

Message for the 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 as many as 54 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, UG, PG, 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. Very soon, the University going to offer new online Certificate and Diploma programmes on various subjects like Yoga, Naturopathy, and Indian Classical Dance etc. would be available as elective also.

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)

B.A. (Hons.)

**INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH
LITERATURE**

ENMJ-101/ENMN-101

Block

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**UNIT
1****DEFINITION, MEANING AND
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LITERARY STUDIES****: STRUCTURE :****1.0 Objectives****1.1 Introduction****1.2 Definition of Literature****1.2.1 Definition of Literature****1.2.2 Nature of Literature****1.2.3 Literature of Knowledge and Literature of Power****1.2.4 Elements of Literature****1.2.5 Impulses Behind Literature****1.2.6 Language in Literature****1.2.7 Literature as the Expression of the Personality****1.2.8 Style is Man****1.3 Literary Studies****1.3.1 Definition of Literary Studies****1.3.2 Literary Theories/ Approaches to the Study of Literature****1.3.3 Literary Criticism****1.3.4 Literature and Society****1.3.5 Major Literary Genres****1.4 Key Words****1.5 Let Us Sum Up****1.6 Books Suggested****Answers****1.0 OBJECTIVES**

In this unit we shall;

- discuss the definitions of literature and literary studies,
- discuss nature of literature, Elements of literature and impulses that create literature,
- discuss the role of language in literature and how style of writing reflects the personality of the author,
- define literary studies which deal with the relationship of literary works with time, milieu and race,
- discuss briefly the various approaches to the study of literary works.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature is a term used to describe written material. The word 'Literature' is derived from the Latin word 'Litra' meaning 'Writing formed with letter of alphabet'. It actually refers to all kind of written and printed materials such as material on medicines or electronics item. Manuals, circulars, pamphlets are also called literature in general sense. Literature proper is imaginative or creative writing especially of recognized artistic value.

Thus literature is a body of written works of language, period and culture. It contains written materials like poetry, fiction, essays, etc. these are creative works of imagination with creative use of language and deal with themes of Universal Interest. Literature is generally classified on the basis of nation, language, historical period, genre and subject matter.

Though Literature is defined as the body of writing, it includes oral literature also which is preserved and transmitted orally from one generation to another.

Literary studies deal with literary theories, theoretical approaches to literature and literary criticism. It is the formal study of works of art which involves explaining, interpreting, evaluating and judging the literary works. Literary criticism is the study, evaluation and interpretation of literature based on the fixed norms of literary theories. Literary theories discuss goals and methods of literature in philosophical manner. Very often literary theorist and literary critics are different as literary theorists build theories and literary critics apply them to the literary works to evaluate or interpret them.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF LITERATURE

1.2.1 Literature Defined/Various Definitions of Literature :

The word 'literature' is used in a broad sense. It refers to compositions or writings that tell stories, expressions, dramatize situations or propagate ideas. Before the invention of writing, there were literary works, which were recited, spoken or sung and transmitted orally. In ancient India and some western countries, oral tradition existed. Even in present time, there are some societies where oral literary traditions exist particularly among tribal and nomads. Literature has always remained connected with oral performance. Even today, poetry is recited and plays are performed on the stage. Poets and story writers read their works directly before the live audience. It is difficult to define literature wholly to satisfaction. However let us have a look at some definitions from reliable sources.

Merriam –Webster's Collegiate Dictionary considers literature to be "writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest."

Walter Peter, the famous 19th century critic referred to "the matter of imagination or artistic literature" as a "transcript, not of mere fact but of fact in its infinitely varied forms."

Rebecca West says, "Literature must be an analysis of experience and a synthesis of the findings into a unity."

Collins English Dictionary defines Literature as "Writing in prose or verse regarded as having permanent worth through its intrinsic excellence."

Britanica.Com refers to literature "as those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their extension."

Ezra Pound says, "Great Literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree."

C.S. Lewis says, "Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our life has already become."

"Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it but molds it to its purpose", says Oscar Wild.

Somerset Maugham called "Poetry the crown of Literature."

Goethe glorified literature by saying that, "the decline of literature indicates the decline of a nation."

Encyclopedia of Britannica classifies literature as "the best expression of the best thought reduced to writing."

Matthew Arnold in his book 'The Study of Poetry' defined poetry as "criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such criticism by the laws of poetic truth and beauty". This definition by Arnold applies to literature in general.

T.S. Eliot says that, "the greatest of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards."

No definition of literature can be taken as inclusive of an important characteristics of literature and therefore let us draw some vital characteristics of literature based on various definitions.

1. Literature is usually a written material which may include informative works on science, history, philosophy, travel, politics, moral etc.
2. Literature proper is judged on aesthetic grounds
3. The purpose of literature is to provide aesthetic pleasure following the norms of literary truth and beauty.
4. The language of literature is emotive which expresses emotions and arouses feelings.
5. Literary writers use language for its most subtle and complex effects which multiply meaning of words. Readers have to dig out the meanings from its multiple layers.
6. Literature employs metaphorical and symbolic language which defamiliarizes the world described in literary works.

7. Fictionality is one of the most important characteristics of literary texts. Literature is the product of the writers' imagination. Even historical figure created by literary writers are fictitious not real.
8. Literature has no pragmatic function like a newspaper, a book on gardening or cookery book. It is not written for a specific purpose. The only function of a literary work is to delight the reader.
9. Literature has profound human significance as it grows out of life. When we read great books, we come closer to life and understand human nature.
10. Thus, literature is an expression of life through the medium of language.

1.2.2 Nature of Literature :

Understanding nature of literature helps us differentiate between what is literature from what is not literature. The question can be solved by distinguishing the use of language. Language is the raw material of literature like stone or metal for sculpture. Language is not inert, like stone or metal. It is a creation of a mankind charged with cultural heritage of a particular linguistic group.

The language of science is purely denotative. It carries 'thought' while the language of literature carries both emotion and thought. Literary language is expressive and it conveys the tone and the attitude of the writer. It does not merely state or communicate but persuade the readers. Poetic language organizes and employs the resources of day-to-day language. In literary works, aesthetic function is of paramount importance.

In literature, 'I' is functional, not real. Time and place in novels are not real but imaginary. If we accept fictionality and imagination as inevitable traits of literature, we have to exclude Plato, Cicero and Emerson from literary world. In fact there are philosophical and political works with literary qualities despite fictionality and imagination. A literary work is highly complex organization of multiple meanings and that is the reason why literary and non-literary works often over-lap.

Literature provides an objective platform for knowledge and understanding. It connects us with broader cultural world and makes us better human beings.

1.2.3 Literature of Knowledge and Literature of Power :

De Quincey, a famous English essayist of 19th century laid down the distinction between "Literature of knowledge" and "Literature of Power". The function of the literature of knowledge is to teach and the function of literature of power is to move.

"All that is literature seeks to communicate power; all that is not literature, to communicate knowledge".

The object of the first is to inform, prove or persuade while the object of the second is to appeal to the higher understanding or reason and provide aesthetic delight. Literature of power belongs to the domain of poetry, drama and fiction. No logic can be applied to them as there are governed by their own laws.

1.2.4 Elements of Literature :

W. H. Hudson in his famous book *An Introduction to the Study of Literature* discusses four important elements of literature.

1. **The Intellectual Element :** This is an element of thought which the writer expresses in his work. In many famous works of literature, thought or idea is predominates.
2. **Emotional Elements :** Literature is often the result of emotional upsurge. In romantic poetry there are “spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions”.
3. **Elements of Imagination :** Literature is not real or factual but fictitious and imaginative. Imagination is a strong source of creative literature. Creative writers are stirred by intense vision and they arose similar vision in the minds of the readers also.
4. **Technical Element :** Technical Elements is related to craftsmanship and organization of thought, feelings and imagination. This element is connected with style, language, literary devices, metres and other intrinsic elements of works of art.

1.2.5 Impulses Behind Literature :

Why does a writer write ? What are the impulses that give birth to literature ? All human beings have an inherent desire to express themselves. Thus, desire for self-expression is one of the impulses behind literature. People are always interested in lives of others, their thoughts, feelings and problems. This is the impulse that creates novels/short stories, biographies, etc.

Human beings are interested in both the worlds of reality and imagination. The world of reality is dull and dry but the world of imagination is life enhancing and pleasurable. Finally, we are all interested in coherent appearances and form. This desire for form creates literary genres, techniques, styles, diction and literary devices.

1.2.6 Language in Literature :

Stone or bronze is the raw material for sculpture; language is the medium of literature. However, unlike stone or bronze, it is not inert. It is quite complex and demonstrates multiple layers of meaning. Literary language is different from everyday language in old classical literary works. Elizabethans did not talk like Shakespeare's characters. In western literature, the common speech people contributed came to be used as the language of literature.

Basically, language is a means of communication. It communicates ideas, and also expresses feeling or emotion. There are three basic purpose of language.

1. To convey information
2. To express personal information or opinion
3. To get someone to do something

In technical writings, emotional attitudes are out of place. In literary language, the purpose of intentions of the writer is often quite complex. In literature, particularly in poetry, feelings and emotions expressed and aroused are the most important part of the meaning.

“Ambiguity” in literary works refers to multiple shades or meaning to words. The simplest way of distinguishing literary language is its use. Language of science contains ‘thought’ while the language of literature contains thought and emotions. Emotive use of language is confined to literature. Scientific language is “denotative”, and the language literature is full of ambiguities and conveys tone and attitude of the author. Literary language, sound symbolism of the world is stressed. In literary language, meters, patterns of sound, figures of speech are very important. It is also deeply involved in the historical and cultural structure of the language.

Every day language also has expressive function, but it is full of irrationalities. Unlike scientific language, it is not limited merely to communication. It often aims at influencing the listener through expressing the attitude of the speaker that it reflects. In literary language, the resources of language are exploited systematically and rationally.

Alexander Pope believed that literary writing is not a spontaneous act of ease or chance. It comes from art, practice and labour.

1.2.7 Literature as the Expression of Personality :

Matthew Arnold defined literature as the criticism of life. It means that the artists present his own interpretation of life. He/she interprets life as he/she sees it and experiences it. Thus it becomes expression of his/her interpretation of life. The artist holds mirror up to the world which reflects his/her personality. A great book is the product of the brain and heart of the greatness to the greatness of the personality of the author. A great book owes its greatness to the greatness of the personality of the author. A genius is synonymous with originality and freshness. A great book exhibits original outlook of life and the world in an original manner. John Milton said, “A good book is the precious life blood of master spirit.”

Originality does not mean newness but geniuses. Authenticity is a characteristic of great literature. Authenticity in literature means, being faithful to one's own experiences. Literature reflects the personality of the author in an artistic manner. It is not the expression of the experience in universal manner. In great literature the personal turns into the universal, and therefore it appeals to all human beings irrespective of geographical territories and time.

1.2.8. Style is the Man :

Style is not restricted merely to literature. It is a necessary part of any utterance because one chooses the way of speaking for each context. In literary writings, style refers to two main aspects; diction and syntax. Diction relates to the choice and use of words, and syntax relates to sentence structure. Style is part of classical rhetorical devices like metaphor, alliteration and other figure of speech.

Style means the manner. There are styles of dressing, walking, singing, dancing, playing, writing etc. There is also a style of oratory or public speaking. All writers, speakers, singers have their own distinct style. Thus, style becomes a personal matter. It is like voice of a person, distinct and personal. Even when we do not see a person but hear his/her voice, and we recognize him/her.

A famous French writer, Buffon, said, “Le style, cest l'homme” which means “style is the man. “Writer's style is distinctive like the style of his walking. For a student literature, it is necessary to study the style of a writer as the index of his or her personality. Style is not nearly decorative elements but the part of the author's personality. Mimicking someone's style is a meaningless attempt because one can capture only their mannerisms; not their essential qualities. It would be like wearing someone else's clothes which would not suit or fit the person.

Alexander Pop called style “the dress of thought.” For, he considered it an external edition and not the integral part of a work of art. Thomas Carlyle's statement about style is more authentic as he calls it “not the coat of the writer but his skin”. Like skin, it is inseparable and the part of organic whole. The style of a great writer is always marked by individuality. Light is thoughts and feelings, his style is also personal. Style can be studied as a record of the writer's intellectual, emotional, spiritual and artistic growth. It reflects his background, education, upbringing and influences that shaped his personality. Students of literature should, therefore, focus not only on content of a work of art but its style.

❖ **CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :**

ANSWER IN BRIEF.

1. What does ‘Literature’ mean in a general sense?
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2. What is literature proper? Explain it.
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3. What do literary studies deal with?
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4. How does the literary language differ from scientific and everyday language?
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5. What is the function of literature of power?

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WRITE SHORT NOTES.

1. De Quincey Views on Literature of Knowledge and Literature of Power.
2. The elements of Literature.

1.3 LITERARY STUDIES

1.3.1 Definitions of Literary Studies :

A literary study is the study, evaluation and interpretation of Literature. Literary Criticism lays standards for evaluation of literary works. It analyzes the details of a text in order to reveal its structure and meaning. Literary study is the humanistic study of literature. Literature uses language in particular ways and, therefore, literary studies focus on language of a given literary work. Literature “transforms and intensifies ordinary language deviates systematically from everyday speech.” (Eagleton)

Literature is broadly defined as written or spoken material but the term refers to creative, fictional works. It includes poetry, drama, fiction, and several non-fiction writings. It also includes oral literature which existed in old times particularly among indigenous people. Oral literature is handed down from one generation to another.

The four important criteria of literature are

1. Fictionally
2. Specialized language
3. Lack of pragmatic function
4. Ambiguity

Fictionally refers to imaginary world created by the artist. Even in historical novels, the writer employs his imagination in creation of his characters, setting, dialogues, etc. The language in literature differs from scientific language and everyday language. As the Russian formalists maintained, literary texts use language in such a way that it becomes strange and unfamiliar. This process is called the process of defamiliarization. A literary writer employs rhetorical devices, poetic devices and other technical features for defamiliarizing the language he uses.

Another important characteristic of literature is that it has no practical purpose. It has no specific function like books of cookery, gardening and engineering. It has no social, moral or other pragmatic function. Literature exists for its own sake. The only purpose of literature is to provide aesthetic delight. Ambiguity denotes multilayered interpretations of a literary text.

Literary studies deal with methods and approaches to the study of literature. The history of any nation's literature is the record of the unfolding

of that nation's character and culture. History deals with the external aspects of the nation and people. Literature deals with inner and spiritual traits of the nation. That is the reason why we speak of literature as Greek literature, English literature, French Literature and so on. We study literature also as a product of society. A great sociological critic, Taine applied the formula of the race, milieu and time. According to him, literature is shaped by the race of the writers, totality of the surroundings, their climate and physical environment. Time factor also plays a very important role in literature and, therefore, we classify literature based on literary periods like the Renaissance, Neo-Classical Age, Romantic or Victorian Age.

Literary studies deal with sociological, historical cultural point of view in evaluation literature. Modern theories focus on the text, its structure and style.

1.3.2 Literary Theories and Approaches to Study of Literature :

There are five theoretical approaches to the study of literature.

1. Text-oriented approach
2. Author-oriented approach
3. Reader-oriented approach
4. Content-oriented approach
5. Literary-critique or evaluation

In text-oriented approach, the text is analyzed from textual point of view. Textual analysis can be carried out at three levels—phonological, structural and semantic—stylistic. Phonological level relates to patterns of sound and rhythm. Structural levels deal with grammatical patterns. We study simile, metaphor, imagery, paradox, irony etc. at the semantic—stylistic level.

In author-oriented approach, we study the relationship between author and his works. In reader oriented approach, the focus is on analyzing the connection between the works of literature and readers. In context-oriented approach, the literary works are studied from a historical, cultural, social, or political point of view. Literary critique or evaluation is scholarly analysis of a work of art based on accepted methodology and critical theory.

1.3.3 Literary Criticism :

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines literary criticism as “the formal study and discussion of works of literature, which involves judging and explaining their importance and meaning.”

Literary theories are applied to judge or evaluate the literary works. Western criticism has been dominated by two theories of literary art the expressive and constructive theories of composition. Aristotle was the first great critic belonging to the constructive school of thought. In his *Poetics*, he gave theories of the construction of tragedy. For him, the expressive elements were of secondary importance. Longinus differed from Aristotle who focused on the expressive aspect of a work of art. In Western criticism, this controversy between the constructive or the impressive aspect of literary

works has always been debated. This anti-thesis has endured in European history of literary criticism and philosophy throughout the ages in the form of Scholasticism versus Humanism, Classicism versus Romanticism, Cubism versus Expressionism and so on.

Major Western and English critics are as follows: Aristotle, Longinus, Sir Philip Sidney, Nicolas Boileau, Ben Jonson, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold, John Ruskin, Walter Peter, Oscar Wilde, Charles Baudelaire, Gustave Flaubert, Emile Zola, Hippolyte Taine, Sainte-Beuve, Benedetto Croce, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, T.E. Hulme, J.C. Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, Paul Valery, I.A. Richards, and Northrop Frye etc.

Major literary theories and movements in Western Literary Criticism include, classicism, romanticism, aestheticism, Marxism, Russian formalism, psycho-analysis, New Criticism, structuralism, deconstruction, modernism, Post modernism, Post-structuralism, feminist theory, Post-colonialism, cultural studies, reader-response theory and so on.

1.3.4 Literature and Society :

Literature and society have close relationship as the writer is a member of a society and readers are also members of a society. The science of society is sociology which is the scientific study of human society. Literature is also a social product, for it reflects human society and human life in general. Literature like sociology examines the realistic picture of human life. Like, sociology, literature is profoundly concerned with social world. So, literature can be regarded as the expression of human life through the medium of language which is also a social creation. W.H. Hudson aptly remarks, "Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language".

Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their great book *Theory of Literature* remark that, "Literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation". Literature portrays life which is a social reality. Literature influences society and it is also influenced by society. Literary works reflect social, political, religious and cultural values of the contemporary society. Form and style also change in accordance with the changes in the temper of the society.

Literary works are the result of social forces and therefore they cannot be separated from society. If we compare the poets of Neo-classical Age with the poet of Romantic Age, we shall find certain common characteristic in Neo-classical poets like reason, emphasis on expression etc. and in Romantic poets, we would find predominance of emotions, imagination, lyricism and spontaneity.

Every literary artist is an individual but he is also the product of a particular society and culture. Culture and society are affected by Time

Spirit and also racial characteristic of the people. That is the reason why history of literature is divided into certain periods with common characteristics. Goethe has rightly said that, “Everyman is a citizen of his age as well as his country”. We should study literary writers individually but also as members of a particular age and nation. Certain genres were produced in certain ages only. For example, the age of Shakespeare was the age of Drama, the 18th century was the age of prose, satire and novels. Romantic Age gave way to outburst of emotions and flights in imagination.

Marxist criticism interpreted works of literature based on class relations, social conflicts and economic inequality. According to Marxist theory, individuals are capitalist subjects. In India, literature produced during Gandhian era focused on social upliftment, rural life and swadeshi movement. These examples show that literature can be studied from social point of view as literature and society are inseparably linked.

1.3.5 Major Literary Genres :

There are two main divisions of literary forms : (1) Prose and (2) Poetry. Prose is made up of sentences and paragraphs without metrical or rhyming structure. Poetry is a literary work with intense expression of feelings and thoughts in distinctive style and rhythm. Poetic language generally differs from language used in prose. It has rhythmic and aesthetic qualities. Good poetry has multiple layers of meanings that require profound aesthetic understanding on the part of readers.

The following are the major literary genres.

1. **Novel** : Novel is a long narrative divided into chapters. There are characters, plot, setting and dialogues.
2. **Short Story** : it is a narrative that involves a few characters, one plot and one single incident. It can be read at a single sitting. It often ends abruptly.
3. **Plays/Drama** : a play is written to be performed on the stage. It is divided into acts and each act is divided into scenes. There are also plots, characters, settings and dialogues in the play. There is no narration but dramatic presentation. Development of plot and characters depends solely on dialogues.
4. **Poetry** : Poetry is a metrical composition with the expression of emotions and ideas. It is a perfect form of utterances with rhythm and beauty. Poetry is defined as “criticism of life” that adheres to the laws of poetic truth and beauty. Poetry is further divided into narrative poetry, lyric, ode, song, ballad, elegy and epic.
5. **Epic** : Epic is a long narrative poem based on the legends of popular heroes. There are two types of epic – the epic of growth and the epic of art. Epic of growth evolves with the passage of time. It is based on stories sung and transmitted orally by bards and minstrels. *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Beowulf* are the examples of epics of growth. In India, we have *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* as the examples of the epics of growth. The epic of art is the product of an individual genius. It is

the result of scholarship, profound knowledge and labour. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the example of the epic of art.

6. **Ballad** : Ballad can be defined as a short story in verse. It was a song with narrative story often sung to the accompaniment of dancing. Ballads often dealt with the themes of love, adventure, heroism, valour and supernatural incidents. Like, epic there are ballads of growth and literary ballads.
7. **Elegy** : Elegy is a lyric of lament or mourning at the death of a friend or someone. There is a sincerity of sad emotion in elegy. It often expresses reflections on death, transitoriness of human life and meaninglessness of human dreams. There is an elegy called “pastoral elegy” with pastoral background forests, shepherds and natural surroundings.
8. **Ode** : ode is a kind of a lyric. It can be defined as a rhymed lyric, often in the form of oddness, generally defined or exalted in subject, feeling and style. For example, “Ode to Nightingale” by John Keats. There are two kinds of odes: (1) Pindaric Ode (2) Horatian Ode.
9. **Lyric** : The word ‘lyric’ comes from ‘lyre’ a stringed musical instrument. Originally, it was used for poetry meant to be sung in accompaniment of lyre. However this has now come to signify short, musical poem. Lyrics deal with emotions of love, patriotism, sadness, joy and love for nature etc. It is characterized by intensity of emotions and spontaneity. Romantic age produced great lyrics in English literature.
10. **Sonnet** : it is a lyrical poem written in 14 lines in iambic pentameter. It originated in Italy and its pioneer was Petrarch. Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey brought it to England and experimented with it in 16th century. Petrarchan sonnet is divided into two parts: Octave (8 lines) and Sestet (6 lines) Shakespearean sonnet is divided into three quatrains and a couplet (4 + 4 + 4 + 2)
11. **Tragedy** : Tragedy is a play with serious action and sad ending. Aristotle defined it in his *Poetics* as imitation of serious action which provides catharsis to emotions of pity and fear. William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear* are great examples of tragedy.
12. **Comedy** : Comedy is a play with happy ending. It is humorous and amusing. The goal of comedy is usually to induce laughter in the audience. Aristotle termed comedy as an imitation of men who are inferior to average. Comedy is often satirical in tone. There are different forms of comedy such as romantic comedy, comedy of manners, comedy of humor, satire, black comedy and so on. William Shakespeare wrote beautiful romantic comedy like *As you like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream*, etc.
13. **Essay** : Essay is “loose sally of mind” said Dr. Johnson. It is a composition of moderate length on any particular subject. Like a lyric, it is often highly personal. It deals with any subject, ‘from dust to the star’ (Hugh Walker). Bacon wrote discursive essays depicting practical

wisdom and pragmatic philosophy. Charles Lamb wrote highly personal essays and Addison and Steele popularized periodical essays which became the forerunner of novel. Periodical essay was quite popular in 18th century and brought philosophy out of closet to public places and coffee houses.

- 14. Literary Criticism :** Literary criticism is also regarded as a branch of literature. Literary works deal with life; criticism deals with life; criticism interprets literary works. Therefore, literary criticism can be defined as criticism of the criticism of life. The chief function of criticism is to enlighten and highlight the beauties of the work of art.

❖ **CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :**

(A) FILL IN THE GAPS IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES FROM THE WORDS GIVEN BELOW.

1. De Quincey was a famous _____.
 2. _____ in literary work denotes multiple meanings.
 3. Taine was a famous _____ critic.
 4. Textual analysis can be carried out as _____ levels.
 5. _____ level deals with grammatical patterns.
 6. 'Poetics' is a famous critical work by _____.
 7. Alexander Pope was a _____.
 8. _____ deals with class relations and social conflicts.
 9. Sonnet has _____ lines with iambic pentameter.
 10. _____ has a serious action depicting falls of a noble man.
- (Structural, essayist, three, Aristotle, ambiguity, sociological, tragedy, fourteen, Marxist Criticism, Neo-classicist.)

(B) COMPLETE THE SENTENCES CHOOSING APPROPRIATE OPTIONS FROM THOSE GIVEN BELOW.

1. Elegy is a lyric of _____.
(a) Joy (b) Love (c) Lament (d) Sorrow
2. 'Ode to Nightingale' is a famous ode by _____.
(a) P. B. Shelley (b) Lord Byron
(c) John Keats (d) William Wordsworth
3. Dr. Johnson defined essay as _____.
(a) a compact composition (b) a rational peace of prose
(c) a lyrical prose peace (d) a loose sally of mind
4. Shakespeare's comedies are called _____.
(a) comedy of humour (b) romantic comedy
(c) comedy of satire (d) comedy of manner
5. Sonnet originated in _____.
(a) Italy (b) England (c) France (d) Greece

6. _____ can be defined as short story in verse.
(a) Elegy (b) Ballad (c) Lyric (d) Sonnet
7. Aristotle was the first critic of the _____ school of thought.
(a) expressive (b) structural (c) constructive (d) poetical

1.4 KEY WORDS

Literature : a body of written material

Oral Literature : literature that passes from one generation to another orally

Aesthetic : concerned with beauty or appreciation of beauty

Craftsmanship : a skill in particular craft or artistry

Authenticity : faithfulness to one's own experiences

Syntax : the arrangements of words and phrases

Metaphor : a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is appraised to an object or action to which it is not literally appreciable

Literary Studies : The study, evaluation and interpretation of literature

Fictionality : the quality of being fictional

Ambiguity : the quality of being open to more than one interpretation

Literary criticism : formal study and discussion of works of literature which involves judging and evaluating the works of art.

1.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have dealt with definitions of literature, nature of literature, element of literature, and the role of language in literature. We have also discussed literary theories in brief with critical approaches to the study of literature.

We have offered an overview of major literary genres with examples of related notable works. You are advised to read *An Introduction to Study of Literature* by W. H. Hudson, *The Theory of Literature* by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. In depth study of literary theories will help you to understand literary works better.

1.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Mario Klarer. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. Routledge, 2013
2. William Henry Hudson. *An Introduction to the study of Literature*. Rupa Publication India, 2015.
3. R. A. Scott-James. *The Making of Literature*. Allied Publishers Ltd. 2000(Edition).
4. Edgar V. Roberts. *Writing about Literature*. Prentice Hall, 1995 (Edition).
5. Praveen K. Thaker. *Appreciating English Poetry*. Orient Blackswan, 1999 (Edition).

6. M. H. Abrams. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Macmillan India Ltd. 1998 (Edition).
7. A. C. Hooper. *An Introduction to the study of Language and Literature*. Orient Longman, 1998 (Edition).

**Definition, Meaning and
Nature of Literature and
Literary Studies**

ANSWERS

(A) 1. Essayist 4. Three 7. Neo-Classical 10. Tragedy	2. Ambiguity 5. Structural 8. Marxist-Criticism	3. Sociological 6. Aristotle 9. Fourteen
(B) 1. (c) 6. (b)	2. (c) 7. (c)	3. (d) 4. (b) 5. (a)

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

UNIT 2

THE FUNCTION OF LITERATURE, OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY OF LITERATURE, AND QUALITIES OF GOOD LITERATURE, APPRECIATION OF A LITERARY WORK

: STRUCTURE :

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Why Study Literature

2.2.1 Benefits of Literature

2.2.2 Functions of Literature

2.2.3 Why we Study Literature?

2.4 Qualities of Good Literature

2.5 Appreciation of Literary Works (How to read a literary work)

2.5.1 Appreciating Poetry

2.5.2 Appreciation of Fiction

2.5.3 Critical Approaches for Appreciation of Literary Works

2.6 Key Words

2.7 Check Your Progress

2.8 Let Us Sum Up

2.9 Books Suggested

Answers

1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall;

- discuss the functions of literature and the objective of study of literature,
- discuss qualities of good literary works,
- learn how to read and appreciate literary works,
- look at practical examples of appreciation of literary pieces/ poetry and other literary texts briefly,
- deal with various critical approaches to appreciate literary works. Sociological, biographical, formalist, feminist, psycho-analytical, archetypal, etc.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The word “literature” in a broad sense refers to all printed or written material. Oral tradition of literature existed before writing came into existence. Orality had always been an important part of literature. Even today, plays are performed on the stage and poetry is recited before audiences. Parents delight their children with stories and poems.

The basic nature of literature is aesthetic pleasure it provides to the readers. Literature is imaginative and fictional. It has no practical purpose like science, history or philosophy. Pure literature is called literature of power as its function is to move and touch the hearts of the readers. Unlike the literature of knowledge, it does not provide knowledge or information to the readers. The language of literature is different from everyday language and scientific language. It is charged with cultural nuances. The language of literature is full of ambiguity as it contains multiple layers and shades of meaning.

Literature has many functions like providing entertainment, social or political function, ideological function, moral function, educational function, linguistic function, cultural function, historical function, etc. Literature helps reader grow emotionally and intellectually. It does provide objective base for knowledge and understanding. It links its readers with broader cultural, philosophical, and religious world. It helps people in developing sensibility and compassion for all living creatures.

Literature also makes us aware of the beauty around us. It teaches us to appreciate beauty of nature and the beauty of life in general. It also takes us into the depth of human nature and its intricacies. In our real life, we may know limited number of people. Literature brings us closer to broader and larger human world. Literature is a vital record of what men have seen, experienced and thought from time immemorial and therefore, it provides us the wide range of knowledge about the life and the world.

2.2 WHY STUDY LITERATURE

2.2.1 Benefits of Literature :

The study of arts and literature today is looked down upon as irrelevant and useless. This is a general belief in the society about art and literature, as arts graduates and post graduates have a fewer job opportunities and are not seen as making successful careers. Even though the prevalent belief may not be wrong, it indicates the fact that we are more concerned about the money rather than life. No doubt, science and technology have practical functions and they certainly play an important role in our life and society but one must not forget that literature serves as a gateway to expanding our knowledge and understanding of the world.

Even after thousands of years, why do the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the plays of Shakespeare appeals to us ? Why are we still enchanted by beautiful music, movies and discourse on the *Ramayana* and *Bhagvat Purana* ? There are benefits of literature which make us better human beings by ensuring that we develop humanistic and liberal attitude.

The first important benefit of literature is that it opens for us the beauties around us. It makes us see things which we have missed or ignored. It expands the horizon of mind and makes us more sensitive to things we come across in our life. Our heart leaps up when we behold a rainbow in the sky. We become sensitive towards beautiful songs of birds, murmur of streams and the roar of the oceans. This sensitivity and curiosity enriches our lives profoundly.

Reading of literature also expands our critical skills and the skills of reading between the lines. Literature and history are interconnected. Literature enables us to know about past, the people in the past and events that took place in those days. History records what had happened while literature looks at the past events from imaginative point of view. This makes literature more real than history.

Through literature, we travel to different countries of the world and get transported to different times. Thus literature proves itself to be a sort of a time machine that takes us into past or future. Literature also makes us appreciate other cultures and beliefs. Through the study of literature, we can become more tolerant and liberal towards other religious groups and their cultures. Acceptances and appreciation of different views and culture create truly liberal and democratic world. All kinds of literature addressed human nature and conditions which affect all people. We learn to accept human imperfections and weakness.

In short, the study of literature has civilizing effect on people. Education creates educated professionals but they often lack humanistic attitude. Tolstoy used the term 'educated barbarians' for such people. Sympathy is intellectual; empathy is emotional. Literature evokes empathy and other noble feelings in its readers.

Literature also teaches us to react to different situations in life. In our real life, we do not face all kind of situations, but in literature we come across all kinds of problems that the characters of the literary works face. When we read these works, we identify ourselves with the characters and undergo these situations vicariously. This act as a therapy called "Bibliotherapy". It is the process of using books (literature) to tackle mental disorders and problems. The benefits of literature are endless, universal and eternal.

2.2.2 Functions of Literature :

Functions of literature have been debated since ancient times. Though various thinkers and critics differed about the functions of literature, they all agreed one point that the basic function of literature is to entertain the readers. The nature of literature is related to the function of literature. All objects are used according to their inherent nature. For example, poetry is full of emotions and imagination, and therefore, its primary function is to move the heart of the readers. This act of touching the heart provides aesthetic pleasure to the reader. This pleasure is of higher nature which is quite closer to spiritual pleasure.

In ancient Greece, literature, philosophy and religion existed together. Greek poetry was inseparable from moral teaching. Minstrels were teachers with the function of pleasing the audience. Plato was interested in art insofar as its influence was beneficial in moulding men and women into good citizens. He opposed poetry because all arts were imitations (mimesis), thrice removed from truth. He also rejected poetry on the ground that it excited inferior human emotions, leading him to immoral life.

Aristotle in his *Poetics* used the word 'mimesis' for art but with a difference. For him, imitation was representation of life in literature. He said that literature is more realistic than history as it depicts not what is, but what

may or should be. He said that tragedy led to catharsis, emotions of pity and fear in the hearts of the spectators, freeing them from these harmful emotions. Aristotle emphasized the cathartic value of literature.

Horace, a great Roman critic, believed that the aim of poetry is “to instruct and to delight”. He said that poetry is sweet (dulce) and useful (utile). Longinus was the first romantic critic who said that a work of literature transports the readers into the world of passionate experience. For him, sublimity is the greatest of all literary virtues. Great literature, according to Longinus, appeals to imagination, not reason. Sublimity lifts readers closer to great mindedness of God.

Sir Philip Sidney, a great Elizabethan poet and sonneteer, in his work *Apology for Poetry* (1595) maintains that “delightful teaching is the end of poesy”. He also voiced the opinion of Longinus when he said that the chief function of literature is to “move”. John Dryden, the next great critic after Philip Sidney, asserted that aim of the writers is not to teach but to please. De Quincey made distinction between two types of literature : Literature of knowledge and literature of power. The function of the former is to teach, the function of the latter is to move”.

Romantic poets focused on imaginations and emotions in their poetry. They took poetry as something dealing with eternal and universal truth. William Wordsworth called poetry “a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”. Coleridge in his book *Biographia Literaria* discussed the role of Esemplastic Imagination which “dissolves, diffuses and dissipates in order to recreate”. For Goethe, the highest function of the art is “to represent”.

Matthew Arnold in his book, *The Study of Poetry* glorifies the role of poetry. He calls poetry “the criticism of life”. According to Arnold, poetry is an “application of ideas of life”. He says that poetry teaches us how to live. He holds the view that “poetry of revolt against moral ideas is poetry of revolt against life”.

T. S. Eliot dismisses social function of poetry. He says that poet should erase any trace of his personality from poetry. He says, “Poetry is not turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion. It is not the expression of personality but escape from personality.” Modern critics stressed the study of text it's from, style, language etc. Marxist critics focused on social relevance of literary texts.

After discussing the history of poets and critics and their views on functions of literature, let us now discuss the chief functions of literature.

1. The main function of literature is to entertain and give pleasure to the readers, and to heighten their awareness of certain aspects of life. Literature provides aesthetic pleasure which is quite different from material or physical pleasure.
2. Literature also has a subsidiary function of propaganda. The writer of propaganda is more concerned about ideas, ideology or emotions. The focus of the writer of propaganda is to communicate to his readers his attitude towards life and the world. John Ruskin's economic ideas presented in his works can be cited as an example. Charles Dickens

employed indirect method of fiction to propagate his views on industrialism, poverty, crime, schooling etc.

3. Another subsidiary function of literature is 'release' which refers to the release of pent-up forces in the personality of the writer. It acts as purgation (catharsis) for the writers as well as the readers.
4. Writers also provide "escape" from grim realities of life and the world. It provides escape from boredom and monotony of life. Great literature usually helps the readers to escape from trivial reality.
5. Judith Langer in "Envisioning Literature" says "literature makes us better thinkers. It moves us to see the multi sidedness of situations and therefore expands the breadth of our own visions, moving us towards dreams and solutions we might not otherwise imagined".
6. Literature helps readers develop a sense of individuality and creativity.
7. Literature also develops enduring values like integrity, compassion, loyalty and integrity in the readers.
8. There is an intimate connection between literature and life. Infact life itself is the subject matter of literature. It is the expression of the life through the medium of language. When we study literature, we understand life in its broader perspectives.
9. Literature is a vital record of what men have seen, experienced and thought about life. By reading literature, we have access to experience and thoughts of other people in the world.
10. Literature also provides us a deep understanding of human nature. In our real life, we meet people in a limited number and know them quite superficially. Literature takes us into deeper recesses of human mind. This gives us a profound understanding of human psychology.
11. The function of literature is not to teach but to delight. However, great literature is always connected with human values, virtues and morality. Literature teaches us how to live meaningfully. When we study a work of literature, we come across positive and negative aspects of life. Literature does not preach morality directly but it also stands for the truth, love and other human virtues. Quite often, the good suffers in literary works but it wins our heart and carves its place in our memory forever.

2.2.3 Why We Study Literature?

There are many subjects that deal with specific area of knowledge. For example, economics with human wants, demands, supply, money etc; Physics deals with physical and material world; Chemistry with chemicals; and Psychology deals with human psyche. Literature is the only subject that deals with life, the external and inner world and society. It deals with all subjects of human world, human mind and human society. There are many limitations in human life such as time, place and way of thinking. Literature transcends all these barriers.

The question is why we study literature is often debated and some people say that study of literature has no practical value. It is true that study

of literature has no practical purpose like science, medicine, engineering, geography and so on have. There are flimsy and vague boundaries of literature because it is all encompassing. Literature enables us to know the history of a nation's spirit. It deals with past and works with present envisioning future. It appeals to all five senses, making us experience the beauty of the world around us.

We can learn about past history, socio-economic and cultural background of nation through their literary works like the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and the *Mahabharata*. We get insight into human minds and society as literature conveys thoughts, motives and emotions. Great poets like Ved Vyas or Shakespeare present us with panoramic view of human mind and human weakness.

Comedy and satire make us laugh by ridiculing and exposing human weaknesses. Tragedy arouses the emotions of pity and fear, purging away these emotions and freeing the human mind from these harmful emotions.

Literature allows us to experience the culture and beliefs of other nations which we would probably never visit. We learn to appreciate people as they are, with their beliefs, knowledge and distinct traits. Great literature requires profound understanding of the human world and human minds. There are hidden meanings in literature which requires deep analysis and unfolding the layers that lie hidden therein. This helps us develop analytical and critical mind. We also learn to appreciate the contributions of literature to the history of mankind.

We are all surrounded by unsung tales of noble deeds and sacrifices. When we read folk literature and ballads, our lives become enriched and we learn to appreciate the common folk and their noble actions. Through the reading of literature, we learn to develop empathy for those with whom we differ. Literature provides us with space for those who have been neglected, deprived and marginalized. When we read the Black literature, the Dalit literature and Woman writings, we can understand their sufferings and develop empathy for them. We experience and share the agonies of Richard Wright by reading “Black Boy” or Om Prakash Valmiki by reading “Joothan”.

Literature is both personal as well as communal (in the sense of we as a part of the community) experience. We always discover a new reality in literature. It acts as a tool of self-discovery. Literature operates at many different levels. It has prompted many social and political changes in the society and the world. Literature deals with ideas that create revolution in the social and political spheres all over the world.

2.3 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY OF LITERATURE

The study of literature enables students to immerse themselves in the world they have never seen or experienced before. There are several objectives of the study of literature which are inter-connected. They provide overall understanding of literature and help us develop a sense of appreciation of literary works. Let us discuss some important objectives of the study of literature.

1. **Experience Pleasure :** The first and for most objective of study of literature is to experience pleasure through the reading of literature. Teachers can help students in enjoying literary works by highlighting the aesthetic aspects of these works.
2. **Learn to Appreciate :** Literature requires critical appreciation and, therefore, students must learn how to appreciate the literary works. First of all, a close reading is necessary. No cursory reading can produce proper understanding of literary pieces. Students of literature must respond to the words, grasp the ideas and articulate their emotional responses to the characters and situations. They should examine the plot, characters, setting, ideas, point of view, tone, theme, humour, irony, symbolism, imagery, rhythm, metres, rhyme in the literary works for a better understanding of these works. They should also understand and examine various critical approaches employed by the author such as Marxist, Feminist, and Psychoanalytical. Archetypal etc.
3. **Promote Empathy :** Empathetic attitude in the students of literature or readers is very necessary for a better understanding of literary works. Empathy is emotional attitude that helps readers to experience oneness with character.
4. **Educate Students in Artistry :** Students of literature should learn to use language in an artistic manner. This is possible if academic environment is provided to them to develop their critical faculties. Through the study of literature, they can understand other cultures and people of different countries. The knowledge of various cultures makes them more liberal, secular and tolerant.
5. **Encourage Research :** Students of literature need to learn basics of research, analysis, literary theories and criticism. They need to develop intellectual flexibility, creativity and cultural literacy. They should be familiar with the classics in literature and other representative literary and cultural texts.
6. **Create Connection :** Literary works are not isolated pieces of literature. Literature is criticism of life, and thus it is connected with all human beings, society, morality, religion and human mind. It reflects how the world works, and why and how all human beings are connected. Literature fosters human relationship by depicting commonness among all human beings across time and place.

2.4 QUALITIES OF GOOD LITERATURE

There are no fixed standards for good literature but there are some characteristics that make literature enduring and appealing beyond time and geographical boundaries. Classic literature is based on real life. It is not mere fancy. It offers true picture of society and culture. It remains relevant universally and eternally. Great works deal with political, social and cultural issues. They deal with the eternal themes like love, war, religion, nature and humanity.

There are eight literary standards of good literary works.

