



# ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

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(A State University Established by the Government of Tamil Nadu)

KARAIKUDI – 630 003



## Directorate of Distance Education

**M.A. [English]**

**II - Semester**

**320 24**

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION

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E-28, Sector-8, Noida - 201301 (UP)

Phone: 0120-4078900 • Fax: 0120-4078999

Regd. Office: A-27, 2nd Floor, Mohan Co-operative Industrial Estate, New Delhi 1100 44

• Website: [www.vikaspublishing.com](http://www.vikaspublishing.com) • Email: [helpline@vikaspublishing.com](mailto:helpline@vikaspublishing.com)

**Work Order No. AU/DDE/DE1-15/Printing of Course Materials/2020 Dated 05.02.2020 Copies - 1000**

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## Comparative Literature and Translation

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## INTRODUCTION

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### NOTES

Literature, art, culture, and ideas do not develop in isolation but draw upon other works of art, historical movements, political views, religious beliefs, and cultural concepts from near and far. The study of Comparative Literature explores this process of cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary translation as well as the interlingual translation that makes such examinations possible.

Comparative literature tries to break the walls among nations. It takes into consideration every work of literature whether it is major or minor. While comparing a work of literature of a nation, we also take into consideration its culture and history. When translation studies came up in 19th century, they were seen as threat to literatures. It is because translation was treated as a kind of misinterpretation. Its accuracy was questioned on the grounds that whether it gives the same message with the original text or not. In the beginning, many conservatives rejected translation of many texts especially religious texts such as Bible. Gradually it has been observed that translation study is essential for comparative literature. If translation studies wouldn't be there wouldn't be language diversity in literature. By translating the works of Shakespeare, translator doesn't assimilate the language but s/he broadens its fame. Through translation, people who speak minor languages understand other literatures.

This book, *Comparative Literature and Translation*, has been designed keeping in mind the self-instructional mode or SIM format, wherein each unit begins with an 'Introduction' to the topic and is followed by an outline of the 'Objectives'. The detailed content is then presented in a simple and structured form, interspersed with 'Check Your Progress' questions to test the student's understanding. A 'Summary' of the content, along with a list of 'Key Words' and a set of 'Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises' is provided at the end of each unit for effective recapitulation.



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## BLOCK - I

*Comparative Literature  
and its Nature*

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### INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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#### NOTES

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## UNIT 1 COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND ITS NATURE

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### Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Globalization and its Meaning
- 1.3 Comparative Literature: Meaning and Scope
  - 1.3.1 Scope of Comparative Literature
- 1.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Key Words
- 1.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 1.8 Further Readings

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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As the world is getting smaller and smaller day by day because of faster communications across the world and faster means of communication, therefore cultural exchanges across the world has also increased. In the present scenario of globalization, we see that literature written in one part of the world is read in the different part with much enthusiasm and interest as people have started taking interest in things which are of no immediate cultural significance. But at the same time, it can be said that in a world where things are exchanged at a much faster rate than one can imagine, literature too had to keep pace with the growing times and thus evolved the concept of comparative literature which is growing in its popularity as days are progressing.

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### 1.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Define comparative literature
- Explain the nature of comparative literature
- Discuss the scope of comparative literature

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## 1.2 GLOBALIZATION AND ITS MEANING

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### NOTES

Globalization is a popular and oft used term which refers to economic globalization, that is, ‘integration of national economies into the international economy’ or the spread of free-market capitalism. But the term globalization is not limited only to the financial / economic aspect of our present lives, but also to other aspects, such as cultural, technological, literary, etc. Sheila L. Croucher argues that “globalization can be described as a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and function together. This process is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces.” (Sheila L. Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging: The Politics of Identity a Changing World*, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004. p.10.)

Jan Aart Scholte in his book *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) presented five broad arenas of globalization:

1. *Internationalization*: Referring to the cross-border relations between countries and international exchange and interdependence.
2. *Liberalization*: Referring to a process of removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between nations in order to create an open world economy.
3. *Universalization*: Referring to a synthesis of cultures.
4. *Westernization* or *Modernization*: especially in an Americanized form
5. *Deterritorialization*: Referring to a reconfiguration of social relations and transactions.

