. BC - 9th c. AD)

Dalit discourse being a discourse of resistance, its emergence can be traced as back as to the time when the discrimination against Dalits began to prevail in the society. According to many scholars, Dalits have been discriminated against right from the Vedic period. There is a common belief that the '*Chaturvarnya*' system that divided the Vedic society into four *varna*s - *Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas* and *Shudra*s - gave birth to caste discrimination, since the *Shudra*s out of the four, who were engaged in menial jobs, were considered lowly and untouchable by others.

A commonly cited example in this regard is that of the *Purush Sukta* in *RigVeda* (Verses 10-15). The *Purush Sukta* hymn has been a major source of debate, controversy and generalization leading to despise for a whole body of ancient Indian literature in Dalit discourse. Therefore, its interpretation deserves some attention here. The common

interpretation of verses 10 to 15 of the composition, that talk about various organs of the primal Being, has been that *Brahmin*s were born from the head or mouth of God, *Kshatriya*s from the arms, *Vaishya*s from the thighs and *Shudra*s from the feet. Thus, *Shudra*s were destined to serve the others and face humiliation forever. But the language of Vedic hymns is known for its deeper connotations. It is to be remembered that God in *Veda*s is a formless, featureless, all-pervading Consciousness. So, the hymn cannot be taken literally. Even when taken literally, someone being born from the mouth or feet is too fanciful and illogical a story to believe. Again, the question asked there translates precisely as: "Who *is* His mouth, Who *is* the arm…", and not "Who is *born from* the mouth….?" (Newar "*Is Purusha Sukta..")* To this, the reply given is that *Brahmin*s are the mouth / head of the Purusha, *Kshatriya*s the arms, *Vaishya*s the thigh and *Shudra*s the feet. Metaphorically, if the Purusha (omnipresent Consciousness) is the source of all creation and the society is a microcosm of Him, all the organs of the society / ecosystem need to work in coordination just like the organs of the body. Here, head is responsible for thinking or intellectual activities, arms for protection from the enemy, thigh for management and nourishment and legs for balance and stability of the body. In fact, only if the leg is upright, the body can stand and move properly. "If *Shudra*s as the feet are considered inferior to the others, the very next verse of the composition i.e. verse 16 describes heaven as the head and earth as the feet of the Purusha. Is that to be taken literally too?" (Newar)

Mahābhārata also contains views on *varna* hierarchy. When Bhrigu says that *Brahmin*s are white in *varna* (colour), *Kshatriya*s red, *Vaishya*s yellow, and the *Shudra*s black, Bharadwaja counters him, saying that "... colors are seen among all *Varna*s. Desire, anger, fear, greed, anxiety, hunger, toil prevails in all human beings. All human beings sweat, bile and blood flows in all human bodies, all of them defecate. So what is the distinction?" (12.181) In the *Bhagvad Gita*, Krishna tells Arjuna: "All the four *varna*s are created by me according to divisions of *Guna* and *Karma*." (4.13)

By the time of Buddha (5th & 6th century BC), certain communities had begun to be exploited and convinced that in the eyes of God, they were born as *shudras* due to their bad *karma* (deeds). *Kshudra* (lower) status was associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as, leatherwork, butchering or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses and human waste, which were all considered polluting. Therefore, they were physically segregated from the society and were required to stay outside villages. They could not enter a temple or a school, they were not allowed to draw water out of the community well,

as it was believed that merely touching them would lead to loss of sanctity; hence the term 'untouchables'.

The philosophy of Buddha is taken as the intellectual and philosophical base of Dalit discourse and Dalit literature. He said:

By birth one is not an outcaste,
By birth one is not a *Brahmin*;
By deeds alone one is an outcaste,
By deeds alone one is a *Brahmin*.

By his time, certain professions (not castes) had already started to be recognized as inferior to the others viz. *Caṇḍāla* (corpse burners), *Bhangi* (sweepers), *Chamāra* (cobblers) etc. Still, people of all *varna*s were included by Budhha in his '*sangha'* (group of monks and followers). His inclusion of a *bhangi* named Sunit in his group of disciples during his tour to Shrāvasti is considered a historical step towards the eradication of caste discrimination.

Siddha sect (8th - 9th century CE) was an offshoot of Buddhism, consisting mostly of people from the *chamaar, kahaar, machhuara* communities, who revolted against the *Brahmin*ical hegemony through Sanskrit language and chose to create their literary works in local dialects. Sarahapa, a *Siddha Brahmin* monk and poet, is known for having overturned the *varna* system by marrying a *Shudra* girl. The *Nātha* sect that branched from the Siddhas was founded by Gorakhnātha. This order of monks is also known for not taking into consideration the *varna* of a person while ordaining him.

In this way, the *varna* hierarchy had started to become sharper by the 10th century, against which there were voices of protest time and again. Indian society based on the concept of communal harmony envisioned by the Vedic seers had begun to degenerate gradually. The reasons behind this include misinterpretation of *Smritis, Shastras* and scriptures by a handful of self-centred *Brahmin*s in order to maintain their hegemony, and the inability of the *Shudra*s to access scriptures on account of their lack of knowledge of Sanskrit language. As a result, certain communities involved in menial jobs began to be considered 'impure' and 'untouchable'. This divide became intense with the intrusion of foreign invaders in the medieval period.

19.4.2 Medieval Period (10th-11th century to 19th century)

In the medieval period, Indian society had begun to be corrupted by vices like *varna* discrimination, prejudice and untouchability. This bias was predominantly visible in religious customs, rituals and forms of worship. The foreign invaders, with a few exceptions, could not help to

bring a change in the status quo. During this time, strong resistance was voiced by the Bhakti poets across the country, most of whom had themselves fallen prey to such discrimination. Chennaih, Namdev, Tukaram, Eknath, Kabir, Raidas, Nanak, Chokhamela etc. are the prominent medieval saint-poets who wrote and worked for ensuring an equal status and right to devotion to the downtrodden in society. A few couplets by the Marathi Nirguna saint-poet Namdev may be cited as examples:

1. क्या करो जाती, क्या करो पाती
   राजा राम सेउ दिन राती
2. नाना वर्ण गवा उनका एक वर्ण दूध
   तुम कहां के ब्राह्मण हम कहां के सूद

Kabir, the famous 15th century Bhakti poet of weaver community, writes in a verse:

नहीं को ऊंचा नहीं को नीचा जा का पिंड ताहि का सींचा
जे तू बाम्हन बभनी जाया तो आ बांट है काहे ना आया

Ravidas, also known as Raidas, was another 15th century saint-poet, born in the *Chamaar* community. He writes:

जन्मजात मत पूछिए, का जात अरु पात
रविदास पुत सब प्रभु के, को नहीं जात कुजात

Other poets of the Bhakti tradition like Tukaram, Nanak, Pipa, Dhanna, Chokhamela etc. thought and wrote on similar lines. In this manner, though not organized, systematized or labelled as 'subaltern writing', a significant body of medieval literature produced in various regions of the country from 11th century to the beginning of 19th century, scattered as it was, captures in its full spirit what is now called 'Dalit consciousness'.

19.4.3 Modern Period (19th century onwards)

The period from 19th century onwards can be called Modern period in Indian history for the socio-cultural, religious and spiritual reforms that came as a result of what is known as 'Indian Renaissance'. On one hand, the British empire was strengthening its foundation in the country that was ridden with social evils with untouchability being one of them. On the other, this century saw the rise of institutionalized efforts

from organizations like *Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj* etc., all working in their own way to abolish taboos of the Indian society.

Jyotirao Phule, along with his wife Savitribai Phule, is one of the founding figures behind Dalit Movement as it exists today. While Savitribai worked for the upliftment of the downtrodden women by opening avenues of education for them, Jyotirao prepared the intellectual ground for an organized protest against the *Brahmin*ical hegemony by establishing the *Satyashodhak Samaj* in 1848.

मनु जलकर खाक हो गया जब अँग्रेज आया।
ज्ञानरूपी माँ ने हमको दूध पिलाया।
अेब तो तुम भी पीछे न रहो।
भाइयो, पूरी तरह जलाकर खाक कर दो मनुवाद को।।
हम शिक्षा पाते ही पाएँगे सुख।

Phule is often credited for introducing the word 'Dalit' from Marathi for the downtrodden and women. He wished for radical social transformation. He held the *Veda*s the texts of upper-caste Hindus and discarded them, and opposed ancient Indian scriptures like *Manusmriti* that, he thought, strongly favoured the *Brahmin*s and doomed the *Shudra*s into facing atrocities forever. Due to their caste and social rank, the *Shudra*s were rejected to get education. He discarded the religious services of the priestly class. He advised his people to start priestless marriages. He fought for the *Mangs, Mahars, Chambhars, Kumbhar, Kolis, Koshtis, Kunbis, Malis, Ramoshis* etc.- the dehumanized castes of 19th century Maharashtra. *Varna*s, according to him, encouraged subjugation and social division and the pre-eminence of *Brahmin*s. He saw the subsequent Muslim conquests as the same sort of thing, but took heart in the arrival of the British, whom he considered to be relatively enlightened. In his book *Gulāmgiri*, he thanked Christian missionaries and the British colonists for making the lower castes realise that they are worthy of all human rights.

Like Jyoti Rao Phule, Narayan Guru (1855-1928) worked for the upliftment of untouchables in South India, especially Kerala. Periyar E V Ramaswamy (1879-1973), an anti-God and anti-*Brahmin*ism known as the 'Father of the Dravidian Movement', did notable work against *Brahmin*ical dominance and gender and caste inequality in Tamil Nadu. The greatest figure to influence the present day Dalit movement and dalit discourse per se is Dr Dr B R Ambedkar. The ideological framework provided by him has played so crucial a role in shaping Dalit movement that it is alternatively called Ambedkarite movement, Dalit literature is

alternatively called Ambedkarite literature and this discourse is alternatively called Ambedkarite discourse. Ambedkar, who was himself a Dalit by birth, and had undergone the anguish and agony of a Dalit life, studied the reasons that go into making their socio-cultural status so miserable.

Although the saint-poets of the medieval period raised serious concerns about caste discrimination, it is observed that there was a lack of consciousness that characterizes subaltern writing. This is where Ambedkar differs from his medieval predecessors. He was highly influenced by Jyotirao Phule and Periyar. He believed very firmly that unless the depressed classes are assured political equality in society by the Constitution; all efforts for their social upliftment would be in vain. In fact, he considered a casteless society, based on the doctrine of liberty, equality and fraternity as an ideal society. For this very reason, he embraced Buddhism. In his opinion, the difference between *Dharma* (Hinduism) and *Dhamma* (Buddhism) is that the latter does not have a caste hierarchy. He said: "Though, I was born a Hindu, I solemnly assure you that I will not die as a Hindu."