1. **Artistry** : A good work of literature is always artistic and aesthetically appealing. It appeals to our sense of beauty. A great writer should be basically a great artist. John Keats said, “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”. A good literary piece is a thing of beauty and its appeal is eternal and universal.
2. **Intellectual Beauty** : A great literary work should be intellectual beauty that stimulates thinking. It makes us realize the fundamental truths of life, society, nature and the world. Intellectual elements are the elements of thought or ideas. Sometimes when intellectual elements dominate the work of art, its aesthetic appeal is reduced. Therefore, intellectual element should be balanced with aesthetic beauty and aesthetic appeal.
3. **Suggestiveness** : The word suggestive means “tending to suggest” “evocative” and “stimulating further thought”. “Suggestiveness” is a literary quality that appeals to our emotions and stirs our imagination. It evokes visions beyond our routine life experiences. Good literature is always suggestive as it employs emotive language. Emotive language expresses feelings and emotions and also arouses feelings and emotions in the readers.
4. **Spiritual Value** : Spiritual value in literature creates permanent appeal because it is inner foundation of human mind. Spirituality is not morality but a truly spiritual person is always moral. Spiritual values makes men better, more human and liberal minded. Great literature reflects spiritual values that transcend physical world. The great epics of the world possess profound spiritual values which make them perpetually appealing.
5. **Permanence** : A great literary work transcends time and place. Its appeal is eternal and it can be read again and again. Each reading unfolds fresh and new meaning and insights. A great book owes its greatness to the greatness of the personality of its author. A genius is synonymous with freshness and originality. A great book shows the author's originality of outlook upon the world and life. John Milton rightly said that, “A good book is the precious life-blood of master spirit.”
6. **Universality** : A good literature has universal appeal. It is not confined to any particular place or geographical territories. A great literary work is both timely and timeless. It is relevant for analysis at any point in time and at any place. Great literature deals with universal human feelings, thoughts and issues. It remains relevant to all the people all over the world because it deals with fundamental truth of human life and universal conditions. When we read Shakespeare's plays, they appeal to us profoundly because they deal with permanent and universal human problems.
7. **Style** : Style is the manner in which the author presents his world view. Style is not merely a technical thing. It is the part and parcel of the writer's personality. As Carlyle said, “Style is not the coat of the writer

but his skin”. A great writer's style is original, authentic and appropriate to content of his writing. Style reflects the intellectual, spiritual and artistic growth of the writer.

8. **Authenticity :** Authenticity is one of the most important characteristics of good literature. Originality does not mean newness but it means genuineness. A great work of art draws its life directly from the personality and experience of the author. The foundation of great literary work is sincerity to oneself and one's own experiences. Genuineness and authenticity of experience is the true test of great literature.

2.5 APPRECIATION OF LITERARY WORK (HOW TO READ A LITERARY WORK)

2.5.1 Appreciation of Poetry :

Appreciation of poetry requires some basic knowledge of literary device, prosody, rhyme and diction. Poetry possesses certain elements and aspects and, therefore, we can look at the poem from different angles. Appreciation of poetry is an attempt to tell others what we have felt and experienced while reading it closely.

The most important way of appreciating poetry is to focus our attention on the text of the poem. Text is a product of poet reflected in the use of language in the poem. Words have both meanings and sounds. Words also become the part of grammatical structures. We talk about sounds, meanings and structure in the poems while appreciating poetry.

Textual analysis of the poem can be made at three levels.

1. **Phonological Level :** At this level we study patterns of sounds and rhythm like alterations, assonance, rhyme and meter.
2. **Structural Level :** At structural level, we study grammatical items and structure.
3. **Semantic–Stylistic Level :** At this level we study, the forms and patterns of words in terms of their meanings and use. Semantic stylistic level analysis refers to parallels, contrasts; similes, metaphors, personification, imagery, irony, paradox etc. It also includes the study of literary forms song, lyrics, sonnet, ode, elegy, drama, narration etc.

Loud reading of a poem is the best way of catching its musical qualities. When we read aloud, we can feel its rhythm. To analyze rhythm, we count syllables, note the stresses and understand rhymes and metres. Some poems are written to fit specific structural requirements.

Stress and rhythm are essential elements of poetry. Stress is a term we use to emphasise a syllable or syllables. Stress occurs in vowel sound. A syllable is formed by the combination of consonant and vowel before or after. For example, the word ‘bus’ has one syllable but the word ‘busy’ has two syllables (bi–zi). A word with a single syllable is called monosyllabic; a word with two syllables is called disyllabic. Almost every English word carries stress except structural words like, the, of, and, was etc.

To find out rhythmic patterns of a poem, first of all we need to mark stressed and unstressed syllables in each line of the poem. These patterns are divided into feet disyllabic and trisyllabic (two and three syllables). Let us have a look at the important metrical patterns in English Prosody.

1. **Iambic** : It is a foot with unstressed syllable followed by stressed. It has a rising rhythm. E.g.

U U U U

Again / deny / begin / idea

U–unstressed syllable, Indicate stress

2. **Trochai** : It is a disyllabic foot with stressed syllable followed by unstressed. It has a falling rhythm.

U U U U

Power / beauty / reason / never

3. **Spondee** : in this foot, both the syllable is stressed. Spondee can be used in a line but it cannot create a whole line in a stanza of a poem because due to stressed, syllables, it lacks rhythm.

For Eg. Both Stood

4. **Pyrrhic** : where both the syllables are unstressed (u u)

5. **Anapestic** : It is a trisyllabic foot with two unstressed syllables followed by stressed.

uu

For eg. Disagree

6. **Dactylic** : This is a tri syllabic foot with stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables.

The names of meters are based on the number of feet in each line of the poem. For example,

One foot : monometer

Two foot : diameter

Three feet : trimester

Four feet : tetrameter

Five feet : pentameter

Six feet : hexameter

Seven feet : heptameter

Eight feet : octameter

In English structure, blank verse is usually an iambic pentameter without rhymes. Rhymes occur between words at the end of successive lines.

e.g. A thing of beauty is joy forever :

its loveliness increases : it will never

pass into nothingness.....

– John Keats 'Endymion'

Rhyme is a correspondence of sounds of similar pronunciation at the end of lines. E.g. see/me, ray/stray/ ringing/ singing/ single rhyme is called 'masculine', while double rhyme is called 'feminine'.

Stanza patterns in English are as follows :

Couplet : Two lines

Triplet : Three lines

Quatrain : Four Lines

Rhyme Royal : A stanza of seven iambic pentameter.

Ottava Rima : A stanza of eight iambic pentameter

Spenserian stanza : A stanza of eight iambic pentameter with a line of twelve syllables at the end.

Rhyme pattern is marked as in the example given below.

Pipa's Song

The Year's at the spring	A
And day's at the morn;	B
Morning's at Seven	C
The hillside's dew-pearled;	D
The lark's on the wing;	A
The snail's on the thorn;	B
God's in his heaven	C
All's night with the world !	D

In this short beautiful poem by Robert Browning, 'spring' rhymes with 'wing', 'morn' with 'thorn', 'seven' with 'heaven' and 'pearled' with 'world'. So the rhyme scheme is ABCD, ABCD. Rhymes make the poem musical. There are also literary devices that influence the sounds of the poem.

1. **Alliteration** : It is a representation of initial consonant sounds in a string of words.

e.g. The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free...

S.T. Coleridge : The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

2. **Assonance** : Assonance is the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds especially in stressed syllables. When the same vowel sound is repeated in the words used at the end of verse lines, but not the consonants used in them, it is called assonance.

e.g. grave-fate-/time-child/ Tendered, remembered

3. **Onomatopoeia** : Here the words imitate the sounds.

e.g Grawl, murmer, bang, howl, roar, crash, snap etc.

In poetry words are full of condensed meaning. Poets use figurative language to connect with the readers. They create new meanings of the language people use in their communication. They use emotive language

that has multi layered meanings. These meanings come to the sensitive readers with fresh association and suggestions. Poets use some literary device like simile, metaphor, personification, imagery, irony, paradox etc to build a bridge of understanding with reader.

**The Function of Literature,
Objective of the study of
Literature, and Qualities of
Good Literature, Appreciation
of a literary work**

1. **Simile** : Simile is a comparison using words such as ‘like’ ‘as’ “as_____as”

E.g. He is as brave as lion”

2. **Metaphor** : It makes an implied comparison between two dissimilar things.

e.g. My love is a red red rose.

3. **Personification** : It is when an intimate object is given human qualities.

E.g. Death is not proud, though some have called thee.

Mighty and dreadful.

– *John Donne*

4. **Imagery** : Imagery presents sense experience to the readers’ imagination. Poetic imagery is often visual. It can be aural, one that appeals to the sense of hearing. The poet may appeal to the sense of smell, touch and taste.

5. **Symbol** : A thing that represents idea or quality such as white color symbolizes purity. Symbols carry cultural significance also. Symbolism was a movement led by famous Irish Poet W. B. Yeats.

6. **Paradox** : It is a statement in which two opposite ideas are out together in a seemingly self-contradictory way.

7. **Irony** : Irony refers to what a poet says and what he really suggests. It is often the opposite if what he says.

Here are important suggestions regarding how to improve poetry :

1. Read the poem several times with deep concentration
2. Make notes in the margins of the poem
3. Focus on words and look up words you do not recognize. Use standard dictionary and find relevant meanings because a poet uses words in a very different manner
4. Identify the forms of poems like lyric, sonnet, free verse etc.
5. Read the poem loudly paying attention to the rhyme of each line.
6. Check repetition and rhymes in the poem. Understand the stanza pattern and rhymes carefully.
7. Look for the literary devices like simile, metaphor, and personification.
8. Scan the stanza and find out metrical pattern of the poem.
9. Sum up the poem in your own words.
10. Analyze the title of the poem
11. Identify the speaker in the poem
12. Discuss the situation presented in the poem

13. Discuss the setting of the poem
14. Determine the theme of the poem
15. Identify the concrete images in the poem
16. Read about the poet, his background the time period when the poem was written.

Critical Appreciation of 'Bright Star' by John Keats

Bright Star

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

This is one of the most beautiful and meaningful sonnets by John Keats. It was written in 1819 and revised in 1820. John Keats died at a young age of 25 years. The poem is a Shakespearean sonnet divided into three quatrains and a couplet at the end. The poem seems to be addressed to Bright star and the lady he loved Fanny Brawne.

In the first two lines, the poet tells the Bright star that he would like to be steadfast like the star. The word 'steadfast' suggests North Star or Polaris that remains steadfast in the north sky. The poet says that he would like to be steadfast but not alone like it. He realizes that steadfastness cannot be achieved by human beings as they are constantly in flux. He does not want to live the life of a lonely hermit.

Lines 3 and 4 describes the loneliness and motionlessness of the North Star whose eye lids are open all the time. It keeps watching like sleepless religious hermit. Further the poet says that the star observes the moving water of the earth. The star also keeps gazing on snow-clad mountains and empty barren land.

In lines 9–10, the poet says that he would like to be unchangeable and steadfast like the star but not in high heavens. He would like to rest his head on his beloved's "ripening breast". The word ripening suggests blossoming youth of his beloved. In line 11–12, the poet expresses his desire to feel his beloved's breathing eternally. The word 'soft' and 'pillowed' expresses

sensuousness. The speaker wants to rest his head on soft breast of his beloved which is like soft pillow. He wants to keep awake forever in 'sweet unrest'. 'Sweet unrest' is atypical Keatsian Paradox. Finally the poet says that if he cannot hear tender breathing of his beloved, he would welcome death with no regrets. He would like to swoon to death without the presence of his beloved.

The sonnet is written in iambic pentameter with rhyme scheme—ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. There are several figures of speech in the poem like alliteration, personification, etc. 'The mountain and moors', 'still steadfast, still unchangeable, 'tender taken breath' are alliterations used by the poet. 'The star watching and gazing' is an example of personification. 'Bright star' symbolizes eternity, 'Eremit' 'isolation' 'ripening' breast' blossoming youth. The poem is full of beautiful, concrete and sensuous imagery.

The poem contain theme of love, death, time, loneliness, steadfastness and change, man and natural world, love and sensual pleasures.

2.5.2 Appreciation of Fiction (Novel and Short Story) :

The following points should be kept in mind while appreciating works of fiction.

- We identify the author's thesis and purpose.
- We discuss the structure of the narratives and drama while comprises of exposition, rising action, crisis, climax, document and resolutions.
- In literature, character is a verbal representation of a human being. There are round as well as flat characters. Flat characters remain static and unchanged. Characters can be disclosed through their actions, thoughts, speech and statements by other characters. Discuss characters, particularly the protagonist in detail while appreciating the works of fiction.
- Point of view refers to the position and stance of the speaker that the author adopts for his works. There are first person points of view, second person point of view or omniscient point of view. Sometimes there is mingling of different points of view.
- Setting refers to the background or surrounding which may be natural political or cultural. Discuss the setting of the work in brief.
- Idea refers to thought, opinion, concept or principle in the fictional work such as love, justice etc. literature expresses human values through ideas. Identity idea in the work of fiction. Idea represents theme of the literary work.
- In literature, imagery plays an important role. It triggers senses of sight, sound, touch, smell, hearing etc. there is also kinetic energy that relates to motion. Imagery is often dominant in poetry.
- Figurative language refers to rhetorical or literary devices like, metaphor, simile etc. figurative language is also dominant in poetry. However even in fiction, it is often used to enhance the artistic effect.

We discuss imagery and figurative language in critical analysis of the work of fiction.

- Symbolism and allegory are often employed by the fiction writers. There are cultural symbols, myths, parables and fables in works of fiction. We identify them and discuss their meaning and relevance.
- Tone refers to the attitude and feelings of the writer. Major aspect of tone is the communication of humour. Laughter is evoked by incognito and the use of laughable. Objects, irony, describe contradictory statements and situations. There are verbal and situational ironies. Find out irony and identify the tone in the work of fiction.
- Comparative study is an important aspect of critical analysis of a work of art. Similarities and differences can be highlighted by comparison and contrast. Find common grounds of comparison.
- We discuss the style of the writer highlighting its characteristics.
- Here is the sample outline of the critical analysis.

1. Information about the work.

- I. Title of the work
- II. Author
- III. Publication Information
- IV. Thesis statement

2. Summary of the work.

3. Critical Analysis

- I. Plot–structure
- II. Characters
- III. Point of view
- IV. Setting
- V. Idea
- VI. Tone
- VII. Language and style
- VIII. Comparison and contrast (if necessary)
- IX. Conclusion

2.5.3 Critical Approaches for Appreciation of Literary Work :

There are several critical approaches for understanding and interpreting literature. Literature is related to history, psychology, culture, morality, society, political ideology etc. There are also some critical approaches related to style, structure, archetypes etc.

Moral and intellectual approach is concerned with content and values. Literature has been traditional mode of propagating morality, religion or philosophy. Formalism and new criticism deal with study of text form, ideas, ambiguities and soon. Historical approach stresses on the relationship between literature and history. Structuralism deals with narrative structures

and the structure of any type. A structuralist analysis of style stresses the ways in which writers utilize such structures.

Feminist approach holds that literature has always been patriarchal in nature and the role of women has been neglected in society as well as in literature. Karl Marx saw society as an opposition between capitalists and proletariat. Marxist approach focuses on economics as the base of class conflict. As a result, literature is judged from economic point of view.

Psychological approach is based on Freudian and Jungian theory of human psyche. According to these theories, human behavior is the result of unconscious mind. For example, Hamlet suffers from Oedipus complex (the passionate attachment with his mother). The Archetypal approach is derived from Carl Jung's idea of archetypes or first patterns. This approach holds that literature is grounded in archetypal patterns' Northrop Frye discussed fundamental archetypal patterns in literature.

Jacques Derrida proposed theory of deconstruction which stresses ambiguity and contradiction. The theory of Reader Response is rooted in phenomenology which deals with the understanding of how things appear. According to this theory, the reader is a necessary third party in author-text-reader relationship. Exponent of this theory was Stanley Fish. It aims at enhancing the skills and discipline of readers.

**The Function of Literature,
Objective of the study of
Literature, and Qualities of
Good Literature, Appreciation
of a literary work**

2.6 KEY WORDS

Mimesis : Imitation

Dulce : sweet

Utile : Useful

Esemplastic : Imagination

Propaganda : Biased information used to promote political cause.

Humanistic : Relating to principles of humanism.

Empathy : Ability to understand and share feelings to others.

Bibliography : the process of using literature/books to tackle mental disorders

Artistry : skill, craftsmanship

Cultural literacy : ability to understand and participate in a given culture

Suggestiveness : Open to interpretation. Evocativeness

Phonological : Relating to the system of constructive relationship

Stylistics : the study of distinctive style

Monosyllabic : One syllable. Foot

Disyllabic : two syllables foot

Trisyllabic : three syllables foot

Quatrain : four-lined stanza

Couplet : two lined stanza

Imagery : Visually descriptive or figurative language in literature.

Irony : the use of words that are opposite of what you mean

Paradox : A statement with opposite ideas put together

Symbol : a thing that represents idea or quality

Archetype : a typical example of certain person or thing. A primitive mental image inherited from the earliest human ancestors.

2.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THREE OR FOUR SENTENCES.

1. What is mimesis ?
.....
.....
.....
2. What are the main functions of literature ?
.....
.....
.....
3. How does reading of literature expand our understanding of life and the world ?
.....
.....
.....
4. What are the qualities of good literature ?
.....
.....
.....
5. What are the three level of textual analysis ?
.....
.....
.....
6. What is iambic pentameter ?
.....
.....
.....
7. Define metaphor and give an example of a metaphor ?
.....
.....
.....

CHOOSE APPROPRIATE OPTIONS FROM THOSE GIVEN BELOW.

1. A novel is a part of _____.
(a) Fiction (b) Poetry (c) Biography (d) Epic
2. The Iliad is _____.
(a) An elegy (b) A sonnet (c) A play (d) An epic
3. Intellectual beauty is a characteristic of _____.
(a) Good literature (b) Good music
(c) Good art (d) Literature in general
4. Style is not the coat of the writer but his _____.
(a) Body (b) Skin (c) Bones (d) Brain
5. Anapest meter has _____ syllable.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five
6. Pentameter has _____ feet.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five

CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE FOLLOWING POEM

Sonnet 116 : Let Me Not to the Marriage of True Minds

– William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me prov'd,
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

2.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we learn about functions, objectives and benefits of literature. We also discussed why literature is necessary and how it helps people in living a better, more meaningful life. We also discussed technical aspects of style, dictum and meters and provided useful tips to appreciate poetry and fiction. We also provided samples of critical appreciation and outline of critical analysis of a fictional work. You are advised to practice

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critical analysis of some poems and short stories. You will find lots of poems on 'Poem Hunter.com'. of great English and American poets.

2.9 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Hudson W. H. *An Introduction to the study of Literature*. Harrap, London 1913.

Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. *Theory of literature*. Hart Court Brace and Company, USA 1949.

R. A. Scott. James. *The Meaning of Literature*. Allied Publishers ltd Mumbai 2000 edition.

A. C. Hooper. *An Introduction to the study of Language and Literature*. Orient Longman Ltd. Mumbai 1961.

Praveen K. Thaker. *Appreciation English Poetry*. Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd. Hyderabad, 1999.

Edgar V. Roberts. *Writing About Literature*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey, USA. 1995.

David Daiches. *Critical Approaches to Literature*. Orient Longman, Hyderabad 1981.

ANSWERS

- | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. (a) | 2. (d) | 3. (a) | 4. (b) | 5. (b) |
| 6. (d) | | | | |

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

: STRUCTURE :

3.0 Objectives**3.1 Introduction****3.2 What is Literature ?****3.3 What is Society ?****3.4 The Relationship of Literature and Society****3.5 Let Us Sum Up****3.6 Key Words****3.7 Books Suggested****3.8 Check Your Progress****Answers**

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall,

- explore the concept of literature and society,
- show the examples of literature reflecting society,
- evaluate the relationship between literature and society,

In the end, you should be able to;

- understand the difference of non-literature and literature,
 - understand the examples explained here,
 - grasp the innate relationship of literature and society.
-

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is very difficult to study anything unless you know what you are looking for. By 'looking for' I mean finding what is important in the thing you are studying. The question is the best way of finding that. The expression 'literature', since time immemorial has been employed by man for delight as well as a device that mirrors the realities of life.

'Literature holds up a mirror to life', we all know this as learners and scholars of literature; irrespective of the language of the same. This can be sufficed by tracing the history of literature which dates back to the beginning of human civilization. Any literature that is produced, it penetrates through the layers of lives; realistic and imaginative lives of the people. Literature has its base in and on the human beings; which eventually form a civilization, a society. Literature and Society are inseparable, as they sustain each other.

3.2 WHAT IS LITERATURE ?

In the most general sense, literature is anything which is written. To understand 'what is literature', we must know what is not a literature; like, to better understand the colour 'white', we must know the colour 'black'. In general, the examples of written works are brochures, pamphlets, newspapers, informative booklets, etc. In a more definitive sense, Literature is a body of written work which has intellectual and aesthetic value. The examples of these kinds of literatures are novels, short stories, drama, poetry; which can be again classified into two categories : fiction and non-fiction. The usage of language and its purpose are the two major differentiators of written works; which make them literature or non-literature. Non-literary writings are most of the times written for the purpose of providing information; and the language used in these writings is directional and ordinary.

Literature is written and read for the purpose of deriving aesthetic pleasure, hence the use of language is artistic; which establishes the form, images, concepts, meanings, and mood, that the author wants to convey to the readers. For the creation of literature, the writers borrow their presentation of story, theme, plot, characters, and dialogue; from the place, time, and space they live in. This is in turn influenced by the surrounding environment and the inhabitant people, which are broadly the components which form a society. In other words, the social approach to literature emphasizes not so much the personality or inner feelings of characters as the relation they have with each other. Let us now understand what society is.

3.3 WHAT IS SOCIETY ?

Society consists of surroundings and people. The basic component or a unit of society is human. The group of humans who largely share common geography, culture, political authority, religion, customs, beliefs; they interact and build relationship with each other; this leads to the formation of a society. The features of any society are contrastingly enough; likeness and differences, mutuality and conflict. But majorly, any group of people share interconnectedness, interdependence, and cooperation can be termed as a society.

Now, society is real and tangible; as we can see and relate to the people surrounding us, but literature is intangible because we can read and only feel the emotions conveyed by the writer of it. But still, literature and society share a very strong relationship; let us evaluate that now.

3.4 THE RELATIONSHIP OF LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

Literature mirrors life, hence literature mirrors society. The happenings, events, problems, solutions, happiness, sadness and a variety of emotions and feelings; as well as imagination of people, thus peoples' lives are depicted in the literature. The society influences literature, and literature also influences the society. Thus it's a two-way relationship between literature and society.

The influence of literature on society is felt in certain manners; which holds the proverb 'pen is mightier than the sword' to be true. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* written by Frederick Douglass directly influenced the White American society. It made the Whites aware of the injustice and inhuman treatment of Black slaves in the plantation system and brought the new awakening for the Black Americans. Similarly, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was also responsible for the movements in the Blacks' society for freedom from slavery. Whereas *My Experiments with Truth* by M. K. Gandhi teaches the society about the importance of truth, moral values and showcases high ideals for the healthy society to follow. Similarly, Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Sharatchandra's Parineeta* create and stimulate social reforms, by inspiring the removal of vices and wrong practices performed by the conventional and orthodox societies. Thereby, literature can be said to influence the society.

The practices of society have also influenced literature; though they are the works of fiction. *The Rape of the Lock* by Alexander Pope is an example for this scenario. It is a mock-heroic poem, based on an actual event narrated by Pope's friend John Caryll. The incident is of an aristocratic Petre cutting off a lock of Arabella's hair without permission, and the consequent argument creates a breach between the two families. In this poem Pope depicts the elegance and emptiness, vanity and vagueness, meanness and money-prowess, foppishness and frivolity of the high aristocratic lives of eighteenth century in its real and satirical form. On the other hand, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, is inspired from the real life incidence. Morrison came across an article, published in the newspaper; "A Slave-Mother Who killed her Child". Margaret Garner, a Black slave in 1856, in order to free her child from slavery, attempts to kill her own child; for if the child lives it will be forced into the barbaric institution of slavery. This incident moved Morrison to write a Pulitzer Prize Winner *Beloved*, which is dedicated to "Sixty Million and more" Africans who died as a result of the slave trade.

If we survey the track of literature from the beginning to the post-modern age, with all its transformation; we are brought into the direct contact and motive forces of the inner life of each generation. So it is said, "ordinary English history is the nation's biography and its literature is its biography". Literary texts have been said to be reflecting, "economics, family relationships, climate and landscapes, attitudes, morals, races, social classes, political events, wars, and religion." These are the various features and characteristics of society. Literature and society thus share a relationship where they feed and nurture each other. As stated already in the literary sense the social approach to literature highlight not so much the individuality or inner feelings of characters as the relation they have with each other. As listed through various examples a social interpretation of literature sees these relations in terms of the traditions and customs of society. Directly or indirectly, much stress is laid on the social interpretation of the classes to which characters belong. For instance, it is important to see who is rich and who poor, who is rising in society and who is falling, and who earn their living from a trade, a profession or from family land. A social approach also looks on the institutions of society.

To repeat, Literature mirrors life, hence literature mirrors society. As a result, it is much easier to understand a point about literature or a literary form particularly if you are given example. For instance, novels are specially made worlds in words. In simple terms a novel exists in the way it does because an author has chosen to put it together in that particular manner. This means that novels are not real life. Like all works of art—poems, plays, pots or pieces of music – they have been constructed or crafted. Now, when we talk about the relationship between literature and society, the most obvious question is the social standing of the author, through the character he or she is projecting. If an author is interested in the relation between the different classes within society, he or she is likely to stress the social standing of characters depicted. It should be remembered that not every author is interested in the workings of society, and that those that are will be interested in different societies and will have different attitudes towards them. Dickens for instance, writes about town society, whereas George Eliot seems to be more interested in the society found in villages or small provincial towns. Dickens is more aware of the faults of society—its unfriendly nature, its pretence, the incompetence of its officials—but George Eliot, though by no means without criticism, appreciates tradition, the sense of belonging, and the way in which many classes tolerate each other.

A good question to ask about any book, a literary text is : what do I remember ? Sometimes you will find that what the characters said and did sticks in your mind, but you may also find that what you recall is a scene. You may at times recall scenes in a novel, or remember an impression of the atmosphere, mood or feel. ‘Setting’ is the perfect word. It covers the places in which characters are presented, the social context of the characters, their customs, beliefs and rules of behavior in their society. In other words the social setting of a novel is the prime focus to understand the text to the fullest.

Nobody can change the past. What's done is done. Those two statements express what some novelists’ project in their works as their main plot; such plots are based upon the structure and workings of society. From a reader's point of view, a plot is different from a story because it invites and answers the questions as to why one event follows another. On the other hand a story is just a sequence.

Thus, to conclude the titles of books speak volumes. For example if the title of a novel is *Untouchable*, the title clearly reveals its theme. Here, theme is different from the term significant. Theme is purely what the novel can be summed up as saying. This also displays to prove the fact that the author takes an interest in certain aspects of life through his work. Authors can give expression to the themes of novels by stressing certain words. Words used carefully can focus the meaning of a novel and take the reader to the heart of the author's concern. Moral words work in similar way. The point about a moral word is that it carries a judgment with it; that is to say, we can tell whether we should approve or disapprove simply by attending to the meaning of the word. Thus, in a novel setting makes a complete world and that world can be said to be the fundamental theme of the book.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt the difference between general text and literature, the relationship of literature and society. The texts have been stated which depict the influence of society on literature, as well as the influence of literature on society. Various aspects of ‘novel’ as a literary form are discussed for better understanding. As a reader look at the novels you are studying from the point of view of how the author arranges the events and the person he or she adopts for the narration. What effects do these have ?

3.6 KEY WORDS

Civilization : the process by which a society or place reaches an advanced stage of social development and organization.

Penetrate : to go into or through

Depict : illustrate

Tangible : that which can be touched

Aesthetic : appreciation of beauty

Aristocratic : of or belonging to high-born, well-born, elite life

Barbaric : cruel

Moral : ethical

Interpretation : understanding

Approach : move towards

Theme : subject matter

Significance : meaning

Symbols : signs

Story : simply a sequence

Plot : concerned with causes—with the ‘whys’ of events

Fundamental : central

Setting : background

Social standing : relation between the different classes within society

3.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Albrecht, Milton C. “The Relationship of Literature and Society”. Chicago Journals. 1954, p. 426.

Annas, Pamela J. & Robert C. Rosen. *Literature and Society : An Introduction to Fiction, PoetryDrama, Nonfiction*. MLA Update, 2015.

3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS.

1. Give the examples showcasing general writing and forms of literature.
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.....
.....
2. When you interpret a literary text, what is utmost required as a reader ?
.....
.....
.....
3. What is the purpose of literature ?
.....
.....
.....
4. Reflect in your words on this statement “Interpretation is the business of finding out what the meaning, or meanings, of the book is.”
.....
.....
.....
5. In which texts literature reflects society ?
.....
.....
.....
6. Which literary texts inspire the societal reforms ?
.....
.....
.....
7. Which relationship exists between literature and society ?
.....
.....
.....

ANSWERS

1. The examples of general writings are brochures, pamphlets, newspapers, and informative booklets. The examples of forms of literature are novel, short story, drama, poetry.
2. While interpreting a text you will discover that you need to master a set of terms that describe certain literary effects. In addition, you will find that you need to master a wider vocabulary which deals with the thoughts, experiences and feelings with which literature is concerned.

3. The language of literature is artistic and the purpose of literature is to derive aesthetic pleasure.
4. The idea of interpretation often frightens students. The statement reveals that fact that interpretation is finding out the significance of a work, of saying what it is about, what it adds up to. The question, then that you should ask about any literary work is : what is its meaning or significance ? When you answer that question, you will be interpreting the work. Further, comes the stage to try a number of approaches to a comprehend a literary text.
5. *The Rape of the Lock* by Alexander Pope and *Beloved* by Toni Morrison are the literary books which reflect society.
6. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* written by Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *My Experiments with Truth* by M. K. Gandhi, Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and Sharatchandra's *Parineeta*, these literary texts inspire the reformations in society.
7. Literature and society exists in a two–way relationship, where literature influences society and society influences literature. They are connected to each other in a way that each feeds and nurtures the other. So it can be said that, “ordinary English history is the nation's biography and its literature is its biography”. Also, “economics, family relationships, climate and landscapes, attitudes, morals, races, social classes, political events, wars, and religion”; gets reflected in literature.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

UNIT 4

UNTOUCHABLE BY MULK RAJ ANAND FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

: STRUCTURE :

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 About the author – Mulk Raj Anand

4.3 About the Novel – *Untouchable*

4.3.1 Central Characters

4.3.2 Literary Analysis of *Untouchable*

4.4 *Untouchable* and Relationship of Literature and Society

4.5 Key Words

4.6 Let Us Sum Up

4.7 Books Suggested

4.8 Check Your Progress

Answers

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall;

- know about the Indian English novel *Untouchable*,
- become aware of the social injustices,
- evaluate the novel with reference to the relationship between literature and society.

In the end, you should be able to;

- know about the author and his novel,
- understand the need to abolish the injustices and bring reformation in the society,
- understand that how literature and society mirror each other.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the earlier unit, we have seen that literature and society share an interconnected relationship. The same was shown with various examples of literary texts influencing society and vice a versa. Here, we shall learn the same concept in-depth with a special concern to the novel *Untouchable*. History of human civilization tells human society was divided into two broad sections, one was intellectually, culturally, and monetarily powered class and the other was the exploited , victimized class. It was not merely the truth of past. Even today it is the truth. *Untouchable*, a novel by Mulk Raj Anand depicts the Indian society and the situation of downtrodden and backward people of a certain caste; resulting in the inhumane and unjust

treatment inflicted by the upper-caste Indians. This literary text, a novel; shows the realistic picture of the Indian society of that time.

Untouchable by Mulk Raj Anand From the Point of View of Relationship between Literature and Society

4.2 ABOUT THE AUTHOR – MULK RAJ ANAND

The period of spanning the 1930s and 1940s was momentous both in the history of Indian nationalism and in the history of the Indian novel in English. The fiction of the 1930s and 1940s is dominated by the voice of Mulk Raj Anand (1905–2004) who was born in Peshawar of Undivided India. He studied in University College, London and did his Ph.D. from the Cambridge University, UK. He developed his friendship with the Bloomsbury group; which was made up of English writers, intellectuals, and philosophers. Anand was a good friend of George Orwell, who is famous for his novel *Animal Farm*. Anand returned to India in the year 1946, he supported India's Freedom Struggle by his writings. He was an Indian writer, who chose to write his works in English language. He was one of the first India-based writers in English to gain international readership. He has been awarded with the prestigious Padma Bhushan and International Peace Prize.

Anand was a novelist, short story writer and an autobiographer also. Some of his notable novels are *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942).

4.3 ABOUT THE NOVEL – UNTOUCHABLE

The novel *Untouchable* was published in 1935; it was Mulk Raj Anand's first novel. It happens to be the first novel written by Mulk Raj Anand under the deep influence of Mahatma Gandhi. The genesis of Anand's first novel recounts his decisive shift from Bloomsbury to Sabarmati. It is possibly Anand's most accomplished novels. The novel is set in Bulashah, a fictional town of India. This novel depicts a realistic picture of the injustices prevalent in the Indian society of that time. It depicts the sufferings of the lower-caste people of India, Bakha is the protagonist, a young boy who is sweeper and cleans latrines. Bakha becomes the representative of the downtrodden and outcaste people. These sections of people suffer because they are by birth, considered as outcastes by the upper-caste Hindus. The story of this novel revolves around a single day in the life of Bakha. By birth he belongs to a lower-caste family, by profession he is a toilet-cleaner. This novel presents an account of the humiliation and struggle that he and others like him have to go through, due to the hypocrisy and artificiality of the upper-caste. The lower-caste people were not allowed to draw water from the well, entry in the temple was prohibited, their touch to things or other people was considered polluted; hence they were called 'Untouchables'. Bakha was subjected to mental and physical abuse by the upper-caste Hindus. Bakha struggles with the ill-treatment received by the people of the village; and desires to pursue a better life by educating himself.

4.3.1 Central Characters :

Bakha : *Untouchable* is an exemplary novel dealing with the nastiest evil of Indian society i.e., untouchability executed by the varna system

advocated by *The Laws of Manu*. Bakha the hero of the novel, an untouchable epitomizes the lowest strata of Indian Society. Bakha is the protagonist, a central figure and character, around whom the story is woven. Bakha is an introspective young sweeper who lives in the outcastes' colony in a small cantonment town in northern India. Bakha's day-to-day labor is to clean the latrines more than twice a day— a job detested by the upper caste people. The novel portrays the events that happen in one day of Bakha's life. A sensitive boy, Bakha suffers a great deal of degradation at the hands of caste –Hindus. The pretense and hypocrisy of the Brahmin priest who curses him for contaminating the temple by his standing outside the door and who does not mind mistreating his sister Sohni irritate him. When he touches Lallji in the market inadvertently, the latter slaps him. When he finally encounters Colonel Hutchinson, the Christian Missionary, Mahatma Gandhi and Iqbal Nath Sarshar, he begins to dream of becoming an honorable man. The novel is a powerful indictment on the caste discrimination and hypocrisy of the Hindus, especially Brahmins. A chain of humiliating experiences leave Bakha searching for some yet unknown release from the degradation of his life. He is the representative of the down-trodden, underdogs who suffer injustices due to the social–evil of caste–discrimination. He struggles to search and establish his own identity, so that he can find the significance of his life.

Lakha : Bakha's father, is the head of all Bulashah sweepers and toilet–cleaners. He is a submissive person, who quietly accepts the inferior status of his community and the ill–treatments of the upper–caste.

Sohni : Bakha's sister is an attractive woman, who takes care of the family and does the household chores. She is molested by the Hindu priest Pandit Kalinath. Her character is important because the author exposes the corruption and double–standards of the upper–caste Hindus through her.

Charat Singh : This character is an exception from the upper–caste Hindus. Charat Singh is a 'havaladar' in the army, as well as a good hockey player. He is a kind–hearted person and treats Bakha affectionately. One of Bakha's idols, and his personality is humorous. At the beginning of the novel he humiliates Bakha to clean the latrines but later on he gives Bakha a brand new hockey stick. His inclination to share his afternoon tea with Bakha shows his lack of conviction in untouchability.

Iqbal Nath Sarshar : Sarshar is a young poet with revolutionary ideas. He is against the practice of untouchability. According to him, a new technology of flush system in toilets will help to remove this evil, because then there will be no need for a certain caste of people to clean the toilets, dirt and filth of others.

4.3.2 Literary Analysis of *Untouchable* :

The main theme of this novel is 'untouchability'. The people of the untouchable caste were sweepers, washermen, barbers, and grass-cutters. One day, Bakha accidentally touches an upper-caste Hindu in a market place, that person is infuriated and abuses Bakha by addressing him as 'swine' and 'dirty dog'. Bakha feels ashamed and is angry; but is hardly able to retaliate.

This novel can be considered as a psychological novel, because it provides a vivid account of Bakha's thought process, ponderings and wanderings of a day in his life. It helps the readers to see a larger picture as well as innate perspectives of Bakha's character.

The imagery of the sun and a river frequently occur in the novel. So it can be analyzed that the sun is the symbol of life-force and vitality, contrastingly, these qualities are missing in the lives of Bakha's community. A river is a symbol of flow and changing times, it conveys that the grief and sufferings of the outcastes will eradicate with the passage of time.

Since Anand is an Indian writer in English, he retains Indianness through the usage of Hindi and Punjabi words in this English language novel. For e.g. 'ghar', 'jalebi', 'Harijan'. Through this he represents the realistic and relatable picture of the Indian society.

4.4 *UNTOUCHABLE* AND RELATIONSHIP OF LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

As we know that 'literature holds up a mirror to the society', here the literary form, a novel *Untouchable* also shows us the mirror of the society; by depicting the social evils prevalent at that time in the Indian society.

Untouchable holds up a mirror to the realistic scenario of caste-discrimination existing in the Indian society.

Bakha and his community is considered as the 'untouchables'. An upper-caste throws a chapatti towards Bakha, like one would throw towards a dog. Bakha initially loved an upper-caste girl, whom he can't marry because of caste-discrimination; and he belongs to the lower-caste. When Bakha accidentally touches an upper-caste Hindu in a market-place, that person abuses Bakha. Bakha is shattered by the incident and bursts out in anger : "Why are we always abused ? The sanitary inspector that day abused my father. They always abuse us. Because we are sweepers. Because we touch dung. They hate dung. I hate it too. That's why, I came here. I was tired of working on the latrines every day. That's why they don't touch us, the high caste." Untouchability was one of the most evil practices of caste system in India. Indian leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar have taken steps to eradicate this evil, due to which socially and economically backward class people suffered.

Anand captures the predicament of the untouchables; when through Bakha he reveals that the the outcastes were denied even the basic need of life, water. In most of the situations in the novel, Bakha remains helpless, but says : "All of them abused, abused, abused why are we always abused ?

Because we are sweepers. I am a sweeper, sweeper—untouchable I am an Untouchable!”

The author provides the readers with the different solutions for these untouchables. Mulk Raj Anand includes various views which can prove to be the remedies for the ill-fated lower-castes of the Indian society. The first and foremost is education. Gandhiji's view on untouchability is that, he considers the practice of untouchability as a sin, so it must be abolished; and according to Dr. Ambedkar, education is a tool which can make the lower-caste aware of their situation, so that they can raise their voice against injustices. The second solution is that of religious conversion. Christianity is devoid of caste-system, so Bakha is advised to convert to Christianity, so that he can be free from all the atrocities. The third solution is technology. The rise of technology with which the dirt and filth can be cleaned automatically through toilet flush machines, can prove to be a remedy for the predicaments of the untouchables. These solutions provide a ray of hope to Bakha and thousands of lower-castes like Bakha, who suffer the physical, mental, and emotional tortures at the hands of the upper-castes of the India society.

4.5 KEY WORDS

Untouchable : not able or allowed to be touched or affected; of or belonging to the lowest-caste Hindu group or the people outside the caste system.

Downtrodden : oppressed or treated badly by people in power.

Inhumane : without compassion for misery or suffering; cruel.

Protagonist : the leading character or one of the major characters in a play, film, novel, etc.

Outcaste : a person who is expelled from their caste.

Hypocrisy : the practice of claiming to have higher standards or more noble beliefs than is the actual case.

Molest : assault or abuse (a person, especially a woman or child).

Eradicate : destroy completely; put an end to.

Reformation : the action or process of reforming an institution or practice, changing for a better situation.

Stigma : dishonour

Endowed : gifted

Monetarily : money wise

Dalit : down trodden

4.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt about the author and his novel, Mulk Raj Anand and Untouchable; respectively. The novel depicts the predicaments of the lower-castes, known as untouchables. Bakha is the representative of that community. He is abused and suffers injustices because he is a toilet-

cleaner, and thus he is untouchable. The author provides the readers with the alternatives which can bring reform in the society and eradicate the evil practices.

The realistic picture of the Indian society, showing main concern towards the social vice of untouchability and caste-discrimination and its remedies are portrayed in *Untouchable*, which is a literary novel. This establishes the relationship of interdependence and interconnectedness between literature and society; as 'Literature mirrors society, society mirrors literature'.

***Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand From the Point of View of Relationship between Literature and Society**

4.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi : Penguin Books, 2001.
2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Untouchable_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Untouchable_(novel))
3. ePathshala, MHRD, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHNF4ThCmwY>

4.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS.

1. Prepare a brief note on Mulk Raj Anand and his works.
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2. Give a brief note on the novel *Untouchable*.
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3. Prepare a character-sketch of Bakha.
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4. What are the various injustices practiced on the untouchables ?
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5. What are the alternatives to bring a social reform in the society ?
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6. How *Untouchable* holds up a mirror to the society ?
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ANSWERS

1. Mulk Raj Anand (1905–2004) was born in Peshawar of Undivided India. He was one of the first India-based writers in English to gain international readership. He has been awarded with the prestigious Padma Bhushan and International Peace Prize. Anand was a novelist, short story writer and an autobiographer also. Some of his notable novels are *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942).
2. The novel *Untouchable* was published in 1935; it was Mulk Raj Anand's first novel. The novel is set in Bulashah, a fictional town of India. This novel depicts a realistic picture of the injustices prevalent in the Indian society of that time.
3. Bakha is the protagonist, a young boy who is sweeper and cleans latrines. Bakha becomes the representative of the downtrodden and outcaste people. He struggles to search and establish his own identity, so that he can find the significance of his life. When Bakha accidentally touches an upper-caste Hindu in a market-place, that person abuses Bakha. He says, "All of them abused, abused, abused why are we always abused ? Because we are sweepers. I am a sweeper, sweeper-untouchable I am an Untouchable!"
4. The untouchables were not allowed to draw water from the well, entry in the temple was prohibited, their touch to things or other person was considered polluted. The basic need of water was also prohibited. The untouchable girls were molested by the upper-castes. These untouchables suffered the abuses of physical, mental, and emotional kinds being inflicted on them.
5. Mulk Raj Anand includes various views which can prove to be the remedies for the ill-fated lower-castes of the Indian society. The first and foremost is education. Gandhiji's view on untouchability is that, he considers the practice of untouchability as a sin, so it must be abolished; and according to Dr. Ambedkar, education is a tool which can make the lower-caste aware of their situation, so that they can raise their voice against injustices. The second solution is that of religious conversion. Christianity is devoid of caste-system, so Bakha is advised to convert to Christianity, so that he can be free from all the atrocities. The third solution is technology. The rise of technology with which the dirt and filth can be cleaned automatically through toilet flush machines, can prove to be a remedy for the predicaments of the untouchables.
6. The novel *Untouchable* depicts the predicaments of the lower-castes, known as untouchables. The realistic picture of the Indian society, showing main concern towards the social vice of untouchability and caste-discrimination and its remedies are portrayed in *Untouchable*, which is a literary novel. This establishes the relationship of interdependence and interconnectedness between literature and society; as 'Literature mirrors society, society mirrors literature'.