### Cultural Dimensions of Globalization

Today the world has become a smaller place because of the faster communication networks and faster means of transport, and mass migration has caused a blurring of identities which are based on the notion of nation. Consequently, the cultural boundaries are also swept away to some extent. The advent of telephone, fax machines, internet, satellites, and cable TV, etc. has made the communication between people of far of places easier, faster and cheaper. Moreover, big entertainment companies determine not only the perceptions and dreams (culture / way of living / thought processes) of citizens from where the company is operating, but influence the people everywhere. If it is true that globalization has led to the exchange of goods, ideas, behaviour, thoughts, technology, and more importantly dissemination of information; then at the same time, it is also a fact that it has led to the promotion of western ideals, values, norms of capitalism, leading to a clash with the local cultures. The dominant culture in the world being the consumerist culture of the west has taken an upper hand over the local / marginal cultures throughout the third world. The impact of it can be seen in terms of the third world countries benefitting to some extent with the cheaper goods and better technological

equipment, but they achieved that with the loss of their own cultural markers in some cases. Many literatures and other cultural constructs portray this aspect of cultural take-over by the west.

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### **1.3 COMPARATIVE LITERATURE: MEANING AND SCOPE**

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### **NOTES**

Comparative literature is thought to be a separate branch of study very dissimilar to literary studies as in literary studies one focuses on critical study of a text or texts whereas in comparative literature the endeavour is to compare and analyze texts belonging to different cultures and ages. In other words, it can be said that, as Vijay Kumar Das had pointed out in *Comparative Literature*: “Comparative Literature analyses the similarities and dissimilarities and parallels between two literatures. It further studies themes, modes, conventions and the use of folk tales, myths in two different literatures or even more.” Thus, in a way the realm of comparative literature is very different from that of literary studies, though there are obvious similarities too.

Comparative literature is an inter-textual and interdisciplinary branch of study as it focuses on different facets such as translation studies, sociology, critical theory, cultural studies, religious studies as well as history. Moreover, it is to be noted here that comparative literature crosses national borders, time periods, languages, genres as well as different man-made boundaries. It is a branch of Study where literature and arts of different civilizations, cultures, ages and languages are studied to understand and analyze people, customs, behaviours, myths, history, philosophy and social movements etc. Rene Wellek rightly points out in his *Crisis of Comparative Literature*: “Literary scholarship will not make any progress methodologically, unless it determines to study literature as subject distinct from other activities and procedures of man. Hence, we must face the problem of ‘literariness’, the central issues of aesthetics, the nature of art and literature.”

#### **1.3.1 Scope of Comparative Literature**

The scope of comparative literature is very vast in the sense that the literature of the whole of the world can be brought under the ambit of the study of comparative literature. The task of comparative literature, according to Arthur Marsh, Professor of *Comparative Literature* is “To examine ... the phenomena of literature as a whole, to compare them, to group them, to classify them, to enquire into the causes of them, to determine the results of them this is the true task of comparative literature.” If this be the scope of comparative literature, then whatever is written across the world throughout the ages can be brought under the purview of comparative literature.

In other words, it can be said that the subject matter of comparative literature is to bring forward a comparative study of the different cultures across the world

## NOTES

through the means of literature. In a world which is day by day focusing towards cultural studies as it seems to be the most significant aspect of teaching-learning and critical process, it is evident that a subject like comparative studies is making its best attempt to somehow bring to the fore the subject of cultural studies.

### Cultural Studies

Cultural studies is a new paradigm of English studies throughout the world. Since the 1970s, along with the varied definitions of culture (which we will be discussing in the course of this chapter), there was a paradigm shift in the way English Studies have been conducted as English departments across the world gave way to Department of Cultural Studies as English Studies found that their primary concern is the study of culture. For example, when we say we are studying “English”, in most cases we mean that we are reading “English Literature”; and literature is nothing but the study of culture. In such circumstances it is necessary that we study cultural studies so that we are at par with paradigm shift in English Studies. Day by day we are progressing towards an era when the study of culture becomes the most significant way in understanding an era as well as its people.

In the era, when cultural studies have become the objective of the liberal humanities, comparative literature studies are doing a great job in terms of comparing cultures across civilizations and ages to figure out how these civilizations expressed themselves in terms of art and literature. In such a study therefore, it is paramount that one need not be biased towards any particular culture and its representation and only when one approaches the field of comparative literature from an unbiased perspective that it becomes possible to do a specific analysis of the cultures and their representations in a manner which suits the purpose of the study.

### Check Your Progress

1. Define globalization.
2. What is liberalization?
3. What is the role of comparative literature?
4. What is the subject matter of comparative literature?

## 1.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Sheila L. Croucher argues that “globalization can be described as a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and function together. This process is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces.”

2. Liberalization refers to a process of removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between nations in order to create an open world economy.
3. Comparative Literature analyses the similarities and dissimilarities and parallels between two literatures.
4. The subject matter of comparative literature is to bring forward a comparative study of the different cultures across the world through the means of literature.