His basic disagreement with ancient Hindu texts like *Manusmriti* was on the ground that they assure a higher status in the *Varna* hierarchy to people who do not work themselves but live as parasites, getting their physical jobs done by others. And the same class of people are then considered inferior and their slavery is sanctioned by these sciprtures. The power to frame laws in the society was given to the higher *varna*s, who made sure that the *shudra*s always remain subjugated. Concepts like *Aatman, Parmaatman, punya-paap, Svarga-narka* etc., he believed, were created by *Brahmin*s so that their hegemony over the *shudra*s was kept intact. Therefore, he burnt a copy of the text.

Check Your Progress-II

Match the items in column A with those in column B:

A	B
(a) Four *Varna*s	(i) Periyar
(b) Purusha Sukta	(ii) Basis of Dalit ideology
(c) Bhakti poet	(iii) Vedic period
(d) Caste eradication in Tamil Nadu	(iv) Jyotirao Phule & Savitribai Phule
(e) Ambedkar	(v) Rig*Veda*
(f) Girls education	(vi) Eknath, Tukaram etc.
(g) Marathi Bhakti poet	(vii) Kabir

19.5 PROMINENT DALIT WRITERS AND THEIR WORKS

As stated earlier, the term 'Dalit literature' was first used at the 1958 conference of *Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangh*, inspired by the ideology Phule and Ambedkar, which "became an alternative platform to mainstream Marathi literature". (Dadawala 13) In the 1960s, a group of young, educated, Marathi Dalit writers including Namdeo Dhasal, Baburao Bagul, Shankarao Kharat etc. started the Little Magazine Movement and shook the literary sensibility of Marathi readers with their avant-garde writing. In the 1970s, Namdeo Dhasal and Raja Dhale founded the Dalit Panthers movement influenced by the Black Panthers movement of the Afro-Americans. Laxman Gaekwad, Laxman Pawar, Daya Pawar, Waman Nimbalkar, Tryambak Sapkale, Arun Dangle, Umakant Randhir, J. V. Pawar, Tarachandra Khandekar, Yogiraj Waghmare, Avinash Dolas, Kishore Shantabai Kale, Narendra Jadhav, Yogendra Meshram, Bhimrao Shirvale etc. became prominent voices of Dalit writing in Marathi. Dalit writing also spread to other languages like Gujarati, Kannada, Punjabi, Hindi, Malayalam and Bengali. Dalit literature has used all literary forms – poetry, short stories, novels, plays and autobiographies in various languages.Nirav Patel, Joseph Makwan, Dalat Chauhan, Harish Mangalam, Mohan Parmar, B. N. Vankar, Yashwant Vaghela, Pannalal Patel Chandu Maheria etc. in Gujarati, Bama in Tamil, Omprakash Valmiki in Hindi, etc.

In the year 1992, a new chapter was started in Dalit writing with the publication of Arjun Dangle's *Poisoned Bread* , which was the first ever attempt to anthologize Dalit writings in English. He involved all the genres available in Marathi Dalit literature-poetry, short stories, essays, autobiographical excerpts and public speeches. As a result, today we have several collections of Dalit writings coming out in both Indian languages and English. Following are some of the most widely read writers of Dalit literature that are available in English translation: Bama's *Karukku* and *Sangati*, Dr. Narendra Jadhav's *Untouchables: My Family's Triumphant Journey Out of the Caste System in Modern India*, Sharankumar Limbale's *The Outside: Akkarmashi,* Joseph Macwan's *The Stepchild*, Om Prakash Valmiki's *Joothan: A Dalit·s Life*, Baby Kamble's *Our Existence* and *Imayam Beats of Burden*, Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life*. There are number of other writers writing Dalit literature but do not share the Dalit writers' category as the latter are not Dalit by birth as the other Dalit writers by birth. Mahasweta Devi, Sara Joseph, Kumaran Asan, Pannalal Patel, Mulkraj Anand and Premchand.

19.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF DALIT WRITING

According to Ranjana Nagar, Dalit literature forms a different but important part of Indian literature. It analyses the past and the present from a Dalit perspective, provides a space to the silent and suppressed voices and an opportunity of social, political and cultural development. Following are the characteristics observed in Dalit works in common:

I. Reflects Dalit anguish, experience and sensibility

According to Omprakash Valmiki, "Dalit literary movement is not just a literary movement. It is also a cultural and social movement. Dalit society has been imprisoned for a thousand years in the dark mist of ignorance, deprived of knowledge. Dalit literature is the portrayal of the wishes and aspirations of these oppressed and tormented Dalits." (*Dalit Sahitya ka Saundaryashastra* 97) A Dalit text presents "those experiences that did not find a place in literary representations." (*Joothan* 30). Dalit works largely represent the atrocities, operation social injustice inequality and exploitation suffered by the legs at the hands of the upper castes.

II. Authenticity of experience

Dalit critics like Sharankumar Limbale and Omprakash Valmiki account *Svānubhav* i.e. the experience of having lived a Dalit life as the most important characteristic of Dalit writing. Authenticity of expression comes from authenticity of experience. "When they do not know the reality of this, life, whatever they write about it will remain superficial", states Valmiki (*Mukherjee* 26) When the Hindi writer Kashinath Singh said that one does not have to be a horse in order to write on one, he famously replied that only the horse tethered to its stall after whole day's exhausting labour knows how it feels. Dalit writers do not believe in creating fictitious or romantic stories but rather portraying reality to the greatest possible correct details. "Autobiography has been the favourite genre of the Dalit writers. This is not surprising in the light of the emphasis placed by them on authenticity of experience." (Mukherjee 28)

III. Language and diction

The reality depicted by Dalit writers in their works is different and rather painful, therefore the language used to depict this reality is also different and not polished or sophisticated. Dalit literature makes use of rather and uncouth, impolite conversational language, specific to the setting or region. Shame, anger, pain, suffering and rebellion are expressed through imageries and metaphors like volcanic eruption, leftover, poisoned bread and so on.

IV. Characters and Themes

Dalit literature does not take elite characters like kings, queens or rich people as its protagonist. Most of the times, the protagonist in a Dalit work is a poor, helpless person living in a remote village in a dilapidated condition, and struggling for carving a place of repute in the society, trying to climb the social ladder in spite of repeated humiliation. Such literature is aimed at making the reader restless and angry. The works revolve around themes like liberty, equality, justice solidarity and abolition of caste discrimination.

V. Rejection of Hindu mythology

Dalit writers reject Hindu mythology as anti-Dalit and *Brahmin*ist. According to Dangle, "the tradition and culture of Ancient India does not contain anything which a Dalit can own with pride." (*Poisoned Bread* 234). These writers view Hindu Gods and Goddesses as structured, institutionalized and modified by the upper castes in a way that favours their hegemony. Therefore, they make a conscious use of local Gods and Goddesses, specifically of the lower castes, in their works. They also reconfigure the epics and *Purānas* from a subaltern point of view. For example, in *Joothan*, Valmiki who is compared with Eklavya and his headmaster a Dronāchārya by his father, challenges the discrimination of his teacher unlike the silent obedient Dronāchārya.

VI. Reflection of Ambedkarite ideology

As mentioned earlier, Ambedkar's views have been one of the greatest influences on Dalit literature. Dalit lietrature is largely written on the lines of Ambedkarite ideology. Many Dalit works contain references either to Ambedkar or his works and acknowledge his contribution, holding it responsible for the transformation of Dalit silence into a voice of protest.

19.7 DEFINING DALIT AESTHETICS

According to Limbale, "That work of Dalit literature will be recognised as beautiful, and therefore good, which causes the greatest awakening of Dalit consciousness in the reader." (*Towards an Aesthetic* 117) He believes that Dalit writers should be analysed from a sociological perspective focused on social values rather than on beauty. Dr C B Bharati claimed that "there is an urgent need to create a separate aesthetics for the literature and aesthetics based on the real experiences of life." (qtd in Nagar 129)

Dalit writing rejects the traditional standards of evaluating literature i.e. the conventional aesthetics, since the purpose of the latter is to provide aesthetic pleasure or beauty. According to these writers, the

concerns of traditional aesthetics are never realistic whereas Dalit literature is based on the painful reality of Dalit lives. This is the reason why critics like Yadunath Thatted and Acharya Javdekar condemned the Rasa theory as incompetent to do full justice to Dalit writing. They proposed to incorporate 'revolt' as the tenth and 'cry' as the eleventh rasa in the existing Rasa theory. Dalit writers also reject both Western and Eastern theoretical frameworks like Freud's Psychoanalysis, Barthes' Structuralism, Derrida's Deconstruction and Indian theories of *Rasa* and *Dhvani*.

"Dalit literature's primary aim is Dalit empowerment. Aesthetic concerns are secondary at best and should support the works' political aims rather than be foregrounded for their own sake." (Thiara 257) There was virtually no discussion about dalit aesthetics until 1988, when Sharad Patil wrote *Abrahmani Sahityanche Saundaryashastra* in Marathi, he argued that Dalit literature relies on *Brahmin*ical aesthetics because it has no aesthetics of his own. This motivated writers like Omprakash Valmiki, Sharan Kumar Limbale and others to develop a different and new aesthetic theory for Dalit. Omprakash Valmiki wrote *Dalit Sahitya ka Saundaryashastra* in 2001 and Sharan Kumar Limbale wrote *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* in 2004. Although Dalit aesthetics can still be considered only in its infancy stage, certain points where it differs from the conventional aesthetics are as follows:

A. Traditional idea of aesthetics is based on the principle of beauty. Dalit writing is concerned more with pain and suffering of the Dalits. There is a deliberate attempt to obstruct the process of enjoyment and pleasure in the reader and he is consciously made to engage with the problems of the society. It takes a sociological point of view and not merely aesthetic.
B. The conventional idea of beauty, according to them, is abstract and transcendental. Dalit literature tries to operate on materialist aesthetics.
C. Conventional aesthetics examine how the work of art influences the reader. Thus, the primacy of the reader is important. In Dalit literature, the primacy of the suffering protagonist is held most significant.
D. According to Dalit writers, traditional aesthetic principles consider beauty and pleasure more important, but Dalit literature considers social values such as freedom, love, justice and equality more important.