♦♦♦♦♦

: STRUCTURE :

5.0 Objectives**5.1 Introduction****5.2.1 The Beginnings****5.2.2 Kinds of Illumination****5.2.3 Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis****5.2.4 Major Concepts****5.2.5 At a Glance****5.2.6 Disadvantages****5.3 Let Us Sum Up****5.4 Key Words****5.5 Books Suggested****Answers**

5.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you to;

- appreciate the relationship between literature and psychology,
- understand the importance of psychology in literature,
- define major concepts in psychoanalysis.

After this unit, you will be able to;

- analyse writers and their characters from psychology,
 - explain the actions of characters which seem implausible or inexplicable.
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5.1 INTRODUCTION

If Psychology can be defined as the ‘study of human behaviour’ and literature as ‘writings in prose or verse especially writings having the excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest’, we can attempt to understand the mutual relationships between literature and psychology. Literature has existed ever since man had language. Psychology was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans though it reached the stature of discipline in Europe only in the 18th and 19th centuries. Literature and psychology are intertwined because both are interested in the human mind; the difference between the genres lay not in what stories they told, but in how they told them. Psychology researches human behaviours and their causes while literature depicts human behaviour through fiction. These two branches of social science, studying human behaviour are interrelated and mutually beneficial. It is important to distinguish between ‘psychology and literature’ and ‘psychology in literature’.

In this unit, we focus on the former. The latter would naturally refer to the psychological novel which is not being considered here.

One school of thought believes that the relationship between psychology and literature can be studied as : the first representing the lowest level of abstraction and involves ‘psychology in literature’ : literature as a source of psychological data, literature as a source of insights for psychology; the second involves literature as an independent variable, literature as a dependent variable or literature as understood through psychology; and the third, at the highest level of abstraction, involves psychology as culture-free and literature as culture-bound. We could take it one step further to explain literature as interested in possible worlds (the world as it could be) and psychology in actual worlds (the world as it is). The psychological approach is a unique form of criticism in that it draws upon psychological theories in its interpretation of a text. Linking the psychological and literary worlds bring a kind of scientific aspect into literary criticism. The three branches of psychological criticism are Psychoanalytic criticism, trauma and Cognitive criticism. The working of the writer's mind may be explained by the approach of trauma “...in trauma the greatest confrontation with reality may also occur as an absolute numbing to it, that immediacy, paradoxically enough, may take the form of belatedness.” Example of Jane Austen's novels where she continually has a father-figure, love-hate relationship between mother and daughter as well as the relationship among sisters could clarify this point. In attempting to understand the relationship between literature and psychology, do remember that we must pay attention both to the writers, to their characters and to some extent even the readers. We will be able to understand the importance of the readers’ reaction better in the third approach of psychological criticism which is the Cognitive Approach. Whereas the psychoanalytic approach focuses on the author and why they wrote and what they wrote. The cognitive approach focuses on the reader and how their mind works while reading literature. Ismet Emre gave the following explanation of the relationship between the two disciplines : Beside literature and psychology, there is no other branch of science which is engaged so much in the study of the relationship between human body and soul with its contradictions and dilemmas, making efforts to define the relationship in terms of specific rules, to know the mysterious aspects of the human soul and its subconscious areas by means of long and detailed journeys; at the same time both branches have been struggling in their existence between arts and science for about a century.

We could succinctly describe the relationship as being important because :

- (1) The application of psychological knowledge to art provides a more precise language with which to discuss the creative process.
- (2) The lives of the authors can be studied as a means of understanding their art.
- (3) The actions of the characters can be explained and understood better.

Please remember when we read about literature and psychology, this should not be confused with the psychological novel where the writer delves

deep into the mind of his characters as in Virginia Woolf's 'stream of consciousness' novels, James Joyce's *Ulysses* or the novels of Dostoyevsky.

In this unit, you will study the mutual relationship between psychology and literature.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

1. a) Which is older — literature or psychology ? How do you know ?

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1. b) Why is psychology culture-free ?

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2.A) MATCH THE WORDS IN COLUMN A WITH THE APPROPRIATE PHRASES IN COLUMN B.

A	B
i. Ismet Emre	(i) possible world
ii. Literature	(ii) actual world
iii. Psychology	(iii) relationship between 2 disciplines

5.2.1 The Beginnings :

A direct relationship between literature and psychology came neither from writers or critics but from an Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud (1856–1939). The Psychoanalytical theory of Freud has had a significant effect on literature. However, the relationship is reciprocal, and the effect of Freud upon literature has been no greater than the effect of literature upon Freud. On the celebration of his seventieth birthday, Freud was greeted as the 'discoverer of the unconscious', he corrected the speaker and disclaimed the title. 'The poets and philosophers before me discovered the unconscious', he said. 'What I discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious can be studied.' Freud offered a new terminology which helped writers and practitioners of the creative arts to probe deeper in their dramatisations of the human situation. To these early forays can be added the influence of Adler's concept of the inferiority complex, Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and theories of the unconscious, not of individual writer or character but of the race or culture, which is generally called the archetypal approach.

In his *Psychology and Literature*, Jung justifies the use of psychology for studying literature because all thought and expression are derived from the human psyche. The writer draws materials from the realm of human consciousness, according to Jung. Comparing a great piece of writing to a dream, Jung concludes : "It does not explain itself ... and we must draw our conclusions".

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

1.a) What was Freud's profession ?

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1.b) How was Freud greeted on his seventieth birthday ?

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1.c) What is the archetypal approach ?

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2. **Give Reasons :**

a.) Relationship between psychology and literature is reciprocal.

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b) A great piece of writing is like a dream.

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5.2.2 Kinds of Illumination :

Application of psychological knowledge can generate three kinds of illumination, as propounded by I. A. Richards, Edmund Wilson and F. L. Lucas. Firstly, as suggested by Richards in *Principles of Literary Criticism*, the new field provides a more precise language with which to discuss the creative process. It can be further explained as a kind of equilibrium “a particular and harmonious kind of response in the audience, brought about by the stimulus of a work of art”. This kind of analysis will clarify ‘the unconscious relations between writer and reader’. A good example of this is Kenneth Burke's essay, *Antony in Behalf of the Play*, in which he brilliantly examines the unconscious relations between writer and reader.

Secondly, as Edmund Wilson pointed out in *The Wound and the Bow*, the study of the lives of authors helps us to understand their works of art. This means that literary biography is helped by psychology to speculate on the interior parts of life. The criticism that employs this approach works on the premise that an important part of the relationship between artist and art is similar between patient and analyst. D. H. Lawrence believes that the author has shed his sicknesses in his books. This may further help the critic or reader to understand the underlying patterns of a writer's work. A good

example of this can be found in Wilson's essays in *The Wound and the Bow*, where the writer exemplifies how effectively this approach can be used to lead us to understand not only the personal problems of the writers but also the underlying patterns of their writings.

Thirdly, as F. L. Lucas points out in *Literature and Psychology*, psychology can be used to explain the actions and reactions of created characters. Some of their actions may seem puzzling or implausible till we are able to become a psychoanalyst searching for the subconscious patterns which motivate a character. The best example of this is Ernest Jones' study of the character of Hamlet in *Hamlet and Oedipus*, where he provides an answer to the puzzle of Hamlet's delay in avenging his father. It needs to be reiterated here that this answer could not perhaps be conceived and expressed before the development of Freudian psychology.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

1.a) Who were the proponents of the three kinds of illumination ?

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1.b) Name the three works that are mentioned in reference to the three critics.

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2. **Explain :**

a) The creative process is a kind of equilibrium

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b) he author has shed his sickness.

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5.2.3 Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis :

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many critics became interested in the psychological interpretation of literature. And in this area, it is psychoanalysis which has been in the forefront. We can define psychoanalysis as a discipline founded on a procedure for the investigation of mental processes that are otherwise inaccessible because they are unconscious. Freud believes that society sublimates or channels its unconscious through the creative process. According to Freud as well as later theorists and critics who followed the psychoanalytical approach to the study of literature, the author's own childhood traumas, family life, sexual conflicts,

fixations, and such will be traceable within the behaviour of the characters in the literary work. But psychological material will be expressed indirectly, disguised, or encoded (as in dreams) through principles such as ‘symbolism’ (the repressed object represented in disguise), ‘condensation’ (several thoughts or persons represented in a single image), and ‘displacement’ (anxiety located onto another image by means of association).

Freud described the human mind as being of three levels, which he called the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious. The three may be defined as –

Conscious : this is where our current thoughts, feelings, and focus live.

Preconscious (sometimes called the subconscious) : this is the home of everything we can recall or retrieve from our memory.

Unconscious : at the deepest level resides a repository of the processes that drive our behaviour, including primitive and instinctual desires.

Critics who use the psychoanalytic method base their analysis of characters on these three. It is to Freud's credit that he developed a language that described, and a model that explained, a theory that encompassed human psychology. This has helped both critics and readers to appreciate literature on a new level.

In addition to the three levels of the human mind, Freud made a clear distinction between ‘id’, ‘ego’ and ‘superego’. As he believed that the powers motivating men and women are mainly and normally unconscious, you must understand these three clearly. ‘Id’ (or it) is the predominantly irrational, unknown and unconscious part of our psyche. The ‘ego’ (or I) is the predominantly rational, logical, orderly, conscious part. ‘Superego’ is a projection of the ego and seems to be outside of the self and making moral judgements. Freud believed that the unconscious (and often the repressed in the life of the author) has a major role to play in creative writing.

The importance of Freud in the general study of any writing can be understood better when we realise those words, he introduced through his theories are now used by everyday people, such as anal (personality), libido, denial, repression, cathartic, Freudian slip, and neurotic.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

1.a) Define ‘psychoanalysis’.

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1.b) Mention the three levels of the human mind, according to Freud.

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2. Distinguish the terms— id, ego, superego

5.2.4 Major Concepts :

In order to understand the relationship between psychology and literature and to apply the appropriate tools for a psychological study of literature, you must understand a few more concepts.

- (a) **Manifest Content** : As the purpose of creative writing is seen as a desire to gratify some forbidden wish, the literal surface of the work is called ‘manifest content’ or ‘dream story’.
- (b) **Figurative Language** : Something that evolves as the writer's conscious mind resists what the unconscious mind tells it to picture or describe.
- (c) **Libido** : The force by which the sexual instinct is represented in the mind.
- (d) **Symbol** : Messages from the unconscious; an act or process of representing an order or an idea by a substitute object, sign or signal.

It is important to remember that many of these concepts will be used by many other theorists but have a special meaning and significance in the context of psychoanalysis.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5

- 1.a) Define : libido, manifest content

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5.2.5 AT A GLANCE :

All psychoanalytic approaches to literature have one thing in common the critics begin with a full psychological theory of how and why people behave as they do, a theory that has been developed by a psychologist/psychiatrist/psychoanalyst outside of the realm of literature, and they apply this psychological theory as a standard to interpret and evaluate a literary work. The developer of the theory and the details of the theory will vary, but the theories are all universalist in scope, positing patterns of behaviour that are not dependent on specific times, places, and cultures. Psychoanalytic literary criticism can focus on one or more of the following :

The author : the theory is used to analyse the author and his/her life, and the literary work is seen to supply evidence for this analysis. This is often called “psychobiography.”

The characters : the theory is used to analyse one or more of the characters; the psychological theory becomes a tool to explain the characters’ behaviour and motivations. The more closely the theory seems to apply to the characters, the more realistic the work appears.

The audience : the theory is used to explain the appeal of the work for those who read it; the work is seen to embody universal human psychological processes and motivations, to which the readers respond unconsciously.

The text : The theory is used to analyse the role of language and symbolism in work.

5.2.6 DISADVANTAGES :

As with any other approach, the psychological approach too is not without its innate dangers or drawbacks.

Firstly, an oversimplification. This was a serious drawback in the early period when this approach was gaining ground, the tools were new and the users uncritical.

Secondly, art is significantly different from dreams as the artist is largely in control of his product while the dreamer is not. Art is composed expression. Dream may be compulsive confession.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 7

1.a Mention the two main disadvantages.

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1.b. How is art different from a dream ?

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5.3 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;
the relationship between psychology and literature,
the major proponents of psychoanalysis,
the concepts to understand this theory.

5.4 KEY WORDS

Psychoanalysis : method of treating somebody with mental illness by asking about past experience.

Dream : a series of pictures or images that happen in your mind when asleep

Id : personality component made up of unconscious energy

Ego : psychological component of personality made up of conscious decision making process

Symbols : sign or image that represents something

Behaviour : the way in which one acts or conducts oneself

5.5 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*

Nayar, Pramod K. *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory*

Sachdev Rita, *A handbook of Literary Criticism*

Scott, Wilbur S. *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism*

I

- 1a. Literature is older as Psychology was developed as a discipline only in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 1.b As it explains the world as it is
- 2.a (i–iii), (ii–i), (iii–ii)

II

- 1.a Neurologist
- 1.b ‘discoverer of the unconscious’
- 1.c ‘collective unconscious or theories of the unconscious of race or culture’
- 2.a As both help in understanding the other
- 2.b Neither of them explains themselves, and we must draw our conclusions

III

- 1a) I.A. Richards, Edmund Wilson, F.L. Lucas
- 1.b) Principles of Literary Criticism, The Wound and the Bow, Literature and Psychology
- 2.a) ‘the kind of response brought about by stimulus of a work of art’
- 2.b) By giving expression to all that has been repressed

IV

- 1.a) ‘a discipline founded on a procedure for the investigation of mental processes that are otherwise inaccessible because they are unconscious’
- 1.b) Conscious, Pre-conscious, Unconscious
2. **id** : irrational, unknown, unconscious part of the psyche
ego : rational, logical, orderly, conscious part of the psyche
superego : projection of the ego, outside of self, making moral judgements

V

- 1.a) (i) **Libido** : The force by which the sexual instinct is represented in mind.
- (ii) **Manifest Content** : As the purpose of creative writing is seen as a desire to gratify some forbidden wish, the literal surface of the work is called ‘manifest content’ or ‘dream story’.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

: STRUCTURE :

6.0 Objectives**6.1 Introduction****6.1.2 The Ghost as a Manifestation of the Inner Mind****6.1.3 Oedipus Complex****6.2 Soliloquies****6.3 Play within the Play****6.4 Symbols****6.5 Let Us Sum Up****6.6 Key Words****6.7 Books Suggested****Answers**

6.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you;

- to analyse a work of literature from the point of view of psychology,
- to interpret words in relation to unspoken thoughts,
- to study symbols and images as reflecting the inner workings of the human mind.

After this section, you will be able to;

- appreciate the creative process of the artist,
 - analyse fictional characters using language and methods of psychology.
-

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The tragedies of Shakespeare are mainly about a tragic hero and the tragic flaw that leads to the death of the hero in most cases. The play *Hamlet* is about the Prince of Denmark—Hamlet—who warned by the ghost (King Hamlet) about the real nature of the present king Claudius decides to avenge the death of his father. This play is as much about the external actions as it is about the workings of the inner mind of the characters. The arena shifts in such plays from the outside to the inside. Shakespeare proves again and again that he possessed an extraordinary ability to understand human thought processes from the ‘inside out’. In attempting to understand the way his characters act, he understood the way they think and feel. He looks at the thought processes going on in the minds of his characters and thus delineates them accordingly. In *Hamlet*, it is his conscience that leads to his tragic flaw of procrastination. The psychological study of jealousy and melancholia runs parallel to the story of revenge. In *The Living World of*

Shakespeare, John Wain writes : “Where the conventional revenge play, hero is kept from fulfilling his vow only by material difficulties, Hamlet hesitates because of conscience”. All the events of the play are interwoven around this : the inner emotion and its dramatic manifestation. Shakespeare understood our inner demons and knew how to express them on the written page, and hence Shakespeare does not limit this only to the protagonists; he presents the inner working of the mind of almost all the characters : in the hypocrisy of Polonius, “This above all—to thine own—self be true”, (Act 1 Scene 3) in the protective unspoken love of Laertes for his love—lorn sister Ophelia, “Be wary then, best safety lies in fear”, (Act 1 Scene 3), in the troubled drawn between son and husband Gertrude when she says, “ Good Hamlet, cast thy knighted colour off/ And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark” etc. (Act 1 Scene 2).

In this unit, we shall discuss the various facets of the relationship between psychology and literature in Hamlet.

6.1.2 The Ghost as a Manifestation of the Inner Mind :

The ghost is a recurring character in Shakespeare's tragedies. Though critics may argue that it was introduced to entertain the groundlings, we can see that it performs a far more important function. The ghost appears in *Macbeth* as Banquo, in *Julius Caesar* as Caesar, in *Richard III* as ghosts of Henry VI and Edward IV, in *Cymbeline* as ghosts of Pothouse's father, mother and brothers etc. In *Hamlet*, it is used to give a voice to the doubts that Hamlet harbours. When he says,” the funeral baked meats/Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables”, (Act I Scene2)he is certainly voicing his feelings about the undue haste of his mother's marriage to his uncle in spite of the regicide and these same ideas are expressed by the ghost in much more stronger language. It is the inner working in Hamlet's mind that finds an external appearance and expression in the ghost. The dramatist also clearly describes the difference in the attitude of Hamlet and his father to the sin of Claudius : The ghost is more critical of Claudius than Hamlet is. To the ghost, he is “that incestuous, that adulterate beast...with traitorous gifts... won to his shameful lust...” (Act I Scene 5), but to Hamlet it is his mother who is more guilty because of her lust and incest. “Within a month/ ... A little month or ere those shoes were old/ with which she followed my poor father's body/ ...why she, even she /married with my uncle/... With such dexterity to incestuous sheets”. (Act 1 scene2) The Ghost, however, advises Hamlet, not to Plan revenge against his mother : “Leave her to Heaven, / And to those thorns in her bosom lodge/ To prick and sting her”. (Act 1 Scene 5) This again is a manifestation of Hamlet's inability to plan to harm his mother.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

1.a) What is the function of the ghost in *Hamlet* ?

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.....

- 1.b) Has the ghost appeared in other plays of Shakespeare ?

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2. **STATE WHETHER TRUE OR FALSE.**

- a) The Ghost is more critical of Gertrude than of Claudius.

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.....

- b) Gertrude married Claudius soon after her husband's death.

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.....

6.1.3 Oedipus Complex :

Moreover, that brings us to the Oedipus complex. A whole new approach to literature began with the theories of Freud and the acceptance that 'literature is entwined with the psyche'. Hidden from the workings of the conscious mind, the unconscious, Freud believes, plays a large part in how we act, think, and feel. In the interaction of the conscious and unconscious working together, argues Freud, we shape both ourselves and our world. Freud says, "the poet's psychology is with which we are confronted in *Hamlet*." To him the play *Hamlet* is based on the same soil as *Oedipus Rex*. The Oedipal complex, also known as the Oedipus complex, is a term used by Sigmund Freud in his theory of psychosexual stages of development to describe a child's feelings of desire for his or her opposite-sex parent and jealousy and anger towards his or her same-sex parent. *Hamlet* seems to possess that Oedipal complex more in relation to Claudius who now demands to be made his father, accept his position as Gertrude is now his wife and queen. Dr Jones says, that the intrinsic evidence from the play, "decisively shows that Shakespeare projected into it his inmost soul." Ives Hendricks believes, "the drama tells the story of incest and patricide with more disguise". Throughout the play, *Hamlet* seems to dwell on his mother's sexual proclivities more than one would usually associate with a son. "O most wicked speed to post/ With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!" (Act 1 Scene 2) And later in coarser words, "Good night— but go not to my uncle's bed....Refrain tonight,/ And that shall lend a kind of easiness/ To the next abstinence." (Act 3 Scene 4). The Queen is not protesting and gives *Hamlet* more courage to continue in the same vein, almost crossing all bounds of decency in a mother-son relationship : "Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed/ Pinch you on your cheek, call you his /mouse..." (Act 3 Scene 4). Shakespeare's role in feeding food to psychology and the 19th and 20th century psychoanalysis tradition through his plays and dramas is a testament to his insights into human nature. The Oedipal complex often finds expression also in his soliloquies, almost all through the play.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

Hamlet by Shakespeare From the Point of View of Relationship between Psychology and Literature

1. a) Who propounded the theory of Oedipus complex ?

.....
.....
.....

1. b) Give one example of this complex from the play (which has not been listed above).

.....
.....
.....

2. **FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE WORDS/ PHRASES.**

- (a) The Oedipus Complex refers to an attraction towards the _____ .
(b) Literature is entwined with the _____ , according to Freud.

6.2 SOLILOQUIES

The soliloquies in *Hamlet* are an important aspect of the psychological study in literature. A soliloquy is defined as an act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself or regardless of any hearers, especially by a character in a play. Shakespeare uses this very effectively in almost all his great plays. His focus is not only on crafting characters but on simulating their thought processes. This focus on *process* – that is, on how a character progresses in a line of thinking – helps the reader to enter the mind of the character and to understand why he acts the way he does, what propels him forward in a particular direction. One of the best-known soliloquies – “To be or ...”. clearly shows us the psychological state of the protagonist and makes his tragic flaw of procrastination very evident. “And thus, the native hue of resolution/ Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought/ And enterprises of great pitch and moment/ With this regard their currents turn awry/ And lose the name of action”. (Act 3 Scene 1) This conflict or disgust within himself is spread through the entire tragedy. Suicidally depressed by his father's death and his mother's remarriage, the possibility of suicide as an escape comes to Hamlet quite early in the play, showing the reader the wavering nature which seems to get more and more engrained as the play progresses : O that this too too solid flesh would melt,/Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!/ Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd/ His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!” (Act 1 Scene 2) Hamlet's self-loathing which reveals his present state of mind is clear when he says, “Yet I–/ A dull and muddied mettled rascal/... Am I a coward ?”. (Act 2 Scene 2). With each soliloquy, the reader gets a clearer picture of a complete disintegration of Hamlet.

In Ophelia, we see the inner working when she becomes insane. Ironically, Hamlet pretends to be mad in order to achieve his purpose while Ophelia becomes stark mad and to the extent that she finally takes her own life. When she goes mad, she sings a bawdy song about a maiden who is

tricked into losing her virginity with a false promise of marriage. Ophelia's soliloquy ends with : "O woe is me/ T'have seen what I have seen, see what I see". She feels that she has been cheated because merely pretended to love her and these suppressed feelings of betrayal and dishonesty work on her innocent mind till she finally ends it all.

Through his soliloquies too, Shakespeare gave us the psychodramas on the stage through which we can project our internal worlds and learn from the characters he invented.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

1.a) Can you define a soliloquy ?

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.....

.....

1.b) Identify the soliloquy in Act 4 Scene4 which shows the mental agony of Hamlet.

.....

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.....

2. **MATCH THE WORDS/ PHRASES IN COLUMN A WITH THE APPROPRIATE ONES IN COLUMN B.**

A	B
(i) self-slaughter	(a) unheard by others
(ii) soliloquy	(b) Hamlet
(iii) wavering nature	(c) a sin

6.3 PLAY WITHIN THE PLAY

Hamlet's ploy of catching the guilty conscience of Claudius by having a play enacted along the same lines of Claudius's murdering of his brother clearly proves Shakespeare's knowledge of psychology even before these theories were propounded. Hamlet makes his intentions clear in this soliloquy : "I'll have these players/ Play something of the murder of my father/ Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks, / I'll tent him to the quick. If he does blench, / I know my course". (Act 2 Scene2) The dumb-show is the prelude to the actual staging of the play. Hamlet chooses to sit at Ophelia's feet rather than next to the Queen, partly to encourage the idea that his madness is caused by disappointed love, but mainly because he could not watch the King's face if he sat next to the royal pair. Hamlet gives a detailed introduction to the play : "The Mouse-trap.... This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna.... Tis a knavish piece of work." (Act 3 Scene) When the actual play echoes the actions of Claudius, he rises in terror with "give me some lights. Away!" (Act 3 Scene 2), Hamlet is convinced that the Ghost had spoken the truth. This play-within-the-play further helps the dramatist to reveal his own theories of play-acting. However, the ability to trap the king into a virtual admission of his guilt

by his reaction to the scene is another example of the use of psychology by the dramatist.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

1.a) Why does Hamlet want Claudius to watch the play ?

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.....

1.b) Why does Claudius call for lights ?

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2. GIVE REASONS

a) Hamlet sits at Ophelia's feet.

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b) Shakespeare had a knowledge of psychology.

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6.4 SYMBOLS

Following Freud's theory in the interpretation of a piece of literature, the psychoanalytic critic tends to see all concave images (Ponds, flowers, cups or vases, caves, and hollows) as female symbols, and all images whose length exceeds their diameter (towers, mountain, peaks, snakes, knives, lances and swords) as male symbols. Shakespeare uses symbols and images profusely in his tragedies. (The animal imagery in *King Lear* is the best example.) Symbols help create meaning and emotion.

In this play, poison is an important symbol. It stands for treachery and disloyalty, death and dishonesty. At the beginning of the play, the ghost tells Hamlet how he was murdered by his brother : Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole/ With juice of cursed hebona in a vial, / And in the porches of my ears did pour/ The leperous distilment” (Act1 Scene 5). And at the end of the play, it is poison which causes Hamlet's death : “O, I die, Horatio! / The potent poison quite o'er crows my spirit” (Act 5 Scene 2).

Flowers are another often used symbol in the Elizabethan Age. Ophelia, gone mad after her father's death gives different flowers to different people—symbolism clearly suggests the inner working of the broken heart of Ophelia : violets to herself, pansies to Polonius, rosemary to Hamlet etc. Each flower is associated with a certain quality which she probably realises even in her insane condition. (Act 4 Scene 5)

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5

1.a) What is the function of a symbol in a work of art ?

.....

.....

.....

1.b) Why does Ophelia choose different flowers ?

.....

.....

.....

6.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;
the relationship between literature and psychology,
the importance of the inner workings of the mind of characters.

6.6 KEY WORDS

Thought processes : the process of using your mind to think something carefully.

Oedipus complex : unconscious sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex and begins around the age of four.

Conscience : the part of your mind that tells you if what you are doing is right or wrong.

Soliloquy : a speech in a play when a character is alone and speaks on his inner thoughts.

Play within a play : a play that is played within the confines of another play.

6.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Shakespeare William, *Hamlet* (Any good student edition)

Knight, Wilson G. *The Imperial Theme*

Leech, Clifford Shakespeare : *The Tragedies*

Guerin Wilfred L. et al A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature (available online)

(PDF) *The Contribution of Psychological Theories in Literary Criticism*. Available from : https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273853336_The_Contribution_of_Psychological_Theories_in_Literary_Criticism

ANSWERS

Hamlet by Shakespeare
From the Point of View of
Relationship between
Psychology and Literature

Check your progress :

I

- 1.a) To give a voice to the doubts that Hamlet has
- 1.b) Yes, in Macbeth, Julius Caesar etc.
- 2.a) False 2 b.) True.

II

- 1a) Freud
- 1.b) “That blurs...” (Act 3 Scene 4)
 “In the rank sweat...” (Act 3 Scene 4)
- 2.a) Opposite–sex parent
- 2.b) psyche

III

- 1.a) Act of speaking one's thoughts aloud, specially in a play
- 1.b) “How all occasions do inform ...” (Lines 31 – 65)
- 2.a) (i–c) (ii–a) (iii–b)

IV

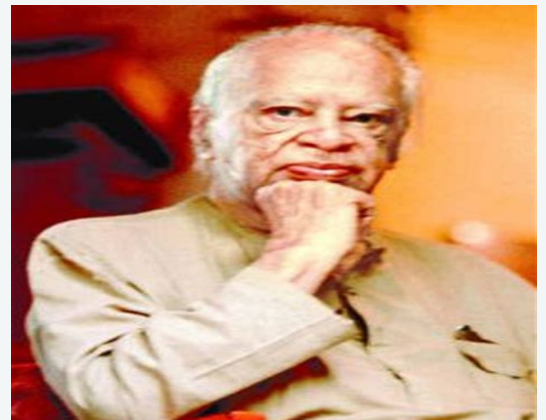
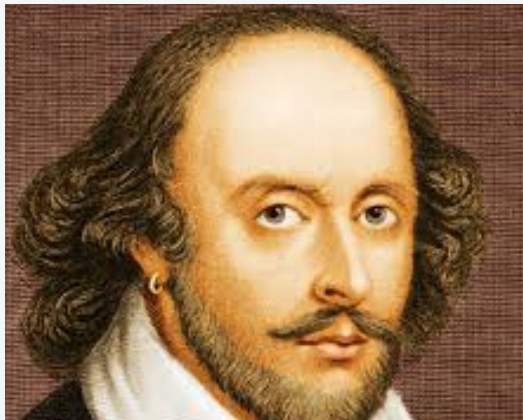
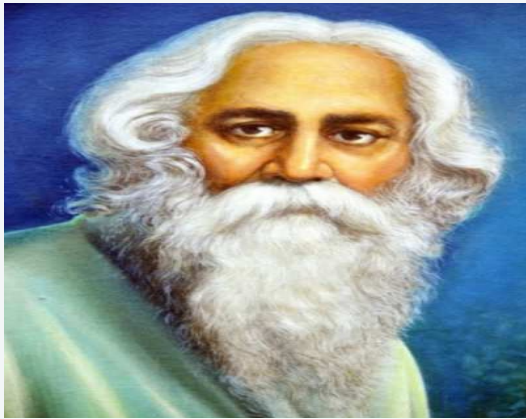
- 1.a) To get proof of his crime
- 1.b) As he feels guilty about his actions
- 2.a) To get a better view of Claudius; To pretend being love–sick
- 2.b) The play within the play

V

- 1.a) To help create meaning and emotion
- 1.b) To show her attitude/ emotions towards each

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

**FIRST YEAR B.A.
ENGM101
Introduction to Literature**



Message for the 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 as many as 54 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, UG, PG, 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.

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Prof. (Dr.) Ami Upadhyay
Vice Chancellor

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University
Ahmedabad



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F.Y.B.A
ENGM101
INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

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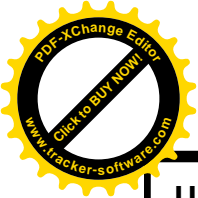
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UNIT 7

LITERATURE AND IDEAS

: STRUCTURE :

7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Literature and Ideas

7.2.1 Literature – Its Meaning and Relevance

7.2.2 Philosophy and Ideas – Conceptual Framework

7.3 Relationship between Literature and Ideas

7.4 Let Us Sum Up

7.5 Key Words

7.6 Books Suggested

Answers

7.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall;

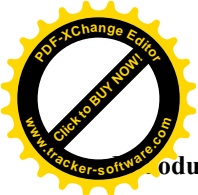
- discuss what is literature,
- understand how a literary piece of work can be interpreted in different ways,
- get the idea of philosophy and ideas.

On completing the unit, you will;

- get an idea about literature, philosophy and ideas,
- be able to know how to interpret a literary piece from philosophical perspective,
- acquire knowledge of appreciating a literary text with its relationship with ideas.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss the relationship of literature with philosophy and ideas. Reading literature and philosophy provides new perspectives and insights on issues in the human experience. Literature generally reflects life. Literature aids in making the issues of human experience more alive and personal. Issues of human experience become more alive to challenge and intrigue a person by being presented in both literary and philosophical forms. By understanding the relationship between literature and ideas, one can acquire the knowledge of rational investigation of questions about human existence as well as about ethics.



7.2 LITERATURE AND IDEAS

7.2.1 Literature – Its Meaning and Relevance :

Literature has been commonly used to designate fictional and imaginative writings—poetry, prose fiction, and drama. It designates other writings including philosophy, history, and even scientific works. In larger sense of the term ‘literary’, the philosophical writings of Plato and William James, the historical writings of Edward Gibbon, the scientific essays of Huxley, and the psychoanalytic lectures of Sigmund Freud are included in literature. Etymologically, the word ‘Literature’ is derived from Latin *litteratura* means “learning, a writing, grammar,” it is considered as “writing formed with letters.” Literature can be defined in the strict sense as a written imaginative and literal work with significance and a permanent artistic value. It must be imaginative, it must be written and then it must contain artistic values. R. J Rees defines the term “Literature” as, “a permanent expression in words of some thought or feeling or idea about life and the world” (9).

Literary writings have permanence. Literature should be a mirror of human nature. It should be close to life. This closeness comes out of actual human experience. Again, the quality of this experience is more important than its quantity. As Hudson says, “Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an experience of life through the medium of language.” (Sinha 2)

Literature is writing which expresses and communicates thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards life. Literature can only come alive through the creative imagination. There are some qualities which we expect to find in good literature. These qualities are (1) life-likeness, (b) sincerity and (c) suggestiveness. While reading a poem or a novel or a drama we should feel that the feelings or ideas expressed in it corresponds to our own. We feel pleasure in reading a piece of literature, because in it we find the reflection of our own joys and sorrows. A good literature has sincerity to oneself, to one's own experience of life and to the truth of things as one has seen it. A writer, if he wants to live, must write of what lies at his own doors, and must report faithfully only that which he has lived through, seen, thought, felt and known for himself. Without sincerity nothing great can be accomplished in literature. The Divine Comedy of Dante still appeals to us because it is the sincere attempt. The tragedies of Shakespeare have their roots deep down in his sorrows and silent struggles. Literature must be suggestive— it should have the power to our emotions and imagination rather than our intellect. Literature has an evaluative as well as descriptive function.

SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 1

1. Give any two definitions of literature and on the basis of these definitions derive your concept about literature.
2. What are the qualities of good literature ?

3. Give example of any one epic which shows the qualities of good literature.
4. Discuss the suggestive quality of literature in any one of the tragedies written by Shakespeare.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

- a. _____ writings of Plato are literary writings.
- b. Etymologically, the word 'Literature is derived from _____ language.
- c. _____ is famous in psychoanalytical writings.
- d. Literature can only come alive through the _____ imagination.
- e. The Divine Comedy is written by _____

7.2.2 Philosophy and Ideas – Conceptual Framework :

Philosophy, in general sense, is a belief or a system of beliefs which are accepted by some group or school. The philosophy of literature deals with the question, "what is art" ? Since ages, the fundamental question that remained preoccupied among the philosophers was the relationship between ideas in the human mind and the world existing outside the mind. Plato displays a strong hostility to the contents of the literary culture of his period, and proposes a strong censorship of popular literature in his utopia.

In philosophy, ideas are usually taken as mental representational images of some object. Ideas can be abstract concepts that do not present as mental images. Many philosophers have considered ideas to be a fundamental ontological category of being. The capacity to create and understand the meaning of ideas is considered to be an essential and defining feature of human beings. In a popular sense, an idea arises in a reflexive, spontaneous manner, even without thinking or serious reflection, for example, when we talk about the idea of a person or a place. A new or original idea can often lead to innovation.

One view on the nature of ideas is that there exist some ideas (called innate ideas) which are so general and abstract that they could not have arisen as a representation of an object of our perception but rather were in some sense always present. Another view holds that we only discover ideas in the same way that we discover the real world, from personal experiences. Humans acquire all or almost all their behavioral traits from nurture (life experiences). Plato, in Ancient Greece, was one of the earliest philosophers to provide a detailed discussion of ideas and of the thinking process. Plato argued in dialogues such as the *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Republic*, and *Timaeus* that there is a realm of ideas or forms, which exist independently of anyone who may have thoughts on these ideas, and it is the ideas which distinguish mere opinion from knowledge, for unlike material things which are transient and liable to contrary properties, ideas are unchanging and nothing but just what they are. Plato seems to assert forcefully that material things can only be the objects of opinion; real knowledge can only be had of unchanging ideas. Material things are seen, but not intellected, while the ideas are intellected but not seen."

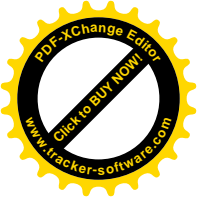


For Descartes knowledge took the form of ideas and philosophical investigation is the deep consideration of ideas. In a Lockean view, there are really two types of ideas : complex and simple. Simple ideas are the building blocks for much more complex ideas, and while the mind is wholly passive in the reception of simple ideas, it is very active in the building of complex ideas. Hume limited idea to the more or less vague mental reconstructions of perceptions, the perceptual process being described as an “impression.” Immanuel Kant defines an idea as opposed to a concept. “Regulative ideas” are ideals that one must tend towards, but by definition may not be completely realized. Liberty, according to Kant, is an idea. Rudolf Steiner sees ideas as “objects of experience” which the mind apprehends, much as the eye apprehends light.

In “How to Make Our Ideas Clear” C. S. Peirce proposed that a clear idea is defined as one, when it is apprehended such as it will be recognized wherever it is met, and no other will be mistaken for it. If it fails of this clearness, it is said to be obscure. G. F. Stout and J. M. Baldwin, in the Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology, define idea as “the reproduction with a more or less adequate image, of an object not actually present to the senses.” It should be observed that an idea, in the narrower and generally accepted sense of a mental reproduction, is frequently composite. When a man, for example, has obtained an idea of chairs in general by comparison with which he can say “This is a chair, that is a stool”, he has what is known as an “abstract idea” distinct from the reproduction in his mind of any particular chair. Furthermore, a complex idea may not have any corresponding physical object, though its particular constituent elements may severally be the reproductions of actual perceptions.

Diffusion studies explore the spread of ideas from culture to culture. Some anthropological theories hold that all cultures imitate ideas from one or a few original cultures. Cultures are influenced by one another. In the mid-20th century, social scientists began to study how and why ideas spread from one person or culture to another. Johnson claimed that they are mental images or internal visual pictures. As such, they have no relation to words or the concepts which are designated by verbal names.

An ideology is a collection of normative beliefs and values that an individual or group holds for other than purely epistemic reasons. Ideology must be seen neither as hegemonic nor static. Ideology is accepted as a commonsense view of things presented by the power holder class. In this way the interests of the ruling class is secured. While Althusser, a Marxist critic, names this as an “imaginary consciousness”, Roland Barthes, a post-modernist calls it as “myth”. Both of them agree that this is a weapon of the power holders used to inject the dominant ideology of the society. Another Marxist critic, Terry Eagleton shares the same idea saying that ideology does not only inject its own beliefs but it also “denigrates ideas which might challenge it”, excluding rival forms of thought, “obscuring social reality”. The use of language by the power holders as a weapon to inject the dominant ideology of the society is argued by Lacan and Kristeva.



SELF EVALUATION EXERCISE 2

- 1. What is philosophy ?
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.....
- 2. How ideas are conceptualize in philosophy ?
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.....
.....
- 3. Discuss views of Descartes Locke and Hume about ideas.
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.....
.....
- 4. What is an ideology ?
.....
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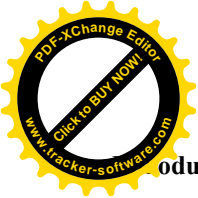
SAY TRUE OR FALSE.

- a. Aristotle displays a strong hostility to the contents of the literary culture of his period.
- b. Republic is written by Plato.
- c. Material things are seen, but not intellected, while the ideas are intellected but not seen.”
- d. Liberty, according to Hume, is an idea.
- e. Althusser was a Marxist critic.

7.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND IDEAS

Philosophy and literature involves the literary treatment of philosophers and philosophical themes (the literature of philosophy), and the philosophical treatment of issues rose by literature (the philosophy of literature). Many attempts to interpret poetry as a kind of philosophy or philosophy as a kind of poetry or to identify the study of either poetry or philosophy with the history of ideas. Olusegun argues that both literature and philosophy are related on two general notes. He argues that they are both forms of “social consciousness and they are constructions of language.”

The relationship between philosophy and literature is not a thing to be discovered and described once and for all, but rather a question constantly recreated by writers, critics and philosophers responding to new situations. Attempts to define the relationship between philosophy and literature have often been set out as binary oppositions viz. universal versus particular, reason versus imagination, insight versus emotion, argument versus form.

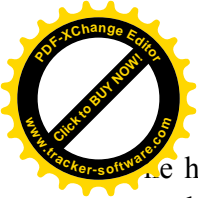


The first level of their relationship is the fact that both literature and philosophy are social phenomena. According to Oladipo, they are social not just in the general sense of being produced by people who make up the society; rather they are social in majorly two ways : both philosophy and Literature are born out of human experiences of an individual or groups and they often treat very abstract matters that arise from a reflective pondering on the phenomena of life. Both are products of culture. Again they are social in another expression. They are both produced for the intellectual and practical needs of the society. From the points above, it is lucid that both disciplines focus on the same object which can be construed as the human person in the various aspects of his experience. They both reflect the quest for the better understanding and the tackling the problems of human existence.

The second broad connection of the two disciplines is the idea that they are both constructions in language. Philosophy develops concepts and clarifies them, while literature engages these words to communicate ideas, figures and moral principles and to enlarge realities. Furthermore, both philosophy and literature mirror the society together with the society's development and state. The philosophy of an era tells of the nature of that age likewise the literature of an epoch tells of the problems and realities of that period. They both reflect the beliefs of men about realities. Hence, through criticism of the ideas we live by, philosophy dishes out norms that should regulate the thinking and behaviour of men in the society. In the same vein, literature has themes that convey morality pedagogically. For instance, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* or Shakespearean's *Hamlet*.

Both, philosophy and literature are systematic presentations. They are not just some zigzagged amalgamation and mishmash of materials. Finally, philosophy and literature interacts in delving into each other's area of discourse. More importantly, philosophy interrogates literature through the device of Literal Criticism. Literal criticism is the philosophical analyses cum judgments of works of art and literature. The Associate Professor of philosophy at Stanford University, Lanier Anderson contributed to this debate of relationship and it is apt to mention it at this juncture. He argues that : "Great Literature is often deeply philosophical and Great Philosophy is often great literature". For literature to take its rightful pace and fulfill its function in the society it has to wear some sorts of philosophy. In fact, some literatures like Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* are widely termed philosophical.