## NOTES

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### 1.5 SUMMARY

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- Globalization is a popular and oft used term which refers to economic globalization, that is, ‘integration of national economies into the international economy’ or the spread of free-market capitalism.
- This process is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces.”
- Today the world has become smaller place because of the faster communication networks and faster means of transport, and mass migration has caused a blurring of identities which are based on the notion of nation.
- The advent of telephone, fax machines, internet, satellites, and cable TV, etc. has made the communication between people of far of places easier, faster and cheaper.
- If it is true that globalization has led to the exchange of goods, ideas, behaviour, thoughts, technology, and more importantly dissemination of information; then at the same time, it is also a fact that it has led to the promotion of western ideals, values, norms of capitalism, leading to a clash with the local cultures.
- The dominant culture in the world being the consumerist culture of the west has taken an upper hand over the local / marginal cultures throughout the third world.
- The impact of it can be seen in terms of the third world countries benefitting to some extent with the cheaper goods and better technological equipment, but they achieved that with the loss of their own cultural markers in some cases.
- Comparative literature is thought to be a separate branch of study very dissimilar to literary studies as in literary studies one focuses on critical study of a text or texts whereas in comparative literature the endeavour is to compare and analyze texts belonging to different cultures and ages.
- Comparative literature is an inter-textual and interdisciplinary branch of study as it focuses on different facets such as translation studies, sociology, critical theory, cultural studies, religious studies as well as history.

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- The scope of comparative literature is very vast in the sense that the literature of the whole of the world can be brought under the ambit of the study of comparative literature.
- In other words, it can be said that the subject matter of comparative literature is to bring forward a comparative study of the different cultures across the world through the means of literature.
- Cultural studies is a new paradigm of English studies throughout the world.
- In the era, when cultural studies have become the objective of the liberal humanities, comparative literature studies are doing a great job in terms of comparing cultures across civilizations and ages to figure out how these civilizations expressed themselves in terms of art and literature.

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### 1.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Phenomenon:** It refers to a fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen, especially one whose cause or explanation is in question.
- **Interdisciplinary:** Relating to more than one branch of knowledge.
- **Humanities:** The humanities are studies about human culture, such as literature, philosophy, and history.
- **Culture:** It refers to the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively.
- **Myth:** It is a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events.
- **Critical study:** A critical analysis is subjective writing because it expresses the writer's opinion or evaluation of a text.

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### 1.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. Define comparative literature.
2. What is globalization? What are the cultural dimensions of globalization?
3. What are the five broad areas of globalization as given by Jan Aart Scholte?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. What is the scope of comparative literature in the era of globalization?
2. Explain cultural studies in detail.

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## 1.8 FURTHER READINGS

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- Bassnett, Susan. 1993. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. US: Wiley.
- Croce, Benedetto. 1990. *Benedetto Croce: Essays on Literature and Literary Criticism*. US: SUNY Press.
- Saussy, Haun. 2006. *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. US: JHU Press.
- Wrenn, Charles Leslie. 1968. *The Idea of Comparative Literature*. UK: Modern Humanities Research Association.
- Wellek, René. 1963. *Concepts of Criticism*. US: Yale University Press.

### NOTES

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## UNIT 2 COMPARATIVE LITERATURE: HISTORY AND NATURE

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### Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
  - 2.1 Objectives
  - 2.2 A Short History of Comparative Literature
  - 2.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
  - 2.4 Summary
  - 2.5 Key Words
  - 2.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
  - 2.7 Further Readings
- 

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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History is central to the study of comparative literature as it is a kind of historical study of texts in comparison that we do when one engages himself or herself in the study of comparative literature. Therefore, it can be said, as Rene Wellek also emphasized that history is central to comparative literature. In this context it is to be remembered that it is not the factual history that comparative literature scholars and students are interested in; but moreover, the cultural history that is of much significance to the study of comparative literature. One needs to understand here too that Language is not a static entity; that language too goes through constant evolution and it changes over the course of time. So, when a comparative literature studies literary texts he or she not only studies the cultural history but also the linguistic history.

Ferdinand Brunetiere commented: “The history of Comparative Literature will sharpen in each of us. French or English, or German the understanding of the most national characteristics of our great writers. We establish ourselves only in opposing; we are defined only by comparing ourselves to others; and we do not know ourselves when we know only ourselves.” In other words, it can be said that while understanding Comparative Literature it is essential that one understand the history of the literature of the country of its origin in much more concrete terms so as to fathom the ways and means by which the writer of that work has produced the literary work. Therefore, cultural history is of supreme significance when reading and understanding Comparative Literature.