Check Your Progress-III

Think upon the questions given below and write their answers in the space provided below in maximum100 words:

I. How does the language and diction of a Dalit text differ from other texts?

_____
_____
_____
_____

II. Why do Dalit writers mostly choose autobiography as a genre?

_____
_____
_____
_____

III. What is the fundamental difference between Dalit aesthetics and conventional aesthetics?

_____
_____
_____
_____

IV. Name any two works of Dalit aesthetics with their authors.

_____
_____
_____
_____

19.8 SOME PARADOXES IN DALIT DISCOURSE: TOWARDS DEFINING A DALIT TEXT

Certain paradoxes that exist within the ambit of Dalit discourse that prevails today are as follows:

I. Dalit discourse discounts texts by those writers who are not Dalits by birth for the lack of authenticity of experience. The chief argument here is that a non-Dalit writer cannot authoritatively narrate the feelings of a Dalit. If that is true, can a Dalit authoritatively portray the life of a non-Dalit? It is paradoxical that the latter accounts are taken to be true. Can caste be the only parameter to judge the worth of a literary work? In that case, a significant corpus of works by writers like Mulkraj Anand, Mahashweta Devi, Premchand has to be discarded.

II. Dalit discourse is a discourse of resistance against social evils like untouchability and caste discrimination. The aim of the discourse, as Ambedkar envisioned it, is to create a casteless society. However, in many Dalit texts, resistance turns into extreme form of revenge, so much so that the Dalit protagonist is seen to be exploiting upper-caste characters to avenge. One does not have to forget that any literature rests on ethics and values and ought to promote them.

III. The aim of the discourse, as mentioned above, is to create a casteless society. In absence of the complete understanding of this holistic Ambedkarite ideology, the discourse turns into sheer anti-*Brahmin*ical apartheid.

IV. The political dimension of Dalit discourse cannot be neglected. But, as far as Dalit literary movement is concerned, a text ought to be saved by the author from the political bias dominating the literary merits of the text.

V. Dalit writers have been consistently resistant to any theory of aesthetics. Ironically, such resistance only reinforces literary theory. Today, a large number of Dalit texts are researched upon in the light of subaltern theories.

VI. Dalit discourse, though it is a liberating discourse, remains patriarchal at large. Dalit feminism is gradually voicing its double-protest (against Dalit and gender discrimination) through writers like Kaushalya Baisantri, Sushila Tarkbhaure etc.

In this light, it is important for a student of Dalit discourse to arrive at a definition of a Dalit text. A Dalit text is that which takes into examination the life of Dalit/s. It draws the attention of readers to real social issues concerning Dalits, and intends to resolve them or suggest solutions to create social accord, not merely antagonizing a caste or castes. The aim of the discourse, as mentioned above, is to eradicate caste evils. Buddha's famous preaching says: "Hatred does not cease through hatred at any time. Hatred ceases through love. This is an unalterable law." Therefore, a Dalit text is that which can maintain the dynamism of this mission. If a Dalit text is written just with the motive of political propaganda and to maintain and sharpen caste hierarchy, it cannot be called a Dalit text. A true Dalit text is that which is written with a purpose to inform about the wrong done in the past, and also help to reform the society. It is a text written with a mature point of view and noble intention. It has a sociological purpose and social responsibility. "We need an ongoing struggle, and a consciousness of struggle, a

consciousness that brings revolutionary change in both the outside world and in our hearts, a consciousness that leads the process of social change." (Valmiki 10)

19.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt:

- What is Dalit literature and the difference between *varna*, *jāti* and caste
- How Dalit discourse flourished over the years
- Features of Dalit discourse and Dalit aesthetics
- The existing paradoxes in Dalit literature

19.10 KEYWORDS

Jāti - refers to a classification based on common birth or origin.
Varna - based on the profession a person is involved into.
Caste - was introduced by the British in 1901 for census purposes. It comes very near to the classification based on *jāti*.

19.11 SUGGESTED READING

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ANSWERS

Check Your Progress-I

I. (a) Jyotirao Phule (b) depressed (c) Harijan, Children of God (d) Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangh, 1958 (e) *Varna* (f) *Jāti*, *Varna* (g) 'casta', 1901

II. Refer to Section 19.2 for the definitions.

Check Your Progress-II

(a) – (iii), (b) – (v), (c) – (vii), (d) – (i), (e) – (ii), (f) – (iv), (g) – (vi)

Check Your Progress-III

I. Refer to Section 19.3 (VI)

II. Refer to Section 19.3 (V)

III. Traditional idea of aesthetics is based on the principle of beauty. Dalit writing is concerned more with pain and suffering of the Dalits.

IV. Omprakash Valmiki. *Dalit Sahitya ka Saundaryashastra* (2001)
Sharan Kumar Limbale. *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (2004)

UNIT : 20 FEMINIST DISCOURSE

Structure

20.0 Objectives
20.1 Introduction
20.2 Concept of Feminism
20.2.1 Pioneers (I) - Wollstonecraft, Woolf and De Beauvoir
20.2.2 Pioneers – (II) and Gynocriticism
Check Your Progress-I
20.3 Feminisms and Feminism in India
20.3.1 Indian Feminism – Nature and Perspective
20.3.2 Major Texts from Past and Present
Check Your Progress-II
20.4 Let Us Sum Up
20.5 Key Words
20.6 Books Suggested
Answers

20.0 OBJECTIVES

- To acquaint students with the term and its context
- To make students aware and understand the variety of feminist waves/ discourses
- To acquaint students with the western feminist pioneers that laid foundation for the theories on women's writings
- To make students aware and well versed with the concept of Indian Feminism and introduce them to some of the contemporary women writings in India

20.1 INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a highly loaded, multi-dimensional, oft quoted, often misunderstood and sometimes misused word. Feminism is a belief, an activism, commitment and practice of equality of women in all spheres of life. It came into existence as a reaction to the centuries of oppression, subjugation, discrimination and deprivation of women in all cultures and races. The contemporary feminist discourse was propelled in the recent history and the western feminism came into its full force in the twentieth century. However, we also need to understand that before it gathered the momentum, there were pioneers and torch bearers in the previous centuries who laid the foundation for the movement. In the current unit we will learn about the major thinkers , the three waves of feminism and why and how there is a variety of feminisms in contemporary feminist discourse of the west with special reference to feminism in India and also discuss the works of some of the contemporary women writers in India.

20.2 CONCEPT OF FEMINISM

As mentioned earlier, the term 'Feminism' has a historical, political ,social and cultural reference and has been defined and contested in many ways. The term "feminism" was used to refer to "the qualities of females" during mid 1800. Later on after the First International Women's Conference in Paris in 1892 the term was in currency for its meaning and advocacy of equality of rights of the both sexes. This usage was derived from the French word feminist (meaning feminist) and came into practice for the movement, advocacy and theories on gender equality. However, for our understanding let us take two simple definitions of the term**.**

Encyclopedia of Britannica describes feminism as:

"The belief in social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. Although largely originating in the West, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to activity on behalf of women's rights and interests."

Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines it as:

"The belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men; the struggle to achieve this aim."

There is a variety of approaches in which feminism is practiced and theorised but there are some commonalities too. Lois Tyson lists out the following common threads on which Feminism theories and practices are based on:

1. Oppression of women in all domains of life.
2. Patriarchal norms that marginalised women by creating a different and discriminatory set of norms and values for women.
3. Deep rooted patriarchal ideology that represent women as inferior creation
4. While biology determines our sex (male or female), culture determines our gender (scales of masculine and feminine).
5. Feminist theory and literary criticism has a goal to change the world by prompting gender equality.
6. Gender issues play a part in every aspect of human production and experience, including the production and experience of literature, whether we are consciously aware of these issues or not.

The Western feminism has been categorized historically in three waves. The 'First 'is roughly identified to have begun in the mid-nineteenth century with the struggle to achieve basic political rights and went on till the amendment on women's right to vote in 1920. This struggle for women's equality took a back seat for sometime due to the World Wars However, the same period also highlighted the need for equality strongly. The period of late 1960s and early 1970s show the manifestation of the 'Second Wave' of feminism. This was an extension of demand of equality in all spheres of life. The political equality of right to vote did not bring in the desired equality for women in society in general. Therefore, women's equality was now demanded in education, the workplace, and at home. The 'Third Wave' of feminism emerged again out of the dissatisfaction with the result of second wave. The first two waves of feminisms were predominantly a white, middle class, first world women centric approach. The Third wave feminists critique earlier forms of feminism for their lack of attention to the differences among women due to race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion. These feminists consist of women from third world, past colonies and non-white women.

20.2.1 Pioneers (I)- Wollstonecraft, Woolf and De Beauvoir

The history of women's writing in Europe that emphasized the need for equality of women date back to sixteenth century. But the contemporary discourse laid its foundation towards the end of eighteenth century. American and French revolutions had initiated the discussions on equal rights of women but had not created any difference in the position of women at large. However, a few years later in 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her groundbreaking text *A Vindication of Rights of Woman* which is considered to be one of the pioneering texts of feminist discourse. Wollstonecraft for the first time argued for the equality of women and advocated the need for equal education for women. She argued that women are also as rational as men by the virtue of being human and education will allow women to develop fully as a rational

being. We see examples of women writers like Mary Shelley, Bronte Sisters, and George Eliot etc. during the nineteenth century but they were very few in numbers compared to the men writers. This issue of less women writers or the absence of women's writing in the history was taken up by Virginia Woolf in her lecture series published later as an extended essay titled A *Room of One's Own* in 1929.In this essay Woolf brought out the need for a room of one's own – space and independence for women. By creating an imaginary Judith Shakespeare , Woolf tried to show how patriarchy has marginalized and suffocated talented women writers throughout the history and how women's writing in the past lie buried and unnoticed before us. This discourse of how patriarchal structures affect and shape up women's psyche and women writer was taken forward by Simone de Beauvoir in her radical work *The Second Sex (1949)*. In this work, Beauvoir discusses how men over centuries have suppressed women and how man has created norms that make him the self- the superior and the woman as the other, the second –the inferior. Through her arguments and examples she proved "one is not born, but rather becomes woman'" which explains how image and the role of woman as a gender is defined and constructed socially and not biologically. Her work was followed by many women writers, theorists and critics in America and Europe which was dominated by French feminist writers. The uniting factor of all these groups was their chief concern revolved around evolving and reconstituting ways to do justice to women's views, works, concerns and presence in literary world.