To cast philosophers as the guardians of universality, reason, insight and argument is to strip literature of its ambition to provide knowledge, thought and truth. It is also to ban passion and beauty from philosophy. Often criticism reduces the literary text to an example of a pre-existing theory or philosophy. Literature works 'behind philosophy's back'. Yet its work is not 'outside' philosophy, but 'essential' to it, as if philosophy has to turn around, to look behind itself to find fundamental 'illuminations' it can't find in any other way. By neglecting the turn, or return to literature, philosophy will overlook fundamental insights available only to the philosopher willing to stop, pause, turn back and pick up the pearls strewn on a path he thought



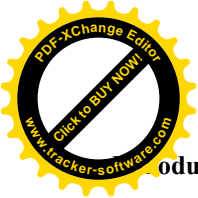
He had already explored. Criticism—the work of reading—is here connected to the idea of stopping, pausing, paying attention and looking more closely. Cavell wants to make a place for literature within philosophy, both because he thinks literature contains illuminations of value to philosophy, and because he thinks that the question of expression and experience lie at the very heart of philosophy. On this view, criticism—the act of accounting for one's experience of a work of art—can be philosophy.

We often begin reading by trying to get at least a general idea of what the work is about, what its major concerns and concepts are. At first, we may only form a hazy idea of the whole. To get a clearer view, we zoom in on key concepts, study the examples, circle back to passages that illuminate them, look for the arguments, the contradictions and the exceptions. In the end, we come out with a workable understanding of the book's concerns. If it really fascinates us, we may engage with it again, maybe revise some of our initial impressions, try to get clear on why it strikes us as important and reflect on what we can use it for in our own work. What can be the role of literature in this context ? Since literature is created to cater to the needs of the powerful class in any existing society, it will pay lip service to the existing power structure. But the subversive nature of literature, especially novel as a genre would not abide by the rules of that society. Seemingly catering to the needs of that society, it questions, challenges and exposes the weakness of the society which is best exemplified in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.

Literature exposes the terrible weaknesses of every community and demonstrates how societies through myths try to disguise their serious flaws. Foucault agrees with this view and says “though literature belongs to the great system of constraint” all the same, it has a special place in that system determined to seek quotidian beneath the quotidian itself, to cross boundaries, to ruthlessly or insidiously bring out secrets in the open, to displace rules or codes, to compel the unmentionable to be told, it will thus tend to place itself outside the law, or at least take on the burden of scandal, transgression, or revolt. More than any other form of language it remains the discourse of “infamy” : it has the duty of saying what is most resistant to being said—the worst, the secret, the most insufferable, the shameless” It is this special quality of literature which makes it a unique way of telling the truth.

SELF EVALUATION EXERCISE 3

1. What do Philosophy and literature involve ?
.....
.....
.....
2. “Literature and philosophy are social phenomena” – Justify.
.....
.....
.....



3. "Philosophy and literature are systematic presentations" Elaborate
-
-
-
4. Discuss Foucault's views about literature and philosophy.
-
-
-

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

- a. _____ argues that both literature and philosophy are forms of "social consciousness and they are constructions of language."
- b. _____ develops concepts and clarifies them.
- c. Philosophy interrogates literature through the device of _____.
- d. _____ argues that "Great Literature is often deeply philosophical and Great Philosophy is often great literature".
- e. Cavell ____ thinks literature contains illuminations of value to philosophy.

7.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;

- what is literature,
- what are the qualities of literature,
- what is philosophy and ideas,
- relationship between literature and ideas.

7.5 KEY WORDS

Literature : fictional and imaginative writings—poetry, prose fiction, and drama; a permanent expression in words of some thought or feeling or idea about life and the world

Qualities of good literature : (1) life-likeness, (b) sincerity and (c) suggestiveness.

Philosophy : a belief or a system of beliefs which are accepted by some group or school.

Ideas : mental representational images of some object

Ideology : a collection of normative beliefs and values that an individual or group holds for other than purely epistemic reasons; a commonsense view of things presented by the power holder class.

Literature and Philosophy : both are social phenomena; both are constructions in language; both are systematic presentations

7.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Crane : R.S. Literature, Philosophy, and the History of Ideas Modern Philology, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Nov., 1954), pp. 73–83 : The University of Chicago Press : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/434715>

Cf. Sartre, “what is Literature”, <http://www.sartreorg/index.html>

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Moramollu, Gulrah : Ideology and Literature. http://akademikpersonel.kocaeli.edu.tr/gulrah/diger/gulrah04.01.2017_13.53.15diger.pdf

Olusegun Oladipo, Dialogue in African Philosophy– monograph Series : Philosophy, Literature and the African Novel

Karl, Frederick., R.A Reader's Guide to The Development of The English Novel in The Eighteenth Century. London : Thames and Hudson, 1974.

Rees, R.J. English Literature : An Introduction for Foreign Readers. New Delhi : Macmillan, 2001.

Sinha, Manindra Nath. A Handbook of the Study of Literature. Bareilly : 1996.

ANSWERS

Self-Evaluation Exercise 1

1. Two definitions of literature are as under.
 - a. Literature is a permanent expression in words of some thought or feeling or idea about life and the world.
 - b. Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an experience of life through the medium of language.

Literature ,can be considered as a written imaginative and literal work with significance and a permanent artistic value. It must be imaginative, it must be written and then it must contain artistic values.

2. There are some qualities of good literature. These qualities are (a) life-likeness,(b) sincerity and (c) suggestiveness. While reading a poem or a novel or a drama we should feel that the feelings or ideas expressed in it corresponds to our own. We feel pleasure in reading a piece of literature, because in it we find the reflection of our own joys and sorrows. A good literature has sincerity to oneself, to one's own experience of life and to the truth of things as one has seen it. A writer, if he wants to live, must write of what lies at his own doors, and must report faithfully only that which he has lived through, seen, thought, felt and known for himself. Without sincerity nothing great can be accomplished in literature.



3. The Mahabharata, The paradise Lost, The Ramayana , The Iliad, The Odyssey etc. are the great epics. They contain qualities of good literature. When we read The Ramayana , we feel life–likeness in it. The incidences happened in it may occur to anyone of us. It is sincere as it depicts the real human situation. It is suggestive that the issues occurred to Rama or Sita or Ravana may occur to us if we are under such circumstances.
4. The tragedies of Shakespeare are universal. Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, all have suggestiveness. Hamlet's procrastination is the real cause of his tragedy. His character suggests us not to commit the mistakes that he committed to avoid any tragic incidence in our life.
5. Fill in the blanks.
 - a. philosophical
 - b. Latin
 - c. Sigmund Freud
 - d. creative
 - e. Dante

Self-Evaluation Exercise 2

1. Philosophy, in general sense, is a belief or a system of beliefs which are accepted by some group or school.
2. Ideas are usually taken as mental representational images of some object. Ideas can be abstract concepts that do not present as mental images. Many philosophers have considered ideas to be a fundamental ontological category of being. The capacity to create and understand the meaning of ideas is considered to be an essential and defining feature of human beings. In a popular sense, an idea arises in a reflexive, spontaneous manner, even without thinking or serious reflection, for example, when we talk about the idea of a person or a place. A new or original idea can often lead to innovation.
3. Philosophers like Descartes, Hume, Kant discuss various views about ideas. According to Descartes knowledge took the form of ideas and philosophical investigation is the deep consideration of ideas. Whereas Hume limited idea to the more or less vague mental reconstructions of perceptions, the perceptual process being described as an “impression.”
4. An ideology is a collection of normative beliefs and values that an individual or group holds for other than purely epistemic reasons. Ideology must be seen neither as hegemonic nor static. Ideology is accepted as a commonsense view of things presented by the power holder class.
5. Say true or false.
 - a. false
 - b. true
 - c. true
 - d. false
 - e. true

Self-Evaluation Exercise 3

1. Philosophy and literature involves the literary treatment of philosophers and philosophical themes (the literature of philosophy), and the



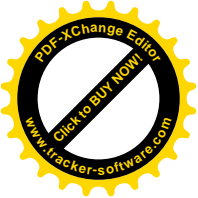
philosophical treatment of issues raised by literature (the philosophy of literature). What do Philosophy and literature involve ?

2. Literature and Philosophy, are both forms of “social consciousness and they are constructions of language.”

According to Oladipo, they are social not just in the general sense of being produced by people who make up the society; rather they are social in majorly two ways : both philosophy and Literature are born out of human experiences of an individual or groups and they often treat very abstract matters that arise from a reflective pondering on the phenomena of life. Both are products of culture. Again they are social in another expression. They are both produced for the intellectual and practical needs of the society. From the points above, it is lucid that both disciplines focus on the same object which can be construed as the human person in the various aspects of his experience. They both reflect the quest for the better understanding and the tackling the problems of human existence.

3. Both, philosophy and literature are systematic presentations. They are not just some zigzagged amalgamation and mishmash of materials. Finally, philosophy and literature interacts in delving into each other's area of discourse. More importantly, philosophy interrogates literature through the device of Literal Criticism. Literal criticism is the philosophical analyses cum judgments of works of art and literature. The Associate Professor of philosophy at Stanford University, Lanier Anderson contributed to this debate of relationship and it is apt to mention it at this juncture. He argues that : “Great Literature is often deeply philosophical and Great Philosophy is often great literature”. For literature to take its rightful pace and fulfill its function in the society it has to wear some sorts of philosophy.
4. Foucault agrees with the view that literature exposes the terrible weaknesses of every community and demonstrates how societies through myths try to disguise their serious flaws. He says “though literature belongs to the great system of constraint” all the same, it has a special place in that system determined to seek quotidian beneath the quotidian itself, to cross boundaries, to ruthlessly or insidiously bring out secrets in the open, to displace rules or codes, to compel the unmentionable to be told, it will thus tend to place itself outside the law, or at least take on the burden of scandal, transgression, or revolt.
5. Fill in the blanks.
 - a. Olusegun
 - b. Philosophy
 - c. Literal Criticism
 - d. Lanier Anderson
 - e. Cavell

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆



UNIT 8

THE STRANGER BY ALBERT CAMUS – FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND IDEAS/PHILOSOPHY

: STRUCTURE :

8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.2 *The Stranger* – at a Glance

8.2.1 About the Author

8.2.2 Plot of the Novel

8.2.3 Characterization

8.2.4 Theme of the Novel

8.3 *The Stranger* : Literature and Philosophy

8.4 Let Us Sum Up

8.5 Key Words

8.6 Books Suggested

Answers

8.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- discuss *The Stranger* written by Albert Camus,
- discuss the plot and characterization in *The Stranger*,
- get the idea of relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy and interpret *The Stranger* from that perspective.

On completing the unit, you will;

- get an idea about *The Stranger* as a novel,
- be able to know how to interpret a *The Stranger* from philosophical perspective,
- acquire knowledge of appreciating *The Stranger* with its relationship with ideas.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The Stranger is a novel written by Albert Camus, published in French as *L'Étranger* in 1942. The novel discusses the universal predicament of human being i.e. our existence in the world. Camus considers *The Stranger* as a platform to explore absurdity, and interrogates the meaning of life of our existence. The central idea that Camus wishes to convey is that the significance of human life is only understood at the point of death. The novel communicates the fundamental philosophy that accurate perception of life is obtained only when a person faces possibility of death. Through literary medium, the novel correlates literature with philosophy.

8.2 THE STRANGER – AT A GLANCE

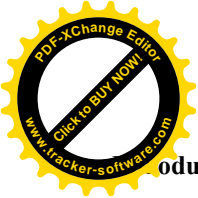
A literary piece of writing reflects the society and it gives voices to the ideas of an author. It has, to some extent, certain autobiographical incidences in it. The narrator of the novel, Meursault is depicted as indifferent to worldly affairs, including sorrows of mother's death and love of a woman. Camus considered the Absurd to be a fundamental and even defining characteristic of the modern human condition. The notion of revolt refers to both a path of resolved action and a state of mind.

8.2.1 About the Author :

Albert Camus (1913–1960) was born in French Algeria to a Pied-Noir family. *The Stranger* is written by Camus which narrates tragedy and suffering. His father had died in World War I. The growing bloodshed of World War II forced a questioning of life and its meaning. Camus witnessed ill-treatment of native Algerians during the French occupation of Algeria, which had begun in the first half of the 19th century and, after World War I, was opposed by a growing nationalist movement. This conflict can be visualized in Meursault's killing of 'the Arab' the only name he uses to refer to Raymond's mistress's brother. The murder has been read by some as a metaphor for the treatment of Algerian Muslims by the colonizing French. Camus published *The Stranger* at a time when Algerians were demanding political autonomy with increased forcefulness; although France did extend some rights during the 1940s, ongoing conflicts and failed French promises of more independence culminated in the outbreak of the Algerian War in 1954.

Albert Camus was a French–Algerian journalist, playwright, novelist, philosophical essayist, and Nobel laureate. Though he was not professional a philosopher, he made important contributions to a wide range of issues in moral philosophy in his novels, reviews, articles, essays, and speeches which include terrorism and political violence to suicide and the death penalty. He is often described as an existentialist writer, though he himself disavowed the label. He began his literary career as a political journalist and as an actor, director, and playwright in Algeria. His famous novels are *The Stranger* (1942), *The Rebel* (1951) and *The Plague* (1947.) In his works, he introduced and developed the twin philosophical ideas—the concept of the Absurd and the notion of Revolt—that made him famous. The Absurd can be defined as a metaphysical tension or opposition that results from the presence of human consciousness—with its ever–pressing demand for order and meaning in life—in an essentially meaningless and indifferent universe. It consists of an attitude of heroic defiance or resistance to whatever oppresses human beings. In awarding Camus its prize for literature in 1957, the Nobel Prize committee cited his persistent efforts to “illuminate the problem of the human conscience in our time.” He was honored by his own generation, and is still admired today, for being a writer of conscience and a champion of imaginative literature as a vehicle of philosophical insight and moral truth. He died in 1960.

The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy



8.2.2 Plot of the Novel :

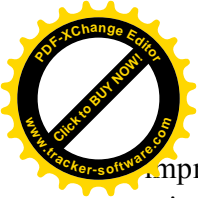
The narrator of the novel is Meursault, who is a young man living in Algiers. The novel begins with the receipt of a telegram informing death of Meursault's mother. He takes a bus to Marengo, where his mother had been living in an old persons' home. When he reaches there, he speaks to the director of the home. The director allows Meursault to see his mother, but Meursault finds that her body has already been sealed in the coffin. He declines the caretaker's offer to open the coffin.

Throughout the night, Meursault keeps watch over his mother's body. The talkative caretaker stays with him but Meursault does not like it much. Meursault smokes a cigarette, drinks coffee, and dozes off. The next day, before the funeral, he meets with the director again. Thomas Perez, an old man who had grown very close to Meursault mother, will be attending the funeral service. But Perez has difficulty keeping up and eventually faints from the heat. Meursault reports that he remembers little of the funeral. That night, he happily arrives back in Algiers.

Meursault goes to the public beach for a swim. There, he meets Marie Cardona, his former co-worker and they two make a date at the movie theatre. And spend the night together. Marie leaves Meursault before he wakes up in the morning. Meursault spends the whole day in the balcony watching people passing on the street. The next day is a Monday and Meursault returns to his routine work and has his lunch with his friend Emmanuel. At night near his apartment, Meursault meets Salamano, an old man who lives in his building and owns a mangy dog. Meursault also meets his neighbour, Raymond Sintes, who is widely rumored to be a pimp. Raymond invites Meursault over for dinner. After dinner, Raymond narrates how he beat up his mistress after he discovered that she had been cheating on him. Later, he got into a fight with her brother. Raymond wants to torment his mistress even more in revenge, but he needs Meursault to write a letter to lure his mistress back to him. Meursault agrees and writes the letter.

The next Saturday, Marie visits Meursault at his apartment. She asks Meursault if he loves her, and he replies in negative. At that time they hear shouting coming from Raymond's apartment and arrival of a policeman there. The policeman slaps Raymond and summoned him to the police station for beating up his mistress. Later, Raymond asks Meursault to testify on his behalf, and Meursault agrees. That night, Raymond runs into Salamano, who laments that his dog has run away.

On Marie's marriage proposal, Meursault replies indifferently but they become engaged. Meursault, Marie, and Raymond go to a beach house owned by Masson, one of Raymond's friends. They enjoy swimming at the beach and have lunch there. That afternoon, Masson, Raymond, and Meursault run into two Arabs on the beach, one of whom is the brother of Raymond's mistress. A fight breaks out and Raymond is stabbed. After tending to his wounds, Raymond returns to the beach with Meursault. They find the Arabs at a spring. Raymond considers shooting them with his gun, but Meursault talks him out of it and takes the gun away. Later, Meursault shoots Raymond's mistress's brother, for no apparent reason. Meursault is



The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy

imprisoned. His lawyer is disgusted at Meursault's lack of remorse over the crime that he committed and also at Meursault's lack of grief at his mother's funeral. Later, the magistrate brandishes a crucifix and demands that Meursault put his faith in God. Meursault refuses saying that he is atheist. The magistrate dubs him "Monsieur Antichrist."

One day, Marie comes to see Meursault in prison. She is hopeful that Meursault will be acquitted and that they will get married. As he awaits his trial, Meursault slowly adapts to prison life. His isolation from nature, women, and cigarettes torments him at first, but he eventually adjusts to living without them. He manages to keep his mind occupied, and he sleeps for most of the time.

Meursault is taken to the courthouse full of Spectators and members of the press for Meursault's trial. The subject of the trial quickly shifts away from the murder to a general discussion of Meursault's character, and of his reaction to his mother's death in particular. Meursault is charged as a person lack of grief or tears. Marie confesses that the day after his mother's funeral she and Meursault went on a date and saw a comic movie. During his summation the following day, the prosecutor calls Meursault a monster and says that his lack of moral feeling threatens all of society. Meursault is found guilty and is sentenced to death by beheading.

There is a sudden change in the behavior of Meursault. He returns to prison to await his execution. He struggles to come to terms with his situation, and he has trouble accepting the certainty and inevitability of his fate. He imagines escaping and he dreams of filing a successful legal appeal. One day, the chaplain comes and urges Meursault to renounce his atheism and turn to God, but Meursault refuses. Meursault suddenly becomes enraged, grabs the chaplain, and begins shouting at him. He declares that he is correct in believing in a meaningless, purely physical world. For the first time, Meursault truly embraces the idea that human existence holds no greater meaning. He abandons all hope for the future and accepts the "gentle indifference of the world." Meursault's acceptance makes him happy.

SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 1

1. What does Camus consider *The Stranger* is about ?

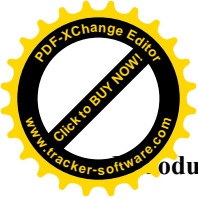
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2. In which field did Camus contribute ?

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3. When did Camus win Nobel Prize in literature ?

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4. Narrate the incidence of Meursault's journey to attend his mother's funeral in your own words.

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5. Describe in brief Raymond's encounter with the Arabs.

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6. Why does Meursault shoot the brother of Raymond's mistress ?

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SAY TRUE OR FALSE.

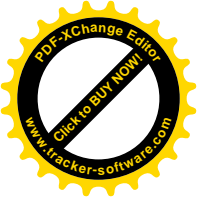
1. Originally, *The Stranger* is written in Spanish language.
2. Meursault marries Marie.
3. At the end, Meursault commits suicide.
4. Raymond is stabbed by an Arab.
5. Salamano laments that his dog has run away.

8.2.3 Characterization :

Literature is reflection of life and characters in any text portray vivid personalities with peculiarities in their character.

Meursault : In the novel, Meursault is a protagonist and narrator. The title of the novel – *The Stranger* – refers to him. Meursault is a detached figure, emotionally indifferent to others including to his mother and his lover, Marie. He does not have any emotional attachments with anyone including his mother and Marie. He does not care that his mother is dead, or that Marie loves him. He rejects the moral order of the society. He does not think of hiding his lack of feeling by shedding false tears over his mother's death. Because of this kind of attitude, the society considers him as an outsider, a threat, even a monster. He is put on trial as he kills a man, "the Arab," for no apparent reason. Later on, the focus of Meursault's murder trial shifts away from the murder itself to Meursault's attitudes and beliefs. Meursault's atheism and his lack of outward grief at his mother's funeral represent a serious challenge to the morals of the society in which he lives. As a result, he is considered as an outsider.

But at a micro level, Meursault is neither moral nor immoral. He may rather, be considered as amoral—he simply does not make the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' in his own mind. When Raymond asks him to write a letter that will help Raymond torment his mistress, Meursault agrees because he is indifferent to such matters. After his encounter with the chaplain, he concludes that the universe is, like



him, totally indifferent to human life. He decides that people's lives have no grand meaning or importance, and that their actions, their comings and goings, have no effect on the world. When Meursault accepts "the gentle indifference of the world," he finds peace with himself and with the society around him. Through the character of Meursault Camus conveys the reality of human nature and condition.

Marie Cardona : In the novel, Marie is a former co-worker of Meursault whose affair with him starts immediately after the funeral of Meursault mother. Marie is young and high-spirited lady. She delights in swimming and the outdoors. Meursault's likes her because of her physical beauty. Marie delights in physical contact similar to Meursault. She enjoys the act of sex. However, unlike Meursault's physical affection for Marie, Marie's physical affection for Meursault signals a deeper sentimental and emotional attachment. Though Marie is disappointed when Meursault expresses his indifference toward love and marriage, she does not end the relationship or rethink her desire to marry him. There may be an element of pragmatism in Marie's decision to marry Meursault. When they are not together, Meursault does not take much interest in Marie, and so Marie enjoys a lot in this freedom of relationship. She tries to support and remain loyal to Meursault when he is arrested and put on trial.

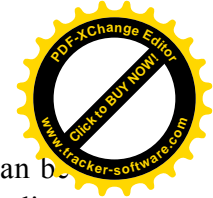
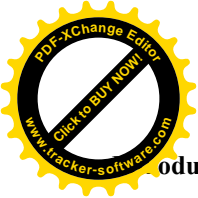
In the context of Camus's absurdist philosophy, Marie's loyalty represents a mixed blessing, because her feelings of faith and hope prevent her from reaching the understanding that Meursault attains at the end of the novel. The author implies that Marie, lacking the deeper understanding of the universe that Meursault has attained, is less "enlightened" than Meursault.

Raymond Sintes : Raymond is a local pimp and Meursault's neighbour. He suspects that his mistress cheats him and so to punish her, he asks Meursault to help. There is a sharp contrast in character of Raymond and Meursault. Meursault is detached person whereas Raymond behaves with emotion and initiative. Additionally, whereas Meursault passively reacts to the events around him, Raymond initiates action. He is also violent, and beats his mistress as well as the two Arabs on the beach, one of whom is his mistress's brother. Raymond uses Meursault in his schemes. However, he helps Meursault during trial which shows his loyalty.

Raymond draws Meursault into conflict with 'the Arab' and eventually Meursault kills the Arab in cold blood. Raymond becomes the catalyst in Meursault's downfall as well as enlightenment. Raymond gives Meursault the gun that Meursault later uses to kill the Arab. The murder by Meursault and his subsequent trial bring about Meursault's realization of the indifference of the universe. A good deal of ambiguity exists in Raymond's relationship with Meursault. On the one hand, Raymond convinces Meursault to help him in his schemes to punish his mistress, and to testify on his behalf at the police station. On the other hand, Raymond seems to feel some loyalty toward Meursault. He asserts Meursault's innocence at the murder trial,



The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy



attributing the events leading up to the killing to “chance.” It can be said that Raymond begins his relationship with Meursault intending only to use him, and then, like Marie, becomes drawn to Meursault's peculiarities.

Meursault's Mother : Madame Meursault's death begins the action of the novel. Three years prior, Meursault sent her to an old persons' home. Meursault identifies with his mother and believes that she shared many of his attitudes about life, including a love of nature and the capacity to become accustomed to virtually any situation or occurrence. Meursault decides that, toward the end of her life, his mother must have embraced a meaningless universe and lived for the moment, just as he does.

The Chaplain : A priest who attends to the religious needs of condemned men, the chaplain acts as a catalyst for Meursault's psychological and philosophical development. The chaplain seems threatened by Meursault's stubborn atheism. Eventually, Meursault becomes enraged and angrily asserts that life is meaningless and that all men are condemned to die. This argument triggers Meursault's final acceptance of the meaninglessness of the universe.

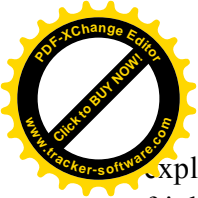
Salamano : One of Meursault's neighbors. Salamano owns an old dog that suffers from mange, and he frequently curses at and beats his pet. However, after Salamano loses his dog, he weeps and longs for its return. His strong grief over losing his dog contrasts with Meursault's indifference at losing his mother.

The Arab : The brother of Raymond's mistress. On the Sunday that Raymond, Meursault, and Marie spend at Masson's beach house, Meursault kills the Arab with Raymond's gun. The crime is apparently motiveless—the Arab has done nothing to Meursault. The Arab's mysteriousness as a character makes Meursault's crime all the more strange and difficult to understand.

8.2.4 Theme of the Novel :

Any literary text conveys some fundamental and universally accepted ideas. *The Stranger* conveys a strong resonance of Camus's philosophical notion of absurdity. In his works, Camus asserts that in general, individual lives and human existence have no rational meaning or order. But it is very difficult to accept this notion and so people constantly attempt to identify or create rational structure and meaning in their lives. The term ‘absurdity’ describes futile attempt of the humanity to find rational order where none exists. Neither the external world in which Meursault lives nor the internal world of his thoughts and attitudes possesses any rational order. Meursault has no discernable reason for his actions viz. to marry Marie and to kill the Arab.

Society nonetheless attempts to fabricate or impose rational explanations for Meursault's irrational actions. The trial sequence in Part Two of the novel represents society's attempt to manufacture rational order. The prosecutor and Meursault's lawyer both offer explanations for Meursault's crime that are based on logic, reason, and the concept of cause and effect. Yet these



Explanations have no basis in fact and serve only as attempts to defuse the frightening idea that the universe is irrational. The entire trial is therefore an example of absurdity—an instance of humankind's futile attempt to impose rationality on an irrational universe.

The novel conveys 'Meaninglessness of Human Life'. Camus argues that the only certain thing in life is the inevitability of death, and because all humans will eventually meet death, all lives are all equally meaningless. Meursault gradually moves toward this realization throughout the novel, but he does not fully grasp it until after his argument with the chaplain in the final chapter. Meursault realizes that, just as he is indifferent to much of the universe, so is the universe indifferent to him. Like all people, Meursault has been born, will die, and will have no further importance. Only after Meursault reaches this seemingly dismal realization is he able to attain happiness.

The Stranger shows Meursault to be interested far more in the physical aspects of the world around him than in its social or emotional aspects. This focus on the sensate world results from the novel's assertion that there exists no higher meaning or order to human life. Throughout *The Stranger*, Meursault's attention centers on his own body, on his physical relationship with Marie, on the weather, and on other physical elements of his surroundings. For example, the heat during the funeral procession causes Meursault far more pain than the thought of burying his mother. The sun on the beach torments Meursault, and during his trial Meursault even identifies his suffering under the sun as the reason he killed the Arab.

SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 2

1. "Meursault is a detached personality, indifferent to happy and sad events of life." – Justify this statement in the light of character of Meursault.

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2. Describe the relationship between Marie Cardona and Meursault.

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3. How does Raymond use Meursault in schemes ?

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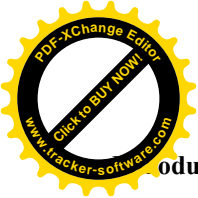
4. Narrate Salamano's attachment with the dog.

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The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy



5. Write a detailed note on major themes of the novel.

.....

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.....

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

1. Meursault sent his mother to _____ before three years of her death.
2. Meursault interested far more in the _____ of the world around him than in its social or emotional aspects.
3. Meursault killed _____ .
4. _____ acts as a catalyst for Meursault's psychological and philosophical development. the chaplain.

8.3 THE STRANGER : LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

In *The Stranger*, Camus has applied American style of writing. Simple, short and precise sentences, depiction of characters ostensibly without consciousness. Camus is a philosophical writer in the sense that he has (a) conceived his own distinctive and original world-view and (b) sought to convey that view mainly through images, fictional characters and events, and via dramatic presentation rather than through critical analysis and direct discourse. He is also both a novelist of ideas and a psychological novelist. Though he was baptized, raised, and educated as a Catholic, Camus seems to have been a natural-born pagan who showed almost no instinct whatsoever for belief in the supernatural. Even as a youth, he was more of a sun-worshipper and nature lover than has piety or religious faith.

In existentialism, it is widely viewed that life starts without any specific reason, and is lived through with lack of energy and desire, and ends by chance. It is defined as irrational, meaningless and absurd. Immediate perception of life seems different but ultimate stance of life is similar to each other in terms of lack of energy and desire. Moreover, existentialism claims itself to be superior on basis of human freedom characterized by freedom of choice and moral responsibility of deeds, and thus it liberates human life from determinism. Apparently the existentialists tend to enjoy absolute freedom independent of any external influence, and they even feel that psychologically but in practice we see that they are controlled by their sense of sincerity and autonomous quality. It can be observed here that the rationality and legitimacy of human will depends on taking moral responsibility of an action. It means, to the existentialists, freedom, a manifestation of psychological quality, functions as the sole principle of moral values guided by personal sincerity and autonomy. But if freedom includes the concepts like "personal sincerity" and "autonomy," defined through social essences, it becomes no longer uncurbed exercise of human will rather it works like an illusion of freedom under a kind of self-imposed regulations. Albert Camus, despite being an existentialist, does not want to define life as such rather he takes life as it is which must be lived through, suffered, defied yet cannot be explained adequately. Meursault, the protagonist reflects



Conflicts in terms of his existence and essence of society. Though he apparently seems to be psychologically free, he cannot wield his freedom under social realities. Moreover, through his trial the novelist implies that social essence stands against individual freedom and feelings. The judicial system appears to be fake and biased where justice as a the system is a sarcasm and not interested in the murder he committed; rather the system is considering him as a threat based on some peculiar traits. His non-conformity to the current codes has been the real cause behind his execution, and it takes to another point that legal system is not here to judge right and wrong, rather to ensure conformity and to nail peculiarity with the best possible steps.

The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy

SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 3

1. Explain the following : A. Existentialism B. Absurd
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2. Discuss the major philosophical ideas are explored in *The Stranger*.
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3. On the basis of *The Stranger*, write in your own words about relationship between literature and philosophy.
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SAY TRUE OR FALSE.

- a. Camus was an atheist.
- b. In existentialist philosophy, it is widely viewed that life starts without any specific reason.

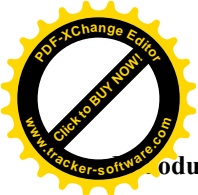
8.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;
he life and work of Albert Camus,
detailed study of the novel *The Stranger*,
relationship between philosophy and ideas with reference to *The Stranger*.

8.5 KEY WORDS

Novel : it is a fictitious prose narrative of book length, typically representing character and action with some degree of realism.

Existentialism : is a philosophical theory or approach which emphasizes the existence of the individual person as a free and responsible agent determining their own development through acts of will.



Absurdism : the belief that human being exists in a purposeless, chaotic universe.

Pagan : a non –Christian

8.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Camus, Albert | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <https://www.iep.utm.edu/camus/> 1/19

<http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2023%20Issue1/Version-10/E2301103034.pdf>

https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1093&context=utk_chanhonoproj

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/stranger/>

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/49552.The_Stranger

ANSWERS

Self-Evaluation Exercise 1

1. Camus considers *The Stranger* as a platform to explore absurdity, and interrogates the meaning of life of our existence.
2. In which field did Camus contributed a wide range of issues in moral philosophy in his novels, reviews, articles, essays, and speeches which include terrorism and political violence to suicide and the death penalty
3. Camus won Nobel Prize in literature in the year 1957.
4. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words. A sample is given here.)

Meursault receives a telegram of death of his mother. He takes a bus to Marengo, where his mother had been living in an old persons' home. When he reaches there, he speaks to the director of the home. The director allows Meursault to see his mother, but Meursault finds that her body has already been sealed in the coffin. He declines the caretaker's offer to open the coffin.

5. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words. A sample is given here.) That afternoon, Masson, Raymond, and Meursault run into two Arabs on the beach, one of whom is the brother of Raymond's mistress. A fight breaks out and Raymond is stabbed. After tending to his wounds, Raymond returns to the beach with Meursault. They find the Arabs at a spring. Raymond considers shooting them with his gun, but Meursault talks him out of it and takes the gun away. Later, however, Meursault returns to the spring to cool off, and, for no apparent reason, he shoots Raymond's mistress's brother.
6. Meursault shoots the brother of Raymond's mistress because he stabbed Raymond.
7. Say true or false.

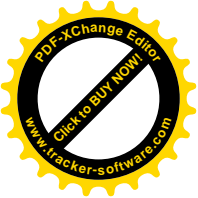
1. false

2. false

3. false

4. true

5. true



SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 2



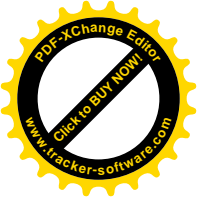
The Stranger by Albert Camus – from the point of view of Relationship between Literature and Ideas/philosophy

1. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words. A sample is given here.) The protagonist and narrator of *The Stranger*, to whom the novel's title refers. Meursault is a detached figure who views and describes much of what occurs around him from a removed position. He is emotionally indifferent to others, even to his mother and his lover, Marie. He also refuses to adhere to the accepted moral order of society. After Meursault kills a man, "the Arab," for no apparent reason, he is put on trial. However, the focus of Meursault's murder trial quickly shifts away from the murder itself to Meursault's attitudes and beliefs. Meursault's atheism and his lack of outward grief at his mother's funeral represent a serious challenge to the morals of the society in which he lives. Consequently, society brands him an outsider.
2. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words. A sample is given here.) A former co-worker of Meursault who begins an affair with him the day after his mother's funeral. Marie is young and high-spirited, and delights in swimming and the outdoors. Meursault's interest in Marie seems primarily the result of her physical beauty. Marie does not seem to understand Meursault, but she feels drawn to Meursault's peculiarities nevertheless. Even when Meursault expresses indifference toward marrying her.
3. Raymond uses Meursault in beating his mistress and in fight with his mistress' brother.
4. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words.)
5. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words.)
6. Fill in the blanks.
 1. old persons' home.
 2. physical
 3. an Arab
 4. the chaplain.

SELF-EVALUATION EXERCISE 3

1. Explain these Terms : A. Existentialism B. Absurd (Students are required to read the concept and elaborate in detail in their own words.)
2. Discuss the major philosophical ideas explored in *The Stranger*. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words.)
3. On the basis of *The Stranger*, write in your own words relationship between literature and philosophy. (Students are required to read the novel and elaborate in detail in their own words.)
4. Say true or false.
 - a. true
 - b. true

♦♦♦♦♦



UNIT 9

LITERATURE AND OTHER ARTS

: STRUCTURE :

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Relationship Between Literature and Art/s
- 9.3 Poetry and Visual Arts
- 9.4 What is 'Ekphrasis' ?
- 9.5 Why Combination of Literature and Other Arts ?
- 9.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.7 Suggested Activities
- 9.8 Key Words
- 9.9 Exercises
- 9.10 Books Suggested

Answers

9.0 OBJECTIVES

- to establish relationship between literature, viz., poetry, novel, drama, short story, etc and other arts, like painting, drawing, sculpture, music, etc.,
- understand how various art forms are interrelated and how each is helpful in understanding the other.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

“L'art pour l'art” is the famous French saying which means “Art for art's sake”. Edgar Allan Poe opines about the purpose for writing a poem in The Poetic Principle as “poem written solely for the poem's sake”. The primary aim of any art is pleasure, for the self and for the other. The pleasure that it accords is invaluable as it connects the self with the supreme. To this aspect, all other aims are subservient and secondary. A creative artist provides an expression through his/her creativity to various aspects of our existence. There are various forms of art, viz., literature, music, painting, sculpture, etc. All these art forms are ultimately aimed at creating the most elevated expression of mind and heart. One often considers such creativity as the gift of god.

Creative art is categorized as literature, viz. prose, verse, etc., performing arts, viz. dance, music, theatre, etc., and visual arts, viz. drawing, painting, sculpture, etc. These art forms are interconnected to create an altogether different effect. The purpose for mixing more than one disciplines is represent multidimensional aspect of life. And thus literature and other arts are often represented together for creating better understanding of life.



Literature is both oral and written and can therefore make use of both acoustic and visual signs in its various genres. Relationship between a piece of literature and other works of art like painting, drawing, photography, sculpture or drama, etc. creates interrelation between the two. Visual arts, music, and drama provide effective ways for students to develop literary envisionments.

Offering readers the opportunity to read historical fiction, poetry and essays, or even nonfiction works such as diaries and letters, often enables them to imagine the human concerns behind historical events. Connections between literature and math or science expand one's understandings of both areas while broadening habits of mind. Readers who experience a range of such connections learn to establish relationships between and among seemingly contrary ways of defining and explaining the world.

9.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND ART/S

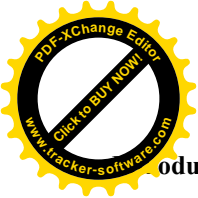
Literature and other arts have been welded together in numerous ways and enjoy various relationships of commonalities and differences. For authors, artists, readers, and viewers, the interrelation between literature and art encourages various questions – of form and content, of interpretations, of visual and written language, of adaptation, translation, and rewriting, of influence and originality, and of the roles of creator and audience.

The relationships of literature with the other arts is in respect to their common features, specific differences, and mutual influences between the verbal, nonverbal, acoustic, and visual signs. At the intersection between literature and the visual arts, visual poetry has made use of the aesthetic potential of both verbal and visual signs. With the visual arts, literature shares the potential of representation whereas music is essentially nonrepresentational. Among the universal characteristics of the arts are symmetry and recurrence of forms. Aesthetic features which literature shares with music are rhythm, tempo, or recurrence, but rhythm is also visual rhythm, which is also a feature of the visual arts. Whereas the visual arts are superior in the representation of the visual word, the verbal arts have the potential of representing the visible as well as the invisible world.

Henri Matisse's masterpiece *Jazz* makes explicit a constant source of tension in the relationship between literature and visual art while showing the limitations of each. It arises a question as to what can art do that literature cannot, and what can literature attain that art cannot ?

Literature is associated with all other arts insofar as it 'represents' these arts and their signs by means of verbal representations. Literary texts describe paintings, sculptures, or works of architecture, music, and dance. They express the impressions made by such works of art on literary characters, and in theoretical treatises, such as Horace's *Ars poetica* (on music) or Lessing's *Laocoon* (on painting and sculpture).

There seems to be a notion among the writers that the images of other art forms will curtail the imaginations of their readers. Such notions are seen throughout the history of the relationship between literature and art, manifesting variously where painting, illustration, sculpture, photography,



or theatre intersect with literary writing in all its forms. This fact seems to be an incorrect notion. The combination of the literary with the visual establishes a hierarchy of signification. Therefore, the reinterpretation of a text by an artist or an art object by an author provokes not only an assessment of the new and original work, but also a reappraisal of art, literature, and the process of adaptation. The relationship prompts evaluations, and therefore a self-consciousness of both or either medium arises. The interaction of literature and art is therefore inherently critical, even crucial.

There are many examples of visual artists' experimentations with written texts directly engaging with literary works. For example, Italy's Sperlonga sculptures depicting episodes of The Odyssey and Botticelli's large panel painting Primavera. Literature often indicates the visual. However, its engagement with art can draw on more than the representation of an image. For example, American poet Frank O'Hara's 1960 poem 'Having a Coke with You' expresses his absorption with a lover. O'Hara refers to well-known artwork including Rembrandt's painting Polish Rider, Duchamp's painting Nude Descending a Staircase, and the drawings of Michelangelo to make his adoring point, while comparing a loved one to exalted art.

And the portrait show seems to have no faces in it at all, just paint
you suddenly wonder why in the world anyone ever did them

I look

at you and I would rather look at you than all the portraits in the world

'Having a Coke with You' draws on a long history of poetry and literature written about to what is conveyed by words without overpowering the medium of writing.

The interrelation and interconnection of literature and art include combinations of text and image which attempt to balance each medium, rather than reflect one through the other. The twentieth century emergence of the *livre d'artiste* and contemporary graphic novels neither present the visual nor the written, rather they seek a partnership of each other.

The relationship between literature and art indicates intertextuality, adaptation, and translation, of all forms of art, of communication, representation, narrative and beauty. A work which draws from literature and visual art encourages the progression of interpretation, reinterpretation, rewriting, and reimagining. Such interrelation between literature and art depict a creative act of reading or viewing. W. H. Auden's poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts' (Museum of Fine Arts) (1938) expresses a contemplation of human suffering impelled by viewing Brueghel's painting titled 'Icarus' and makes explicit its status as a written response to art.

One can easily assume that literature and art together lead to critical analysis as well as theoretical questioning. Texts and images which engage with both the visual and the written mediums encourage speculations about form, content representation, the impossibilities therein, of commonalities such as narrative, framing, movement, stasis, metaphor. Together they can express concerns of literary and artistic theory.



The contemporary manifestations of literature and art perceive consumerization the very association of art and literature. Recently there is seen a keen interest in book sculpture and the materiality of the book form. The intricate work of artists such as Su Blackwell and Brian Dettmer posit this new approach to the printed medium as a physical creation of art through literary artefacts. A contrast between these two artists demonstrates two very different approaches to the reappropriation of literature. Blackwell's sculptures are consistently composed on a surface of an open book, implying an overflow or visual outpouring of the story within, and thus extending the book as frame while respecting its role as base. On the other hand, Dettmer almost completely abandons the structural character of the frame, instead treating the literature as malleable primary material. Together these artists continue to highlight the modern definitions of literature and art, which is, undefinable and often indistinguishable. It is within this space that these authors perform their analyses, towards a reassessment of artistic boundaries within and without literature.

In her article on sisters Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, an accomplished painter, critic Annalisa Federici critiques the relationship between art and artist, character and narrative and demonstrates a cross-fertilisation of techniques of narrative and design that make these works both complimentary and self-referential. She asserts :

“...the sister arts can be also considered, in the specific case of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, as the sisters’ arts, that is two different means of expressing the same underlying aesthetic principles as well as the closeness of their professional and private relationship.”

South African scholar Elizabeth Geary Keohane offers a novel approach to comparing art and literature by suggesting the potential for a text to play the role of a museum guide. Her analysis of Michel Butor's *Les Mots dans la peinture* suggests word-image relations through her designation of the text as a reader in its own right. She says,

“...Butor's engagement with form in this text sees him develop a string of brief encounters with different artworks over the course of the book, allowing us to align our progression through the text, as readers, with the trajectory of a visitor leisurely making her or his way through an exhibition space.”