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## 2.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the history of comparative literature
- List the books published on comparative literature

## NOTES

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## 2.2 A SHORT HISTORY OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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The word “comparative” is derived from Latin “comparare” which means an observation or judgment of similarities or dissimilarities between two or more branches of science or subjects of study such as comparative literature, comparative religion, and comparative language and so on. The word “comparative” thus makes us do a comparison of different subjects or texts or cultures which may be similar to each other or may be dissimilar. The objective of any comparison is to therefore make an evaluative critical judgment between two things so as to reach a conclusion which will be better for understanding both the things or texts or cultures.

It is generally assumed that the word “comparative” was first used as an adjective by William Shakespeare in his play *King Henry IV*, Part I in 1597 in the words Falstaff uttered to Hal, Prince of Wales: “...the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince.” In that sense, the word “comparative” is usually traced to the greatest dramatist William Shakespeare who had given English vocabulary many words which are his creations or inventions.

In 1598, Francis Meres used the term as an adjective in the section titled “A Comparative Discourse of Our English Poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian Poets” in his book *Palladis Tamia* subtitled “Wits Treasury.” Meres compares Greek poets of great antiquity (like Homer, Orpheus, Linus and Musaeus), the ancient Latin poets (like Jovianus Pontanus, Politianus, Marullus Tarchaniota) and the ancient Italian poets, (like Livius Andronicus, Ennius and Plautus) to forerunners of English literature such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate. Homer, Petrarch and Chaucer accounted the god of English poets are compared and contrasted together with the other ancient poets of the antiquity. By making such a comparison, Meres tried to prove how the English poets have also tried to attain the grandeur similar to that of the Classical poets and have always aspired for certain kind of sublimity in their works. We can say that it is the first article of studies of comparative literature. In other words, this can be thought to be the beginning of Comparative Literature in the proper sense of the term, though when scholars look at the Comparative Literature they often miss the point that it is one of the greatest work of Comparative Literature.

Then the term was also used in some captions of seventeenth-and eighteenth-century books which were quite popular during the age. After these attempts at

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the beginning of the nineteenth century in France the words ‘comparative’ and ‘literature’ were used together as a phrase in several course books. It is in France that the concept of Comparative Literature takes shape in the proper sense of the term as it is the French who started comparing texts which can be considered to be National Literature. The French emphasized on comparing texts which has a sense of national belonging. In the later units when we will be talking in details about French Comparative Literature and American School of Comparative Literature we will see the difference between the two where the French School emphasized on the national aspect of Literature whereas the American School thought that to make comparison on literature only on the basis of nationality and nation is too narrow and therefore they emphasized that instead of looking at the national aspects it is better to look at the “intertextuality” in texts which are being compared. It is the French and the Americans who tried their best to theorize on the discipline of Comparative Literature so as to come up with a greater and deeper understanding of the discipline which is different from that of the literary studies.

Let us now have a look at some of the significant contributions of the French School in some detail to form the notion of the history of Comparative Literature. Fernand Baldensperger largely tells in the first part (*Littérature Comparée: Le Mot et la chose*) of his book (together with Paul Hazard) titled *Revue de littérature comparée* about the historical developments in French literature. “Noël and Laplace begin to publish their courses “Comparative Literature” in 1816, and Villemain in the preface for *Tableau of the eighteenth century* (during 1827 and 1828) speaks of a “comparative study of literature.” J.J. Ampère, in his *Athenaeum’s* opening lesson *Marseille* (1830) provides “comparative history of arts and literal temperature in all nations” whose philosophy must leave literature and the arts.”

Ampère brings together various studies; it is observed that all his works are related to the history of comparative literature (1833). Chaudes- Aigues, modern writers of France, in 1841, sticks to “The history of comparative literature “; Ville main and Puibusque, in 1842 and 1843, to “the comparative history of literatures.” Similarly, Benloew offers in *Dijon* in 1849 “Introduction to the comparative history of literature”. This is the beginning of the French School of Comparative Literature and its short history which we will ponder over in more detail in the later units.

On the other hand, when we come to the English isles and look at the term “Comparative Literature” and its uses, it is usually considered that the first time in English the phrase “comparative literature” was used in 1848 in an unpublished letter by Matthew Arnold who translated Ampère’s use of “histoire comparative.” Again it is to be noted that in the private letter he wrote to his mother that was unpublished till 1895, Mathew Arnold uses the phrase ‘comparative literature’ “How plain it is now, though an attention to the comparative literatures for the last

fifty years might have instructed any one of it, that England is in a certain sense far behind the Continent. In conversation, in the newspapers, one is so struck with the fact of the utter insensibility, one may say, of people to the number of ideas and schemes...”