20.2.2. Pioneers – (II) and Gynocriticism

Thus, as we saw one of the chief preoccupations of feminism is the study of discriminatory representation of women in the literature that is dominated by men. Elian Showalter focused on this gap and highlighted the need for having a theory – poetics for studying, retrieving and writing of women's literature. This, she highlighted in her famous work *Towards a Feminist Poetics* (1979). She divided the book in two major sections:

1) **Woman as a reader** – critique of the existing literature. She gives examples to show how the literature written by men creates stereotypes and how women are allowed to play limited role in their works. Her argument is that even if women were given a major role to play or allowed to be representatives, it was always from a man's perception of how and what a woman should be or do. Thus, she emphasized on reading the existing literature created by men with a feminist view point.

2) The other section of her work is **woman as a writer** or

'**gynocritic'** – Here Showalter advocates the need for having a different set of literary criticism to study and identify women's writings. She says instead of using, applying and analyzing male models and male theories the writings of the literary criticism of women's writings should be based on feminine perspective. She insists on the need to construct a female framework for the analysis of women's literature, to develop new models based on women's experience. She introduced the concept of **Gynocriticism** which in simple terms means a criticism that seeks to build a framework of literary analysis that is devoted to female identity. This broadly tried to :

i. identify and retrieve the female authors that are missing in the major literary tradition of the past
ii. to identify female subjects – the major preoccupations of a woman's life from her perspective and her experiences . So far these experiences were represented and written by men .Therefore, it is important to seek women's perception of their own lives and experiences
iii. to identify and study the female language. This can be understood as a need to study and evaluate a woman's work through the language she uses in her works.

Check Your Progress-I

Fill in the blanks:

1) Feminist theory and literary criticism, has as its ultimate goal to change the world by prompting gender _____.
2) *A Vindication of Rights of Woman* is written by _____.
3) The _____waves of feminisms were predominantly a white, middle class, first world women centric approach.
4) This issue of less women writers or the absence of women's writing in the history was taken up by Virginia Woolf in her work _____.
5) Simone de Beauvoir's _____ is a radical and landmark work on feminism.
6) Elian Showalter focused on this gap and highlighted the need for having a theory – poetics for _____, _____ and _____of women's literature.

20.3 FEMINISMS AND FEMINISM IN INDIA

The basic foundation of the contemporary feminist discourse was laid over a period of more than three centuries. The latter half of the twentieth century, especially after 1970s –the feminist discourse saw

different approaches and practices of feminism like liberal feminism, radical feminism and socialist feminism. It is important to note that despite the varieties of approaches and perspectives Feminism in this form was chiefly a Western centric model and discourse. This discourse was not able to project, voice or represent the issues of women from the colonized countries, the women from the third world and the issues of the non-white women. Gradually the women from these left out groups also started to raise their voices and dissatisfaction with the act of western feminist discourse as looking at the women's issues from the perspective of the English speaking, white and middle class women of the West. This dissatisfaction opened up the discourses for various other feminisms like Black Feminism, Afro-American Feminism, Latin American Feminism, Third World Feminism, Feminism of Sisterhood, Postcolonial Feminism etc. The struggles for equality for women in all domains of life manifested and were being advocated in the world in different manners and for different issues too. The struggle for equality for women in India also has a different history, context and model. Thus, Indian Feminism or Feminism in India also differs to some degree from the major western discourse. Our country is unique for its diversity, for its colonial past and for its social structures and religious practices. Therefore, a study of women's writings or the Feminism in India demands an understanding and acknowledgement of all these aspects as well.

20.3.1 Indian Feminism – Nature and Perspective

Feminism in India is often misrepresented as a phenomenon during nationalist movement. It is an undeniable fact that many reforms regarding women's position and equality came into practice during that time but the Indian Feminist discourse studies the writings and the position of women in India from the time of ancient Vedic period. It is also equally an unquestionable fact that women were suppressed and subjugated by patriarchal norms and practices in India too. However, it is to be noted that the history of women's position in India is also a part of larger political, social and cultural history of india too. Therefore, we see the presence of women scholars in some of the Ruchas of Vedas and we also have examples of Sati pratha, the female infanticide and the inhuman conditions in which widows were pushed into. The *Narivaad* or *Stree Vimarsh* in India is complex because of the diversity of class, caste, religion and languages. Moreover, there has always been a parallel history of oral and tribal culture which was not necessarily part of the mainstream culture or discourse. But we must also know that Indian Feminist discourse is not an act of proving the point how it is independent and a case in isolation of the larger feminism that happened across the world. Patriarchal norms and practices have tried to marginalize and stereotype women's mind, body and soul through a prescribed role and behavior.

Each society and each nation has seen modification or adherence to such practices. Therefore, the purpose of Indian Feminist discourse is well defined by Jasbir Jain when she says,

" The attempt is not to trace the development in islolation from the rest of the world but to trace the differences in tradition,value structures, political history , social concerns and the nature of resistance. "

The complexities of the study of feminist criticism are also highlighted by Susie Tharu and K. Lalita in their work *Women Writing in India* (1991). According to them the enterprise of women's writing and the scope of feminist criticism in India.

"include questions about contets, structured and restructured by changing ideologies of class gender, empire , in which women wrote, and the conditions in which they were read; questions about the politics ,sexual and critical , that determined the reception and impact of their work; questions about the resistences, the subversions, the strategic appropriations that characterized the subtelest and most radical women's writings."

The first and foremost element of women's writings in India is that it has been a continuous tradition, though it was marginalized but a continuous presence of women in Indian knowledge system and writing has been proven by the feminists who seek to retrieve women's writings in India. Lopamudra, Ruddha, Sarama, Romasha , Vishwavara , Apala , Yami and Ghosha have contributed verses (Ruchas) in Rugveda. (Rugved Samhita (1-126-7). Second important point in terms of religious/cultural context is the difference in the myth of creation in India and the West. It is often pointed out that the patriarchy begins with the myth of the Creation, all religions show women as a secondary creation. However, there is a basic difference between the creation myth in west and India. First, there are multiplicity of creation myths, secondly the versions differ and more importantly various belief systems like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism are not contemporary in time and space. However, within this vast diversity of approaches and myths one fact remains glaringly different from the Western myths of creation that the Vedic belief system gave utmost important to 'self' and that pursuit of 'the self' or practice of asceticism was available to both men and women. Both the grand epics of India, Jain stories, other religious and folk narratives demonstrate this freedom for the pursuit of the higher goals of human lives for women as well. S.Radhakrishnan has concluded the same in his translation and criticism of Upanishads that the subjection of women and their exclusion from Vedic studies do not have any support of Upanishads. Thus, the subjugation, confined roles and the oppression of women came into existence in Indian civilization and *Manusmriti is* considered to be a text that heralded the deterioration of the position of

women in the Indian society. Despite these differences, we must acknowledge the fact that the position of woman in India over centuries was no better than the other women in the world. The unequal distribution of power, rights and inequality on all fronts of life persisted for women during various phases and the clutches of suppression and exploitation got stronger with each invasion on India.

Broadly speaking feminism/ *Narivaad/ Stree Vimarsh* in India despite its multidimensional manifestations and variety of mediums of expressions (as India is also multilingual and there is a notable amount of feminist writing in all the major languages of India) *Narivaad* has:

- Questioned practices and texts
- Resisted hierarchy
- Reinterpreted myths and traditions
- Focused on women's body
- Stressed on the study the form , shape and tools of women's struggles and how did they express it to oral or written literature
- Tried to bring in the experiences and issues of women to the mainstream literature , specially the issues of violence against women , customs and practices which are built on gender discrimination
- Reasserted the need for 'wholeness 'of existence for women – the wholeness encompasses all three-body, mind and soul.
- Reemphasized the fact that feminism as an ideology is not simply a resistance to patriarchal control
- Tried to integrate the private and public space by opposing and dismantling the divisions of two different kinds of sexuality and moral values
- And more importantly, it has expressed the need of women to be heard, to have a choice as well as the freedom to act in accordance with that choice.

20.3.2 Major Texts from Past and Present

As we have already studied that the presence of women scholars and contributors has been identified in Indian literature since the Vedic period. Susie Tharu and K. Lalita in their landmark work *Women Writing in India* have identified and retrieved the works by women writers from 6th Century BC and have recorded the works by women till the contemporary period. Through a close reading of the Upanishads, epics and Bhakti movement Indian Feminists have revealed a continuity of questioning of patriarchal structures that created exclusions and boundaries for women. For our purpose, we will discuss the major texts that emerged during colonial period and shaped up the contemporary discourse of Indian Feminism. One of the first treatises in regional

languages that raised voice against the social injustice and gender inequality was written in Marathi by Tarabai Shinde in 1882 titled as *Stree Purush Tulana*. It was followed by the works of Pandita Ramabai and Savitribai Phule. This Marathi work was accompanied by an anonymous book *Simantni Updesh* from north India. This work is remarkable for its aggressive tone and its forthrightness in telling women to take initiative in getting rid of old mindsets and to change one's own self to change the world. Rassundari Das's autobiography *Amar Jivan* (1876) is an exemplary literary work that speaks about the life and condition of women in India of her times. The reformist and nationalist movements set the tone and path for women's liberation through education and also by creating spaces for women to participate in public life. These works and the women authors laid the foundations for the more liberated, more expressive and diversified female authors. Some of the women are still expressing the feminist concerns in Indian Literature. Senior women writers like Amrita Pritam, Ismat Chugtai, Aashapurna Devi and Mahashweta Devi, Kamala Das have represented and raised women's issues from various perspectives. Amrita Pritam has depicted the plight of women and their suffering in her novel *Pinjar* (1950). Famous for her poems and essays Amrita Pritam is also noteworthy for introducing frank and candid confessional mode of writing through her autobiography *The Revenue Stamp – Raseedi Tikat* (1976). Similarly Ismat Chugtai through her memoirs *A Life in Words – Kaghzi hai Pairahan* depicts the household and the struggle for education in Muslim families in India. Moreover, she is also remembered for her path breaking story *Lihaf* that described the plight of woman caught up in lesbian relationship due to the marriage with a gay man. Though there is no explicit description or no offensive content in the story, she was charged with obscenity and had to defend her case in Lahore for years for the same story. Mahashweta Devi represents the issues of low class, especially tribal women, their sufferings and exploitations through a series of short stories and dramas. The representation of the issues of women as mothers, wives and daughters are represented by writers like Shashi Deshpande in English, Kundanika Kapadia in Gujarati, Ashapurna Devi in Hindi, Lalithambika Antherajanam in Malayalam. The issues and plights of widows in India are well represented in the novel *The Moth Eaten Howdah of a Tusker* and *Blue –necked God* by Indira Goswami. She has also retrieved an almost forgotten female freedom fighter from the Bodo community of north –east India in *The Bronze Sword of Thengphakhri Tehsildar*. The works *Yajnseni* by Pratibha Ray , *A Palace of Illusion* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and poems like *Uttara : Note to the Unborn Child and Until the Lions: Echoes from Mahabharata by* Karthika Nair reinterpret the women characters of epics from the contemporary feminist point of view whereas Suniti Namjoshi retold fabula and folktales in her *Feminist Fables* Postmodern poets like Leela

Gandhi, Ruth Vanita and Karthika Nair continue the bold tradition of unabashed and bold expressions of female body and desire laid down by senior poets like Kamala Das and Kamini Roy.