The critic shows a renewed interest in the structural importance of the text as an entity, an aesthetic of writing beyond the simple depiction of works of visual art. In so-doing, she sets up a meta-curation of the art exhibition, highlighting the continuous potential for verbo-visual interaction.

9.3 POETRY AND VISUAL ARTS

North American poetry and poets have made a very significance contribution towards poetry and visual arts. According to Brazilian critic, Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira, the noted Brazilian critic, contemporary poems are not always limited to books as they used to be, traditionally. They may spread to the computer or TV or cinema screen or even into museum galleries, in the shape of multiple objects, paintings, performances, videos



and installations. While citing examples from Brazilian poets, the names of Antonio Fernando de Franceschi, Marcos Bagno, Felipe Fortuna, Carlos Ávila, Duda Machado and Lúcio Autran occur to the critic's mind. The Brazilian poet-critic Franceschi acknowledges that poetic creation frequently surrenders to forms of intervention mediated by languages with a more immediate impact, especially music, both scenic and electronic. Another Brazilian poet Marcos Bagno declares that he “extracts his poetry from other sources,” among which he mentions music, “a hollow, a-semantic sign,” “the more perfect for that.”

(“Signo oco, asemântico e, por isso, mais que perfeito.” Bagno. In ‘Principio erat Verbum’, p. 247. As in all other Portuguese sentences quoted in ‘Literature and the Other Arts : Post Modern Poetry in English’, the translation by Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira.)

A number of Brazilian poets resort to various forms of intercourse between their poetry and the arts. Felipe Fortuna considers essential the influences he captured from Brazilian humour, from Charles Adams's melancholic cartoons to the most diverse draftsmen, such as André François and Quino. Carlos Ávila says that “Lyrical microforms bearing a strong relationship to music, concrete poetry as well as poems which turn out to be verbal ready-mades, synthesized in brief forms on the white surface of the page.” Another poet, Duda Machado, emphasizes the presence of visual compositions in his book, *Zil*. Together with the abolition of verse for the sake of spatial configuration, words are organized in discontinuous planes, according to sound affinities. The poem becomes an object, “a mixture of words and design.”

The poet, Lúcio Autran, affirms that the starting-point for his book *Um nome* (A Name) was Hieronymus Bosch's painting *Extração da Pedra da Loucura* (The Extraction of the Stone of Madness), and that his poem ‘Uma baleia vista em São Paulo’ (A Whale Seen in São Paulo) refers to three paintings by Franck Stella on display in the 1989 Biennial Exhibition in São Paulo.

Affinities with both music and the visual arts are presented in the work of Michael McClure, one of the leading poets of the Beat generation and also a participant in the 1955 Six Gallery Events, which incidentally launched the San Francisco Renaissance. The poet's alliances with music and performance have led him to perform his poetry with the accompaniment of Ray Manzarek, the former keyboardist for the rock group “The Doors.” McClure's poems sometimes display a graphic design, suggestive of clouds and flowers. Pointing to certain traits of his writing – “the deliberate depersonalizations of grammar and alterations of accepted written syntax” – he invites the reader to see his verses as analogies for the splashes of paint in modern canvases.

His another poem ‘Ode to Jack Pollock’ is about abstract expressionist's favourite colours. In this poem, Pollock's technique of pouring and dripping paint comes out as an image for a lyrical evocation of pain, in which the hand swinging the loops of paint is presented as equivalent to the poet's “gestures” :



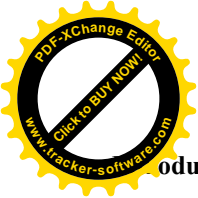
Hand swing the loops of pain _ splashes _ drips_
chic lavender, duende black, blue and red!
Jack Pollock my sorrow is selfish. I won't meet
you here. I see your crossings of paint!
We are all lost in the cloud of our gestures_

Another North American poet Clark Coolidge adopts a similar stance. In the essay “Words”, he relates his poetry to the work of Philip Guston, the neo-expressionist painter and printmaker of the New York School. Coolidge writes : “I find myself very close in spirit and work to the (...) dialectics of the painter Philip Guston (...) the kinetics of thought/action : growth, destruction, transformation.” Puzzled at the obscurity of Coolidge's writing, the reader can only vaguely associate it with Guston, the painter and printmaker of the New York School, who in the late 1960s helped lead a transition from abstract expressionism to renderings of personal symbols and objects. The hermetic character of Coolidge's is purposeful. One cannot forget his affiliation with language poetry – a kind of creative enterprise marked by its disregard of referential meaning and corresponding preoccupation with fragments, nonsense, and unmeaning, as well as the rejection of the linear model current in traditional literature.

The Pre-Raphaelite poets combined poetry with painting. The movement was initiated by William Hunt, John Millais and Dante Rossetti. The primary purpose of these poets and painters was to reform art by rejecting the mechanistic approach. These artists were inspired by Raphael who himself was one of the finest painters. The combination of painting and poetry was wonderful. William Hunt created a painting on Keats' poem ‘The Eve of St. Agnes’. Dante Rossetti was a gifted poet and a painter. His poetry and painting “The Blessed Damozel” inspired generations of poets and painters. Similarly, celebrated Victorian poet Alfred Tennyson's poem ‘The Palace of Art’, first published in 1832, became favourite subject matter for painters. His famous poem ‘The Lady of Shallot’ inspired the English painter John William Waterhouse to paint three versions of this character. Another great Victorian poet Robert Browning's poem, a dramatic monologue, ‘Andrea del Sarto’ is based on the life of a great painter Andrea d'Angelo. Similarly, his another dramatic monologue ‘Fra Lippo Lippi’ is based on the famous Italian painter Filippo Lippi in which the poet seems to question whether art should be true to life or should become an idealized image of life. This is how poetry and painting are inextricably interwoven with each other. The verbal creation seems to register the author's subjective response to a piece of visual art.

9.4 WHAT IS ‘EKPHRASIS’ ?

While describing relation between literature and other arts, the term ‘ekphrasis’ or ‘ecphrasis’ is often used. It means describing an object or existing a work of art as vividly as possible in order to ‘bring it before the eye’. Jongeneel Robillard considers it as textualized images. An ekaphiristic text creates the image by means of a narrative. Critic like Peter Wagner



describes the term as ‘inter-art studies’. According to Murray Krieger, the word ekphrasis or ecphrasis is “the most extreme and telling instance of the visual and spatial potential of the literary medium. ... Ekphrasis, under this definition, clearly presupposes that one art, poetry, is defining its mission through its dependence on the mission of another art – painting, sculpture, or others. ... the study of ekphrasis ... seemed to me the most extreme ... way to put into question the pictorial limits of the function of words in poetry.” (Krieger, 6) The purpose of ekphrasis is to use an artistic language when trying to turn into words a picture or a sculpture. It meditates this relationship between a poem and a work of art, being able to establish an interconnection between literature and other visual arts.

In literature, the theory of the three aspects of language and thought finds corroboration in Ezra Pound's poetological treatise *ABC of Reading*. Pound writes about three fundamental categories to account for all poetic processes, *melopoeia*, *phanopoeia*, and *logopoeia*. *Melopoeia* refers to the acoustic dimension of the verbal arts, to its auditory dimension, its musicality, and rhythm. *Phanopoeia* accounts for their visual and imagetic dimension, the myriad of images which literature can evoke. And *logopoeia* accounts for the verbal, logical, and linguistic impact of literature.

9.5 WHY COMBINATION OF LITERATURE AND OTHER ARTS ?

Relating an individual's literary experiences in a variety of forms leads to fresh insights and new understandings of a text. Encouraging a scholar to represent those experiences in a variety of forms offers access to representations that might not be available verbally and offers less-verbal students alternative ways to demonstrate knowledge.

Jacques Derrida argues that, “The fact that a spatial work of art that doesn't speak can be interpreted in two ways. On the other hand, there is the idea of its absolute mutism, the idea that it is completely foreign or heterogeneous to words. ... But on the other hand ... we can always receive them, read them, or interpret them as potential discourse. That is to say, these silent words are in fact already talkative, full of virtual discourses.”

(Derrida, Jacques, in Peter Brunette and David Wills (eds.), “Deconstructive and the Visual Arts”, 1994, pp. 12–13.)

9.6 LET US SUM UP

Comparing literature with other arts is beneficial to students. The visual arts, music, and drama provide effective ways for students to develop literary envisionments. Teachers are integrating history, social studies, science, and even math with literary experiences. Students benefit cognitively when they are exposed to various art forms while studying literature. Art, drama, and music enable students to explore their literary understandings more deeply and expand their thinking about texts. Integrating social studies, history, and science with literature study helps students by adding a human dimension to the content. Embedding literature study in the context of social studies, history, or science helps students expand their literary



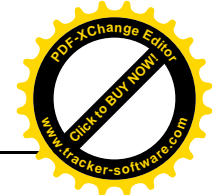
understandings. Art, drama, and music can provide different points of entry into literature, especially for students with diverse learning styles. The arts can provide realistic or metaphorical representations of literary meanings. To maximize their value in the literature classroom, art, drama, and music should be integral to literature study, not just seen as add-ons. Art provides students with another way to talk about their literary understandings. Visual art, drama, and music provide additional ways for teachers to see students thinking about a literary text as well as a way to help students develop their understandings. The arts elevate literacy comprehension and further envisionment-building because they force students to shuttle back and forth between their literary understandings and their artistic creations. Having students dramatize characters or situations helps further their understandings. Skits, role-playing, and other dramatic activities help students understand characters and the situations they are in. Dramatic activities provide excellent ways for students to share what they have read with one another. Convincing administrators, parents, and other teachers of the value of integrating the arts in the literature classroom can be difficult; others may view the arts as non-essential, or even frivolous. The arts can help students develop their sense of imagery, an important aspect of envisionment-building. Social studies and history are often paired with literature because literature offers new ways of seeing historical periods and events. Contextualizing literature with social studies and history enriches the study of the literature.

Connecting the study of literature to other art forms enriches both subject areas. Such connections reinforce related concepts across disciplines, provide fuller understandings by revisiting concepts or topics from different disciplinary perspectives, provide a more coherent learning experiences, and lead them to coordinate the tools used in different disciplines when tackling complex problems.

The relationship between literature and art is longstanding and multifaceted. There is the creative potential of a constant renegotiation of the boundary space between literature and art. Conversations and Collaborations between literature and art provoke questions, and further interest in unpicking this rich subject area, in a contemporary world where accessibility and interdisciplinarity provide the backbone of cultural interaction.

9.7 SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Create a dramatic reading of the poem using your voices individually or in unison – to present the poem's meaning(s) to the class.
2. Set the poem to music and prepare to sing it to the class.
3. Create and perform a dance that conveys the poem to the class.
4. Choose another mode of presentation that involves rhythm, music, and/or dance.
5. Use audio-video performances to analyse a text.



9.8 KEY WORDS

Acoustic : Related to sound

Symmetry : Being identical

Signification : The representation or conveying of meaning

Reappraisal : Evaluation or appreciation in a different way

Mutism : Unwillingness to speak or express the meaning

Ekphrasis : Describing an object or a work of art as vividly as possible

9.9 EXERCISES

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION IN DETAIL.

1. Is any kind of relationship between literature and other arts possible ? Write in detail.
2. Discuss how poetry expresses visual arts.
3. What is Ekphrasis ? Write in detail.
4. Choose correct alternative from those given below each :

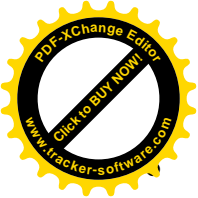
CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM THE GIVEN BELOW.

1. Who has said this : “poem written solely for the poem's sake” ?
(a) Edgar Allan Poe (b) Thomas Carlyle
(c) Henri Matisse (b) W. H. Auden
2. Who has written *Ars poetica* ?
(a) Plato (b) Horace (c) Aristotle (d) Quintilian
3. Who has written the famous poem ‘Having a Coke with You’
(a) Sperrlonga (b) Rembrandt (c) Frank O'Hara (d) Duchamp
4. Who has analysed Michel Butor's *Les Mots dans la peinture* ?
(a) Marcos Bango (b) Solange Oliveria
(c) Oliver Givonnie (d) Geary Keohane
5. Who has written the following lines : “ ‘I find myself very close in spirit and work to the (...) dialectics of the painter Philip Guston (...) the kinetics of thought/action : growth, destruction, transformation.”
(a) Clark Coolidge (b) Samuel Coleridge
(c) Philip Guston (d) William Hunt

9.10 BOOKS SUGGESTED

- Derrida, Jaques, in Peter Brunette and David Wills (eds.), “Deconstructive and the Visual Arts”, 1994, pp. 12-13.



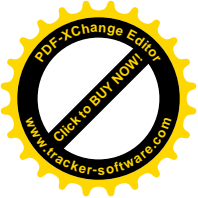
Nöth, Winfried & Lucia Santaella. *Literature and the Other Arts: The Point of View of Semiotics* - ©Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS). Comparative Literature: Sharing Knowledges for Preserving Cultural Diversity - Vol. I

- De Oliveira, Solange Ribeiro. *Literature and the Other Arts: Post Modern Poetry in English*. v. 19 - n. 1. Jan.- June. 2009. pp 43-60.
- Benjamin, Elizabeth & Sophie Corser. *Introduction: Literature and Art: Conversations and Collaborations*.
- Matisse, Henri. *Jazz*, trans. Sophie Hawkes (New York: George Braziller, 1983), p. xv.
- O'Hara, Frank. *Selected Poems*, ed. Donald Allen (Manchester: Carcanet, 1991), pp. 175-76.

ANSWERS

1. (a) 2. (b) 3. (c) 4. (d) 5. (a)

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦



UNIT 10

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL BY D.G. ROSSETTI FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND OTHER ARTS

: STRUCTURE :

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Dante Gabriel Rossetti

10.3 Pre-Raphaelite Poetry

10.4 *The Blessed Damozel*

10.5 The Painting *The Blessed Damozel*

10.6 Music based on '*The Blessed Damozel*'

10.7 Theme of the Poem

10.8 'Sister Arts'

10.9 *The Blessed Damozel* : Poetry and Painting

10.10 Music and *The Blessed Damozel*

10.11 Let Us Sum Up

10.12 Key Words

10.13 Exercises

10.14 Books Suggested

Answers

10.0 OBJECTIVES

- to understand *The Blessed Damozel*,
- to understand how the poem is expressed through painting,
- to understand relationship between literature and other arts.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The Blessed Damozel is written by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1846–47. This poem is the poet's most important literary work interpreting Dantean inheritance. Rossetti worked on the poem for almost the whole of his working life : in 1847, he created the first draft of the poem which subsequently underwent many revisions and changes. Again in 1871, the poet worked on the pictorial rendering of the subject, and on studies and different versions of this picture for the next ten years. This poem is indebted, not just to Dante and the other poets of his time, but to a group of Romantic and Victorian writers, including Coleridge, Keats, Goethe, Musset, Blake, Shelley, Tennyson, and the Bailey of Festus.

10.2 DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti – 12 May 1828 – 9 April 1882 – generally known as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, was a British poet, illustrator,



Painter and translator, and a member of the Rossetti family. He founded the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848 with William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais. Rossetti later became main inspiration for a second generation of artists and writers influenced by the movement, most notably William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones. His work also influenced the European Symbolists and was a major precursor of the Aesthetic movement.

Rossetti's art was characterised by its sensuality and its medieval revivalism. His early poetry was influenced by John Keats. His later poetry was characterised by the complex interlinking of thought and feeling, especially in his sonnet sequence, *The House of Life*. Poetry and image are closely entwined in Rossetti's work. He frequently wrote sonnets to accompany his pictures, spanning from *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1849) and *Astarte Syriaca* (1877), while also creating art to illustrate poems such as *Goblin Market* by the celebrated poet Christina Rossetti, his sister.

Rossetti's personal life was closely linked to his work, especially his relationships with his models and muses Elizabeth Siddal, Fanny Cornforth and Jane Morris.

10.3 PRE-RAPHAELITE POETRY

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (later known as the Pre-Raphaelites) was a group of English painters, poets, and art critics, founded in 1848 by William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The three founders were joined by William Michael Rossetti, James Collinson, Frederic George Stephens and Thomas Woolner to form the seven-member “brotherhood”. Their principles were shared by other artists, including Ford Madox Brown, Arthur Hughes and Marie Spartali Stillman.

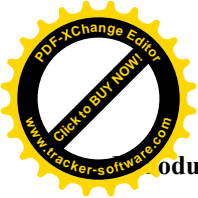
A later medievalising strain inspired by Rossetti included Edward Burne-Jones and extended into the twentieth century with artists such as John William Waterhouse.

The group's intention was to reform art by rejecting what it considered the mechanistic approach first adopted by Mannerist artists who succeeded Raphael and Michelangelo. Its members believed the Classical poses and elegant compositions of Raphael in particular had been a corrupting influence on the academic teaching of art, hence the name “Pre-Raphaelite”. In particular, the group objected to the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds, founder of the English Royal Academy of Arts, whom they called “Sir Sloshua”. To the Pre-Raphaelites, according to William Michael Rossetti, “sloshy” meant “anything lax or scamped in the process of painting ... and hence ... anything or person of a commonplace or conventional kind”. The brotherhood sought a return to the abundant detail, intense colours and complex compositions of Quattrocento Italian art. The group associated their work with John Ruskin an English critic whose influences were driven by his religious background.

The brotherhood's early doctrines were expressed in four declarations :

1. to have genuine ideas to express;
2. to study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them;

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3. to sympathise with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote;
4. most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues.

The principles were deliberately non-dogmatic, since the brotherhood wished to emphasise the personal responsibility of individual artists to determine their own ideas and methods of depiction. Influenced by Romanticism, the members thought freedom and responsibility were inseparable. Nevertheless, they were particularly fascinated by medieval culture, believing it to possess a spiritual and creative integrity that had been lost in later eras. The emphasis on medieval culture clashed with principles of realism which stress the independent observation of nature. In its early stages, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood believed its two interests were consistent with one another, but in later years the movement divided and moved in two directions. The realists were led by Hunt and Millais, while the medievalists were led by Rossetti and his followers, Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris. The split was never absolute, since both factions believed that art was essentially spiritual in character, opposing their idealism to the materialist realism associated with Courbet and Impressionism.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was greatly influenced by nature and its members used great detail to show the natural world using bright and sharp focus techniques on a white canvas. In attempts to revive the brilliance of colour found in Quattrocento art, Hunt and Millais developed a technique of painting in thin glazes of pigment over a wet white ground in the hope that the colours would retain jewel-like transparency and clarity. Their emphasis on brilliance of colour was a reaction to the excessive use of bitumen by earlier British artists, such as Reynolds, David Wilkie and Benjamin Robert Haydon. Bitumen produces unstable areas of muddy darkness, an effect the Pre-Raphaelites despised.

The group continued to accept the concepts of history painting and mimesis, imitation of nature, as central to the purpose of art. The Pre-Raphaelites defined themselves as a reform movement, created a distinct name for their form of art, and published a periodical, *The Germ*, to promote their ideas. The group's debates were recorded in the *Pre-Raphaelite Journal*.

10.4 THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The Blessed Damozel is arguably the best known poem by Dante Gabriel Rossetti as well as the title of some of his best known paintings. The poem was first published in 1850 in the Pre-Raphaelite journal *The Germ*. Rossetti subsequently revised the poem twice and republished it in 1856, 1870 and 1873.

The poem was partially inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's poem *The Raven*, with its depiction of a lover grieving on Earth over the death of his loved one. Rossetti chose to represent the situation in reverse. The poem



describes the damozel observing her lover from heaven, and her unfulfilled yearning for their reunion in heaven.

Rossetti wrote *The Blessed Damozel* as a poignant, uncomplicated depiction of the kind of innocent young love that flourished in the days of the chivalric code. The poem presents a romantic, dreamlike atmosphere as a virginal young woman—claimed recently by death—stands at the threshold of heaven pining for the young man she left behind while he likewise pines for her on earth. Rossetti links the heavenly damozel with her earthbound lover by mixing the spiritual imagery of heaven with the physical imagery of earth. Thus, while the seven stars of the heavenly constellations adorn her hair, it flows down her back with the colour of “ripe corn.” And while the young man thinks he feels her hair fall over him, he discovers only the fall of autumn leaves.

The poem also was the inspiration for Claude Debussy's ‘La Damoiselle élue’ (1888), a cantata for two soloists, female choir, and orchestra.

10.5 THE PAINTING *THE BLESSED DAMOZEL*

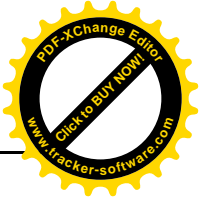
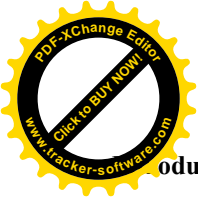
The Blessed Damozel is the only one of Rossetti's paired pictures and poems in which the poem was completed first. Upon repeated requests from friends and patrons to Rossetti to illustrate his most famous poem, and he finally accepted a commission from William Graham in February 1871. After the work was completed Graham requested a predella, the lower part of the painting, on December 31, 1877. His total cost was £1157. Alexa Wilding modelled the damozel in Paradise, Wilfred John Hawtreys modelled the child—angel, and the probable model for the left—hand angel was May Morris. Another, later version is in the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

This is probably the best painting of Rossetti. The subject of the painting can be described as the relation of an emparadised woman to her earthly love. The pictorial version of the subject comprises a later commentary or visual interpretation of the poem by the same title that Rossetti had written much earlier, in 1847. The subject is also at the heart of his great translation project that culminated in his collection of stil novisti verse, *The Early Italian Poets*.

The general compositional differences between the main picture and its predella are important. The poet reclines in a space that is realistically (if also poetically) defined : a natural landscape scene whose winding river defines a space receding toward the pictorial infinity on which the poet's mind is clearly focused. Indeed, his eyes gaze upward to the face of the emparadised damozel, who is the central figure in the transcendental realm represented in the main picture, where an iconic structure organizes the pictorial elements. Three planes carry the images in a shallow space close to the picture plane. The painting has almost no depth.

(<http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s244.rap.html>. WEB. 22 MARCH, 2019. 09.49 AM.)

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10.6 MUSIC BASED ON *THE BLESSED DAMOZEL*

Several pieces of music were based on the poem, including those for orchestra by Debussy, Granville Bantock (1891), Edgar Bainton (1907), Ernest Farrar (1907); for piano by Arnold Bax (1906); for string quartet by Benjamin Burrows (1927); and a 1928 choral by Julius Harrison. A 2007 modern popular song of the same name by Tangerine Dream appears on their album *Madcap's Flaming Duty*.

10.7 THEME OF THE POEM

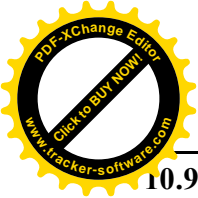
The poem *The Blessed Damozel* can be interpreted at three levels : the damozel – from heaven, the lover – from his dream–vision, and the lover – from his conscious reflection. The last of these is signalled in the text by parentheses, which encloses the lover's thoughts on the vision of his desire. In this context, the poem is described by Leigh Hunt as ‘Dantesque heavens’.

The Blessed Damozel is the poem marked, in the words of Walter Pater, by “a definiteness of sensible imagery” which collapses the preoccupations of these two phases in Rossetti's painting career – temporal distance and eroticized femininity – and provides insight into the role lack and longing played in the development of his aesthetic practices in the 1850s and early 60s.

10.8 ‘SISTER ARTS’

The idea of the “sister arts” of painting and poetry, an idea associated during the eighteenth century with landscape “painting” in verse, was given by John Ruskin and others. Ruskin's conception of the visual arts as constituting a “noble and expressive language” was literally carried out in the popular taste for painting that either illustrated well-known narratives or told new anecdotes. From the 1840's through 1870's, there flourished a number of writers who were also painters, sculptors, draftsmen, or architects : Thackeray, Lear, Butler, Hardy, Hopkins, William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The parallels between one art and the other were often drawn and comparisons of the literary with the visual also started happening.

In the work of painter–poet Rossetti, one can observe some significant similarities between picture and poem in the choice of subject, the use of patterned detail and a certain dream–like quality of tone. Rossetti takes medieval subjects for his poems and pictures, and uses the refrain and the repeated design for pictorial background. The poet is successful in producing an almost hypnotically “flat” tone in his narratives of death and destruction, as in his pictures of the blessed damozel and brooding Lilith. In the background of the poem lie the medieval paintings “with two levels, a heavenly and an earthly one” to which Rossetti's later painting of *The Blessed Damozel* in the form of a diptych makes formal “reference”. In Rossetti's art, both flat and fleshy elements are always present which creates contradiction.



10.9 THE BLESSED DAMOZEL : POETRY AND PAINTING

Rossetti painted pictures of The Blessed Damozel in the 1870s. There are various paintings of the Assumption and more especially of the Coronation of the Virgin. Rossetti's eroticism radically transforms such materials. These pictures have their own integral meanings, but they are also seen as “readings” of their precursive texts. The combination of texts and images makes up a closely integrated network of materials – a network that stands as an index of Rossetti's artistic ideals and practises.

Rossetti seems to believe that a picture is “a painted poem”. For Rossetti, life imitated art. The poet shared the sensual fantasies of the speaker of ‘The Blessed Damozel’ which according to Jerome J. McGann was “Christian idea of ... Divine Love” through a replacement of “Love as agape with love as Eros” (48–52).

Rossetti is seen as an unstable and obsessive visionary, as a figure preoccupied by an ethereal yet sensual ideal of woman, bent on both recapturing the vanished past in all its physical details and on projecting an earthly love into an eternity beyond death. The following lines justify this claim :

Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me – her hair
Fell all about my face . . .
Nothing : the autumn fall of leaves

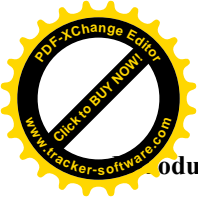
These lines are a combination of fantasy, sensuality, and longing in the midst of decay which support the romantic image of the “Pre–Raphaelite” Brotherhood. Wylie Sypher observes that “Pre–Raphaelite painting and poetry began by being narrative or illustrative and ended by being frankly and consciously ornamental”. Raphaelite poetry has clarity and simplicity as well as the lush decoration.

F. G. Stephens remarked in 1894 that the poem is close and faithful in detail. He asserted that if there are contrasts between painting and lyric, they are not contrasts of definite imagery. This is because the literal images follow from the literary, the pictures having been painted after the poem was written.

If Rossetti's pictures often have extremely literary purposes, either illustrating or telling stories, his poems often have extremely visual qualities which are purely pictorial; one is probably less likely to “read” his simple physical images as psychologically or morally or philosophically symbolic. The parallels observed here may support Rossetti's own inclination to think of himself as a poet who painted. Certainly he is a literary artist.

This painted version, which emphasizes the rich and sensual feeling of the poem contains both the qualities. The paintings of the damozel can be seen as an illustration of the poem's explicit subject and its implicit style, tone and theme. The picture and the poem are successful attempts to relate and balance the opposites : earthly man in time and bless woman in eternity, temporal and the ideal. Something of this paradoxical treatment of fixedness

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and movement, of flatness and depth, of eternal form and flowing time, is presented in the poem. The curious sense of temporal passion in heaven and of a timeless trance on earth is reinforced by the rhetorical structure of *The Blessed Damsel*.

Certain traditional dualities introduced by lover on earth and a beloved in heaven become merged in the styles and imageries of picture and poem. There is no dramatized distinction of body and soul, for the heavenly is concretely embodied. The lush colouring of the picture and the definiteness of the images are counterparts for the emotional language of the poem and its definiteness of imagery. Rossetti's damsel is chaste with her white rose and her three lilies, but she is also quite physical with her yellow hair and her warm bosom.

Rossetti's paintings reveal an element of time in its vision of heaven through blooming flowers, the gracefully waving wind-blown garments, and the flowing hair of the maiden. All these show movement instead of stillness. The damsel strikes the readers as a warm, as breathing and moving, in a flat setting with little dimension of time and space. The lover appears almost like a carved figure seen against a landscape which provides both distance and images of time and change.

The picture and the poem bring together and tend to merge opposing elements, in several ways; in their compositions, their images, their uses of colour and line, and of diction and tense, all these produce parallel effects.

The Blessed Damsel seems to be composed for painting. References to painting are common in his poetry, and its use has important implications for Rossetti's other poems as well. One example appears in the sonnet named *The Portrait*. The speaker, an artist, wishing to record the essence ("furthest goal") of his lady's beauty, desires his painting to express "The very sky and sea—line of her soul". Similar language concludes the natural description in *The Lovers' Walk* (XII) – a poem, as William Michael Rossetti explained, in which "each detail of natural scenery is coupled with a somewhat analogous detail indicating the emotions of the lovers". His analysis fits the opening landscape, where "Sweet twining hedge flowers wind—stirred in no wise" mirror the lovers' clasped hands. But the final lines are descriptive not so much of nature as of nature—painting. They represent the lovers,

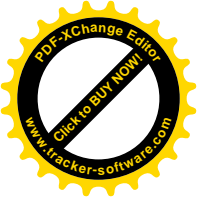
Whose passionate hearts lean by Love's high decree

Together on his heart for ever true

As the cloud—foaming firmamental blue

Rests on the blue line of a foamless sea. (11–14)

In both sonnets, the images quoted refer to a convention of "realistic" painting. To create the illusion that distant landscapes have an end, the artist draws a horizon, line, making the earth and sea seem to support the sky. The striking quality in each poem is Rossetti's use of the reference to emphasize the ornateness of his language. "Cloud—foaming firmamental blue" is deliberately ornamental, and Rossetti "rests" it on the ocean to stress this. By referring to another art he reminds us that his descriptions of landscape and human character are abstractions.



The Blessed Damozel employs Rossetti's simplest diction, and this contributes greatly to its effectiveness. Rossetti here dwells on the paradoxes of the poem : in heaven, the departed maiden longs for human love; her spiritual “body” (hardly physical) warms the “gold bar” at the edge of paradise. Finally, in the greatest irony of all, Rossetti implicitly admits that the situation is a fabrication.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet ! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened ? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair ?) (55–66)

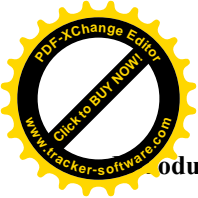
The Blessed Damozel is about its title character and equally about her lover on earth. The detailed heavenly landscape is an index of the speaker's imagination, and the source of this power, in turn, is his grief for the Beloved. Balancing opposites, making inverse aspects of language or experience interdependent, is an important formal device for Rossetti. The poem repeatedly shifts between narration of the forest meeting of the artist-speaker and his dead love, and symbolic readings of that scene.

The devotional, symbolic and mystic art that Rossetti praised and painted creates a fundamental formal problem for a viewer : the relationships of parts, and of parts to the whole, are unclear. Despite their sharp, clear finish, these paintings involve tension, an ambiguity of focus particularly puzzling because it seems to impart an energetic strength.

George Fleming notes, “Each picture is overbrimming with vitality, and each shows a fine feeling for nature in everything, from the expressions and gestures of the human and angelic beings to the garments, buildings, and trees. Neither scene contains one center of interest, and it does not appear that more attention was devoted to the principal figures than to secondary details.” [Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (London, 1967), p. 64.]

Reading Rossetti's poetry, then, is like looking at his painting. When his poetry is puzzling, the frequent source of confusion is the abbreviating technique that makes the static atmosphere of his visual art a vehicle for dynamic relationships of thought.

The Blessed Damozel
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10.10 MUSIC AND *THE BLESSED DAMOZEL*

Song and music represents the creative aspiration of Rossetti, and which, when carried over into his painting in the form of figures playing musical instruments, continues to represent the poetic element in his poetry, which identifies as the singular expressions of a poet–painter.

Rossetti was greatly influenced by Poe's ideas on the importance of music to verse. But Poe was not alone in subscribing to theories concerning the interrelationship between music and the other arts. William Blake had earlier adopted the principle of correspondence based on Swedenborg's ideas, and Thomas Carlyle revealed his allegiance to a similar aesthetic when he proclaimed, “All deep things are song. It seems somehow the very central essence of us, Song . . . Poetry, therefore, we will call musical Thought”. These ideas are echoed in the writings of Rossetti's generation by Walter Pater, who declared that “All art constantly aspires toward the condition of music”.

10.11 LET US SUM UP

Rossetti's early appreciation of the function of music in his poetry and in his visual expressions presages one of the major concerns of the aesthetic movement in England and its counterparts abroad. About *The Blessed Damozel*, Rossetti himself might have said, “I loved thee, Poetry, before I ever wrote a poem.”

10.12 KEY WORDS

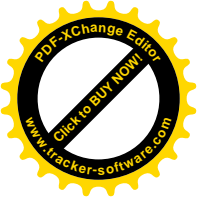
1. **Pre–Raphaelite** : A group of English poets, painters and art critics
2. **Medieval** : Belonging to the Middle Ages, roughly from 5th to 15th century
3. **Revivalism** : A belief or desire to revive old things

10.13 EXERCISES

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

FIND ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND WRITE THEM IN DETAIL.

1. Introduce Rossetti as a poet and a painter.
2. What is Pre–Raphaelite Brotherhood ?
3. Write detail about *The Blessed Damozel* as a poem.
4. Discuss in detail the concept of ‘sister arts’.
5. Compare the painting *The Blessed Damozel* and the poem *The Blessed Damozel*.
6. Discuss in detail how music and the poem *The Blessed Damozel* are interrelated.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

CHOOSE THE CORRECT ALTERNATIVE FROM THOSE GIVEN BELOW EACH.



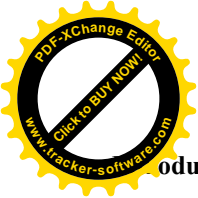
The Blessed Damsel
D.G. Rossetti from The Point
of View of Relationship
between Literature and
Other Arts

1. With whom Rossetti found the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood ?
(a) Hunt and Millais (b) Shelley and Tennyson
(c) Keats and Siddal (d) Brown and Huges
2. In which journal was the poem *The Blessed Damsel* first published ?
(a) The Romantic (b) The Germ
(c) The Tattler (d) The Brotherhood
3. The poem *The Blessed Damsel* was inspired by which of the following poems ?
(a) Upon Westminster Bridge (b) To the Skylark
(c) The Raven (d) Ode to Nightingale
4. About the poem *The Blessed Damsel*, who has said that it has “a definiteness of sensible imagery” ?
(a) John Morris (b) William Hunt
(c) Edward Gilbert (d) Walter Peter
5. Who has said the following : “All deep things are song” ?
(a) Thomas Carlyle (b) William Hunt
(c) Samuel Coleridge (d) Edgar Allen Poe

10.11 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Reference :

- Bentley, D. M. R. “*The Blessed Damsel*” : A Young Man's Fantasy. Victorian Poetry, Vol. 20, No. 3/4, An Issue Devoted to the Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Autumn - Winter, 1982), pp. 31-43. Published by: West Virginia University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40002983>. Accessed : 05-09-2018 03:59 UTC.
- Fleming, George. *Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*. London, 1967. p. 64. <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s244.rap.html>. WEB. 22 MARCH, 2019. 09.49 AM.
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- Roberts, Helene E. *The Dream World of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*. Victorian Studies, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Jun., 1974), pp. 371-393. Published by: Indiana University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3826288>. Accessed: 05-09-2018 04:00 UTC.
- Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, *Poems*. London: Ellis and White, 1881.
- Stein, Richard L. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Painting and the Problem of Poetic Form*. Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, Vol. 10, No. 4, Nineteenth Century (Autumn, 1970), pp. 775-792. Published by: Rice University. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/449714>. Accessed: 05-09-2018 04:01 UTC

Further Reading

- Fleming, George. *Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*. London, 1967. p. 64.
- Johnson, Wendell Stacy. *D. G. Rossetti as Painter and Poet*. Victorian Poetry, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Winter, 1965), pp. 9-18. Published by: West Virginia University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40001286>. Accessed: 05-09-2018 03:59 UTC.
- Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, *Poems*. London: Ellis and White, 1881.

ANSWERS

1. (a) 2. (b) 3. (c) 4. (d) 5. (a)

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



UNIT 11

LITERATURE AND HISTORY

: STRUCTURE :

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 Understanding the Word ‘History’

11.3 History as a Source of Inspiration

11.3.1 Historians and their Purpose

11.3.2 The task of History

11.3.3 History and its Relationship with other Disciplines

11.3.4 History as a Science and Art

11.4 Understanding the Word ‘Literature’

11.4.1 Relationship between History and Literature

11.4.2 Social Environment and its influences on Literature

11.4.3 Relationship between Historical Writings and Literary Forms

11.4.4 Difference between Histories and Novels

11.4.5 Post Modernism : History and Literature

11.5 The Progress of History and Literature in Post Modern Era

11.6 Let Us Sum Up

11.7 Key Words

11.8 Books Suggested

Answers

11.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- discuss the meaning of the word ‘History’, the facts as they are and the way they are presented by Historians / Authors,
- understand the meaning of Literature,
- discuss Social Environment and its influences on Literature,
- discuss the progress of History and its relationship with Literature.

Outcomes :

On completing the unit, you should be able to;

- understand history in all perspectives (what, where, why, how & when),
- connect history and its impressions on society,
- demonstrate the advancement of History and Literature.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

History is the past experience of mankind. It is an attempt made by man through centuries to reconstruct, describe and interpret his own past. It is the memory of past experience as it has been preserved largely in written records. However, at the practical level, history is the product of historian's work in reconstructing the flow of events from the original written traces or sources into narrative account. It is the understanding of what had happened, on the basis of what present standpoints indicate.

Events which occurred before written record are considered prehistory. It is a term that includes past events, memory, discovery, collection, organization, presentation, and interpretation of information about these events. Intellectuals who write about history are called historians.

To exist is to change, to change is to mature and to mature is to advance and make progress. History is collective memory, the storehouse of experience through which people develop a sense of their social identity and their future prospects

Hence, history becomes a barometer to estimate and record this progress of mankind.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

FILL IN THE BLANKS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH THOSE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) History is the _____ of mankind.
- (ii) At the practical level, history is the product of historian's work in reconstructing the flow of events from the _____ or _____ into narrative account.
- (iii) Events which occurred before written record are considered _____.
- (iv) Intellectuals who write about history are called _____.
- (v) _____ becomes a barometer to estimate and record this progress of mankind.

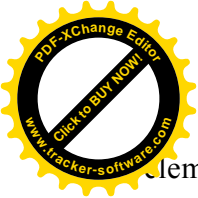
11.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF THE WORD 'HISTORY'

The word History derives its meaning from Greek word *ιστορία*, *historia*, meaning "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation"

The word history has two generally accepted meanings as it refers to history as an event or record. The two uses of these words may be combined as in the definition of history 'the bridge between the past and the present'.

Academic disciplines use descriptions to examine and analyse the order of past events and objectively define the patterns of cause and effect that determine them. Writers, Scholars, and Historians sometimes debate on the nature of History and its usefulness as a discipline.

Earliest influences have helped to bring in various explanations of the nature of history. These evolved over the centuries and continue to change even today. The modern study of history is widespread which includes the study of specific regions and the study of certain topical or thematical



Elements of historical investigation. History is taught as part of primary and secondary education, and the academic study of history is a major discipline in university studies.

Thus, history tries to provide different perspectives to certain problems of the present situations.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

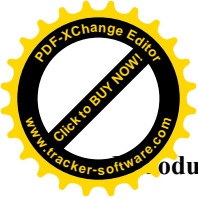
ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES EACH. CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH THOSE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) What is the meaning of History ?
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.....
.....
- (ii) What are the two generally accepted meanings of history ?
.....
.....
.....
- (iii) What does the modern study of history include ?
.....
.....
.....
- (iv) What are the fields where history is taught ?
.....
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.....

11.3 HISTORY AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

History is a source of inspiration as it holds up to us the tradition and glory, the impacting passions and heroic deeds of past generations. In it, we find the “drama of real life”. Men of ideas and letters have perceived history in different manifestations. Hegel considers history as the “history of liberty” which becomes, on one hand, the explanatory principles of the course of history and on the other, the moral ideal of humanity.

For T. B. Macaulay, history being the part of literature, “begins in novel and ends in essay”. History has also been referred to as “biography” a national epic, “a science and progress”. Biography, history and society are the three coordinate points of proper study of man. The uses of History are endless and it is for Human self- knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES. CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH THOSE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) What does History hold up to us as a source of inspiration ?

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- (ii) What does Hegel say about history ?

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.....

- (iii) What according to T B Macaulay is history ?

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.....

- (iv) History has been referred to as

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(Complete the statement based on the paragraph given above)

11.3.1 Historians and its Purpose :

The purpose of historian is to study, clarify and exhibit the historical process. At the same time, he/she is bound to have a purpose in mind when he/she enters in the studies.

Historians cannot exist in vacuum. They live in the society founded by humans and influence it, whether they like it or not. A good historian must question his own faith and admit some virtue in the beliefs of others. To enable man to understand the society of the past and to increase his mastery over the society of the present is “the dual function”. No one reads or writes history to make men aware of character of their time by seeing it in comparison and contrast with another. History which is so close to human life cannot remain fixed; it changes with time, with the impact of new hopes, thoughts and ideas. One cannot fully understand or appreciate the work of the Historian unless one tries to understand the standpoint from which historian himself/herself has approached it, and that standpoint is itself rooted in a social and historical background.

Thus, in order to understand the history one must understand the historian and the age in which he lives because the Historian and the age are the immediate objective of studying history.

Historian aims at an intelligent reconstruction of the past. The primary purpose is to determine what happened in the past and why. In this way,



History can play a powerful role in the enlightenment of men and in the creation of rational human society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW IN NOT MORE THAN 2 OR 3 SENTENCES. CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH THOSE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) What is the purpose of the historian ?
.....
.....
.....
- (ii) What are the dual functions of a good historian ?
.....
.....
.....
- (iii) What is the primary purpose of intelligent construction of history by the historians ?
.....
.....
.....

11.3.2 The task of History :

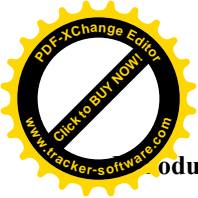
The task of history is to understand the past as many people want to know about the past for emotional or intellectual satisfaction. Historical knowledge gives a prevision, an insight to the understanding of future. It is the human past which is the primary object of the historical study. If the past is to be understood, it must be given full respect. The study of history is an intellectual search, an activity of reasoning mind.