Matthew Arnold further defines the term “Comparative Literature” in a conference, dated 14 November 1857, titled “On the Modern Element in Literature,” printed in Macmillan’s Magazine, February 1869, in the following words –

“Everywhere there is connexion, everywhere there is illustration: no single event, no single literature, is adequately comprehended except in its relation to other events, to other literatures.

It is from then on in England that the Comparative Literature starts its proper journey.

In the next part, we will be looking at the major books that are published in Comparative Literature so as to gain a brief knowledge of the history of Comparative Literature. When we shortly look at books published on comparative literature, although it firstly appeared in the title of the book named Irish scholar Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett’s *Comparative Literature* in 1886, it arose as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century.

Today we recognize the contributions of the books such as Paul Van Tieghem’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1931), René Wellek and Austin Warren’s *Theory of Literature* (1942), Marius-François Guyard’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1951), René Wellek’s *The Crisis of Comparative Literature; Concepts of Criticism* (1963), Claude Pichois and A.M. Rousseau’s *La littérature comparée* (1967), Ulrich Weisstein’s *Einführung in die vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1968), Jan Brandt Corstius’s *Introduction to the Comparative Study of Literature* (1968), Henry Gifford’s *Comparative Literature* (1969), Siegbert S. Prawer’s *Comparative Literature Studies: An Introduction* (1973), C:L: Wrenn’s *The Idea of Comparative Literature* (1973), John B. Alphonso-Karkal’s *Comparative World Literature: Essays* (1974), Hugo Dyserinck’s *Komparatistik: eine Einführung* (1977), Robert J. Clement’s *Comparative Literature as Academic Discipline: A Statement of Principles, Praxis, Standards* (1978), Gerhard R. Kaiser’s *Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1980), Swapan Majundar’s *Comparative Literature: Indian Dimensions* (1987), Peter V. Zima and Johann Strutz’s *Komparatistik. Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1992), Yves Chevrel’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1989), Gurbhagat Singh’s *Differential Multilogue: Comparative Literature and National Literatures* (1991), André Lefevere’s *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* (1992), Susan Basnett’s *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (1993), Claudio Guillen’s *The Challenge of Comparative Literature* (1993); Charles Bernheimer’s *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (1995), *International Journal of Literature and Arts* 2016; 4(1-

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1): 5-12 7 Rey Chow's *In the Name of Comparative Literature* (1995) George Steiner's *What is Comparative Literature* (1995), Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's *Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, Application* (1998), Takayuki Yokota-Murakami's *Don Juan East/West: On the Problematics of Comparative Literature* (1998), John T. Kirby's *The Comparative Reader: A Handlist of Basic Reading in Comparative Literature* (1998), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *The Death of a Discipline* (2003), Haun Saussy's *Comparative Literature in An Age of Globalization* (2006), Dominique Jullien's *Foundational Texts of World Literature* (2011), Jacob Edmond's *A Common Strangeness: Contemporary Poetry, Cross-Cultural Encounter, Comparative Literature* (2012), Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Tutun Mukherjee's *Companion to Comparative Literature, World Literatures, and Comparative Cultural Studies* (2013) among the studies of literatures behind the boundaries in the world.

A list of such books is provided to you to give you a sense of the works and the kinds of scholarship that are involved in the making of Comparative Literature as a discipline in the recent years. In this context, it is to be remembered that in spite of a global interest in the last century on Comparative Literature, there are primary two schools which are still considered to be the primary ones when one looks at the history of the Comparative Literature – the two schools being – The French School of Comparative Literature and the American School of Comparative Literature.

As emphasized earlier, the French School was popular in the early days of Comparative Literature where the focus on comparing texts having a national orientation was the interest of the discipline whereas when the American School came into being it moreover focused on aspects like Parallelism as well as Intertextuality. Intertextuality refers to the fact that there are unconscious and unintended references to the same things in texts which belong to different cultures. For example, often intertextual study focuses on Aristotle's *Poetics* (Classical Greek) and Bharata's *Natyashashtra* (Ancient India) to point out the similarities in thought processes of the two scholars who wrote on dramaturgy in two different places (miles apart) and yet focuses on many things which are similar in terms of performance.

Or one can even make a comparative study of Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* with E. P. Thompson's *The History of the English Working Class*. Whereas *Hard Times* is a novel, E. P. Thompson's book is a sociological and political document, but their interests and concerns remain the same. How both Charles Dickens and E. P. Thompson are writing in two different times yet their preoccupation remains the same – the Victorian Working class and their plight.