Check Your Progress-II
Match the following:

A	**B**
1. *The Moth Eaten Howdah of a Tusker*	1. Tarabai Shinde
2. *A Palace of Illusion*	2. Indira Goswami
3. *Lihaf*	*3.* Ras Sundari Das
4. *Amar Jivan*	*4.* Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
5. *Stree Purush Tulana*	*5.* Ismat Chugtai

Answer the following:

1) List any three threads that Lois Tyson lists out as common threads on Feminism theories and practices are based on.
2) Give one definition of feminism.
3) Name any two women who have contributed shlokas to *Rigved*.
4) What makes *Simantni Updesha* remarkable book*?*
5) Which book is to be believed to be responsible for restricting the role and position in Indian society?
6) List any five things that Narivad has done in the field of literature in India.
7) What are the subjects on which Mahashweta Devi writes?
8) Name three postmodern women poets from India.
9) What is the contribution of Suniti Namjoshi in terms of feminism?
10) Why is the book *Women Writing in India* is an important contribution?

20.4 LET US SUM UP

Thus, through this discussion on Feminism we can conclude that the concept of feminism is highly complex and has much wider scope. The struggle for equality for woman in all spheres of life has a long history and the contemporary feminism was shaped up and took momentum during last two centuries. We learned that pioneer writers like Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf, Simone De Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter laid the foundation and set the path for feminist discourse**.** We also learned that the western feminist discourse was expanded by a variety of feminisms that emerged towards the end of the twentieth century. Indian Feminism is also one of them. We also learned

about what Indian feminism or *Narivaad* or *Stree Vimarsh* aims to do and how it is different from western feminist discourse. Through various examples, we also learned about varieties and diversities of feminist writings in India which addresses the issues raised by Elaine Showalter through her concept of gynocriticism. This also proves how the ultimate aim and preoccupations of feminism also has a common factor that binds the varieties and approaches of contemporary feminisms together.

20.5 KEYWORDS

Oppression	a situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and prevented from having opportunities and freedom
Patriarchy	a society in which the oldest male is the leader of the family, or a society controlled by men in which they use their power to their own advantage
Subjugation	the act of defeating people or a country and ruling them in a way that allows them no freedom
Fabula	story, usually a traditional folk tale

20.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

- Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, 1792
- Beauvoir, Simone De. *Le Deuxième Sexe (The Second Sex)*, 1949
- Showalter, Elaine. *A Literature of Their Own*, 1977; "Toward a Feminist Poetics," 1979 http://historiacultural.mpbnet.com.br/feminismo/Toward_a_Feminist_Poetics.htm
- Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*, 1983 https://www.academia.edu/27769659/In_Search_of_Our_Mothers_Gardens_by_Alice_Walker
- Jain, Jasbir and Avadhesh Kumar Singh- *Indian Feminisms*, 2001
- Tharu, Susie. K. Lalita – *Women Writing in India* (vol. 1 &2),1991

Answers
Check your progress-I

1) equality 2) Mary Wollstonecraft 3) first two 4) A Room of One's Own 5) Second Sex 6) studying, retrieving and writing

Check Your Progress-II
Match the following:

1. The Moth Eaten Howdah of a Tusker	1. Indira Goswami
2. A Palace of Illusion	2. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
3. Lihaf	3. Ismat Chugtai
4. Amar Jivan	4. Ras Sundari Das
5. Stree Purush Tulana	5. Tarabai Shinde

UNIT : 21 NATIVIST DISCOURSE

Structure

21.0 Objectives
21.1 Introduction
21.1.2 Definition of Nativism
21.1.3 Colonialism and *Desivad*
Check Your Progress-I
21.2 Bhalchandra Nemade's *Desivad*
21.2.1 Devy and the Contemporary Discussions
21.2.2 Writers / Practioners
Check Your Progress-II
21.3 Let Us Sum Up
Key Words
Books Suggested
Answers

21.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the concept of *Desivad* and its definitions with historical background
- To acquaint students with the origin and the theory proposed by Bhalchandra Nemade
- To make students understand the theory and the major thinkers and major contributors
- To make students comprehend the key arguments proposed in the texts on *Desivad*

21.1 INTRODUCTION

We live in the time where the world has become flat as the writer Thomas Friedman has suggested. Our world has become flat due to the influences of globalization, modernization and technology. The distances and the differences of space and time have been compressed and various forms of culture are reaching far and wide with the advantage of technology. But the term globalization or modernity are often mistook for

the practice of Westernization or Anglicization. As a result of this, what happens is the individual cultures, language and practices are often seen going to margins. In 2011, UNESCO published a list of 2050 languages that were extinct, or about to get extinct, critically endangered and vulnerable. One major reason for such a poor state of indigenous language is sweeping reach and use of global languages, chiefly English and Spanish. It is easy to understand that along/with a language a whole culture also is lost and so is the literature. Therefore, in the world that has become a 'melting pot' as Homi Bhahba says, the identification and continuation of one's own cultural forms and literary forms also takes a front seat. It was with realization of such a need to speak for one's own theory and forms of literature, the concept of *Desivad* came into existence. *Desivad* or nativism as it is called in English has come into discussion in the latter half of the twentieth century. Like many other theories of the twentieth century, *Desivad* too is also a reaction and resistance of colonial legacy and practices in literature and a theory to focus on the native elements in literature.

21.1.2 Definition of Nativism

Nativism is a social, political, psychological and linguistic term. But it is a word that has anthropological, scientific, moral, racial, ethnical and historical connotations as well. The concept of nativism is often attached to the concept of Americanism that emerged in 1834-35. Following are some definitions of Nativism -

- Oxford dictionary defines nativism as ―a return to or emphasis on indigenous customs, in opposition to outside influences.
- Nativism is also defined as ―the revival or preservation of a native culture by Yourdictionary.com.
- Similarly , The University Desk Encyclopedia defines nativism as ,
- "Turning in of a country or society towards its own culture through movements rejecting foreign influences, ideas or immigrants"
- Thus, Nativism encompasses a sense and urge of returning to one's own culture ,of revival of indigenous culture and rejection of overpowering control of the foreign influences.

21.1.3 Colonialism and *Desivad*

The earlier definition of nativism was also racially biased and looked down upon the native as inferior or secondary. This is because the term 'native' carried a colonial reference. The colonial masters proclaimed that colonizers were inherently superior and the colonized

(read natives) were inherently inferior. Colonization was projected as an act of uplifment and as an act of civilization of the colonies. This has affected, influenced and reshaped the forms and the criteria of appreciating, understanding and production of the cultural forms of the colonies. Frantz Fanon, psychiatrist and one of the most influential postcolonial critics has shown three stages in which national culture shapes up as an influence of colonial project:

1) Influence – The native comes under the influence of the coloniser's culture and seeks to match and assimilate it and often discards his/her own culture

2) Realisation - the native gradually finds out the wide disparity that exists between the two cultures and discovers that he can never be truly white or white enough for the colonizer to treat him as equal, and returns to study his own culture, with a romantic and celebratory mode.

3) Return / Reclaim – In this stage, the native is truly anticolonial, accompanied by a critical analysis of his own culture.

Desivad that emerged in India can be equaled with this third stage. However, we also have to take a note of the fact that even during the high days of British Rule in India a parallel culture of preserving and producing forms of our own culture had continued. In fact, during the period of Renaissance in India **(**the period of struggle for independence**)**, the thinkers and writers advocated and practiced Indian forms of art and literature. But somehow even after independence in the domain of mainstream forms of literature, the influence of western aesthetics, theories and criticism have taken the centre stage. Therefore, we had critics like Bhalchandra Nemade who introduced the theory of nativism and vigorously demanded the need of *Desivad* in India.

Check Your Progress-I

- **Fill in the blanks**

1. The concept of nativism is often attached to the concept of _____that emerged in 1834-35.
2. It was with realization of such a need to speak for one's own theory and forms of _____, the concept of Desivad came into existence.
3. _____ introduced the theory of nativism and vigorously demanded the need of Desivad in India.
4. Colonisation was projected as an act of uplifment and as an act of _____of the colonies.
5. According to Yourdictionary. Com. Nativism is also defined as ―the revival or _____ of a native culture.

21.2 BHALCHANDRA NEMADE'S *DESIVAD*

Different terms *desi, desipan, desiya, desiyata, desaja* are used for the discussion of Desivad. Bhalchandra Nemade, gives an example of the Adivasis of Koraput (Orissa) who use the term *desi, nata* for their oldest dance to show the connotations of the word desi.

Bhalchandra Nemade first used the term in his Marathi essay *Sahityateel Deshiyata*" (Nativism in Literature) in 1983. The English term *Nativism* is used as a synonym for the Marathi term *Deshivad*. This concept or *ism* purposes is to understand Indian literature through Indian point of view. Bhalchandra Nemade is a Marathi literary figure, a Jnanpith awardee, he was one of the pioneer figures in the Little Magazine movement. *Hindu* and *Kosala* are his most acclaimed novels in Marathi. Nemade explains why we need to discuss *Desivad* by giving examples of the world writers like Shakespeare and Dante. He shows that these writers were first of all native writers; it is only through the imperialism, they became world writers. Now despite knowing this we still say that Kalidasa is the Shakespeare of India, Valmiki is the Homer of the East" but we never say so and so writer is a Tukaram of West or so and so writer is Bharat Muni of the West. The main points he puts forward in his Desivad are:

- Each culture has its own desi/native modernity.

- Being native means being rooted to one's own place, rooted here is meant in terms of belongingness and not in terms of being tied there.

- Native principle is fundamental to each literature in order to survive/represent as one's own literature.

- Simple representation of regionalism is also not Desi literature though regional literature can be a subset of the Native literature.