Thus, to enable man to understand the society of the past, and to increase one's mastery over the society of the present, is the dual functions of history. The past is intelligible to us only in the light of the present and we can fully understand the present in the light of the past. It is said that a nation that forgets history will have no future.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW. CHECK YOUR ANSWER WITH THE ONE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) Write a very short note on the task of history.
.....
.....
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11.3.3 History and its Relationship with other Disciplines :

History and the social sciences share common aims. They claim to deal, at least in principle, with the whole range of social life and its purpose which leads to a comprehensive understanding of human actions and relationships. History has become a meeting ground for various disciplines. It includes both nature and humanity in their changing – either growth or declining – phases. It has all the ingredients of science, art and philosophy, all rolled into one, thus becoming a meeting ground of all the three fundamental branches of knowledge. Thus the domain of history has become vast and comprehensive for the reconstruction of the past. The historian employs a variety of sources – primary and secondary – such as records, documents in archives, eyewitnesses reports, recollections, diaries, letters, newspapers, archaeological remains, folklores and popular literature, etc. History deals with evidence, so it is important for the historian that he/she must be clear about his/her attitude towards the sources from which the evidence are drawn. History has mainly two functions to perform, one is to offer broad principles and generalizations of historical truth, and the other is to combine the merits of drama or epic poetry with the merit of truth.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 6

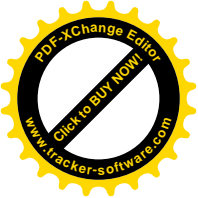
ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW AND CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH ONES GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.

- (i) What are the common aims shared by history and social sciences ?
.....
.....
.....
- (ii) What are the different sources employed by the historian to construct history ?
.....
.....
.....
- (iii) Name two functions that history performs.
.....
.....
.....

11.3.4 History as a Science and Art :

History concerns itself with some but not all of the facts of human life; and on the other hand, besides recording facts, history also has source of fiction and makes use of laws. History is about the process of translating evidence into facts. Facts are literally meaningless in their unprocessed state of simple evidential statement. The proof is turned into facts through the descriptive interpretations of historian.

History is not merely a story telling. It is one of the foundational social sciences in incorporating both science and art.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 7

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWER GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) Explain how history is both a science and art ?

.....

.....

.....

11.4 LITERATURE

According to the Oxford Dictionary, “Literature means literary productions as a whole, the body of writings produced in a particular country or period or in a word in general”.

The word literature simply means a body of published texts. In a more restrictive sense, it refers to creative works of imagination, which are divided into poetry, drama & fiction and this concept is relatively a recent one. Besides the generalising use, literature has borne the weight of cultural. “Literature is not a single entity which can be defined by listing a fixed set of criteria; it is rather a cultural category to which a whole range of characteristics has been attributed”. Literature should not be regarded as a class, but as a collective.

Literature is a form of human expression. But not everything expressed in words, even when organised and written down, is counted as literature. The derivation of the word literature implies writing, there exists also a large proportion of oral literature. Literature becomes a form of universal truth articulated through powerful personal expression. In a general sense, literature includes creative writings (poetry, fiction, drama, essays), popular narratives and worked produced by philosophers, historians, religious and social thinkers travellers, and nature writers. Imaginative literature can be defined by its fictional and autotelic nature, the dominance of aesthetic function within it and its special use of language. Thus to define literature is very difficult.

The word literature tends to be used with approval of works perceived as having artistic merit, the evaluation of which may depend on social and linguistic as well as aesthetic factors. Literature is nothing but an ideology in a certain artistic form and the work of literature are just expressions of ideologies of their time. It's a non- instrumental language whose value resides in itself alone and it is an expression for the sake of expression.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 8

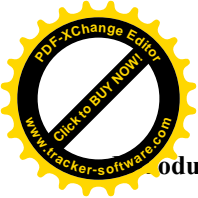
ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWERS GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) Give the Oxford meaning of the word “Literature.”

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(ii) Define Literature

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(iii) Write a note on Literature.

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11.4.1 Relationship between History and Literature :

Literature is a counter part of history. It is both compelling and challenging for a creative writer to blend in critically the legacy of history, as a reference point for the present as well as to re-interpret and re-enact the past experience. The true significance of historical literature lies in its aesthetic interpretation of salient historical and socio-political themes.

Literature is seen not as a passive reflection of historical change, but as a significant (active) vehicle of it. Indeed literary approaches are greatly shaping the contemporary practice of history.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 9

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWER GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

(i) Bring out the relationship between History and Literature

.....

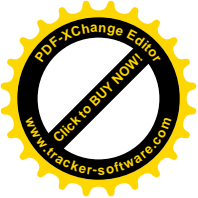
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11.4.2 Social Environment and its Influences on Literature :

Historians often in search of objectivity and accuracy neglect literature and its importance in capturing historical reality. They argue that literature is based on imagination of human mind. But the human imagination is conditioned by social reality and socio-political forces. Literature is not written in vacuum. Literature like history is influenced or moulded by the social environment.

The critical analysis of literature proves if a writer is deeply rooted in the popular life and if his/her writing branches out of this closeness, he/she can align the real depths of historical truth. Literature goes beyond the empirical reality and probes the silence of the human mind. It deals with the complexities of the inner working of the human mind, thereby making the study a more detailed one. The human experience of joy and suffering is a central part of literature. Literature is a vital record of what people have observed and what they experienced.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 10

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWERS GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) Which two forces condition human imagination?
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.....
.....
- (ii) What does critical analysis of literature prove ? Or how does critical analysis affect literature?
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.....
.....

11.4.3 Relationship between Historical Writings and Literary Forms :

History claims to be a true representation of the past while fiction does not. It significantly describes actions and events located in particular times and places. All the facts of civilization, culture and politics regularly become material for fiction.

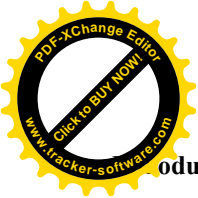
It is common to distinguish history from literature on grounds that history deals in the realm of fact while literature moves in the realm of fiction. Historian may not invent the facts or references while the literary writer may have a greater margin of freedom in exploring relationships. History and fiction are alike stories or narratives or actions.

For History both the structure of the narrative and its details are representations of past actuality. For Fiction, there is no claim to be a true representation in any particular aspect. The notion of a literary genre provides a clue, even a framework, for the reader on how to read and interpret a work. The novel gives the Historian new freedom, inviting him to go beyond the document. History, however remains the raw material for the novelist's human condition. History conceives all of the past time as a single huge unit, a solid object out of which smaller units may be taken. That is orderly forms which permit no abstract extension beyond themselves. The novelists and poets conception of past time is, with a few notable exceptions, radically opposed continuity. It is more fluid and it rests upon the metaphor of river of time.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 11

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWERS GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) Bring out the salient features of Historical writings and literary forms.
Historical Writings.
.....
.....
.....



Literary Forms.

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.....

11.4.4 Difference between Histories and Novels :

The difference between histories and novels, is not so much that the former deal with real things and the latter do not. Novels often refer to real things and pertain to real life, but that history signifies to tell only of real things to refer only to a real, not imagined world. Although history and fiction may have different conventions of referring to the worlds they depict, they share narration and other modes of representation in doing so. Thus, the difference between narrative histories and narrative fiction is not their structures of factuality as such but their overall interpretative structures and what those lead readers to presume about the narrated world represented. Rather than their form what distinguishes historical from fictional stories is first and foremost their contents. The events must not be only registered within chronological framework but narrated as well as revealed as preserving a structure, an order of meaning, which they do not possess as mere sequence.

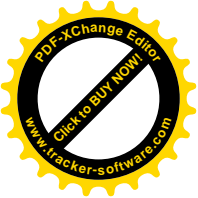
History and fiction are like stories or narratives of events and actions. But for history both the structure of the narrative and its details are representations of the past actuality and the claim to be true representation which is understood by both writer and reader.

For fiction there is no claim to be true representation in any respect. Nothing in the fictional narratives marks out the difference between the true and imaginary and this an agreement to which writer and reader subscribe.

Narrative form in history as in fiction is a pretence, the product of individual imagination. Yet at the same time, it is accepted as claiming truth as representing a real collection of interrelationships in past actuality. Thus the narrative theory also establishes the inter-play of history and fiction. History often clothes itself in the authority of an academic discipline claiming to tell us the truth about the past.

The concept of imagination is pivotal in the construction of both history and literature. This is the fact that history, literature science and technology all display the workings of critical imagination. The historians who are always against the use of literature as historical evidence claim that literature or fiction is always full of imagination and away from reality. But this is not the case, critical imagination is central in the textual construction of reality in both history and fiction.

The human imagination either in history or fiction is always conditioned by the social reality and socio-political forces. While speaking about imagination, it cannot be claimed that every use of imagination is legitimate but at the same time it is to be said that everything produced by imagination need not be merely imaginary.



In history as in fiction, while we read we are aware of a sequence of metaphorical identifications. When we have finished, we are aware of an organised structural pattern or conceptualized myth. Then, it is to be believed that at least there are two levels of interpretation in every historical work; one in which the historian constitutes a story out of a chronicle of events and another in which by a more fundamental narrative technique, he/she progressively identifies the kind of story he/she is telling; comedy, tragedy romance, epic or satire as the case might be. We can distinguish between two kinds of meaning provided by historical narrative; history contains both hypothetical and assertive elements in the same way that realistic novels do. Thus, the role to be played by the element of interpretation also establishes a close proximity between history and literature.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 12

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWER GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) Compare and contrast Histories and Novels.

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11.4.5 Post Modernism : History and Literature :

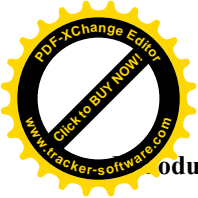
The theory of postmodernism also advocates the use of literature in history. Recent critical readings of both history and fiction have focused more on what the two modes of writing share than how they differ. They both are identified as linguistic constructs highly conventionalized in their narrative forms.

In the context of historiography, postmodernism implies especially a challenge to those conventional certainties, such as facts, objectivity & truth in terms of which much history has in the past been written and read.

The postmodern theory eliminates the secure linear relation between past and present upon which conventional historical interpretation depends. The emphasis now is less on history as a process of objective history and report but, rather, accepts its literary constructiveness. Thus, there can never be one single privileged position from which the story of the past can finally be told. History and fiction have always been notoriously porous genres, of course. At various times both have included in their elastic boundaries such forms as travel tale and various versions of what we now call sociology.

According to postmodernists, facts are not discovered, they are actually sources interpreted according as much too literary as any other criteria. The Postmodern theorists stress the textuality of history and if there is nothing outside the text then the history collapses into fiction, and fact and fiction become indistinguishable from one another.

Postmodern writings assert that there are only truths in plural and never one truth and there is rarely falseness, just others' truths. Fiction and history are narratives distinguished by their frames. History is a kind of fiction in which we live and hope to survive, and fiction is a kind of



speculative history. It is fiction which is concerned both with its status as fiction, narrative or language and also grounded in some verifiable historical reality. Past events can be altered. History can be rewritten. This applies to the real world too.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 13

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWERS GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

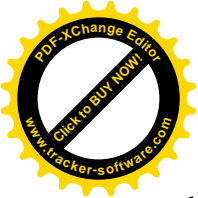
- (i) What does postmodern theory advocate of literature in history?
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.....
.....
- (ii) Prove that both history and literature are accommodating in nature.
.....
.....
.....
- (iii) What are facts?
.....
.....
.....
- (iv) Compare and contrast fiction and history.
.....
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11.5 THE PROGRESS OF HISTORY AND LITERATURE IN POST MODERN ERA

Is the real history of the world changing constantly, if it is, then why ? Because history is a fiction. It is a dream in the mind of humanity, forever striving towards perfect.

Novels incorporate social and political history, though the extent will vary. The old model history essentially presupposes the existence of an objective historical truth that can, at least in principle, be finally uncovered to reveal the past as it was. That truth in its entirety may not have revealed but each piece of individual research can make some contribution to the final edifice, and each will be recognized and valued accordingly. History is as structured, coherent and teleological as any narrative fiction. It is not only the fiction but history too that is probably betwixt and between. History and literature have no existence in and of themselves. It is we who constitute them as the object of our understanding.

In postmodern world, both history and fiction are cultural sign systems, ideological constructions whose ideology includes their appearance of being autonomous and self-contained.



For post modernists, history is not the transparent record of any sure truth and the fiction validates views of historians. For them past arrives in the form of texts and textualized remainders and these texts interact with each other in complex ways. This does not in any way deny the value of history writing; it merely redefines the conditions of value. In postmodern theory, history becomes a text, a discursive construct upon which fiction draws as easily as it does upon other texts of literature. In history and literature debate, the postmodernists give new insights into complexities of narrative discourse and highlight the role of language in reconstructing the human past.

Foucault suggests history is fiction written within the parameters of truth, except that the former is based on what had happened and existed while the latter's basis of construct is imagination.

Fiction borrows as much from history as much history, borrows from fiction according to Paul Ricoeur.

The whole argument establishes a close relationship and interplay of history and literature. Thus, literature portrays social reality and change and provides a good deal of evidence. No single piece of evidence can stand alone. Contradictions both within literature and with the results of its use are inevitable and call out for resolution by additional research in other resources. Moreover, the attempt is not to privilege fiction over fact rather to integrate the both. Thus, it can be concluded that for better understanding of certain historical developments, it would be undoubtedly rewarding to scan the rich repository of diverse experiences recorded sensitively by a creative writer.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 14

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. CHECK OUT FOR THE ANSWERS GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS UNIT.

- (i) History and fiction are inseparable, explain.

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- (ii) What are the views of post modernists on history and fiction?

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- (iii) Foucault's views on history and fiction :

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(iv) According to Paul Ricœur Fiction,

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(Complete the sentences from the text given above)

(v) Can it be concluded that neither history nor fiction can be privileged over the other but both the genres are sides of the same coin.

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11.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have learnt;

- history as a source of inspiration, its task, history as science and art and its relationship with other disciplines,
- history and its relationship with literature, social influences on literature, the differences between histories and novels, relationship between historical writings and literary forms & history and literature in the postmodern world.

11.7 KEY WORDS

Inspiration : the process of being mentally stimulated

Discipline : the practice of training people to follow rules or code of conduct

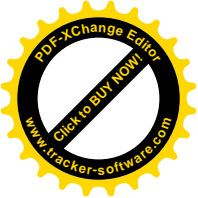
Historical Writings : the writing of history based on source which will stand critical methods

Literary forms : a piece of writing with its structure and organization

Postmodernism : a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific, or objective efforts to explain reality

11.8 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Wikipedia contributors. "What Is History ?." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia, 31 Oct. 2018. Web. 11 Nov. 2018.
2. PDF Chapter – 1 What is History shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in
3. Tosh John, The Pursuit of History : Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History, Longman, London, 1984, p.1
4. Collingwood .G R, The Idea of History, OUP London, 1953, P.9.
5. Webster C B, An Introduction to History, Macmillan, London, 1981, p. 14.
6. Carr H E What is History ?, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1987, pp. 123, 130, 132.



ANSWERS

Check your progress 1

- (i) Past experience
- (ii) Original traces or sources
- (iii) Prehistory
- (iv) Historians
- (v) History

Check your progress 2

- (i) Inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation
- (ii) Two generally accepted meanings of history are as an event or record
- (iii) Modern study of history includes the specific study of regions and the study of certain topical or thematic elements of historical investigation
- (iv) History is taught as part of primary and secondary education, and the academic study of history is a major discipline in university studies.

Check your progress 3

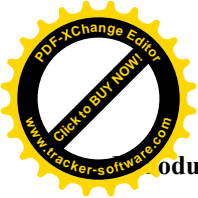
- (i) History is a source of inspiration as it holds up to us the tradition and glory, the impacting passions and heroic deeds of past generations.
- (ii) Hegel considers history as the “history of liberty” which becomes, on one hand, the explanatory principles of the course of history and on the other, the moral ideal of humanity.
- (iii) For T B Macaulay, history being the part of literature, “begins in novel and ends in essay”.
- (iv) History has also been referred to as “biography” a national epic, “a science and progress”.

Check your progress 4

- (i) The purpose of historian is to study, clarify and exhibit the historical process. At the same time, he is bound to have had a purpose in mind when he enters upon his studies.
- (ii) To enable man to understand the society of the past and to increase his mastery over the society of the present is “the dual function”.
- (iii) The primary purpose is to determine what happened in the past and why. In this way, history can play a powerful role in the enlightenment of men and in the creation of rational human society.

Check your progress 5

- (i) The task of history is to understand the past as many people want to know about the past for emotional or intellectual satisfaction. Historical knowledge gives a prevision, an insight to the understanding of future. The study of history is an intellectual search, an activity of reasoning mind. To enable man to understand the society of the past, and to increase one's mastery over the society of the present, is the dual functions of history. The past is intelligible to us only in the light of the present and we can fully understand the present in the light of the past.



Check your progress 6

- (i) They claim to deal, at least in principle, with the whole range of social life and its purpose which leads to a comprehensive understanding of human actions and relationships.
- (ii) The historian employs a variety of sources – primary and secondary – such as records, documents in archives, eyewitnesses reports, recollections, diaries, letters, newspapers, archaeological remains, folklores and popular literature .
- (iii) History has mainly two functions to perform. One is to offer broad principles and generalizations of historical truth. The other is to combine the merits of drama or epic poetry with the merit of truth.

Check your progress 7

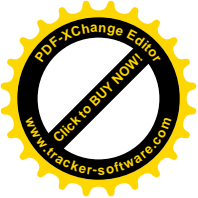
- (i) History concerns itself with some but not all of the facts of human life and besides recording facts, history also has a source of fiction and makes use of laws. History is about the process of translating evidence into facts. Facts are literally meaningless in their unprocessed state of simple evidential statement. The proof is turned into facts through the descriptive interpretations of historian. History is not merely a story telling. It is one of the foundational social sciences and it is both science and art.

Check your progress 8

- (i) According to the Oxford Dictionary, “literature means literary productions as a whole, the body of writings produced in a particular country or period or in a word in general”.
- (ii) The word literature simply means a body of published texts. In a more restrictive sense, it refers to creative works of imagination, which are divided into poetry, drama & fiction and this concept is relatively a recent one. “Literature is not a single entity which can be defined by listing a fixed set of criteria; it is rather a cultural category to which a whole range of characteristics has been attributed”.
- (iii) Literature is a form of human expression. But not everything expressed in words even when organised and written down, is counted as literature. The derivation of the word literature implies writing, there exists also a large proportion of oral literature. Literature becomes a form of universal truth articulated through powerful personal expression. Literature includes creative writings (poetry, fiction, drama, essays), popular narratives and worked produced by philosophers, historians, religious and social thinkers travellers, and nature writers. Literature is nothing but an ideology in a certain artistic form and the work of literature are just expressions of ideologies of their time. It's a non–instrumental language whose value resides in itself alone and it is an expression for the sake of expression.

Check your progress 9

- (i) Literature is a counter part of history. It is both exciting and challenging for a creative writer to blend in critically the legacy of history, as a



reference point for the present as well as to re-interpret and re-enact the past experience. The true significance of historical literature lies in its aesthetic interpretation of salient historical and socio-political themes. Literature is seen not as a passive reflection of historical change, but as a significant (active) vehicle of it. Indeed literary approaches are greatly shaping the contemporary practice of history.

Check your progress 10

- (i) The human imagination is conditioned by social reality and socio-political forces.
- (ii) The critical analysis of literature proves that if a writer is deeply rooted in the popular life and if his writing branches out of this closeness, he can align the real depths of historical truth. Literature goes beyond the empirical reality and probes the silence of the human mind. It deals with the complexities of the inner working of the human mind, thereby making the study a more detailed one. The human experience of joy and suffering is a central part of literature. Literature is a vital record of what people have observed and what they experienced.

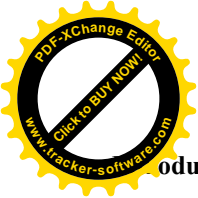
Check your progress 11

- (i) History claims to be a true representation of the past. History deals in the realm of facts. Historian may not invent his facts or references. For History both the structure of the narrative and its details are representations of past actuality. History remains the raw material for the novelist's human condition. History conceives all of the past time as a single huge unit, a solid object out of which smaller units may be taken. That is orderly forms which permit no abstract extension beyond themselves. History and fiction are alike stories or narratives or actions.
- (ii) All the facts of civilization, culture and politics regularly become material for fiction. Fiction describes actions and events located in particular times and places. Literature moves in the realm of fiction. The literary writer may have a greater margin of freedom in exploring relationships. For Fiction, there is no claim to be a true representation in any particular aspect. The notion of a literary genre provides a clue, even a framework, for the reader on how to read and interpret a work. The novelists and poets conception of past time is more fluid and it rests upon the metaphor of river of time.

The novel gives the Historian new freedom, inviting him to go beyond the document History and fiction are alike stories or narratives or actions.

Check your progress 12

- (i) Novels often refer to real things and pertain to real life, but that history signifies to tell only of real things to refer only to a real, not imagined world. The difference between narrative histories and narrative fiction is not their structures of factuality but their overall interpretative structures. Content is what distinguishes historical from fictional



stories. History and fiction are like stories or narratives of events and actions. But for history both the structure of the narrative and its details are representations of the past actuality and the claim to be true representation which is understood by both writer and reader.

Narrative form in history as in fiction is a pretence, the product of individual imagination. History often clothes itself in the authority of an academic discipline claiming to tell us the truth about the past. The concept of imagination is pivotal in the construction of both history and literature. This is the fact that history, literature science and technology all display the workings of critical imagination. Critical imagination is central in the textual construction of reality in both history and fiction.

The human imagination either in history or fiction is always conditioned by the social reality and socio –political forces. In history as in fiction, while we read we are aware of a sequence of metaphorical identifications. It is evident that an organised structural pattern or conceptualized myth is seen. There are two levels of interpretation in every historical work; one in which the historian constitutes a story out of a chronicle of events and another in which by a more fundamental narrative technique. He progressively identifies the kind of story he is telling; comedy, tragedy romance, epic or satire as the case might be. We can distinguish between two kinds of meaning provided by historical narrative; history contains both hypothetical and assertive elements in the same way that realistic novels do. Thus, the role to be played by the element of interpretation also establishes a close proximity between history and literature.

Check your progress 13

- (i) The theory of postmodernism advocates the use of literature in history. They both are identified as linguistic constructs highly conventionalized in their narrative forms.

Postmodernism implies especially a challenge to those conventional certainties, such as facts, objectivity & truth in terms of which much history has in the past been written and read.

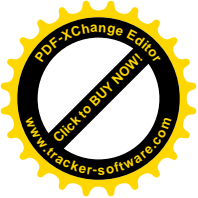
- (ii) The postmodern theory eliminates the secure linear relation between past and present upon which conventional historical interpretation depends. The emphasis now is less on history as a process of objective history and report but, rather, accepts its literary constructiveness. Thus, there can never be one single privileged position from which the story of the past can finally be told. History and fiction have always been notoriously porous genres, of course. At various times both have included in their elastic boundaries such forms as travel tale and various versions of what we now call sociology.
- (iii) Facts are not discovered, they are actually sources interpreted according as much too literary as to any other criteria. The Postmodern theorists stress the textuality of history and if there is nothing outside the text then the history collapses into fiction, and fact and fiction become indistinguishable from one another.

(iv) Postmodern writings assert that there are only truths in plural and never one truth and there is rarely falseness, just others' truths. Fiction and history are narratives distinguished by their frames. History is a kind of fiction in which we live and hope to survive, and fiction is a kind of speculative history. It is fiction which is concerned both with its status as fiction, narrative or language and also grounded in some verifiable historical reality. Past events can be altered. History can be rewritten.

Check your progress 14

- (i) Novels incorporate social and political history. The old model history essentially presupposes the existence of an objective historical truth can be finally uncovered to reveal the past as it was. That truth in its entirety may not have revealed but each piece of individual research can make some contribution to the final edifice, and each will be recognized and valued accordingly. History is as structured, coherent and teleological as any narrative fiction. It is not only the fiction but history too that is probably betwixt and between. History and literature have no existence in and of themselves. It is we who constitute them as the object of our understanding.
- (ii) In postmodern world, both history and fiction are cultural sign systems, ideological constructions whose ideology includes their appearance of being autonomous and self-contained. For post modernists, history is not the transparent record of any sure truth and the fiction validates views of historians. For them past arrives in the form of texts and textualized remainders and these texts interact with each other in complex ways. This does not in any way deny the value of history writing; it merely redefines the conditions of value. In postmodern theory, history becomes a text, a discursive construct upon which fiction draws as easily as it does upon other texts of literature. In history and literature debate, the postmodernists give new insights into complexities of narrative discourse and highlight the role of language in reconstructing the human past.
- (iii) Foucault suggests history is fiction written within the parameters of truth, except that the former is based on what had happened and existed while the latter's basis of construct is imagination.
- (iv) Fiction borrows as much from history as much history borrows from fiction according to Paul Ricoeur.
- (v) Yes, it can be concluded that neither history nor fiction can be privileged over the other. The whole argument establishes a close relationship and interplay of history and literature. Literature portrays social reality and change and provides a good deal of evidence. No single piece of evidence can stand alone. Contradictions both within literature and with the results of its use are inevitable and call out for resolution by additional research in other resources. Moreover, the attempt is not to privilege fiction over fact rather to integrate the both. Thus, it can be concluded that for better understanding of certain historical developments, it would be undoubtedly rewarding to scan the rich repository of diverse experiences recorded sensitively by a creative writer.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦



UNIT 12

TRAIN TO PAKISTAN BY KHUSHWANT SINGH- FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND HISTORY

: STRUCTURE :

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.1.1 A brief description on the relation between History & Literature

12.2 Literature and History in retrospect with respect to Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*

12.3 An understanding of the themes presented in the Novel

12.4 Outlining the Historical Background of *Train to Pakistan*

12.4.1 The Social Milieu

12.4.2 Horror and Violence

12.4.3 Symbolism in the Novel

12.4.3.1 Dacoity

12.4.3.2 Kalyug

12.4.3.3 Mano Majra

12.4.3.4 Karma

12.5 Symbolism in Characters

12.6 Symbolism and Nature

12.7 Key Words

12.8 Let Us Sum Up

12.9 Books Suggested

12.0 OBJECTIVES

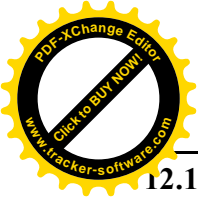
In this Unit we shall;

- discuss the definitions of literature and literary studies,
- discuss the classification of literature,
- understand Indian English Literature,
- discuss the social environment in which the novel is set up,
- try to analyse and understand the degradation of Human values.

Outcomes :

At the end of this unit, you will be;

- prepared to understand the relationship between Literature and History from the point of view of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*,
- well equipped to understand the classification of Literature,
- to comprehend Indian English Literature,
- able to analyse the cause and effects of the aftermath of Partition.



12.1 INTRODUCTION

12.1.1 A brief description on the relation between History and Literature :

The word literature has traditionally been applied to those original works of poetry and prose distinguished by the purposes of their authors and the seeming artistic excellence.

Literature may be classified according to a variety of systems, including language, national origin, historical period, genre, subject matter and geographical regions.

Indian English Literature is the body of work by writers in India who write in English language and whose native language is one of the numerous languages of India. It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature.

History is the study of past events, particularly in human affairs. It is the whole series of past events connected with a particular person, society or time.

The stories of History are stretched to entertain or preach the audience and make them reflect further. The main difference between history and literature is the purpose of each : History intends to record events as accurately as possible while literature interprets historical events in an imaginative way.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-1

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW.

1. Write a short note on the Relation between History and Literature.

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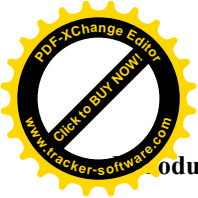
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12.2 LITERATURE AND HISTORY IN RETROSPECT WITH RESPECT TO KHUSHWANT SINGH'S *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN*

History and literature have been intertwined since the very beginning. Real events were narrated as stories to teach the younger generation wisdom or lessons about their origins. Literary text is one of the tools to learn the history as well. It is the indirect way to learn what happened at a certain point of time. All the tales cannot be validated, still they throw light on the then political, social, cultural or religious circumstances. Indian freedom movement and the partition are such historical movements of our history which have left deep scars. The literature of 50s and 60s reflects the then period.

Train to Pakistan is an unauthorized social document on the physical and emotional upheavals which were faced by the people living in the frontier during partition. The compassion that one finds in *Train to Pakistan* is that it exceeds the horror and brutality of Partition by giving a glimpse into human destiny.

Khushwant Singh's novel is all about the holocaust that took place in 1947 when India was divided into two countries – Indian and Pakistan.



Partition has left many scars in the hearts of several Indians. The memories and wounds of the tragic period still make people shiver. The book was first published in 1956 when in the backdrop the terrible memories of the holocaust were still afresh. The novel begins with a reference to the Hindu Muslim riots that had torn the nation and set the fire of communalism and terrorism.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-2

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW.

- 1. What kind of document is the novel *Train to Pakistan*?
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- 2. What can one find in the novel?
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- 3. What does the novel refer to?
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- 4. When was the novel *Train to Pakistan* published?
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12.3 AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE THEMES PRESENTED IN THE NOVEL

Indian literature covers every single aspect, both symbolically and realistically. The writers have tried to mirror the Indian society, their times at large. The events and happenings in India have been successfully projected. Thus, themes in Indian literature have always depicted the ongoing Indian society and the people associated with it.

The story of the *Train to Pakistan* may be fictitious but it is not far from the truth. It represents a true picture of social, economic and political conditions prevailing at the time. It is a story of a region, divided into totally opposite feelings of compassion and revenge, showing typically Indian Society.

The tragic experience of partition, depicting pain, trauma and sufferings of those who had to part from their kith and kins, friends and neighbours; the deepening nostalgia for places of those who had lived in for generations, the traumatic experiences of those countless people who boarded trains thinking they would be transported to the realization of their dreams but of



whom not a man, woman or child survived the journey. The scale and depth of the tragedy was such that many writers approached the subject of partition with great uneasiness.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS –3

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW.

1. What picture does the novel *Train to Pakistan* presents?

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2. What kind of story do you think is *Train to Pakistan*?

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3. What are the themes presented in the novel?

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12.4 OUTLINING THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN*

In the history of India, the partition of 1947 has been documented as the most deadly incident the entire humanity has ever witnessed.

Politically, it has been an event with lasting impact of horror and emotional threat which touched the lives of millions of common people throughout the country who were suddenly forced to choose a country on the basis of religious ideologies. It was a geographical dislocation of the lives of those who had to rebuild their lives after a total destruction of their identities.

The Partition, in the mind of Khushwant Singh is not just a catastrophic event that needed to be recorded but more a phenomenon to be explored and theorized that informed and defined the social, political, cultural and religious realities on the Indian subcontinent

12.4.1 The Social Milieu :

In *Train to Pakistan* the social environment reveals that Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims made the traditional structures of the Punjabi society in the pre-partition India. Culture, language and customs contributed to the larger Punjabi identity, though at a certain level, religion divided those into communal groupings almost separate identities. Another identity is a tense emotional belongingness to the village. It operated at the immediate level which gave shape to the separate religious identities. Mano Majra, the focal point of *Train to Pakistan* is by and large a typical of the rural Punjabi life. In view of economic and cultural backwardness Mano Majra is like any other village in the sub- continent.

Train to Pakistan by
Khushwant Singh – from
the point of view of
Relationship between
Literature and History



The Punjab rural people are not at all prepared for the big holocaust which the partition proved to be. It came as a big blow to the Indian rural life. The people are caught in a disaster beyond their understanding.

Khuswant Singh sketches some very divergent characters some weak and some very strong which are types and individuals. He hints at their complexity and does not intend to develop them fully. The novel portrays sincere belief in traditional, moral and social stands of Indian society.

Though there is a feeling that his characters are hemmed in by their environment and traditions. Khushwant Singh puts the microscope on the then Indian society through his spokesman, Iqbal to criticise different evil customs that were running rampant.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-4

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW.

1. What contributed to the pre-partition Punjabi Sikh society ?

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12.4.2 Horror and Violence :

Dacoity in the first part of the novel is a significant beginning. It is a prelude to actions on other levels too. It introduces a character Juggut Singh as a confirmed criminal who had been released for his good behaviour.

The morning after the dacoity the Mano Majra railway station is more crowded than usual.

The trains also present scene of horror “they were crowded with Sikh and Hindu refugees from Pakistan or Muslims from India. People perched on the roofs with their legs dangling or on bedsteads wedged in between the bogies. Some of them rode precariously on the buffers.” (p-32).

Again a horrifying scene is presented in the second part of the novel,” The arrival of the Ghost train in broad daylight created a commotion in Mano Majra. People stood on their roofs to see what was happening at the station.”(p-78).

After the cremation of the massacred corpses the village was stilled in a deathly silence. No one asked anyone else what the odour was. The sight of so many dead had at first produced cold numbness.”(p-84).

In the last part of the novel train loads of people coming over to Mano Majra is the centre of horror. The river Sutlej is flooded with corpses. The people are inside doors and are left to pray and wait.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – 5

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW.

1. What does the arrival of the train present?

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2. Describe the Ghost train's arrival at Mano Majra station?
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3. Write a note on the silence of the village after the cremation of the corpses?
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12.4.3 Symbolism in the Novel :

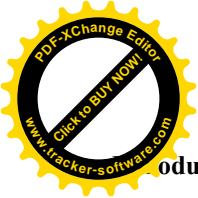
The novel *Train to Pakistan* is divided into four parts : Dacoity, Kalyug, Mano Majra, & Karma, all parts having a symbolical significance.

12.4.3.1 Dacoity : The first part constitutes a true to life description of an actually committed Dacoity but it echoes far beyond the inhuman and cruel actions of Malli and his gang. It symbolizes that the humanity has been deprived of its values. The dacoity is a material expression of our inner and spiritual deprivation.

12.4.3.2 Kalyug : The second part Kalyug is named after the Hindu's religious and theological concept. It represents the last phase in the four cycles of existence. At the time of partition in both India and Pakistan there was darkness everywhere. Millions were uprooted from their homes and hearts. This part of the novel is symbolical of inner blackness of human heart and the darkness all around the whole of India and Pakistan.

12.4.3.3 Mano Majra : The third part is Mano Majra. Every region has a population which can be easily recognized by its structure, language, gait and the dress code. Mano Majras reflect the pristine culture of India. It is the focal point in the sequence of events in the novel. It is deeply rooted in the very structure of the novel. The small world of this village is invaded by the larger world of India Pakistan division. The symbol of this intrusion is the train loads of corpses from Pakistan & India. The engine of the train has taken hold of man and the engine and the bulldozer have succeeded in dehumanizing us. The realities of human relationships break here and the Muslims decide to leave Mano Majra for safety at the Chandannagar refugee camp. The Sikhs feel that after all the bulbul does not sing always and the spring does not leave for ever.

12.4.3.4 Karma : The fourth part is Karma which is significant enough. It has double bearing in the narrative strategy. Karma denotes the totality of a person's action in one of the successive cycles of his existence. It determines man's fate in his next phase of life. It may also be used to denote the unpredictable ways of fate or wheels of fortune. It also indicates the Indian way of life in relation to man's experience with the unknown cosmic design stored for him.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – 6

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW.

1. What are the four parts of the novel?
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2. What does the first chapter constitute of?
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3. How does the writer justify the name 'Kalyug' for chapter two?
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4. What does Mano Majra symbolize in the novel?
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5. Bring out the significance of the fourth chapter 'Karma'.
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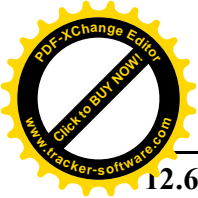
12.5 SYMBOLISM IN CHARACTERS

The major characters of Mano Majra are also symbolical to some extent. Meet Singh an affectionate man, Imam a religious man, Iqbal Singh is a fortune or a compromise, Hukum Chand is a ruler who rules Mano Majra, Nooran is peerless, Haseena is lovely, Ramlal a custodian of gems, Malli is mean, Juggut is a jewel for humanity, Banta Singh is the maker of the village . Thus the characters are the symbols of good or bad, health or wealth, and virtues and vices.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS–7

ANSWER THE QUESTION GIVEN BELOW.

1. Write the symbolism of the major characters of the novel ?
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12.6 SYMBOLISM AND NATURE

The symbolism of rain is also an important aspect of atmosphere in the novel. The first rain after the summer is very joyful but the thunder and lightning follows as the season advances, the towns and villages are swallowed by the rising rivers. The rain is the source of life on the earth but it also creates death and destruction. “With the monsoon, the tempo of life and death increases.” (p-92)

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS– 8

ANSWER THE QUESTION BELOW.

1. Bring out the symbolism of rain in the novel.

.....

.....

.....

12.7 KEY WORDS

History : the study of past events, particularly human history

Literature : a written work considered to be of lasting merit

Social Milieu : the immediate physical and social setting in which people live

Horror : an intense feeling of fear

Violence : behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt

Symbolism : indirect suggestions used to express emotions, ideas or state of mind

2.8 LET US SUM UP

The human values in *Train to Pakistan* are profound, moving and erudite on different facets of 20th century cultural changes. It is an explanation of one of the most moving and tragic events of contemporary Indian history. It is in the background of the great human catastrophe of the partition of India and the ghastly events that followed. It is perhaps one of the most telling contradiction of certain types of pacifism, lure of violence and the paradox of heroism. Thus a great novel of partition and its tone reflects much of the suspicion and fear generated as the result of the communal massacres of 1947.

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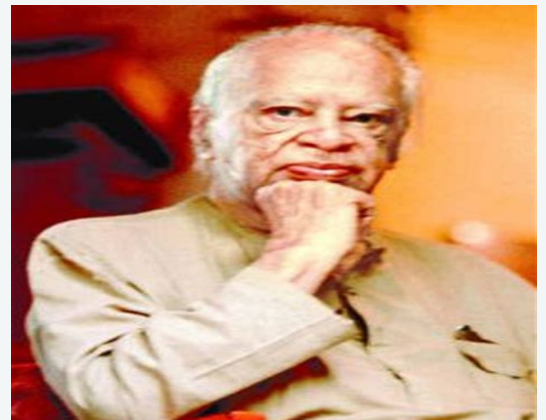
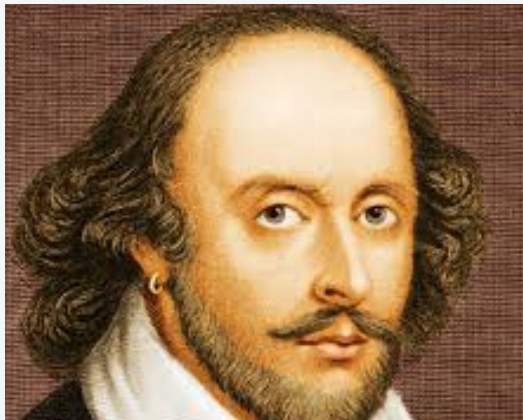
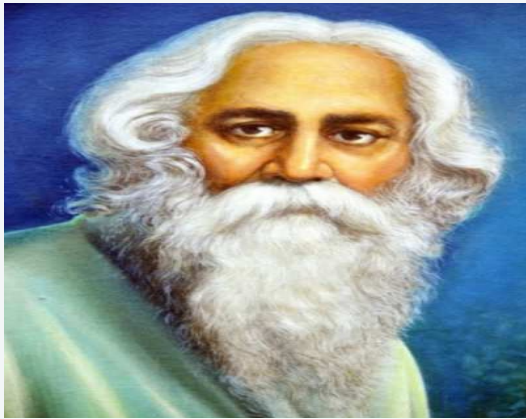
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♦♦♦♦♦

**FIRST YEAR B.A.
ENGM101
Introduction to Literature**



Message for the 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 as many as 54 courses including various Certificates, Diplomas, UG, PG, 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.

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F.Y.B.A

ENGM101

INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

Block

3

Unit 13

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Unit 14

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: STRUCTURE :

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13.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- discuss the meaning of literature,
- discuss the meaning of culture,
- discuss the connection between literature and culture.

On completing this unit, you should be able to;

- understand the concept and meaning of culture,
- understand the concept and meaning of literature,
- establish the relationship between literature and culture,
- understand the symbiotic relation between literature and culture,
- have a clear perspective of how literature and culture impact each other.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature and culture are two highly complex concepts that pervade every sphere of our life. It is important to have a clarity on not only the two concepts separately but also their connection with each other.

13.2 THE CONCEPT OF LITERATURE

The word literature derives from the Latin word *littera*, ‘a letter of the alphabet.’ The Latin word for literature was simply the plural, *litterae*, and in this basic sense literature embraces everything written.

Another way of defining literature is to limit it to 'great books', books which, whatever their subject, are 'notable for literary form or expression'. Because literature has not been captured in writing only, there has also been a rich oral tradition in all literature. In fact all great literature started in an oral form of storytelling, myths, ritual speeches etc.

In the attempt to define the term 'literature', one can distinguish between two general directions : a broad and a narrow definition. Oral or written, what is more important here is that these words are supposed to stimulate the imagination and confront the reader with a unique vision of life. The underlying assumption is that a work of literature must be a creative and universal form of expression which addresses the emotional, spiritual, or intellectual concerns of humanity. However, this idea about literature is no more than the fourteenth century idea that literature is writing (Milner, 1996 : 1). In the eighteenth century literature was viewed as "well-written books of an imaginative or creative kind" (William, 1976 : 152). Good literature is said to demonstrate craft and artistry and has the power to raise questions, provide fresh points of view, and expand the understanding of self and the world.

TIME NOW TO CHECK YOUR COMPREHENSION. CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ? THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU :

- i. What is literature ?
Literature is a term used to describe written words and some times it extends to spoken words as well. In fact, all literature have had their beginning in oral forms.
- ii. How is literature a mirror of society ?
- iii. How far is a narrow definition of literature feasible ?
- iv. What could be the broad definition of literature ?

13.4 THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

The English word 'Culture' is derived from the Latin term 'cult or cultus' meaning tilling, or cultivating or refining and worship. In sum it means cultivating and refining a thing to such an extent that its end product evokes our admiration and respect. This is practically the same as 'Sanskriti' of the Sanskrit language. The term 'Sanskriti' has been derived from the root 'Kri (to do) of Sanskrit language. Three words came from this root 'Kri; prakriti' (basic matter or condition), 'Sanskriti' (refined matter or condition) and 'vikriti' (modified or decayed matter or condition) when 'prakriti' or a raw material is refined it becomes 'Sanskriti' and when broken or damaged it becomes 'vikriti'. It is generally accepted that culture embodies the way humans live with and treat others and how they develop or react to changes in their environments. Just like we have the broad and the narrow definitions of literature, we have the 'little c' and the 'big c' culture. Little c culture is BBV : Belief, behavior and Values; while Big c culture is MLA–Music, literature and art.