Thus when one looks at the history of Comparative Literature one figures out that even though the notion of Comparative Literature has being old enough, but it is a comparatively new discipline, though because of the concerns of the

scholars in this discipline it has witnessed tremendous growth and progress in the last few decades leading to a situation that when one treads the path of Comparative Literature today one wonders at the depth and at the breadth of the works that has been done on this discipline.

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### Check Your Progress

1. When was the word “comparative” first used?
2. Who was Ampère?

## 2.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The word “comparative” was first used as an adjective by William Shakespeare in his play *King Henry IV, Part I* in 1597.
2. Ampère brings together various studies; it is observed that all his work is related to the history of comparative literature (1833).

## 2.4 SUMMARY

- The word “comparative” is derived from Latin “comparare” which means an observation or judgment of similarities or dissimilarities between two or more branches of science or subjects of study such as comparative literature, comparative religion, comparative language and soon.
- The word “comparative” was first used as an adjective by William Shakespeare in his play *King Henry IV, Part I* in 1597 in the words Falstaff’s uttered to Hal, Prince of Wales: “...the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince.”
- In 1598 Francis Meres used the term as adjective in the section titled “A Comparative Discourse of Our English Poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian Poets” in his book *Palladis Tamia* subtitled “Wits Treasury.”
- Ampère brings together various studies, it is observed that all his work is related to the history of comparative literature (1833).
- When we shortly look at books published on comparative literature, it arose as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century.
- Today we recognize the contributions of the books such as Paul Van Tieghem’s *La Littérature Comparée* (1931), René Wellek and Austin Warren’s *Theory of Literature* (1942) and many more till date.

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## 2.5 KEY WORDS

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- **Religion:** It is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods.
- **Comparative:** Anything measured or judged by estimating the similarity or dissimilarity between one thing and another; relative.
- **Cross-cultural:** Relating to different cultures or comparison between them.
- **Antiquity:** It refers to the ancient past, especially the period of classical and other human civilizations before the Middle Ages.

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## 2.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short history of comparative literature.
2. List the various texts where “comparative” was used.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Give a detailed description of Matthew Arnold’s use of “comparative” in his works.

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## 2.7 FURTHER READINGS

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- Bassnett, Susan. 1993. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. US: Wiley.
- Croce, Benedetto. 1990. *Benedetto Croce: Essays on Literature and Literary Criticism*. US: SUNY Press.
- Saussy, Haun. 2006. *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. US: JHU Press.
- Wrenn, Charles Leslie. 1968. *The Idea of Comparative Literature*. UK: Modern Humanities Research Association.
- Wellek, René. 1963. *Concepts of Criticism*. US: Yale University Press.

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## UNIT 3 NATIONAL LITERATURE

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### Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 National Literature
- 3.3 W. H. Hudson: National Literature
- 3.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Words
- 3.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.8 Further Readings

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### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

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In the last two units, we have come across a general definition and scope of comparative literature as well as the significance of history in the understanding of Comparative Literature. In this unit, we will focus on understanding what it means when we refer to a term like “National Literature.” Is Literature related to the national boundaries and is there anyway where one can think of literature primarily to be national or it is that thinking of literature from the point of view of a nation is very chauvinistic. All these are the parameters which we will be dealing with in this unit.

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### 3.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the general notion of the term ‘national literature’
- Critically examine the term ‘national literature’

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### 3.2 NATIONAL LITERATURE

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Frederic Jameson made a famous controversial comment that “All Third World literatures are national allegories.” They are national allegories as somehow or the other they talk in terms of building their nation. When the notion of “nation” was encountered by the third world countries for the first time from the European counterparts they thought of making themselves as a nation. This is not to say that we were not a nation before the advent of the European colonial powers. But as Sudipta Kaviraj and many other would like to believe that before the advent of the colonial power in India, we were nothing, but kingdom(s) sometime ruled by one ruler, sometimes by many – ever expanding and decreasing size of the kingdom depending on the ability of the ruler ruling.

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But at the same time, this is also true as nationalists would like to believe that even before the arrival of the British in India, we had a notion of our country which was sacrosanct and therefore to discredit the nationalist belief will be altogether not right. So, in the present context, when we are discussing National Literature it becomes paramount to understand that the notion of the nation is not just a European import. We are using the term “nation” in the broader sense of the term to signify a consciousness that was already prevalent in India and also elsewhere even before the term “nation” was used to define it.