- As a revolutionary and inclusive critic, who advocated for the Desi, Nemade attacked the so called high-class writers, critics, and aestheticians; which represented the upper class or Brahminic traditional systems and aesthetics.

Thus, while opposing the western framework of theory and criticism for Desi literature Nemade insists that the Native standards are associated with non-Vedic, non-Brahmin and *Bahujan* tradition also. He

also suggests that nativism does not mean xenophobia or an outright denial of the good in other cultures. *Desivad* is an approach rather than a theory for him. While discussing the meaning of *Desi* he further says, "basically, nativism is entirely self-manifest as in the plants and trees that patiently grow and live in their soil." He also argued that it is not possible to compare literary texts of two different cultures, or of languages in isolation, they must be compared, analysed and evaluated with their native features. According to Bhalchandra Nemade, the process of absorbing foreign influences is nativization, and this process must be competent. He also says that it is in the process of nativization, every new writer realizes automatically that he is deeply rooted in his local traditions.

21.2.1 Devy and the Contemporary Discussions

After Nemade, Vasudev Savant attempted a systematic, neat and unbroken arrangement of Nativism with the philosophical support in two essays *'Sahityateel Deshiyata: Nemade Yancha Drishtikon'* and *'Deshivadi Sahityasiddhanta'.*

One more prominent contributor to Desivad is Ganesh Devy who elaborated his views on nativism in his books *After Amnesia* and *Of Many Heroes* (1992) and *In Another Tongue (1998), The Crisis within: On Knowledge and Education in India* (2017). In his book *After Amnesia*, he discussed the conflict between *Margi* and *Desi* traditions existed before British rule. Colonial tradition added to the existing conflict and this was so overpowering and influential that we forgot our own tradition. Devy is not in favour of using the term 'Nativism' as a translation of the word Desivad and he uses the term Desivad thruought his discourse.

However, one of the contemporary critics Makarand Pranjape takes a more progressive approach for Nativism. He criticized Devy for limiting the theory to historiography whereas Paranjape emphasizes on the need to theorise nativism. He also is in favour of including the concept of *swaraj* and *swadeshi* within the theoretical framework of nativism. He therefore says, nativism, then, is a form of indigenous whose agenda can be summed up as a cry for cultural self-respect and autonomy emanating from the *Bahujan Samaj*.

21.2.2 Writers / Practioners

Before Desivad as a theory was introduced, Anand Coomaraswamy, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo have proposed such sort of theory that emphasized and reestablished the Indian framework or Indian aesthetics. Great personalities like Gandhiji and Jyotiba Phule had also brought in the nonwestern, non brahminic and non-Sanskrit Indian cultures into the mainstream. Thus, *Margi (*main stream) was already being questioned and *Desi* (marginalized/folk) was being brought into the centre.

The classic foreword to *Kanthapura* has been recognized as a manifesto for the path Raja Rao had opted and preached for Indian Writing in English. He resolved the dichotomy of foreign (English) language and methods of Indian story telling tradition through a systematic indigenization of English and a spirit and tempo of Indian life. He deviated from the sacrosanct structure of European novel and shaped it on the lines of the epic tradition of India. Thus, the advocacy for Native features and the practice of bringing them to literary framework was shown in India before Desivad came into discussion in a formal manner.

Umashankar Joshi has outlined a range of Indian literature produced in various Indian languages during the past four thousand years or so. He has shown some aspects of the Indian traditional features and even some unifying elements that are present in these works from various Indian languages. U R Anantmurthy is one such writer who showed nativism as a practice in his novels. Many writers and authors in Marathi, Kannada and Gujarati have started following Desivad in their writings. Some of the contemporary writers also encapsulate Desivad in their writings. For example, when Amitav Ghosh represents and tells a story about people in and around Sundarbans in his novel *Hungry Tide* he not only describe the locale but represents the lives and culture of the desi people and also bringing in the folklore of Bonbibi in the novel. Similarly, Dhruv Bhatt in his novel *Akoopar* tries to bring in even the dialect along with the cultural features of the people of Geer in Gujarat. Nativism can also be seen in Manil Suri's *Death of Vishnu* in which he employs Hindu mythology. The native features can be found in the works of women writers like Indira Goswamy and Mahashweta Devi too. Vikram Sheth's *Golden Gate* is often seen as a revival of Indian narrative style of prose in verse. Plays like Girish Karnad's *Hayvadan* and Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence! The Court is in Session* show a skillful blending of modern as well as native elements. Thus, the culture self-respect that Paranjape talks about in the practice of Desivad can be seen in all the forms and in all languages of contemporary Indian writings.

Check Your Progress-II

(I) **Match the following:**

A	B
Amitav Ghosh	Hayvadan
Manil Suri	Silence! The Court is in Session
Vijay Tendulkar	Akoopar
Dhruv Bhatt	The Death of Vishnu
Girish Karnard	Hungry Tide

(II) **Write a short note on Bhalchandra Nemade's Desivad.**

_____

_____

_____
_____
_____

(III) **Answer the following:**

1) Name two essays by Vasudev Savant on Desivad.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2) Why did we forget our own culture according to G.N. Devy?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3) List three main points on Makarand Paranjape's views on Desivad.

_____
_____
_____
_____

21. 7 LET US SUM UP

To sum up we can say that Desivad or nativism is an assertion of one's cultural identity. It is a return, revival, reclaim of Indian literary and aesthetic framework and a rejection of Western theories or yardsticks. The theory came as a reaction and response to the overarching influence of Euro – American literary theories and criticism. But we must not conclude that it is simply an outright rejection or protest against the colonial cultural heritage but it is rather a framework that seeks to celebrate indigenousness, acknowledge our cultural heritage and to situate the works written by Indians in an Indian perspective and in Indian soil. Thus, the theory and the practice of *Desivad* is an endeavor **"**to look in our own backyards for our cultural resources'' as U. R. Ananthamurthy has described it.

21. 8 KEYWORDS

Native	(here) a non – white original inhabitant of a place, as regarded by European colonists or travellers
Colonialism	the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically
Amnesia	a partial or total loss of memory

21. 9 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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- Lange, Bernd-Peter Lange. "Natives and Nativism" http://www.khg.uni.wroc.pl/files/khg7BerndT.pdf
- Nemade, Bhalchandra. *Desivad*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 2009.
- Paranjape, Makarand. *Nativism: Essays in Criticism*. Sahitya Akademi,1997. https://www.academia.edu/855884/Makarand_Paranjape_ed_Nativism_Essays_in_Criticism

Answers

Check Your Progress-I

1. Americanism 2 literature 3. Bhalchandra Nemade
4. civilization 5. preservation

Check Your Progress-II

A	B
Amitav Ghosh	Hungry Tide
Manil Suri	The Death of Vishnu
Vijay Tendulkar	Silence! The Court is in Session
Dhruv Bhatt	Akoopar
Girish Karnard	Hayvadan

UNIT : 22 PRACTICE & PROJECT WORK

Structure

22.0 Objectives

22.1 Rasa Interpretation of a Text

22.1.1 Abhigyānashākuntalam by Kalidasa

22.1.2 Post Office by Dhumketu

22.2 Dhvani Interpretation of a Text

22.3 Vakrokti Interpretation of a Text

22.4 Alamkāra Interpretation of a Text

22.5 Project Work

Answers

22.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall understand:

- Examples of Rasa, Dhvani, Vakrokti, Alamkara etc.in literary and performative texts
- How to interpret a text using a theory of Indian Poetics
- How a text can yield newer meanings when looked at from Indian theories of meaning and interpretation viz. Rasa, Dhvani, Vakrokti, Alamkara etc.

By the end of this unit, you will be able to learn:

- Application of theories viz. Rasa, Dhvani, Vakrokti, Alamkara etc. on to a text

22.1 RASA INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT

As you have learnt earlier, Rasa theory, enunciated by Bharatmuni in his text *Nātyashāstra*, is related to the emotive experience of the reader / spectator. In a nutshell, Rasa is evoked as a result of the dominant psychological state of the reader / spectator being stimulated by the combination of determinants (animate and inanimate), consequent expressions and transitory mental states.

Let us see through examples how to read a text using Rasa theory:-

22.1.1 *Abhigyānashākuntalam* by Kalidasa

Kalidasa's *Abhigyānashākuntalam* is a play, based on the story of Dushyant and Shakuntala from *Mahabharata*, where Dushyant, after promising his love for Shakuntala returns to his kingdom, incidentally forgetting her as years pass, due to the curse of sage Durvāsā. Shakuntala loses the ring that was given to her by Dushyant as a token of their love. Fortunately, the ring is discovered by a fisherman in the belly of a fish, who presents it in the king's court. Dushyant realizes his mistake - too late. Meanwhile, Dushyant is asked to defeat an army of *Asuras* and after returning to Earth years later, Dushyant finds Shakuntala and their son by chance, and recognizes them. It is thus, the story of two lovers who fall in love, separate and at the end reunite. The separation is the phase of transformation of the lovers. Here the physical yearning transcends into a more matured and spiritual love.

The chief rasa of the play is certainly Śringāra Rasa, since the play is about love of Dushyant and Shakuntala. Kalidasa explores the twin aspects of Śringāra rasa – Sambhoga Śringāra and Vipralambha Śringāra. The Sambhoga Śringāra has been shown as erotic and the Vipralambha Śringāra as sublime.

For instance, in the play Dushyant and Shakuntala, the characters become the *ālambana vibhāva*. The girls' talk to the bee, their attire, the flower garden and such others become the uddipana vibhāva. The beautiful surrounding, the inner joy of Dushyant and of course the beauty of Shakuntala triggers the feeling of love in him. Though standing behind the bushes he too is unable to control himself from adoring and appreciating Shakuntala's magical youth,

"*Her lower lip has the rich sheen of young shoots,*
Her arms the very grace of tender twining stems;
Her limbs enchanting as a lovely flower
Glow with the radiance of magical youth".

On Dushyant's entry, fleeting emotions like confusion, wonder, fear, curiosity, bashfulness and such others seem to fill the minds of all the characters present. The blossoming of love between Shakuntala and Dushyant is gradually established through the reactions of both of them to the conversation of the *sakhis* with the King.