Sometimes culture is used as a synonym for civilization. However, it is important to understand that the two are completely different. Culture is intrinsic, civilization is extrinsic. Culture is our inner refinement, while civilization is external development.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 1

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ? THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU :

- iv. What is culture ?
Culture provides us with ideas, ideals and values to lead a decent life. Culture is our world view.
- v. In what ways is culture a way of life ?
- vi. What is the difference between culture and civilization ?
- vii. How would you define 'Little C' and 'Big C' ?

13.5 KEY WORDS

Intrinsic : belonging naturally

Extrinsic : Operating from outside

Symbiotic : a mutually beneficial between different people or groups

Caricature : distorted or exaggerated drawing

Colonization : the action of appropriating a place or domain for one's own use

Documentation : the process of classifying and annotating texts

13.6 LET US SUM UP

Literature reflects the history of civilization. All the written manifestations of culture form literature. Literature teaches us to engage with the past. Shakespeare, Milton, Chinua Achebe, Virginia Woolf all take us to a journey into the society of a past time. What kind of people lived in that society, how they behaved, what were the norms of life they followed; all this is the subject of literature.

Literature emerges out of culture and culture is propagated by literature. It is a mutually beneficial connection that they have. If culture is a way of life, literature drafts it in the most authentic manner. History is only a record of events, literature is the actual record of people.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 2

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ? THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU :

- I. What is the relation between literature and culture ?
Literature and culture have a symbiotic relationship where they support and promote each other. One cannot flourish without the other.
- II. How does culture impact literature ?
- III. How is culture impacted by literature ?

13.7 POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. Literature is a socio-cultural response by writers.
2. Literature and culture share a symbiotic relationship.
3. Study of literature is important to get acquainted with a culture.
4. Culture is propagated and popularized by literature.
5. Culture cannot survive without literature.
6. Literature cannot come into existence without culture.
7. Literature is the documentation of culture.
8. Literature can change a culture.
9. Literature changes with the changes in culture.

13.8 UNDERSTANDING FURTHER

To Understand further let us read the poem *The Patriot* by Nissim Ezekiel :

I am standing for peace and non-violence.
Why world is fighting fighting
Why all people of world
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi,
I am simply not understanding.
Ancient Indian Wisdom is 100% correct,
I should say even 200% correct,
But modern generation is neglecting –
Too much going for fashion and foreign thing.
Other day I'm reading newspaper
(Every day I'm reading Times of India
To improve my English Language)
How one goonda fellow
Threw stone at Indirabehn.
Must be student unrest fellow, I am thinking.
Friends, Romans, Countrymen, I am saying (to myself)
Lend me the ears.
Everything is coming –
Regeneration, Remuneration, Contraception.
Be patiently, brothers and sisters.
You want one glass lassi ?
Very good for digestion.
With little salt, lovely drink,
Better than wine;

Not that I am ever tasting the wine.
 I'm the total teetotaller, completely total,
 But I say
 Wine is for the drunkards only.
 What you think of prospects of world peace ?
 Pakistan behaving like this,
 China behaving like that,
 It is making me really sad, I am telling you.
 Really, most harassing me.
 All men are brothers, no ?
 In India also
 Gujaratis, Maharashtrians, Hindiwallahs
 All brothers –
 Though some are having funny habits.
 Still, you tolerate me,
 I tolerate you,
 One day Ram Rajya is surely coming.
 You are going ?
 But you will visit again
 Any time, any day,
 I am not believing in ceremony
 Always I am enjoying your company.

<<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-patriot-10/>>

This poem is an interesting caricature of an Indian patriot in the seventies of India. To a reader born much after the seventies (as you all are), this poem may serve as a mirror of Indian culture at the time. Not only does it take you to a journey of India in the seventies, giving you clear insight of what people believed in; what were the major issues before those people; how they welcomed their guests; what according to them was the ideal of patriotism but also the poem tells you the kind of English those people used. Present continuous tense was being amply used, because people thought in Hindi and then translated it in English. It was a time when in order to be respected as a patriot, you were required to believe in the Gandhian principles of peace and non-violence. A clear divide between an older, nationalist generation and a younger modern generation had started to emerge. People welcomed their guests keeping in mind the spirit of 'Atithi Devo Bhav'; however, the younger generation had come under the influence of the West and they attached more value to the western concept of fashion. Lassi—the Indian drink had started to give way to wine.

Emphasis : This piece of literature acquaints you with the culture of the times when it was written. History books present the events that take place in a given time. Literature presents the way people lived, thought and behaved in a given time.

13.9 UNDERSTANDING FURTHER

Let us understand this symbiotic relationship between literature and culture through two recent examples :

Diaspora Literature : The diaspora literature is one of the most popular literary trends of our times. Globalization led to people leaving their homes in search of greener pastures. They began scattering about across nations. Afflicted with a sense of exile which led to quest for identity, writers in the diaspora produced a literature which places a yearning for home at the centre of their literature. Diaspora culture gave birth to diaspora literature and in turn diaspora literature manifests the diaspora culture.

Postcolonial literature : This is a kind of literature, the very basis of which is a cultural change. Imperialism and colonialism led to a different kind of mind set. Exploitation and control became the norm in the aftermath of Western colonization. There emerged a dominant centre that controlled its margins or colonies. On the part of the colonized, this culture is marked by :

- An initial awareness of the social, cultural and psychological inferiority
- A struggle for ethnic, cultural and political autonomy
- A growing awareness of cultural overlap and hybridity

This post colonial mindset is most authentically reflected in the postcolonial literature.

Having learnt the concepts of literature and culture as also the connection of the both, we must now check our progress.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 3

EXPLAIN THE FOLLOWING. THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU.

1. Literature is the documentation of culture.
More than history it is literature that can apprise us of a time and people. It's the Therigatha written by the Buddhist bhikkunis that brings to life the whole Buddhist way of life and culture.
2. Literature is history written by not a historian but a writer.
3. Study of literature is important to get acquainted with a culture.
4. Culture is propagated and promoted by literature.
5. Culture cannot survive without literature.
6. Literature can change the culture.
7. Literature changes with the changes in culture.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4

1. Literature is a _____ of culture.
2. Literature and culture have a _____ relationship.
3. Culture is sometimes confused as _____.
4. Literature changes with the change in _____.
5. Literature can _____ a culture.

13.10 BOOKS SUGGESTED

- Reflections on Culture and Literature . Hannah Arendt (Meridian : Crossing Aesthetics) Stanford University Press : Stanford.
- How To Interpret Literature : Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies. Robert Dale Parke. OUP.
- The English Studies Book : An Introduction to Language, Literature and Culture. Rob Pope. Routledge : London & New York.

Reference :

The Patriot. Nissim Ezekiel. <<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-patriot-10/>> WEB..

<<https://www.lanqua.eu/theme/literature-and-culture/>> WEB.

<<https://www.collinsdictionary.com>> WEB.

A Tale of Two Cities. Charles Dickens. Kindle.

ANSWERS**Check your progress : I**

- ii. The set of values, beliefs, and rituals of a group of people form their culture. Culture is the shape they mould their life into. Their food, dress, music, folklore all define their culture.
- iii. Culture is what we are and civilization is what we make use of or possess.
- iv. Little c is BBV : Belief, behavior and Values; while Big c is MLA– Music, literature and art.

Check your progress : II

- ii. Literature derives its life force from culture. Culture provides the setting for literature. George Orwell presented a simulacrum of the Russian Revolution in Animal Farm.
- iii. Literature not only mirrors culture but also powerful literature can shape culture. Literature presents a way of life, which cultures imbibe. Lord of the Flies brought about a cultural change in the importance that it put on individual. It changed the very way people behaved under the constraints of societal expectations.

Check your progress : III

- II. Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities is based on the French Revolution. The book opens with :

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

No Historian can ever draft a time in such evocative terms. A historian paints the times but a writer brings alive the mental make up of people which shapes the time.

- iii. While history can be informative in terms of the major events that took place, literature informs us about how, and how much those events impacted the people of the time. In a way, Literature is people's story, while history is the story of the elite.
- iv. This may be easily corroborated by the example of British and American Literature. Not many have traveled to England, but most of us know the English ways of life in different ages of history through Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Orwell, Hemingway, Robert Frost etc. The American and English culture has impacted us through their literature.
- v. A civilized world without literature is unimaginable. The history of literature is as old as the history of culture. Some oral tradition of literature had still started to emerge even before literature as a structured, organized form could come to exist.
- vi. In 1972, Mary Wollstonecraft published A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. This book changed the very way people perceived woman. It became the first treatise of Feminism, which led to such major changes as the right of enfranchisement to women. In 1944, when the book was republished, the editor acknowledged in the Preface that since the book's first publication, life has changed a lot for women. Needless to say, these changes were all for the better. That is the power of literature.
- vii. A comparison of Ramayana and Mahabharat would amply prove this point. Ramayana was written at a time when people were disciplined and lived a religious life, family values were important, hierarchy was respected. Mahabharat was written in times of social and political turbulence when ethical values were fast disintegrating. One doesn't need to read a political history of the time, as the disintegration is reflected clearly in Mahabharat.

Check your progress : IV

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. Mirror | 2. Symbiotic | 3. Civilization |
| 4. Culture | 5. create | |

♦♦♦♦♦

UNIT 14

GORA BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF REFLECTION OF CULTURE IN LITERATURE

: STRUCTURE :

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Summary of the text

14.3 Literature as mirror of culture

14.3.1 Spread of Brahmo Samaj

14.3.2 Hindu Nationalism

14.3.3 Controversy between Brahmo Samaj and Hinduism

14.3.4 Humanism

14.3.5 Partition of Bengal

14.3.6 Hindu Caste System

14.3.7 Quest for Identity

14.4 Key Words

14.5 Books Suggested

Answers

14.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- give a summary of the novel *Gora*,
- discuss the social, political and religious backdrop ,
- discuss the novel from the point of view of reflection of Culture in Literature.

On reading this unit you shall be able to;

- understand the plot of the novel,
- understand the social, political and religious backdrop,
- appreciate the novel as a reflection of the culture of its time.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Gora is a novel set in the 19th century India, when India was still a British colony. The novel presents the conflict and confusion between the orthodox Hindu society and the newly emerging Brahmo Samaj which was liberal in its approach to life. The novel highlights the problems prevailing in the Bengali society, as also the inner conflict of man as he strives to understand the distinction between right and wrong. It has been hailed as an epic novel, as it presents the social, political, as well as the religious life of Bengal. Tagore tries to portray the inner struggles a man faces in his efforts to achieve freedom. Written in an almost poetic language, *Gora*

raises some pertinent questions about the Indian identity. The novel was first serialized in the Bangla literary magazine *Probashi* from 1907 to 1909; and later published as a book in 1909 itself.

14.2 SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Gourmohan (known as Gora, because of his fair skin), is an orthodox Hindu boy and strictly follows all the customs and beliefs of the Hindu religion. Son of the fanatic father Krishna Dayal and the liberal mother Anandmoyi, Gora is an ardent nationalist. His best friend is an orphan Binoy who considers Gora's mother as his own. By a sudden chance, Binoy comes in contact with a Brahmo family—Paresh Babu, his wife Borodashunadari and their adopted daughter Sucharita. Initially Gora does not approve of this association however, much to his disdain he gradually discovers his own attraction to Sucharita who comes across as an intelligent, cultured, and strong woman.

Not willing to nurture his feelings for Sucharita, Gora embarks on a religious trip with his group. Meanwhile Binoy is persuaded by Paresh Babu's family to perform a play for the British Magistrate. During this time, Gora too, comes to the same place in order to complain to the Magistrate about the dismal conditions in a few of the villages he has visited. However, the magistrate refuses to listen. Sometime after this, Gora is put into jail as he helps a few village boys resisting the oppressive police. Binoy wants to bail him out, but Gora wishes to stay. So perturbed by the unsympathetic nature of the Magistrate, Binoy refuses to perform the play and instead catches the first steamer back to Calcutta. To his surprise, Sucharita's sister Lolita too, leaves her family and joins Binoy. Impressed by her act of defiance, Binoy begins to have affectionate feelings for the rebellious Lolita.

On coming back to Calcutta, Binoy and Lolita meet Borodashunadari's orthodox sister, Harimohini, who has come to live with Paresh Babu and his family as well. During this time, Paresh Babu receives severe criticism from the Brahmos for having taken in Harimohini and succumbing to Hindu practices. Meanwhile, rumours are rife about the closeness of Binoy and Lolita, who were seen together on a steamer. Binoy now, sees that the only way to help the family and Lolita, is to marry Lolita. However, Borodashundari insists that Binoy must first become a Brahmo. Binoy grudgingly accepts this clause, but later goes back on it. When Gora comes back from jail and hears about Binoy's situation, he becomes angry and tells Binoy that if he agrees to perform a marriage, they will never speak to each other again. Binoy takes a tough decision, asking Lolita to stick with her faith, while he would stick to his own.

Meanwhile Gora makes one last attempt to stop the marriage, and goes to Sucharita. Harimohini, all this while has looked upon Sucharita with subtle disdain as she is still a Brahmo and not a Hindu. Therefore, she is very pleased when Gora seeks out Sucharita's company and preaches to her about religion. Haran Babu, the dejected suitor of Sucharita, tells her that she is no longer Brahmo but a Hindu, with Gora as her guru, and she refuses to speak to Haran Babu. She goes to Paresh Babu to confess to him about

her plight, and he slowly reassures her that she need not decide whether she is Hindu or not, and that she must consider things when she is calmer.

Binoy meanwhile has settled the date of his marriage with Lolita. He is warned by Paresh Babu that he will be banished from the society if he decides to go ahead with such a marriage. As it turns out, Paresh Babu is right. The only people who attend such an important occasion of Binoy's are Paresh Babu himself, Anandmoyi(Gora's mother) and Sucharita. Thus Binoy gets married and ends his friendship with Gora.

Gora meanwhile has a change of heart. He realizes his love for Sucharita. Meanwhile, in his deathbed Gora's father Krishndayal reveals the secret of Gora being a foundling, the son of an Irishman. This revelation is startling to Gora, and he confesses to Paresh Babu, that he no longer has any identity, and belongs nowhere. In a flash, Gora finds his nation in his mother Anandmoyi, and he feels indebted to protect India.

Tagore's message is loud and clear that Nationalism comes out of choice and not by the fact of one's birth. Gora also makes it clear that the very idea of nation remains incomplete without women. In a way, Gora becomes the exemplar of Tagore's 'Universal Man.'

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 1

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU.

1. Who is Gora ?

Gora is the nick name of Gourmohan, the eponymous hero of the novel. Gora is the son of Irish parents, but he is brought up by Anandmoyi a Hindu Bengali. He doesn't know the truth about his birth and remains a Hindu fanatic for long. Since the boy is fair skinned, he is known as Gora.

2. What is the relation between Binoy and Gora ?

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.....
.....

3. What is the point of disagreement between Gora and Sucharita ?

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.....
.....

4. What is the main theme of *Gora* ?

.....
.....
.....

***Gora* by Rabindranath
Tagore from the point of
view of reflection of Culture
in literature**

14.3 LITERATURE AS MIRROR OF CULTURE

It has epic dimension and the broad canvas of the social, cultural, middle class Bengal. It unfolds the vast, dynamic backdrop of Bengal under British rule, a divided society struggling to envisage an emerging nation.

The major occurrences prevailing in the 19 century urban Bengal may well be traced in the novel proving there by that true literature presents the most authentic reflection of its times. Most of the characters expose one or the other side of the culture of Bengal. Paresh Babu and Sucharita present the positive side of Brahmo culture while Haran Babu, Borodashundari and Harimohini present the negative side. Krishna Dayal and Gora are the representatives of Fanatic Hinduism while Binoy represents the more tolerant Hindu culture. Harimohini's character also reveals the dark side of Hindu society where a widow is ostracized at all levels. Anandmoyi serves as the bridge between all the opposing strands of religion, by representing the humane face of Hinduism where caste barriers don't exist and love for all religions is the key to sustenance. Some of the major issues have been explained for your clear understanding.

1.3.1 Spread of Brahmo Samaj :

Gora depicts an important period in the history of India when Hindu society was struggling to prevent its own disintegration in the face of challenges from within and without. The impact of Western education and culture had brought about many changes in the cultural fabric of India. Feeling suffocated in the orthodox folds of Hindu society the intellectuals in Bengal people were inspired by the liberalism of the West and they had started questioning the superstitions and illogical rituals such as idol worship, caste system, practice of cruel social customs like sati, ill-treatment of widows, denial of education to women and child marriage. Since the youth under the impact of Western education had started to prefer conversion; Raj Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj with a view to bringing together the best practices of all religions. Gradually however, there arose another section of Brahmos who were more inclined to Christianity. The old faction came to be known as the Adi Brahmo Samaj.

1.3.2 Hindu Nationalism :

Gora is an impassioned patriot, who believes in working for the freedom of his nation from the clutches of the British. At this time, while the Brahmos were busy in their adulations for all things English, there was a section of Hindu youth who followed the path of Hindu nationalism. Gora is quite a representative of such Hindu nationalism. Tagore however, does not endorse this view as this could prove to be divisive. The change of heart brought about in *Gora* marks his shift from Hindu nationalism to Indian patriotism.

1.3.3 Controversy between Brahmo Samaj and Hinduism :

The novel has been hailed as the mirror of the Indian Renaissance. *Gora* starts as an orthodox Hindu and gradually gets inclined towards Brahmo Samaj. During this period, the Bengali society was split into the

Brahmos and the Hindus. Though the faith of the Brahmos was never to discriminate against the individual but to respect all creations, the Brahmos had a deep disregard for the Hindus. Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828 as a reformist movement. Brahmos renounced all superstitions and taboos and aimed at a synthesis of the best in all religions. During the course of time however, the Brahmo Samaj acquired a strong anti-Hindu bias. Raja Rammohan Roy also preached teachings that had a hint of Christian influence. However, in society at that time, being Christian was regarded as the same as having faith in the English.

1.3.4 Humanism :

Tagore takes up the theme of Nationalism in a big way in *Gora*, however, his nationalism very different from the usual. Gora believes in the supremacy of his Nation, and all his actions are motivated by his spirit of Nationalism. However, it is only towards the end that he realizes that human beings are far more important than nation. Gora's mother Anandmoyi doesn't believe in caste or religion and she epitomizes the philosophy of Humanism. Towards the end, Gora realizes she is the nation. Along with Gora's realization of her humanistic approach comes his self realization and he declares, "You are my Bharatvarsha..."

1.3.5 Partition of Bengal :

In 1905, the Partition of Bengal created a political movement in the state. Gora emerges as a national leader, who goes around the country side of Bengal and works for the betterment of Indian peasants. He remains a patriot through the novel. Tagore creates a picture of freedom struggle and its achievements through the portrayal of the eponymous hero. In a true nationalistic spirit, he takes a vow to serve India as her faithful servant.

1.3.6 Hindu Caste System :

Gora is an ardent Hindu and unlike his mother Anandamoyi, he practices its caste system most zealously. On one hand he uses the youth force from amongst all castes for his nation building ventures, on the other hand he maintains the norms of purity and piety in his own conduct and diet. He does not eat the food at his mother's place because she doesn't believe in caste system and has a maid Lachmiya who is a Christian. It is only towards the end when the truth of his birth dawns upon him, that he realizes the futility of caste and religion.

1.3.7 Quest for Identity :

Gora is an exploration of a young man's search for identity through the quest for harmony and unity of his country in the midst of a struggle between orthodoxy and reformation. At this time in Bengal, there were two major factions making their presence felt in the urban society. On one hand were the Hindu revivalists blindly following all the illogical norms of religion, and on the other were the reformists who embarked on a journey to cleanse Hinduism of all its dogmas, instead became inclined towards Christianity. Gora undertakes a journey which will enable him to find love and trust in diversity, a common symbol which would pinpoint the country's oneness. Gora thus becomes a novel of self realization, of a clearer

understanding of one's goal which can only come through a mature vision. In Anandmoyi's faith in the power of love and acceptance, Gora finally discovers the answers to all his doubts.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. THE FIRST ONE IS DONE FOR YOU.

1. How does Tagore represent the point of view of Brahmo Samaj ?
 Paresh Babu and his family are members of the Brahmo Samaj. Haran Babu, the suitor of Sucharita is also a Brahmo. Paresh Babu and Sucharita present the positive side of Brahmo Samaj and as such they do not have any issues in marrying outside their faith. Also, Paresh Babu's daughters are free to mix with men and hold conversations with outsiders, which was not deemed proper in the Hindu society.
2. Make a comment on nationalism as depicted in *Gora* ?

3. What do you know about the great controversy between Hinduism and Brahmo Samaj in Bengal ?

4. What is Tagore's idea of Humanism as expressed in *Gora* ?

5. How did the Partition of Bengal impact the political life of Bengal ?

6. What glimpses of the Caste system do you see in the novel ?

7. How does the theme of quest for identity unravel in the novel ?

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 3

LET US SEE HOW WELL ACQUAINTED YOU ARE NOW WITH THIS CHAPTER. TRY AND ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS. YOU CAN MATCH YOUR ANSWERS WITH THOSE GIVEN AT THE END OF THIS CHAPTER.

Gora by Rabindranath Tagore from the point of view of reflection of Culture in literature

1. Who founded the Brahmo Samaj ?
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.....
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2. What is the major political event that provides the backdrop to the novel ?
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.....
.....
3. What was the point of conflict between Brahmos and Hindus ?
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4. Who, according to Gora, is the nation ?
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5. How would you describe the nationalism presented in the novel ?
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6. Why does Gora get angry with Binoy ?
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.....
7. What are Anandmoyi's religious views ?
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.....
8. How is Tagore's humanism reflected in the novel ?
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9. When did Partition of Bengal take place and how ?
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.....

10. Do you think Gora reflects the culture of its time ?

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14.4 KEY WORDS

Quest for Identity : It is a philosophical concept found and practised in both the Western and the Eastern schools of thought. It looks like a complicated idea, but it's the simplest practice of trying to fulfill the complete potential of one's self. This is like discovering yourself, getting rid of the delusions and understanding yourself as you are. An individual is full of potentials but as long as they do not assess their capabilities they do not understand their real worth. The real identity of an individual is always hidden beneath their lineage, their familial and societal responsibilities as also their religious beliefs. Once they are able to see their real self, beyond all narrow considerations, they become self actualized individuals. In Hindi self realization is known as Atmabodh.

Nationalism : It is a feeling of love and loyalty for one's own nation. It's a system created by people who believe in the superiority of their own nation over others. The desire for political independence is a marked feature of nationalism.

Controversy between Brahmo Samaj and Hinduism : It was the centre of polemics in Bengal in Tagore's times. Brahmo Samaj was a reformation movement brought about by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, against the Hindu fanaticism of the revivalist.

Humanism : It is a philosophy that believes in the supremacy of human beings more than any religion. It emphasizes the agency of human beings. Dogma and superstitions find no place in the philosophy of humanism. The dignity of human life is more important than any other school of thought. Even the boundaries of nation don't divide the humanists and it's a universality of thought that emerges.

14.5 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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Gora by Rabindranath Tagore from the point of view of reflection of Culture in literature

ANSWERS

Check your progress 1

- ii. Binoy and Gora are close friends. Binoy is an orphan with an inclination towards Brahmoism, while Gora is a staunch Hindu. Binoy looks upon Gora's mother as his own, and addresses her as mother.
- iii. Sucharita is Paresh Babu's adopted daughter and a member of the Brahmo Samaj. She is educated, intelligent, cultured, and strong while Gora is a fanatic Hindu and believes that women must remain confined to their homes. He does not like strong, vocal women.
- iv. Gora revolves around the great dichotomy that prevailed in Bengal at the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was the great divide between orthodox Hinduism and Progressive Brahmo Samaj . The story revolves around the divide between nationalism and the revival of traditional Hinduism on the one hand and globalism and progressive reformation on the other.

Check your progress 2

- ii. Gora is an ardent nationalist who keeps his nation on top of all his priorities. Anandmoyi, his mother is a woman, who doesn't believe in caste or religion. All through the novel, Gora remains in disagreement with his mother. He doesn't even eat the food made by his mother. However, in the end he realizes that nation is not important, human beings are. He declares that Anandmoyi is his nation. Thus it's a new concept of nationalism where nation doesn't remain a political entity but becomes human.
- iii. During the early decades of nineteenth century, some bright young men in Bengal embraced Christianity, under the impact of Western thought and education, in an outright condemnation of Hinduism. In response to this, Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, as a reformatory movement. Brahmo Samaj renounced all superstitions and taboos and aimed at a synthesis of the best in all religions. Brahmos rejected the authority of the Vedas and Puranas. Some of the Christian practices of worship were also brought into its fold. During the course of time the Brahmo Samaj acquired a strong anti-Hindu bias.
- iv. Tagore believed in, "Man is the measure of all things." Gora's self realization coincides with his realization of the supremacy of Human beings. In granting the status of nation to his mother, Gora grants the most important place to human beings, so much so that his nationalism is humanized.
- v. The disappointment and dissatisfaction in the Bengali youth of the time was increased even more due to the partition. Partition was an attempt to divide the Eastern side populated by Muslim majority and

the Western side populated by Hindus. Gora works with the youth in the country side to oppose this decision of the British. However, it was only in 1911 that this decision was revoked.

- vi. Gora, the protagonist is himself a staunch casteist. He believes in the norms of purity of diet as prescribed in Hinduism. His father Krishna Dayal is another practitioner of this system. Anandamoyi, though a Hindu, is quite liberal and does not believe in a world torn apart by caste.
- vii. Gora's quest for identity runs parallel to the nation's quest for harmony and it is brought to its culmination a little dramatically. Gora wasn't aware of the fact of his birth; the moment he comes to know that he is an Irish foundling by birth; he realizes the truth of his mother Anandamoyi's belief in human beings beyond caste, class and creed. He understands that he is himself not an Indian, and yet he loves India; he is himself not a Hindu and yet he has been a staunch Hindu all his life. He realizes that religion, nation all these divide, while love and mutual respect unite.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1. Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828.
- 2. The Partition of Bengal.
- 3. Brahmos did not believe in Hindu caste system and superstitions. Hindus considered Brahmos as loyal to the British because of their inclination towards Christianity.
- 4. Anandamoyi.
- 5. Tagore's nationalism is a kind of Internationalism. He believed in Indian patriotism as against Hindu nationalism.
- 6. Initially Binoy's closeness to Sucharita's family annoys Gora because they are Brahmos. Later in the novel, Gora stops talking to Binoy when he marries Lolita, who is Sucharita's sister.
- 7. Anandamoyi is a liberal Hindu who believes in human beings beyond all castes and religions.
- 8. Tagore's humanism is propounded through Anadamoyi who believes in the religion of love. However, Gora's change of heart and ultimate realization of his mother's power strengthens Tagore's viewpoint.
- 9. Partition of Bengal took place in 1905, and it separated the largely Muslim eastern areas from the largely Hindu western areas.
- 10. Yes, it does. The Bengali Middle class society of the late 19 century inhabits the novel. Their dreams, their aspirations, their struggles and their pleasures, all find place in the novel. Gora, Binoy, Sucharita, Anandamoyi all are powerful characters in whom the Bengal of Tagore's time comes to life.

♦♦♦♦♦

: STRUCTURE :

15.0 Objectives**15.1 Introduction****15.1.1 What is Literary Term ?****15.1.2 Importance of Literary Terms****15.3 Literary Terms****15.4 Exercise****15.5 Let Us Sum Up****15.6 Books Suggested****Answers**

15.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- learn a few selected literary terms, along with their detail meaning,
 - learn about association of the terms discussed in this unit.
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15.1 INTRODUCTION

This present unit defines and discusses terms that are commonly used to understand, classify, analyze, and interpret literature. The selected literary terms will definitely provide guideline for further reading of literature especially toward undergraduate students of English, and other literatures. However, these literary terms are proved to be a useful for advanced students, as well as for the general reader with literary interests.

15.1.1 What is a Literary Term ?

‘Term’ or ‘Terminology’ means vocabulary related to a certain field of study, profession or activity. It is a system of words used to name things in a particular discipline. One is able to work comfortably in a given profession if knows the terms used within the profession. Similarly, it is important to know some of the basic terms and expressions used to discuss and analyze literature.

Literary term means the technique, style and formatting used by literary writers to highlight, elaborate or strengthen compositions. For example, every story has a theme, setting, conflict and is written from a particular point-of-view. All these words in Italics are literary terms and they have specific meanings in the interpretation of the work.

15.1.2 Importance of Literary Terms :

These words help us to understand literature and find out the characteristics of a work along with its meaning and significance. Understanding

of literary terms helps to appreciate a work of literature deeply. It helps a student of literature to the writer's thoughts and ideas in a better manner.

15.3 LITERARY TERMS

1. **Absurd Theatre or Absurd Literature** : The term is applied to the works of literature (mostly drama and other prose) that depict human condition essentially being meaningless– absurd. The term is derived from *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942) by Albert Camus where he writes,

“In a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. His is an irremediable exile.... This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of absurdity.”

Thus it is derived from Existentialism of Albert Camus. It represents purposelessness in a universe without meaning or value. As a rebellion against basic beliefs and values in traditional culture and literature the Absurd movement emerged in France after the tragic and horrors of World War 2. In Absurd Theatre or Literature generally the characters face alarmingly incomprehensible predicaments. The phrase ‘Theatre of the Absurd’ was coined by the critic Martin Esslin with the reference of works of dramatists who evoked the absurdity by leaving behind logical form, character and dialogue together with realistic illusion that of the 1950s. Mainly they were led by Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco. ‘Waiting for Godot’ by Samuel Beckett is one of the best examples of ‘Absurd Theatre’.

2. **Aestheticism** : The word is derived from the Greek which means sensitive, perceptive and sentient. The term represents the doctrine that regards beauty as an end or final destination in itself. It is a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of art, beauty and taste. It applies to a literary movement of the second half of the nineteenth century leading to the belief in ‘Art for Art's Sake’.

Immanuel Kant and other German philosophers separated the sense of beauty from practical interests in support of ‘Aestheticism’. ‘Aestheticism was adopted in France by Baudelaire, Flaubert and in England by Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde and several poets of the 1890s under the slogan of ‘Art for Art's Sake’. Oscar Wilde was the leader of Aestheticism. It attempts to preserve the arts from didactic or political purposes. Barnett Newman says, “Aesthetic is for the artist as Ornithology is for birds.”

3. **Analogy** : Analogy means a comparison between two things, typically on the basis of their structure and for the purpose of explanation and clarification. It is an allegory between the workings of nature and those of human societies. It is also the process of arguing from the point of view of similarity
4. **Ambiguity** : Ambiguity befalls when words carry double or more meanings. It means openness to different interpretations. It is also known as ‘Multiple meanings’ or ‘Plurisignation’. Figurative language

is often ambiguous. The publication of 'Seven Types of Ambiguity' (1930) by William Empson encouraged the usage of the term 'Ambiguity' in criticism to identify a thoughtful poetic device, the use of a single word or expression to signify two or more diverse references or to express two or more distinct attitudes or feelings. Verbal richness adds here to the poetic richness.

5. **Archetype** : This term is used since 1930s. 'Arche' means 'primitive' and 'types' means 'form'. Thus 'Archetype' means a 'primitive form'. The term signifies narrative designs, arrangements of action, character types, themes and images which recur in a wide variety of works of literature as well as in myths, dreams and even social rituals. The famous psychologist Carl Jung used the term describing it as 'primordial images formed by repeated experiences in the lives of our ancestors, inherited in the 'collective unconscious' of the human race and often expressed in myths, religion, dreams and fantasies as well as in literature.' Jung said that primordial images lie in collective human consciousness and so it evokes profound emotional responses in the reader because it resonates with an image already existing in his/her unconscious mind. Such characters, images, actions etc. have the power to stir generation after generation because they are archetypal in nature. Northrop Frye discussed common archetypes in all literatures.
6. **Apocalyptic** : Apocalyptic writing is the writing that aims to reveal the future history of the world and the ultimate destiny of the earth and its inhabitants. It reveals such futuristic secrets through prophecy. Such writing is generally found concerned with the coming end of the world seen in terms of a visionary pattern of history. The Second Coming a poem by W. B. Yeats is an example of apocalyptic writing.
7. **Agnosticism** : The term has its roots in science. The term was coined in 1869 by Thomas Huxley who was the biologist. He said, "I neither affirm nor deny the immortality of man. I see no reason for believing it, but on the other hand I have no means of disproving it." Thus it denotes the view that the truth values of certain claims, especially metaphysical and religious claims such as whether or not God exist, are unknown and perhaps unknowable. Agnostic is one who does not believe or disbelieve in the existence of God. Thus the approach encouraged by biologists like Huxley and Charles Darwin became popular amongst the writers between around 1850 and 1914, arose from the scientific thought of the time.
8. **Allegory** : It is an extended narrative in which the characters and incidents symbolize underlying ideas. Usually it is moral or ethical in nature. For example, Spenser's *Faerie Queene* is a series of romantic adventures but each incident has a moral significance too. The triumph of the Red Cross Knight in *Faerie Queene* signifies the defeat of error by holiness. Personification and metaphor are the chief ambassadors of Allegory. Sometimes it is conveyed through the expression of abstract ideas in concrete terms. For instance, in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* the characters and places like Hopeful, Giant

Despair, Doubting Castle etc. denote mental and moral states. The chief purpose of allegory as a device in literature is to teach a lesson. An interesting story encourages a reader to learn a lesson that is presented objectively and simply.

There are some short narratives similar in its purpose but, unlike an allegory which is an extended symbolic narrative, are also called allegories. They are fable, parable and exemplum.

9. **Apocalyptic** : Writings that aim to reveal the future history of the world and the ultimate destiny of the earth and its inhabitants.
10. **Archaism** : It is an old word or expression which is usually no longer accepted. Language is an ever evolving and changing phenomena. Usually a writer should not use such words which have gone out of current language. If such words are used, the reader will fail to understand and get puzzled. Words like albeit, wot, trow are such words which were used commonly once but no longer now. They may be still used by a writer if there is a historical character who belongs to that age when these words were used. Such a kind of use is sometimes called positive archaism. For example, R.L.Stevenson's *The Black Arrow*, the writer has used : And keep ever forward, Master Shelton; turn me not back again, an ye love your life. Here the word 'ye' stands for 'You'.

If this device is used repeatedly by the writer, it turns into annoying one. In short, archaism is the use of expressions, techniques and fashions from an earlier period which is not in use in the current age.

11. **Ballad** : A ballad is as a song or poem that tells a story and has a rhythm and rhyme scheme. It is a poem that is presented with music. English ballads are typically composed of four-line stanzas. They follow an ABCB rhyme scheme. Ballad is one of the oldest poetic forms in English. It deals with tales of adventure, fighting, deeds of valour, love, hatred, and pity. The oldest form of ballad is Folk ballad or Primitive ballad which is usually transmitted orally. The strict meter and rhyme scheme of folk ballads helped singers and storytellers to remember the words of the poems easily. Chevy Chase, Sir Patrick Spens and Binnories are the examples of Folk or Primitive ballads. Literary Ballads is the literary imitation of the traditional type of ballads. It is the product of the conscious literary attempt. John Keats' ballad *La Belle Dame sans Merci* is a perfect example of the lyrical ballad's departure from the form of the traditional ballad. Coleridge's *The Rime of Ancient Mariner* and Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalot* are the other examples.
12. **Burlesque** : It is a form of comedy. It is an Italian word that means 'mockery'. It is often confused with two other forms of satire- farce and parody. There is ridiculous exaggeration in imitation of some other more serious work. Early use of burlesque is found in the ancient Greek mock epic poem *The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice*. Aristophanes and Euripides used it in their dramas. Later Roman

dramatist Plautus used it. Chaucer, Cervantes and Lesage used it to ridicule the medieval romance. In English literature, burlesque was used by Geoffrey Chaucer proficiently. John Gay and Samuel Butler also excelled in dramatic burlesque.

13. **Blank Verse** : Blank verse is one of the most common forms of English poetry. It is unrhymed verse. It is most commonly found in iambic pentameter. Shakespeare in his plays and Milton in his epic *Paradise Lost* used it. It was introduced into English by Earl of Surrey, a poet of the 16th century. It was first used in the tragedy *Gorboduc* by Sackville and Norton Example of Blank Verse in Drama. Following is an example of it from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

“HAMLET : To be, or not to be— that is the question :

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die— to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die— to sleep.
To sleep— perchance to dream : ay, there's the rub!”

This is the most famous monologue from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* that has been written in blank verse. Not all lines have exactly ten syllables which is usually in iambic pentameter. Sometimes Shakespeare chose to write lines with eleven syllables, yet the stress used to be still on the tenth syllable.

Blank Verse has been used in poetry too. *Mending Wall* is a well-known poem by Robert Frost who used blank verse in his poetry. Following is an example from the same poem.

“He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, “Good fences make good neighbours.”

14. **Baroque** : Baroque is an artistic style that used exaggerated motion and easily interpreted details to produce drama, sculpture painting, architecture, dance etc. It began around 1600 A.D. in Rome, Italy and spread in Europe. The word ‘baroque’ simply means that something is elaborate and detailed. It was used derogatively in the beginning to underline excess and redundancy. At present, it is used for ornate, complex and detailed works of art.
15. **Binary** : In mathematics and digital electronics, a binary number is the number expressed in the binary system or base-2 numeral system

which represents numerical values of two different symbols typically 0 (zero) and 1 (one). Derrida used the word binary opposition for deducing meaning in deconstruction.

16. **Catharsis** : It is a Greek word which means 'Purification or cleansing'. In literature, it is used for the cleansing of emotions of the characters. Originally, the term was used in Poetics by Aristotle. Using this word, he explained the impact of tragedy on the spectators. He opined that catharsis is the ultimate end of a tragic artistic work and marks its quality. He wanted to say that there are some unwanted emotions that should be cleaned. Catharsis is the release of such unwanted emotions as pity, sadness, and fear. The process of Catharsis brings about the change of extreme emotion to rejuvenation. Catharsis was first linked to drama, especially to tragedy. The theory implied that by watching tragedy, people would get rid of unwanted emotions and display emotions at a proper amount in their lives.
17. **Colonialism/Post-colonialism** : Colonialism is the establishment of exploitation, maintenance and expansion of colony by a political power. It is a set of unequal relationships between the colonial power and the colony. Post-colonialism refers to a set of theories in philosophy and literature that grapple with the legacy of the colonial rule. Said and Spivak are major post-colonialist thinkers and literary theorists.
18. **Classicism** : Classical is something that pertains to Greek or Roman antiquity. It conforms to ancient Greek and Roman models of art. It denotes restraint, order, symmetry and repose. It is valued on account of its traditions and antiquity. It is long-established, time-tested, eternally and universally appealing.
19. **Collective Consciousness** : This term is used in sociology and psychology. It refers to the knowledge and beliefs shared by all the members of a particular race, group of society. Humans are social animals. French sociologist Emile Durkheim coined the term in 19th century. He proposed that collective consciousness results from strong positive and negative pressure on the individual. Carl Jung proposed that there was collective unconscious in addition to collective consciousness. He said that archetypes are inherited rather than learned.
20. **Deconstruction** : It is a method of critical analysis of philosophical or literary language. It emphasizes the internal workings of language and conceptual systems. Derrida presented the concept in his book of Grammatology. It is related to linguistics, humanities, social sciences, anthropology etc. He said that texts outlive their authors and become part of a set of cultural habits. Deconstruction denotes the pursuing of the meaning of a text to the point of exposing the supposed contradictions and internal oppositions.
21. **Dissociation of Sensibility** : T.S. Eliot used the term 'dissociation of sensibility' in his essay '*The Metaphysical Poet.*' Donne and other metaphysical poets mingled thoughts with feelings. Donne produced

feelings pregnant with intellectual touch. Eliot simply did not mean by sensibility, a feeling but synthetic faculty which can unite thought and feeling, which can fuse the disparate experiences into a single whole.

22. **Dystopia** : It is an opposite of Utopia. It is an imaginary place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically a totalitarian or environmentally degraded one.
23. **Dualism** : The division of something conceptually into two opposed or contrasted aspects. It is a philosophical view that the world consists of dual things e.g. mind and matter; good and evil. Moral dualism is the belief that there is eternal conflict between the good and the evil. Duality is not always opposite but complementary.
24. **Expressionism** : It is a style of painting, music and drama in which the artist seeks to express emotional experience rather than the impressions of the external world. It departs from realism and naturalism. The highly personal visions communicated in the paintings of Van Gogh are examples of expressionism. It is a modernist movement that originated in Germany in the beginning of 20th century.

15.4 EXERCISE

STATE WHETHER THE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE OR FALSE.

1. The term Absurd has been derived from The Myth of Sisyphus by Samuel Beckett.
2. Virginia Woolf is associated with New-classicism.
3. The slogan 'Art for Art's Sake' is associated with Aestheticism.
4. The term 'dissociation of sensibility' has been used by Donne in his essay 'The Metaphysical Poet'.
5. The Second Coming a poem by W. B. Yeats is an example of apocalyptic writing.

15.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;

- A few selected literary terms, along with their detail meaning,
- About association of the terms discussed in this unit.

15.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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Web-Resources

https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/a-glossary-of-literary-terms-7th-ed_m-h-abrams-1999.pdf

https://www.uv.es/fores/The_Routledge_Dictionary_of_Literary_Terms.pdf

[http://armytage.net/pdsdata/%5BChris_Baldick%5D_The_Concise_Oxford_Dictionary_of_L\(BookFi.org\).pdf](http://armytage.net/pdsdata/%5BChris_Baldick%5D_The_Concise_Oxford_Dictionary_of_L(BookFi.org).pdf)

ANSWERS

1. False	2. False	3. True	4. False	5. True
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: STRUCTURE :

16.0 Objectives**16.1 Introduction****16.2 Literary Terms****16.3 Exercise****16.4 Let Us Sum Up****16.4 Books Suggested****Answers**

16.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall;

- learn a few selected literary terms, along with their detail meaning,
 - learn about association of the terms discussed in this unit.
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16.1 INTRODUCTION

This present unit defines and discusses terms that are commonly used to understand, classify, analyze, and interpret literature. The selected literary terms will definitely provide guideline for further reading of literature especially toward undergraduate students of English, and other literatures. However, these literary terms are proved to be a useful for advanced students, as well as for the general reader with literary interests.