### Nationalism

#### Different Modes of Representing Nation

Apparently it seems that the narratives of Nativism and Internationalism are opposed to each other as the Nativists seem to be championing the local, the regional, based on language, as G. N. Devy says, “Nativism is a language specific way of looking at literature” (1995, 120) and the Internationalists seem to believe that the western parameters of looking at history, literature, culture and society are the only valid categories. Moreover, some Internationalists also believe in a pan-human existence, or post-national existence, be it political (Jawaharlal Nehru) or humanitarian (Gandhi) or spiritual (Rabindranath Tagore) or that of Arjun Appadurai whose version of post nationalism arises out of the crisis of the nation-state. This paper intends to probe how opposing are the two strands of thoughts in the construction of Nation, whether they are really opposed to each other or can they exist side by side as overlapping categories ?

Nativism, as Ganesh N. Devy defines it, is a critical project that “understands writing as a social act and expects of it an ethical sense of commitment to the society within which it is born”. (1995, 120) Thus Nativism seems to be an agenda of indigenous cultural self-respect and a cry for the autonomy of Indian Literature and culture. The project is anti-colonial to its core, which rejects the superiority of the Western culture and “rules out the colonial standard of literary history as a series of epochs”. (1995, 120) But at the same time, as G.N. Devy proclaims, Nativism also rules out the ‘marga’ claim of mainstream Sanskrit and Tamil traditions of literatures and critical theories which dominated the Indian literary scenario prior to the emergence of ‘bhasa’ literatures in the eleventh century.

Nativists are of the opinion that due to our encounter with the colonial west; and as a result equating modernity with westernization, our ways of looking back at our own past has changed. Either we look back and think what Macaulay thought – “that a single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole of native literature of India and Arabia. “ (101) or we think as the orientalist thought that India had a rich glorious past which we have forgotten and it needs the Western people to reinvent our glorious tradition.

Both the ways of looking at the past is Western and these two ways of looking at Indian literatures are dominating in the present-day Indian academics.



G.N. Devy points out, in *After Amnesia*, that we have forgotten the ‘bhasa’ literary history (from 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards till the emergence of the colonial power), which he terms as ‘cultural amnesia’. But Devy is optimistic that “What would come after amnesia is nativistic history”. (*After Amnesia* 124) Devy’s project seems to point out to the contemporary Indian scholars the path in which their intellect should pursue for the benefit of our society and culture.

In the present context of globalization when the Euro-American theories are profoundly dominating the Indian academy and when the literatures written in regional languages are neglected, the nativists’ call for cultural self-respect has immense importance in the decolonization of the Indian mind, but there are many basic ambiguities in Nativism itself. The most basic one is – What does the word ‘native’ or ‘desi’ mean? Makarand Paranjape in the essay ‘Towards a Contemporary Indian Tradition in Criticism’ writes – “Desi can be translated as regional, country or even national”. (Towards a Contemporary Indian Tradition in Criticism 175) Sudhir Kumar has also pointed out in his essay ‘Nation versus Nativism’ that the words ‘native’ and ‘nation’ have a common Latin origin, from the word ‘nasci’ (to born) (Towards a Contemporary Indian Tradition in Criticism 119)

Thus, it becomes very difficult to say what the term desi actually signify? This ambiguity exists because the nativists have not identified clearly who the non-native or the outsider or the alien is? Bhal Chandra Nemade in his *Marathi Novel: 1950-75* and essay “Sahityateel Deshiyata” (‘Nativism in Literature’) tried to deal with one such polarity: the native versus the international. In “Sahityateel Deshiyata,” Nemade very grudgingly attacks the colonial internationalism and the internationalism of Nehru.

Nehru believed that the main aim of Indian nationalism is not only to free India from colonial power, but it has a duty to the still larger cause of humanity. Speaking before the Indian Council of World Affairs on March 22, 1949, Nehru said — “We do not wish to be isolated. We wish to have the closest contacts, because we do, from the beginning, firmly believe in the world coming closer together and ultimately realizing the ideal of what is being called One world.” (420)

He wanted freedom for all nations, but he was in favour of putting an end to the independent sovereign state. He said, “either peacefully or through war, a single world federation must emerge . . . such a World Federation must be a real union of free nations.” It’s very moving to hear such discourse of internationalism where every nation would have its own freedom, but in reality, it does not happen so. It is the West who will carry on with their dominance. Nemade objects to this kind of internationalism because we cannot be international by following the West (because that would be colonial international). Though the colonial era has ended but the dominance of the West is carrying on whether it is literature, science, technology, economy, culture or anything else. Therefore what Chairman Mao

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had said in 1955 (as pointed out by Nemade in his essay 'Nativism in Literature') seems true that "Jawaharlal Nehru does not seem to have understood that India is a part of Asia and not of Europe." (Quoted in "Nativism in Literature," 253) Therefore it's apt for Nemade to term Nehru's brand of internationalism 'bogus' because till the time we reach a state (and all the nations in the world reach that state) of perfection (which is impossible) it's impossible. Anyway, Nehru's brand of political internationalism is going to fail because it is an idealist version, which can never come true.