Before the lovers could express their love for each other Kalidasa separates the lovers. But this *Vipralambha* is not the resultant of any hatred. It brings out the ingrained feelings of love. They long to meet each other. Dushyanta impatiently reveals to Madhavaya about his growing love for Shakuntala. On the other side Shakuntala suffers from fever; she

falls ill. Dushyant thinks if she is really having fever or she is also in love. Shakuntala explains her friends that she is in this state because of the king who came to protect the *tapovan*, since the moment she saw him she is in love and wants to marry him. She begs, "My friends, if you approve, counsel me as to how I can find favour in the eyes of the Royal Sage; otherwise I shall be just a memory"

There are only a few instances of *veera rasa* in the play. This king's heroic energy is exposed again at the end of act six when Dushyant accepts the proposal of Indra to help him fight against the Titans.
The repudiation of Shakuntala is no doubt *Vipralambha Śringāra*. But it also arouses the pathetic sentiment i.e., *karuna rasa*. The curse of Durvāsā, loss of Dushyant's memory are the cause of the lovers suffering. These determinants lead to the shedding of tears, sorrow and grief for both Dushyant and Shakuntala. Such consequents combine with the *vyavichāribhāvas* like the king's fainting to produce *karuna rasa*. Another example of sorrow in the drama is Shakuntala's departure from Kanva's ashrama, the scene is full of sorrow.

22.1.2 Post Office by Dhumketu (Translated into English as The Letter)

The story *Post Office* by Gujarati writer Dhumketu (Gaurishankar Joshi), translated into English as *The Letter*, is about Coachman Ali, a hunter in his youth undergoes transformation of heart on being separated from his daughter after her marriage. He goes to the post office every day, waiting desperately for a letter from his daughter, for five years. But the letter never arrives during his lifetime. The story tries to project how the emotions and feelings of old people are neglected in a mechanized society.

The dominant rasa of the story is Karuna Rasa. According to Bharatmuni, the *sthayibhāva* for Karuna Rasa is *Shoka* (sorrow). The causes for this sorrow could be death, separation form dear ones, accident, misfortune etc. This sorrow is represented on stage through shedding tears and lamentation among other *Anubhāvas* (expressions).

The *ālambana vibhāva* for Karuna Rasa in the story is chiefly Coachman Ali, the lonely old man waiting for a letter from his daughter during the last days of his life. He is the first person to reach the post office every day early in the morning, amidst biting cold, in his tattered clothes. Ali religiously follows this schedule for five years with infinite faith, waiting for the entire day and becomes a subject of mockery for the post office staff. However, till the last day of his life, the letter never arrives. Here, the letter is also as important as a character – an objective

correlative for the evocation of pathos, and therefore can be called *ālambana vibhāva.* The dark sky, intense cold, faint light of the morning – these become the *uddipana vibhāva* that stimulate the state of sorrow. Dark and cold both are suggestive of tragedy and death.

The *anubhāva* (expression) of sorrow is generally through weeping, shedding tears etc. This is deftly portrayed in the story when, after disappearing for a few days on account of his illness, Ali comes once again to the post office on the last day of his life, falling out of breath and approaching the end of his life, to check if the letter has arrived. Receiving a rude reply from the postmaster, who calls him a pest, and finding no letter, he gradually walks out of the post office building, turning back after every few steps, still hoping if there was any hope. His eyes are filled with tears of helplessness and his patience is getting exhausted, since he has already experienced the end of his life approaching.

Along with the above-mentioned *vibhāvas* and *anubhāva*, there are transitory states (*vyabhicharis)* like yearning, anxiety, excitement, fear, sickness etc. that help stimulate the sorrow further. As a result of the combination of the *vibhāvas, anubhāva* and *vyabhicharis*, Karuna Rasa is generated in the sahridaya (competent spectator / reader).

22.2 DHVANI INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT

The ninth century Kashmiri scholar Ānandvardhan proposed in his *Dhvanyāloka,* that language has a threefold capacity of rendering meaning i.e. they always do not mean what they superficially mean. There is a 'suggestive' signification of the words depending on the socio-cultural context.

Let us see through the example of a poem how this suggestive signification works:

***Madhushala* by Harivanshrai Bachchan**

Written between 1932 and 1934 and published in 1935, *Madhushala* is the most popular of Harivanshrai Bachchan's poems and a landmark work of modern Hindi poetry. Full of sensuous and sentimental spirit revolving around the house of wine, the poem is actually a commentary on life and the contemporary times, and has a deeper significance than what appears – wine as a symbol of free and liberated outlook towards life.

The poem represents the philosophy of Bachchan – the passionate yearning of the soul to attain the most Beautiful, ending only in disappointment or frustration, realizing the transience of beauty, the resulting pain, disillusionment and inevitability of death. The poem is a

stoic acceptance of fatalism that one meets while in the pursuit of the Truth and the Beautiful.

The poem is an open rejection of those conservative religious ideals that chain individual freedom. Life is transient according to the poet, and the meaning of life lies not in the pursuit of an abstract other-world but in enjoying the tangible beauty of this world, living now and here fully.

However, the poem reinforces no indulgence in sheer pleasure, but the fact that man is the creator of his own destiny. Infinite pursuit towards one's goal, so much so that the goal becomes an intoxication in itself, brings the bliss of success. *Madhushala* also suggests one's goals – materialistic, artistic, aesthetic or spiritual. When the desire to attain one's goal becomes highly intense and the journey / pursuit itself becomes the destination, one is bound to achieve one's goal. *Madhushala*, thus echoes persistence towards one's goals. (Stanza 6&9)

मदिरालय जाने को घर से चलता है पीनेवला,
'किस पथ से जाऊँ?' असमंजस में है वह भोलाभाला,
अलग-अलग पथ बतलाते सब पर मैं यह बतलाता हूँ -
'राह पकड़ तू एक चला चल, पा जाएगा मधुशाला।।
मदिरा पीने की अभिलाषा ही बन जाए जब हाला,
अधरों की आतुरता में ही जब आभासित हो प्याला,
बने ध्यान ही करते-करते जब साकी साकार, सखे,
रहे न हाला, प्याला, साकी, तुझे मिलेगी मधुशाला।।

The symbolism of wine has been employed also to reduce communal conflict and various types of social divide at large. According to the poet, while religious extremism of any sort divides the society, the wine-house is a kind of levelling factor where there is no discrimination of any kind. Thus, wine-house is suggestive of social reforms of equality and fraternity. (Stanza 50)

मुसलमान औ' हिन्दू है दो, एक, मगर, उनका प्याला,
एक, मगर, उनका मदिरालय, एक, मगर, उनकी हाला,
दोनों रहते एक न जब तक मस्जिद मन्दिर में जाते,
बैर बढ़ाते मस्जिद मन्दिर मेल कराती मधुशाला!

The twentieth century was also the time when superstitions had caught hold of the society – a society that was steeped in false rituals and was governed largely by religious orthodoxy. Death was used as a threatening force by self-proclaimed god-men. However, the poet, in stanza 68, suggests that death is the constant truth that nobody can deny. (Stanza 68)

कभी न सुन पड़ता, 'इसने, हा, छू दी मेरी हाला',
कभी न कोई कहता, 'उसने जूठा कर डाला प्याला',
सभी जाति के लोग यहाँ पर साथ बैठकर पीते हैं,
सौ सुधारकों का करती है काम अकेले मधुशाला।।

एक तरह से सबका स्वागत करती है साकीबाला,
अज्ञ विज्ञ में है क्या अंतर हो जाने पर मतवाला,
रंक राव में भेद हुआ है कभी नहीं मदिरालय में,
साम्यवाद की प्रथम प्रचारक है यह मेरी मधुशाला।।

Bachchan's Madhushala is no superficial glorification of wine or wine-house; it becomes a symbol of a free-thinking mind, progressive outlook towards life and individual freedom in the transitional twentieth century society that was crippled due to fragmenting medieval value-system that was no longer relevant. At the suggestive level, it is a powerful plea to youth to challenge and replace social orthodoxy and hypocrisy with a fresh world-view.

From a literary point of view, the work of art is the poet's Madhushala (wine-house) that carries the nectar of beauty and aesthetic experience extracted from the raw material of imagination.

भावुकता अंगूर लता से खींच कल्पना की हाला,
कवि साकी बनकर आया है भरकर कविता का प्याला,
कभी न कण-भर खाली होगा लाख पिएँ, दो लाख पिएँ!
पाठकगण हैं पीनेवाले, पुस्तक मेरी मधुशाला।।

22.3 VAKROKTI INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT

Kuntaka, the tenth century Sanskrit scholar, gave the distinction between ordinary language and literary language. The former he called *Svabhāvokti*, used in sciences and informative communication, and the latter was called *Vakrokti*, the language of literature. *Vakrokti*, according to him, operates at six levels.

Let us take an example from English poetry to understand this:-

Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1751)

Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, published in 1751, differs from a conventional elegy poem. It does not lament upon the death of a friend but of poor, humble and rustic people in general. According to some scholars, the poem may have been occasioned by an actual death, perhaps that of Gray's friend Richard West in 1742. To Dr Johnson, the poem "abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo." In the poem, Vakrokti can be observed operating at six levels as given below:

I. *Varnavinyāsa Vakratā* (Phonetic obliquity)

Phonetic obliquity works at the level of phonemes and syllables i.e. when similar or identical phonemes are repeated at varying intervals. The very first stanza of the poem presents a remarkable use of consonance with the sound /l/ being echoed throughout the stanza on almost every stressed syllable:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

The reverberation of '*low'* in "lowing", "slowly" and "plowman" adds to the theme of the poem. Besides, phrases like "weary way" (l. 3), "solemn stillness holds" (l. 5), "pomp of power" (l. 33), "dull, cold ear of Death" (l. 44), "born to blush" (l. 55), "listless length" (l. 103) etc. are all examples of phonetic obliquity.

II. *Padapurvārdha Vakratā* (Lexical Obliquity)

Lexical obliquity works at the level of base forms of substantives. It includes stylistic choice in vocabulary, metaphor, adjectives and concealed expressions. One finds, for instance, the use of the word "lea" – a synonym for 'meadow' in the first stanza to match the rhyme of 'me'. The word "hamlet" used in line 16 instead of 'village' stands for a residency even smaller than village.

Gray's employment of adjectives is also noteworthy. He uses such adjectives as would enhance the beauty of expression as well as facilitate the evocation of rasa. The expression "moping owl" (l. 10), for instance that complains the moon about its vanishing "ancient, solitary reign" (l. 11) describes the antiquity and hushed atmosphere of the churchyard with no human presence except that of a nocturnal creatures.