16.2 LITERARY TERMS

1. **Free Will** : Free will is the ability to choose between different possible courses of action. It is closely linked to the concept of responsibility, praise, guilt and sin. If there is no free will, there is no retributive justification for rewarding or punishing anybody for action. Existentialists believed that we are condemned to choose.
2. **Gothic** : Gothic people were East Germanic tribe. In 18th century, it was used to define barbarous, uncouth and uncultured. Gradually, its meaning broadened to signify Teutonic or Germanic and then medieval in general. It applied to literature, architecture and other arts. Gothic fiction is a subgenre of literature that combines fiction, horror and romanticism. Horace Walpole wrote a novel *The Caste of Otranto*. Mary Shelley also wrote '*Frankenstein*.' The works of E.A. Poe can also be classed as Gothic.
3. **Hellenism** : Hellenism refers to ancient Greek culture or ideals. It can be defined as the national character of Greek culture and art. It also applies to the study of ancient Greek culture or its imitation. John Keats was profoundly influenced by Hellenism. He believed like the

Greeks that beauty was synonymous with truth. Hellenism influenced the aesthetic movement of 18th and 19th century England and Germany focusing on art for art's sake.

4. **Historicism** : Historicism is a mode of thinking that assigns major significance to a specific context, such as historical periods geographical place and local culture. Historicism also comprises of artistic styles that draw inspiration from recreating historic styles. This is especially prevalent in architecture. New historicism in literary criticism emphasises the historicity of a text by relating it to the configurations of power, society or ideology in a given time.
5. **Humanism** : It is an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or the supernatural. Humanists believe that man is at the centre of the universe. They believe in 'this world' rather than 'the other world'. They emphasize common human needs, seek solely rational ways of solving human problems. The Renaissance movement revived interest in ancient Greek and Roman.
6. **Hybridity** : Hybridity is one of the important ideas of Homi Bhabha. He borrowed the term from Edward Said's work. He does not see colonialism as something locked in the past, but he shows how its histories and cultures constantly intrude on the present.
7. **Imagism** : It was a movement that took place in early 20th century English and American poetry that sought clarity of expression theorist the use of precise images. The movement derived in part from the aesthetic philosophy of T.E. Hulme and involved Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Lowell and others. They emphasized on the use of common speech, new rhythms, unrestricted subject matter and clear and precise images.
8. **Judicial Criticism** : It seeks to pronounce judgments on works of literature on the basis of certain rules. If a work is found to adhere to these, it is good. If not, it is condemned as worthless. Such rules were derived from ancient Greek and Roman masters. Dr. Johnson can be rules, called the exponent of judicial criticism.
9. **Langue** : Ferdinand de Saussure used the term 'Langue' for formal language. Language encompasses the abstract, systematic rules and conventions of a signifying system. It pre-exists individual users.
10. **Linguistics** : It is a scientific study of language and it includes the study of morphology, syntax, phonetics and semantics. Specific branches of linguistics include sociolinguistics, historical-comparative linguistics and applied linguistics. The earliest activities in the description of language have been attributed to Panini (4th century B.C.) in Sanskrit in his book *Ashthadhyayi*.
11. **Mimesis** : Greek word meaning 'imitation' Aristotle used it for literature. Plato said that the whole material world was a copy of the absolute. Aristotle in Poetics called all arts mimetic. He said that tragedy is a skillful selection and presentation of imitation of life. In tragedy, the characters are better than the real; while in comedy, they are inferior.

12. **Multiculturalism** : Multiculturalism is a body of thought in political philosophy about the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity. It describes the existence, acceptance or promotion of multiple cultural traditions within a single jurisdiction. It advocates equal respect to the various cultures in a society.
13. **Mysticism** : It is a constellation of distinctive practices, discourses, texts, institution and traditions aimed at human transformation. It is a belief that union with the absolute can be attained through contemplation or self-surrender. It is often characterized by self-delusion and dreamy state of mind. It believes in attaining oneness with all human beings and nature.
14. **Naturalism** : It was a literary movement or tendency from 1880's to 1930's. Emile Zola was the pioneer of this movement in literary characteristics of naturalism are determinism, the opposite of free will and pessimism. It is characterized by detachment from the story works.
15. **Neo-classicism** : The revival of classical style or treatment in art, literature, architecture or music. As an aesthetic and artistic style, this originated in Rome in mid 18th century, combining a reaction against the late baroque and rococo with a new interest in antiquity. In music the term refers to a return by composers of the early 20th century to the forms and styles of the 17th and 18th centuries, as a reaction against 19th century Romanticism.
16. **Objective Correlative** : The term was used by T.S. Eliot in his work Tradition and the Individual Talent. It refers to a pattern of objects, actions or events which can serve effectively to awaken in the reader the emotional response which the author intends to give without giving a direct statement of that emotion. T.S. Eliot believed that great art is always objective and impersonal and therefore, a great artist evokes emotional response in the readers indirectly.
17. **Oedipus Complex** : The term Oedipus complex is a term used by the great psychologist, Freud. It explains the emotions and ideas that the mind keeps in the unconscious via repression that concentrate upon a child's desire to have sexual relations with the parent of the opposite sex. Males are attracted to mothers and daughters to fathers.
18. **Orientalism** : It can be defined as a manner of regularized. Orientalism writing, vision and study dominated by imperatives, perspectives and ideological biases of ostensibly suited to the orient. Edward Said propagated the concept in his book Orientalism.
19. **Paganism** : It is a term that developed among the Christian community of Southern Europe during antiquity to describe religions other than their own. In 19th century, it was re-adopted as a self-descriptor by members of various artistic groups inspired by the ancient world. It was used pejoratively for polytheists.

20. **Parole** : Parole is the actual use of the language by the individual speaker. It is the psychical manifestation of speech. Difference between things is what makes people understand what is said and depicted and therefore how we communicate.
21. **Positivism** : A philosophical system that holds that every rationally justifiable assertion can be scientifically verified or is capable of logical or mathematical proof. It rejects metaphysics and theism. It is a philosophy of science that positive facts, information derived from sensory experience interpreted through rational, logical or mathematical treatments form exclusive source of all authoritative knowledge.
22. **Primitivism** : It is a belief in the value of what is simple and unsophisticated, expressed as a philosophy of life or through art or literature. It was a Western art movement that borrows visual forms from Non-Western or pre-historic peoples. It is the pursuit of ways of life running counter to the development of technology.
23. **Psycho-analysis** : It is a system of psychological theory and therapy that aims to treat disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind by techniques such as drama interpretation and free association.
24. **Pluralism** : It is a condition or systems in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources authority exist. It is a practice of holding more than one office or church benefice at a time. It denotes a diversity of views and stands rather than a single approach a method of interpretation.
25. **Platonism** : Platonism is a view that there exist such things as abstract objects. It does not exist in space or time. It is non-physical and non-mental. It is the philosophy of Plato. The primary concept is the Theory of Forms. The only true being is founded upon the forms, the eternal, unchangeable and perfect of which particular objects of senses are imperfect copies.
26. **Sentimentalism** : It is an excessive expression of the feelings of tenderness, sadness or nostalgia in behaviour, writing and speech.. Sentimentality is a reliance on feelings as guide to truth. In literature, it a device to induce a tender emotional response disproportionate to the situation at hand.
27. **Subaltern** : Gayatri Spivak used the term subaltern in her post-colonial studies. She said that it is not just a classy word for an oppressed. In post-colonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to cultural imperialism is subaltern –a space of difference. Antonio Gramsci (1891– 1937), an Italian intellect first used the term.
28. **Symbolism** : It is an artistic and poetic movement or style using symbolic images and indirect suggestion to express mystical ideas.
29. **Structuralism** : In sociology, anthropology and linguistics, structuralism is the theory that element of human culture must be understood in terms of their relationships to larger, overreading system or structure.

It works to uncover the structure that underlies all things that human do, think, perceive, and feel structuralism developed in the early 1900's in the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and others. It is applied to diverse range of fields and areas of knowledge.

30. **Semantics** : It is a branch of linguistics that deals with the meaning of words and especially with historical changes in the meanings. It also means the study of relation between sign and their meanings.
31. **Surrealism** : It was a movement in art and literature that originated in France in 1920's. Andre Breton pioneered the movement. In 1924, its manifesto was issued. It aimed at an expression of the unconscious by freeing mind from logic and rational control. In painting, Dali, Picasso and Tanguy adopted the surrealist technique.
32. **Syllogism** : A logical presentation of an argument through a formula. It aims at a method whereby the logic of an argument is demonstrated through analysis. There are three steps : (1) Major premise (2) Minor premise (3) Conclusion.
33. **Signifier** : Signifier means the sound image or its graphic equivalent. When we speak the word 'cat' or write it as 'C...A... T'. It is the signifier. Saussure used this term for language.
34. **Signified** : The Signified is the meaning that the signified suggests. There is no physical connection between the signifier and the signified. It is arbitrary and depends on difference for example, 'cat' and 'mat', or 'cat' and 'car'.
35. **Stream of consciousness** : This literary technique describes a character's interior monologue : a continuous flow of thoughts going on in the character's mind. It's a technique that came to the fore in the 20th century, famously championed by Virginia Woolf in *To The Lighthouse* and, more bafflingly, by James Joyce in his groundbreaking novel *Ulysses*, in which the idea of a stream of consciousness is taken to its extreme.
36. **Transcendentalism** : It is an idealistic philosophical and social movement that developed in New England around 1836 in reaction to rationalism. It was influenced by romanticism, Platonism and Kantian philosophy. It taught that divinity pervades all nature and humanity. Its members had progressive views on feminism and communal living. R.W. Emerson and Thoreau were the central figures of the movement.
37. **Utopia** : From the ages, human beings have dreamt of perfect world. These worlds free of conflict, hunger and unhappiness have been unreal but have inspired the mankind. In 1516, Sir Thomas More wrote the first Utopia. He coined the word 'utopia' from the Greek 'ou-topos' which means 'no place' or 'nowhere'.
38. **Unitarianism** : It is a belief that God exists in one person and not three. It is the denial of the doctrine of trinity as well as the full divinity of Jesus. It is a Christian theological movement named for the affirmation that God is one entity.

16.3 EXERCISE**FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH APPROPRIATE OPTION.**

1. _____ is an artistic and poetic movement or style using symbolic images and indirect suggestion to express mystical ideas.
(a) Symbolism (b) Symbol (c) Naturalism
2. Oedipal complex is a term used by the great psychologist, _____.
(a) Freud (b) Aristotle (c) Plato
3. Surrealism, a movement in art and literature that originated in France in _____.
(a) 1920 (b) 1930 (c) 1935
4. Aestheticism, is derived from the _____.
(a) Greek (b) Latin (c) French
5. _____ used the term subaltern in her post-colonial studies.
(a) Gayatri Spivak (b) Freud (c) Plato

16.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt;

- a few selected literary terms, along with their detail meaning,
- about association of the terms discussed in this unit.

16.5 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Abrams, Meyer Howard, and Geoffrey Harpham. A glossary of literary terms. Cengage Learning, 2011.

Baldick, Chris. The concise Oxford dictionary of literary terms. Oxford University Press, 1996.

Cuddon, John Anthony. A dictionary of literary terms and literary theory. John Wiley & Sons, 2012.

Childs, Peter, and Roger Fowler. The Routledge dictionary of literary terms. Routledge, 2006.

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[http://armytage.net/pdsdata/%5BChris_Baldick%5D_The_Concise_Oxford_Dictionary_of_L\(BookFi.org\).pdf](http://armytage.net/pdsdata/%5BChris_Baldick%5D_The_Concise_Oxford_Dictionary_of_L(BookFi.org).pdf)

ANSWERS

1. (a)	2. (a)	3. (a)	4. (a)	5. (a)
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: STRUCTURE :

17.0 Objectives**17.1 Introduction****17.2 Introduction to Literature****17.2.1 Views on Literature****17.2.2 Characteristics of Literature****17.2.3 Major Approaches to Criticism****17.3 Introduction to Criticism****17.3.1 Views on Literary Criticism****17.3.2 Objectives of Literary Criticism****17.3.3 Major Literary Theories****17.4 Introduction to Theory****17.4.1 Definition of Literary Theory****17.4.2 Major Literary Theories****17.5 Difference between Criticism and Literary Theory****17.6 Let Us Sum Up****17.7 Key Words****17.8 Questions****17.9 Books Suggested****Answers**

17.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall discuss;

- the concept, definitions, characteristics of literature,
- the meaning, definitions and objectives of criticism,
- the notion of theory and have a glance at major theories.

On completing this unit, you should be able to;

- demonstrate the understanding of literature, criticism and theory,
- explain the characteristics and objectives of literature, criticism and theory,
- name major forms of literature, approaches to criticism as well as theories.

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Sometimes what looks simple and easy is actually quite complex, challenging and wide. Such is the thing with the three terms used in the title

of the unit also. If literature is an ocean of expression, imagination, creativity, criticism and theory are the navigators for a student. Hence, an understanding, knowledge and insight of these concepts are very vital for a student of literature. In this unit, we will endeavour to gain some basic knowledge about these three terms.

17.2 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

In its broadest sense, literature is anything that is written and/or printed in the form of a book, magazine or pamphlet. It deals with and expresses experiences, ideas and emotions of man. Derived from the Latin word *litera*, meaning letter, the term literature is defined in Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms as a body of written works related by subject-matter, (e.g. the literature of computing), by language or place of origin (e.g. Russian Literature), or by prevailing cultural standards of merit.

17.2.1 Views on Literature :

To understand the term in a better way, have a look at some of the well-known views on literature :

- “Literature is anything that is printed, as long as it is related to the ideas and feelings of people, whether it is true or just a product of one's imagination.”—Webster
- Literature is writing which expresses and communicates thoughts, feelings and attitude towards life. – RJ Rees
- “Literature is writing that is considered by both critics and consumers to be of a high quality and cultural value, in which the creative use of language is prominent.”– Wordpress
- “Literature consists of those writing which interpret the meanings of nature and life, in words of charm and power, touched with the personality of the author, in artistic forms of permanent interest.” – Henry van Dyke
- “Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.” – Ezra Pound
- “Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.” – C. S. Lewis
- “It is in literature that the concrete outlook of humanity receives its expression.” – Alfred North Whitehead

17.2.2 Characteristics of Literature :

Based on the above views, following are the major characteristics of literature :

- It is a product of a creative imagination.
- It communicates experiences, thoughts and ideas.
- It is a criticism of life.
- It is a life-enhancing experience.

- It holds a mirror up to the nature.
- It makes familiar world unfamiliar
- It is connotative in nature.
- It requires some technical knowledge and craftsmanship.

Literature carries a great significance. In the words of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the famous German writer, philosopher and critic, “The decline of literature indicates the decline of a nation.” A great literature is an embodiment of a nation's customs and cultures, an artistic representation of the history of civilization and a document of society's evolution. Literature serves many purposes. It transmits values, preserves ideas and traditions. Sometimes it is also a driving force of change. A slice of life, as it is called by many; it is also a source of pleasure. Literature helps you understand the situation from other's point of view. Reading literature gives you an experience of living many lives at a time. In short, literature is an artistic representation of life, of varied human experiences, in different forms of expressions.

17.2.3 Major Forms of Literature :

Forms of literature can be divided into two in main : prose and poetry. Following are the glimpses of various forms.

Types of Poetry : Poetry is a type of literature that uses a creative blend of words and rhythm to create meaning. Sounds, images and ideas are presented in a concentrated manner. Listed below are the major types of poetry writing :

- **Epic :** An epic is a long poem narrating the deeds of heroic or legendary figures. Some examples are Iliad, Odyssey by Homer, Paradise Lost by Milton, The Mahabharata by Ved Vyas etc.
- **Ballad :** It is a story in the form of a poem using dialogue. It has been often orally transmitted. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Coleridge, The Lady of Shallot by Tennyson etc
- **Lyric :** It is a poem expressing the mood, feelings of the poet. Common lyric poems are ‘sonnet’, ‘ode’, ‘elegy’ etc. Stopping Woods by a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost, Success is Counted Sweetest by Emily Dickinson, O Captain! My Captain by Walt Whitman etc are some well-known lyrics.

With its origin in Italy in the 14 century, a sonnet is a poem of 14 lines. Some famous sonnets are Ozymandias by Shelley, Acquainted with the Night by Robert Frost, On His Blindness by Milton etc.

Ode is a formal poem. It is an address to a person or abstract entity. It is always serious in tone. Some examples are Ode to the Westwind by Shelley, Ode to Psyche by Keats, Ode to Duty by Wordsworth etc

An elegy is a poem written to commemorate or lament the death of someone. Lycidas by Milton laments the death of Edward King. In Adonis, Shelley mourns the death of Keats. Auden has written an elegy In the Memory of WB Yeats.

Types of Prose : Prose writing can be divided into two categories : Fiction and Non-Fiction. Novels, short stories, drama, one-act plays are works of fiction whereas essays, biographies, and autobiographies are the works of non-fiction. Given below is a brief explanation of them :

- **Novels :** It is a narrative with no specific rules regarding length, structure or form. Due to its flexibility, it is the most thriving form of literary writing. Tom Jones by Fielding, 1984 by George Orwell, The White Tiger by Arvind Adiga, To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf etc are some examples of this prose.
- **Short Stories :** As the name suggests, it is a short narrative; usually focusing on a single event with only one or two characters. After Twenty Years by O' Henry, To Build a Fire by Jack London, Lottery by Premchand etc
- **Drama :** It is basically meant for performance. More than narration, action matters more. Like other forms of literature, this too can be divided into History Play, Tragedy, Comedy, Romance etc. Macbeth by Shakespeare, Dr Faustus by Marlowe, Nagamandala by Girish Karnad etc are some examples of this genre.
- **One-Act Plays :** As indicated by its name, it is a play in one act. The narrative may be divided into various scenes. Some famous one-act plays are A Marriage Proposal by Anton Chekhov, Endgame by Samuel Beckett, A Memory of Two Mondays by Arthur Miller.
- **Essays :** A short prose composition, an essay discusses a subject or proposes an argument. Self-Reliance by Emerson, On Catching the Train by AG Gardiner, etc are some known essays. Some famous essayists in English are Francis Bacon, Addison, Steele, Hazlitt, DH Lawrence, etc.
- **Biographies :** An account of the life of a famous individual from birth to death or a significant point in life. Life of Samuel Johnson by James Boswell, Will in the World : How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare by Stephen Greenblatt, etc are the examples in this genre.
- **Autobiographies :** It is a history of one's life written by that person. My Experiments with Truth by Mahatma Gandhi, My Story by Kamala Das, Mein Kampf by Adolf Hitler, etc are some famous autobiographies.

In the initial days, literature was only written for the public to read, enjoy and appreciate. The invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 15th century initiated mass production of books and making dissemination of knowledge and information easier. However, it was only the first quarter of the 19th century that showed the emergence of English as an area of study. As a part of educational reforms, in 1826, a University College was established and from 1828 English was offered as a subject for study. It was only in 1831 that English Literature was introduced as a course. The study of literature requires certain skills and knowledge on the part of the students/readers and criticism performs this role.

17.3 INTRODUCTION TO CRITICISM

Literature is all about the creative delineation of a topic and thus is usually connotative in nature. They are not self-explanatory. Criticism helps in explaining the comprehensive meaning of a literary work. Criticism is books about books or literature about literature.

Although the word criticism gives negative vibrations, it can have positive implications if expressed and understood in the right spirit. In simple words, criticism is a set of tools to understand, study, analyse, interpret and evaluate a work of art and in this case, literature. It is useful to both, the writer as well as the reader. For a writer, it is a feedback and to a reader, it is a kind of notes that unearths the implied meaning of the text. It helps a reader understand various perspectives of the author and the artistic quality of the work. The way the use of tools depends on the artisans, the method, perspective and style of criticism too depend on the critic. Every critic has his/her own standards of judgements.

The responsibility of a literary critic is to attempt to arrive at a critical understanding of the aesthetic, social, political, and cultural connotations of a text. Hence, a literary critic searches for clues in the text that can render a logical understanding of the author's intent and ideologies behind the content. Criticism requires a close reading of the text. The text can be a literary work or critical work. Thus, criticism can be about the criticism which can be called meta-criticism. The process of criticism expects a critic to critique a literary work from a particular point of view or literary theory.

The meaning and objective of the words critique and criticism are also a matter of consideration. Though they look similar apparently, in fact, they are not exactly the same. As per the Merriam-Webster dictionary,

“Critique is an alteration of an archaic word that referred generally to criticism. Critique itself dates to the early 18th century and originally referred to a piece of writing that criticized a literary or artistic work. The words criticism, critique and review overlap in meaning. Criticism usually means “the act of criticizing” or a “remark or comment that expresses disapproval,” but it can also refer to the activity of making judgments about the qualities of books, movies, etc. (as in “literary criticism”). Critique is a somewhat formal word that typically refers to a careful judgment in which someone gives an opinion about something. Review can refer to an essay analyzing a literary or artistic work, but can also sometimes imply a more casual or personal opinion.”

Judy Reeves, in her book *Writing Alone, Writing Together : A Guide for Writers and Writing Groups* states that the difference between critique and criticism is like the difference between a crystal ball and a wrecking ball. For a layman, criticism means an act of fault-finding but for a student of literature, it means to pass a judgement based on a set of approved standards as well as close and dispassionate analysis. Till recently, the term critique was used as a noun, to denote the critical examination or review of merit of something and the doer of such an act is considered to be able to make a judgement. However, now, it is also used as a verb meaning to appraise something critically expecting one to be persuasive and logical

17.3.1 Views on Literary Criticism :

Following are some well-known and varied views on literary criticism :

- A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ; – Pope,
- To judge of poets is only the faculty of poets and not of all poets but the best. – Ben Jonson
- Literary criticism can be no more than a reasoned account of the feeling produced upon the critic by the book he is criticising. – DH Lawrence
- Criticism must consider both what is physically present in a text and, no less importantly, what is missing in terms of the reader's system of expectations. – Yury Lotman, Ardis
- Evaluation, so readily taken for granted as the first purpose of criticism, might in practice be its least helpful starting point. – Catherine Belsey

17.3.2 Objectives of Literary Criticism :

On the basis of the deliberations done, the following can be the broad objectives of literary criticism :

- To broaden literary understanding about the author, style, structure and genre
- To evaluate literary works from various perspectives
- To place the authors on the basis of their contribution
- To help a reader choose a better option in reading
- To improve critical and interpreting abilities
- To explore various possibilities and expand imagination
- To enhance empathetic abilities

The history of criticism dates back to the Greek antiquity where Plato (427 BC), credited with the establishment of first higher learning institution in the western world, and his great disciple Aristotle (384–322 BC), the father of Western Philosophy propounded the founding principles of criticism. After that criticism journeyed extensively and developed widely in the hands of critics from the medieval era to the modern era who provided various canons to judge literature. These canons include elements of a literary work, qualities of a critic, principles, process and techniques of criticism.

17.3.3 Major Approaches to Criticism :

Listed below are some of the Approaches to Criticism to give you a bird's eye view :

- **Historical Criticism :** It is a general perception that every writer is the product of his age. Historical criticism studies the era in which the author lived and weighs the influence that time on the literary work. eg. The novels of Charles Dickens tell a lot about the Victorian era. Historical criticism assists in understanding why Dickens wrote whatever he wrote.

- **Biographical Criticism** : Biographical criticism relies heavily on the life and world of the author for a better understanding of the intent of the author and critiques, how the work is coloured by the author's experiences, beliefs and prejudices.
- **Didactic Criticism** : Teaching is one of the functions of literature. Hence, one of the ways to look at a literary work is to study the message conveyed or lessons taught through the literary work. This approach inquires into the moral value of the work and accepts or rejects it based upon its compatibility with their moral code or beliefs.
- **Structural Criticism** : This approach studies the text objectively believing that nothing is outside the text. Hence, the focal point is the form, use of symbolism and metaphor. The analysis is solely based on the content on the pages.

Till recently, criticism used to get published as an essay or in a book form or even as an article in various magazines and journals. However, with the advent of technology, modern day criticism can also be found on social media and blogs.

Thus, criticism is a kind of discourse that advances the consciousness of readers, develops a better understanding of a literary work and works as lens in valuing a literary work. Hence, in the words of Frederick C Crews, “Literary criticism is the reasoned consideration of literary works and issues.”

17.4 INTRODUCTION TO THEORY

Simply stated, a literary theory is a systematic study of the nature of literature and provides a complete set of methods for analyzing literature. Theories are, in a way, lenses used by critics to view a piece of literature.

17.4.1 Definitions of Literary Theory :

As defined in the Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, a theory is –

A shorthand term used since the 1970s to refer to a miscellaneous body of intellectual approaches that had increasingly become interlinked and mutually reinforcing in their repudiation of humanist traditions in literary study, history, aesthetics and philosophy.

Wolfreys, Womack and Robins in their book Key Concepts in Literary Theory describes –

Theory as a loosely wielded term which has become somewhat vacuous, at least potentially so. ‘theory’ refers, in the field of literary studies, to the critical movement which has emerged in the Anglo–American university since the 1960s as a response in large part to interest within the English–speaking academic world in particular strands of continental linguistics, narratology, psychoanalysis, semiotics and philosophy.

17.4.2 Major Literary Theories :

Listed below are some major literary theories :

- **New–Criticism** : Emerged in the early 20th century, new–criticism studies the relationship between the text and the meaning. It is one

of the varieties of formalism and dominated literary scene till early 1960. Major exponents of this theory include IA Richards, TS Eliot, Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren and William Empson.

- **Structuralism** : Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist and semiotician's Course in General Linguistics (1916) changed the outlook of not only linguistics but nearly every branch of the humanities and the social sciences. It propounded the theory that the meaning of a text lies in the structures it employs. Major advocates of this theory are Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Levi Strauss etc.
- **Reader–Response Theory** : Once the text is written, it no more belongs to the author. It is in the realm of the reader and the meaning of the text lies in the reaction of the reader. It is a reader that creates meaning. The promoters of this theory are by Norman Holland, Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, Hans–Robert Jauss and Roland Barthes.
- **Feminist Theory** : The publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792) is credited with the beginning of feminist view in literary studies. Both, male and female writers have contributed to this cause. Some famous works are John Stuart Mill's The Subjection of Women (1869), The Origin of the Family (1884) by Friedrich Engels, Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own (1929), The Second Sex (1949) by Simon de Beauvoir.
- **Marxist Theory** : Followers of this theory look at a literary work from the lenses of class conflict. An effort is made to understand the social and political meaning of literature. Working class is sympathized and capitalists are criticized. Marxist ideology is discussed in the works like The Communist Manifesto (1848), Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859), Das Kapital or Capital (1867) by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
- **Psychoanalysis** : The supporters of this theory try to study the psychological motivations of the characters or of the authors themselves. They apply the theory of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Carl Jung.
- **Post–colonial Studies** : This theory has a historical linkage. It studies a literary work in the context of colonialism and colonial era. Major proponents of this theory are Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Homi K Bhabha, Aime Cesaire, and Edward Said.
- **Eco–Criticism** : Also known as green–studies, eco–criticism studies the relationship between literature and its environment. The approach began in the USA and the UK in 1980 and 1990 respectively. Developed as a branch of eco–criticism, eco–feminism analyses the interconnection between the oppression of women and nature and draws parallels between the two.

17.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CRITICISM AND LITERARY THEORY

This is a debatable topic but many opine that they are not the same. In simple words, theories are the methods to look at a literary work whereas criticism is an application of the method. Thus, the theory is understanding something and criticism is doing something. e.g. Psychoanalytic criticism uses the techniques proposed by psychoanalysis to interpret a text. Sigmund Freud, for example, in his theory of psychoanalysis listed three levels of human personality : the consciousness, the conscience and the unconscious. He emphasised the importance of unconscious. Hamlet by Shakespeare can be studied in the light of this theory. Hamlet has been considered an Oedipus tragedy. The play is about the hero's hesitation in avenging the death of his father. If it is studied from the psychoanalytic canons, it can be understood that Hamlet's hesitation in killing his uncle is caused by his own guilt. This involves his own unconscious desire to kill his father and take his place as the object of his mother's love.

To sum up, it can be concluded that literature is a creative discourse whereas criticism and theories are analytical discourses. All three activities require a great amount of observation, knowledge, skills, insight and understanding of human life.

17.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, a bird's eye view is given to help you understand the concept of literature, criticism and critical theory as well as their importance as a student of literature and language.

Denotatively speaking, every written content be it an article, advertisement, editorial, poem, novel or short story can be called literature. From an aesthetic point of view, every piece of writing that shows some creative use of language and carries some cultural or social value is literature. This specifically includes poems, short stories, drama, one-act plays, essays, etc. Literature not only is an expression of the culture, values, and voice of the nation in which it is written, it is also a perspective towards time and life of a nation in a particular era.

The simplest meaning of the term 'criticism' is that it is literature about literature. Its purpose is to study, evaluate and interpret the point of view of the author and to explain it to the reader. It has its tools and method to analyse a text. A literary text can be studied in the light of various critical approaches and literary theories. e.g. The Role of Chance in the Novels of Hardy is an instance of criticism.

Literary theory, on the other hand, is an inquiry into the principles of the study of literature. It tries to investigate how meanings are generated. Theorists, thus, discuss varied ways to study literature and critics study literature in the light of these theories.

17.8 KEY WORDS

Word	Meaning/s
concept	Idea, notion, thought, perception
glance	Look, glimpse, peep
navigators	Guides, skippers
endeavour	Efforts, attempt, try
prevailing	Usual, main, fundamental
competencies	Capabilities, abilities, skills
irrigates	Waters, floods, moistens
embodiment	Personification, example, expression
evolution	Development, growth, progress
transmits	Conveys, communicates, spreads
dissemination	Distribution, broadcasting, diffusion
emergence	Appearance, rise, arrival, development
delineation	Description, definition, explanation
unearths	Extracts, uncovers, discovers, exposes
perspectives	Viewpoints, outlooks, views
aesthetic	Artistic, visual, beautiful
connotations	Meanings, implications, suggestions, associations
ideologies	Philosophies, beliefs, principles, ideas, thoughts
meta-criticism	“A criticism of criticism, the goal of which is to scrutinize systematically the terminology, logic, and structure that undergird critical and theoretical discourse in general or any particular mode of such discourse” (Henderson and Brown).
critique	Analysis, assessment, evaluation
archaic	Old, ancient, out-dated, old-fashioned
persuasive	Convincing, influential, believable
antiquity	Ancient times, olden days, antique
propounded	Advocated, submitted, offered, proposed
medieval era	In the history of Europe, the Middle Ages (or medieval period) lasted from the 5th to the 15th century. It began with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and merged into the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery.
canons	Standards, rules, norms, principles
didactic	Moral, moralistic, improving
miscellaneous	Various, varied, mixed, diverse

repudiation	Denial, rejection, refusal
wielded	Exercised, used, had, employed
vacuous	Empty, blank, vacant, hollow
continental	Mainland, inland, interior, central
narratology	the branch of knowledge or criticism that deals with the structure and function of narrative and its themes, conventions, and symbols.
psychoanalysis	Psychoanalysis is defined as a set of psychological theories and therapeutic techniques that have their origin in the work and theories of Sigmund Freud. The core idea at the center of psychoanalysis is the belief that all people possess unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires, and memories.
semiotics	the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation.
colonialism	Expansionism, colonization, imperialism
ecocriticism	Ecocriticism is the study of literature and the environment from an interdisciplinary point of view, where literature scholars analyze texts that illustrate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature.
eco-feminism	Ecofeminism is a branch of feminism that sees environmentalism, and the relationship between women and the earth, as foundational to its analysis and practice. Ecofeminist thinkers draw on the concept of gender to analyse the relationships between humans and the natural world.
pseudoscientific	falsely or mistakenly claimed or regarded as being based on scientific method.

17.9 QUESTIONS

- Write an essay on literature with reference to the definition given by Salman Rushdie wherein he states, "Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit, where I hope to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart." You can cite the examples of literary works to prove your point.
- Write a note on the concept, process and purposes of criticism on the basis of the definitions given below :
 - To understand how the artist felt, however, is not criticism; criticism is an investigation of what the work is good for. ... Criticism ... is a serious and public function; it shows the race assimilating the individual, dividing the immortal from the mortal part of a soul. – George Santayana

- “Literary criticism can be no more than a reasoned account of the feeling produced upon the critic by the book he is criticizing. Criticism can never be a science : it is, in the first place, much too personal, and in the second, it is concerned with values that science ignores. The touchstone is emotion, not reason. We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and nothing else. All the critical twiddle–twaddle about style and form, all this pseudoscientific classifying and analyzing of books in an imitation–botanical fashion, is mere impertinence and mostly dull jargon” – DH Lawrence

3. What is criticism ? What are the main objectives of criticism ? List and define any THREE approaches to criticism.
4. What is a literary theory ? List and define any FIVE literary theories.

17.10 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. Prasad B, An Introduction to English Criticism,(Macmillan India Ltd)
2. Prasad B, A Background to the study of English Literature (Trinity Press, Revised Edition)
3. Rees RJ, English Literature : An Introduction for Foreign Readers (Macmillan India Ltd)
4. Barry Peter, Beginning Theory (Viva Books Private Ltd, 3rd Edition)
5. Brooker and Widdowson, A Practical Reader In Contemporary Literary Theory, (Routledge)
6. Wolfreys and Womack, Key Concepts in Literary Theory, (Rawat Publication)

Web Resources for Self–Study

1. [https ://www.britannica.com/art/literature](https://www.britannica.com/art/literature)
2. [https ://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/literary_theory_and_schools_of_criticism/](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/literary_theory_and_schools_of_criticism/)
3. [http ://elibrary.bsu.az/books_400/N_92.pdf](http://elibrary.bsu.az/books_400/N_92.pdf)

ANSWERS

1. In its broadest sense, literature is anything that is written and/or printed in the form of a book, magazine or pamphlet. It deals with and expresses experiences, ideas, and emotions of man. Derived from the Latin word *litera*, meaning letter, the term literature is defined in Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms as a body of written works related by subject–matter, (*e.g. the literature of computing*), *by language or place of origin (e.g Russian Literature)*, or *by prevailing cultural standards of merit*.

According to Rushdi, “Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit, where I hope to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart.”

Rushdi conveys the following things in the above definition :

- a. Literature *helps explore the highest and lowest places in human society.*
- b. Literature *helps explore the highest and lowest places in the human spirit.*
- c. His expectations as a reader are *to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart.*

Explanation :

- a. **Literature helps explore the highest and lowest places in human society :** Literature is considered to be a mirror of society. Society is the source of inspiration for the situation, story as well as the characters. Every society has good and evil elements and literature reflects on these elements. eg. Shakespeare's Historical dramas talk about the things happening in royal palaces whereas the novels of Charles Dickens talks about the orphanages.
- b. **Literature helps explore the highest and lowest places in the human spirit :** Literature is about society and the people living in society. There are saints and demons, good-natured persons and evil-minded human-beings too. Literature offers glimpses in the life and mindset of all of them. eg. In the epic, the Mahabharata, there are the Pandavas, who suffer and sacrifice for friends and family members, as well as the Kauravas who try all the possible malevolence to take undeserved assets and favours.
- c. **His expectations as a reader are to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart :** Every work of art is the product of a writer's creative imagination. Literature gives the semblance of reality. Actually, every story is an expression of the writer's perception and the truth that s/he wanted to convey. eg. *Pygmalion* by GB Shaw talks about the state of education and woman in the Victorian Society. The picture portrayed by him in this play is his truth, his imagination. As a reader, one should try to understand the writer's point of view.

Thus, literature, according to the definition given, gives an opportunity to visit good places and bad places; to meet virtuous as well as corrupt people and to taste sweet, sour and bitter flavors of life.

2. Criticism is an analysis and evaluation of a literary work. It is done to appreciate the qualities the aesthetic value as well as assist a reader in understanding and appreciating a literary work. Varied meanings and objectives of this activity are given by many critics. Here, two definitions are under consideration.

The first definition by George Santayana conveys the following things about literary criticism :

- Criticism is an investigation of what the work is good for.

– Concept of Criticism

Criticism, as understood by a layman, is not a negative or fault-finding activity. It is an effort to analyse and assess the qualities that highlight the value to a literary work. A critic, through criticism, assists a reader in appreciating the value a literary work.

- Criticism is a serious and public function. – **Purpose of Criticism**

Criticism is a serious activity and is carried out for a reader who would like to and need to understand the aesthetic qualities of a literary work. It is published either in the form of an article, a book or as a chapter in a book.

- Criticism shows the race assimilating the individual, dividing the immortal from the mortal part of a soul. – **Purpose of Criticism**

Here the author is personifying a literary work. There can be certain things about a literary work which are likely to be forgotten by readers but there are certain things which make a literary work immortal. The purpose and objective of an act of criticism are to divide the immortal aspects from the mortal ones.

- We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion, and nothing else. – **Process of Criticism**

This point offers the view of George Santayana and talks about how and what happens when a critic initiates the process of criticism. According to Santayana, criticism is a subjective activity as it is an outcome of the effect of reading on emotions which should be sincere. In short, a critic should express sincerely whatever he felt while reading.

The next definition by DH Lawrence offers another perspective to the act of criticism. Following things are expressed in the definition.

- Criticism is a reasoned account of the feeling produced upon the critic by the book. – **Concept of Criticism**

According to Lawrence, criticism is a rational activity. Much like Santayana, Lawrence too believes that emotions play a role but he adds that the critic is required to explain these emotions through the evidence from the literary work. Hence, he calls it a reasoned account of the feelings produced upon the critic.

- Criticism can never be a science: it is, in the first place, much too personal, and in the second, it is concerned with values that science ignores. – **Concept of Criticism**

Though Lawrence calls criticism a reasoned activity, he does not consider it a science for two reasons.

1. Criticism is a subjective activity as it is an outcome of the effect produced upon the critic on the reading the literary work. One critic may appreciate a literary work or an author whereas the other might disapprove a style or techniques. eg. Plato considered every work of art a slavish imitation and twice removed from reality whereas Aristotle approved the imitation and called it a creative imitation. Later on, Dryden stated, "It is not enough that

Aristotle has said so, for Aristotle drew his models of tragedy from Sophocles and Euripides; and he has seen ours, he might have changed his mind.” Thus, the standards of judgments can vary from critic to critic.

2. Criticism is concerned with values. While analyzing a literary work, the critic usually looks for the ethical, aesthetic, affective, social, historical, and existential meaning whereas in science there is no consideration for this affective domain. Science, on the other hand, would only take into account cognitive domain.
- The touchstone is emotion, not reason. All the critical twiddle-twaddle about style and form, all this pseudoscientific classifying and analyzing of books in an imitation-botanical fashion, is a mere impertinence and mostly dull jargon. – **Concept of Criticism**

Elaborating further on the concept of criticism, Lawrence states that the way a touchstone is used to judge the quality of gold, a touchstone can also be used to judge the quality of the work of art. This touchstone can only be emotions. All the other discussion, classifications, methods and approaches to study literature is a futile exercise

3. Literature is all about the creative delineation of a topic and thus is usually connotative in nature. They are not self-explanatory. Criticism helps in explaining the comprehensive meaning of a literary work. Criticism is books about books or literature about literature.

The responsibility of a literary critic is to attempt to arrive at a critical understanding of the aesthetic, social, political, and cultural connotations of a text. Hence, a literary critic searches for clues in the text that can render a logical understanding of the author's intent and ideologies behind the content. Criticism requires a close reading of the text. The text can be a literary work or critical work. Thus, criticism can be about the criticism which can be called meta-criticism. The process of criticism expects a critic to critique a literary work from a particular point of view or literary theory.

Objectives of Criticism :

- To broaden the literary understanding of the author, style, structure, and genre.
- To evaluate literary works from various perspectives.
- To place the authors on the basis of their contribution.
- To help a reader choose a better option in reading.
- To improve critical and interpreting abilities.
- To explore various possibilities and expand the imagination.
- To enhance empathetic abilities.
- **Historical Criticism:** It is a general perception that every writer is the product of his age. Historical criticism studies the era in which the author lived and weighs the influence that time on the literary work. eg. The novels of Charles Dickens tell a lot about the Victorian

era. Historical criticism assists in understanding why Dickens wrote whatever he wrote.

- **Biographical Criticism:** Biographical criticism relies heavily on the life and world of the author for a better understanding of the intent of the author and critiques, how the work is coloured by the author's experiences, beliefs, and prejudices.
 - **Didactic Criticism:** Teaching is one of the functions of literature. Hence, one of the ways to look at a literary work is to study the message conveyed or lessons taught through the literary work. This approach inquires into the moral value of the work and accepts or rejects it based upon its compatibility with their moral code or beliefs.
4. A literary theory is a systematic study of the nature of literature and provides a complete set of methods for analyzing literature. Theories are, in a way, lenses used by critics to view a piece of literature.
- **New-Criticism:** Emerged in the early 20th century, new-criticism studies the relationship between the text and the meaning. It is one of the varieties of formalism and dominated literary scene till early 1960. Major exponents of this theory include IA Richards, TS Eliot, Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren and William Empson.
 - **Structuralism:** Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist and semiotician's Course in General Linguistics (1916) changed the outlook of not only linguistics but nearly every branch of the humanities and the social sciences. It propounded the theory that the meaning of a text lies in the structures it employs. Major advocates of this theory are Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Levi Strauss etc.
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 - **Feminist Theory:** The publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) is credited with the beginning of feminist view in literary studies. Both, male and female writers have contributed to this cause. Some famous works are John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), *The Origin of the Family* (1884) by Friedrich Engels, Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), *The Second Sex* (1949) by Simon de Beauvoir.
 - **Marxist Theory:** Followers of this theory look at a literary work from the lenses of class conflict. An effort is made to understand the social and political meaning of literature. The working class is sympathized and capitalists are criticized. Marxist ideology is discussed in the works like *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), *Das Kapital or Capital* (1867) by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

♦♦♦♦♦

યુનિવર્સિટી ગીત

સ્વાધ્યાય: પરમં તપ:

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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 ?
કહે બુદ્ધ આંબેડકર કહે, તું થા તારો દીવો;
શારદીય અજવાળા પહોંચ્યાં ગુર્જર ગામે ગામ
ધ્રુવ તારકની જેમ ઝળહળે એકલવ્યની શાન.

સરસ્વતીના મયૂર તમારે ફળિયે આવી ગહેકે
અંધકારને હડસેલીને ઉજાસના ફૂલ મહેકે;
બંધન નહીં કો સ્થાન સમયના જવું ન ઘરથી દૂર
ઘર આવી મા હરે શારદા દૈન્ય તિમિરના પૂર.

સંસ્કારોની સુગંધ મહેકે, મન મંદિરને ધામે
સુખની ટપાલ પહોંચે સૌને પોતાને સરનામે;
સમાજ કેરે દરિયે હાંકી શિક્ષણ કેરું વહાણ,
આવો કરીયે આપણ સૌ
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
દિવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ...
ભવ્ય રાષ્ટ્ર નિર્માણ

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