III. *Padaparārdha Vakratā* (Grammatical Obliquity)

The third type of obliquity is grammatical obliquity i.e. obliquity in the inflectional forms of substantives. This includes obliquities of tense, case, person, number, voice and affixation. In Gray's elegy, one finds a transformation of person from the 24th stanza. The narration in the stanzas before stanza 24 is largely in third person plural (i.e. the poor people). Stanzas 24 to 29 contain an imaginary dialogue in second person and first person singuar. ("For thee, who mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead...) Here the speaker imagines his own death being discussed by a farmer. The Epitaph appended at the end of the poem is in third person singular, talking about a "youth" who is supposedly the poet himself. Thus, there is an attempt to comment on the 'general' from the 'personal'.

IV. *Vākya Vakratā* (Sentential Obliquity)

This is the most permeating and predominant type of obliquity wherein a whole sentence is presented in a different manner using various figures of speech. This is the most oft-occurring obliquity in any literary work. A few random examples from the poem would suffice to show Gray's deft handling of sentential obliquity:
The personification of the characteristics of the elite and the privileged with the first letter capitalized in stanza 8:

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor."

V. *Prakarana Vakratā* (Episodic / Contextual Obliquity)

Episodic obliquity is generally in works which are based on familiar stories / legends. A part of the plot is modified or changed in order to innovate and provide aesthetic delight. This is generally a part of epic / dramatic poetry more than lyrical poetry. Since Gray's elegy is not based on a familiar story and is an independent creation, there is hardly any scope for Prakarana Vakratā.

VI. *Prabandh Vakratā* (Compositional Obliquity)

Compositional obliquity can include changing the dominant rasa of the composition, changing the end of the story, inclusion of contingent objective, obliquity of title and obliquity of similar stories. In Gray's elegy, it is found that the speaker does not mourn the death of any particular individual but appears to be meditating on death and the lives of simple rustic folk and his own death. In this sense, it is different from the conventional elegy. Gray has experimented with elegy genre per se.

22.4 ALAMKARA INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT

In Indian Poetics, *Alamkāras* are categorized into two: *Shabdālamkāra* and *Arthālamkāra*. The former includes those figures of speech that are related with sound and the latter includes those related with meaning. Examples of both the categories are given below:

Shabdālamkāra:

***a) Anuprāsa* (Alliteration)**

The repetition of a particular sound (generally) at the beginning of the word is called Anuprāsa (alliteration). For instance, the following lines from Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner, where the sound /f/ is repeated:

The *f*air breeze blew, the white *f*oam *f*lew,

The *f*urrow *f*ollowed *f*ree;

b) Yamaka

Yamaka is the repetition of a word in the same line / stanza but with a different meaning. For instance, the lines from Romeo and Juliet where the word 'lie' is repeated and has different meanings:

Mercutio: That dreamers often *lie*
Romeo: In bed asleep, while they do dream things true. Dreamers *lie* (are false), and *lie* (down).

***c) Shlesha* (Pun)**

Shlesha is when the double meanings of a word are explored. Consider a sentence like 'The tallest building in town is the library — it has thousands of stories!'. Here, the library has multiple floors as well as story-books. Another example:

When I am dead, I hope it may be said
'His sins were scarlet, but his books were read'.
(Hilaire Belloc, "On his Books")

In the above example, the word 'read' has two meanings – red colour and the act of reading.

Arthālmkāra

a) *Upamā* (Simile)

An *upamā* or simile is a figure of speech that states explicitly the similarity existing between two different things. In this, a comparison is made between two objects of different kinds which have at least one point in common. Consider the following lines from Robert Burns, where the beloved is compared to a freshly bloomed red rose:

"My love's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June…"

Another example can be from T S Eliot's 'Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock':

"Let us go, then you and I
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon the table"

b) *Rupaka* (Metaphor)

In this figure of speech, a comparison is implied, but not formally expressed. Simile is an overt, and metaphor a covert comparison. For example, take two dialogues Shakespeare:

"All the world is a stage…" (As You Like It)
"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury" (Macbeth)

c) *Atishayokti* (Hyperbole)

It is an overstatement or exaggerated reality. For example, Hamlet's love for Ophelia:

Hamlet: I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.

Or lines from the famous Shakespearean sonnet:

"So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

d) *Mānavikarana* (Personification)

Here, inanimate objects and abstract ideas are invested with the attributes of a living being i.e. they are shown as having life and intelligence. For example, the following lines from Emily Dickinson attribute living quality to the abstract idea of hope:

"Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all."

Keats, in his *Ode to a Nightingale*, uses personification:

"My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk"

e) *Utprekśā* (Conceit)

When the condition or action of an animate or inanimate object is in a particular manner and it is fancied by the poet in a different manner, the figure of speech is called *utprekśā.* It may be considered a far-fetched or elaborate metaphor or simile. John Donne's metaphysical poem *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* can be taken as an example, where he compares the two lovers with the two ends of a compass:

"If they be two, they are two so,
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if the other do."

f) *Virodha* (Oxymoron)

It is a figure of speech whereby two contradictory qualities are predicted at once of the same thing i.e. they are placed side by side. For example:

"To live a life half-dead, a living-death."
(Milton, *Samson Agonistes)*

Or the line "Parting is such *sweet sorrow"* from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

g) Vyatireka

In simple terms, it means that in *vyatireka*, the intention ofthe poet isto show the excellence of the *upameya* over the *upamāna.* For example, consider the following lines from Shakespeare's sonnet, *Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?*

"Shall I Compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate"

22.5 PROJECT WORK

Read carefully the following extracts taken from some classic works of literature. Think what could be the Vibhava, Anubhava and Vyabhichari, and derive the Rasa that they evoke:

(1) *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

"How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavored to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips."

(2) *Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead* by Alfred Lord Tennyson

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

***(3) Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by S T Coleridge**

And now there came both mist and snow, And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared

by, As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

(4) *Samson Agonistes* by John Milton

"O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensom,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest suttleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.
God, when he gave me strength, to shew withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse then chains,
Dungeon, or beggery, or decrepit age!
Light the prime work of God to me is extinct
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferiour to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,
They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong."

Read carefully the following extracts taken from some classic works of literature. Try to comprehend their primary meaning. Further, read them again and try to understand the suggested meaning (Dhvani) intended behind them.

(5) *1984* by George Orwell

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the

lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for HateWeek. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

There seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere
Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the Party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.

Outside, even through the shut window-pane, the world looked cold. Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere. The black-moustachio'd face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was one on the house-front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own.

(6) ***The Sick Rose*** **by William Blake**

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

(7) ***I Dwell in Possibility*** **by Emily Dickinson**

I dwell in Possibility –
A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows –
Superior – for Doors –

Of Chambers as the Cedars –
Impregnable of eye –
And for an everlasting Roof
The Gambrels of the Sky –

Of Visitors – the fairest –
For Occupation – This –
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise –

Read the two following poems by Emily Dickinson and try to understand how obliquity (Vakrokti) has been used at various levels:

(8) Faith—is the Pierless Bridge
Supporting what We see
Unto the Scene that We do not—
Too slender for the eye

It bears the Soul as bold
As it were rocked in Steel
With Arms of Steel at either side—
It joins—behind the Veil

To what, could We presume
The Bridge would cease to be
To Our far, vacillating Feet
A first Necessity.

(9) Pain—has an Element of Blank—
It cannot recollect
When it begun—or if there were
A time when it was not—

It has no Future—but itself—
Its Infinite Contain
Its Past—enlightened to perceive
New Periods—of Pain.

Given below is the famous monologue of Satan from John Milton's *Paradise Lost (Book II)*. Read it carefully and try to find out how different figures of speech (Alamkāras) have been employed:

(10.) Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial vertues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of Heav'n
Did first create your Leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,
Hath bin achievd of merit, yet this loss
Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Formost to stand against the Thunderers aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From Faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,
More then can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper then prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,
Whether of open Warr or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

Answers:
Go through the following web links for detailed answers and further reference on the given practice exercise questions:
(1) https://the-creature.weebly.com/physical-appearance.html
(2) https://poemanalysis.com/alfred-tennyson/home-they-brought-her-warrior-dead/

(3) https://poemanalysis.com/samuel-taylor-coleridge/the-rime-of-the-ancient-mariner-part-i/
http://armytage.net/updata/Harold%20Bloom%20introduction%20of%20Poets%20The%20Ancient%20Mariner%20by%20Chelsea%20House.pdf
(4) http://triggs.djvu.org/djvu-editions.com/MILTON/SAMSON/Download.pdf
https://www.academia.edu/31108855/Moral_Dilemma_and_Tragic_Affect_in_Samson_Agonistes
(5) https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nineteen-Eighty-four
(6) http://tv-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/documents%2Fnull-The+Sick+Rose+18+ready+to+print+-+Google+Docs.pdf
http://eprints.binadarma.ac.id/2429/1/02%2013%20-%2024%20Symbols%20in%20William%20Blake%27s%20Poetry%20%28rOSMAIDAR%29.pdf
(7) https://poemanalysis.com/emily-dickinson/i-dwell-in-possibility/
(8) https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/214314768.pdf
https://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org/emily-dickinson/biography/special-topics/emily-dickinson-and-the-church/
(9) http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/cs6/blank.html#:~:text=The%20%22element%20of%20blank%22%20(,(line%207)%20is%20ironic.&text=The%20enlightenment%20which%20pain%20brings,more%20and%20still%20more%20pain.
(10) http://vidyamandira.ac.in/pdfs/e_learning/ENGA-P5,%20Satan%20in%20Paradise%20Lost%20PPT.pdf

Some Useful Video Links Related To Indian Poetics:

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLlqr2jXaszzB--9UIiLxamSHrp1EJ_FCp
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYEKtWjTPLw
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEGEcW3Lokw
https://thesongpedia.com/navrasa-by-nightingale-lata-mangeshkar-and-essence-of-emotions/

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સ્વાધ્યાયઃ પરમં તપઃ
સ્વાધ્યાયઃ પરમં તપઃ
સ્વાધ્યાયઃ પરમં તપઃ

શિક્ષણ, સંસ્કૃતિ, સદ્‌ભાવ, દિવ્યબોધનું ધામ
ડૉ. બાબાસાહેબ આંબેડકર ઓપન યુનિવર્સિટી નામ;
સૌને સૌની પાંખ મળે, ને સૌને સૌનું આભ,
દશે દિશામાં સ્મિત વહે હો દશે દિશે શુભ-લાભ.

અભણ રહી અજ્ઞાનના શાને, અંધકારને પીવો ?
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ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
દિવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
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