Instead Gandhi's internationalism seems to have a great meaning because Gandhi thought that you can be true international if you are a true regional or true national. He wrote, referring to internationalism – "Without being nationalist, none could lay claim to internationalism. Unless a man could serve his family, his village, his country he could not serve the world." (134) Thus, for Gandhi internationalism is nothing bad, but it does not mean simply imitating the West. It means, for him, the celebration of the local and through the celebration of the local one can be a true international. Bhal Chandra Nemade in the essay 'Nativism in Literature' gives the example of 'Pather Panchali' of Satyajit Roy, which celebrates the local and in its celebration of the local it got international recognition. For Nativists, there is no harm in becoming international or getting international recognition as long as you are respecting what is yours, what is the law or code of your land. Gandhi rightly said – "Internationalism has got no malice, no ill will or contempt, but it had only peace and goodwill in its, and unless a man can begin to love heartily his neighbours, he could not cultivate the spirit of love for the outside world." (Vol.18, 134)

In that sense what Makarand Paranjape says in his essay "Challenges in Theory" seems to be apt – "Being national does not, in itself, deny the possibility of being international, but if we start off wanting to be international, then we may end up being denationalized instead." (Challenges in Theory 7) Thus, the scholars in India who are trying to be international by imitating the West and are talking about globalization, they are not the true internationalists, but in their process of becoming internationalists they are getting denationalized. These scholars may question that there is no future in academics if one wants to be regional or, may say that being nativist is 'narrowness'. But if we look at their discourse carefully then we will find out that they are actually giving bogus logic because they themselves know that in their endeavour to become international in the Western terms, they are actually perpetuating the Western domination. And till the time the Indian scholars would carry on imitating the West the domination of the West would also carry on.

To counter this argument of the so-called internationalist scholars, Nemade writes "A great writer writes primarily for his own time and for his own community. If at all any international recognition comes, it is purely incidental or secondary." (Nativism in Literature 235) And then he gives example of Dante and Shakespeare who were nativist writers, they wrote for their native land, in their native language

and international recognition has come to them. The Indian writers and scholars should also do that, they should write about their land, for their land and in their native language; and if any international recognition he gets, then he would be the true international.

It shows that Nativists are not against being international but they are against a certain kind of internationalists who are “living with a self-induced hypnosis and thriving on the import of alien totems.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore as Makarand Paranjape says “a constant other will be ‘international’ because that is where we shall locate the West.” The nativists are attacking that international phenomena which make us recognize ourselves only after the West recognizes those particular objects; or that phenomena which makes us neglect our national and regional objects go unnoticed; or that which makes us choose everything foreign, whether it is a foreign degree or anything else material. It is this kind of internationalism that the Nativists are attacking.

Some scholars may again argue that nationalism or the nation-state is also a construct of the West. And in the process of being ‘national’ the nativists are also becoming Western. They would argue that in India prior to colonialism political belonging to territorial state was rather a tenuous affair because the kingdoms and empires collided and expanded at the expense of each other. Sudipta Kaviraj writes ( in a different context) that “it was in that sense impossible to achieve the kind of firm identification between people and a form of politicized space which is presupposed in the political ontology of the modern nation state.” In that sense the category of Nation State is truly a Western construct. Rabindra Nath Tagore in his essay ‘Nationalism’ gives a brilliant analogy of the pre-colonial state and the colonial and post-colonial nation state. Tagore wrote – “Before the Nation came to rule over us (under British colonial rule) we had other governments which are foreign, and these, like all governments had same elements of the machine in them. But the difference between them and the government by the Nation is like the difference between the hand loom and the power-loom. In the products of the hand-loom the magic of man’s living fingers find its expression, and in its hum harmonizes with the music of life. But the power-loom is relentlessly lifeless and accurate and monotonous in its production.” (Nationalism in India 10)

It is true that the Nativists have to accept what has happened to India during the colonial era; they cannot think of going back to the era of ‘rajatva’ (kingdom/ empire), but they can argue that though the ‘lifeless power loom’ has taken away from India its ‘magic of man’s living fingers’, but the concept of ‘nationalism’ that the Western nation-state had never completed implanted in India. May be the colonial hegemony of discourse has made an India nation-state (in its freedom or anti-colonial movements), but there still remains many magic of India civilization which the Western discourse of nation-state could not invade. The nationalism that the West practices is violent and that violent nationalism takes/ have taken shape into imperialism, as Gandhi said, “Violent nationalism otherwise known as imperialism is a curse. Non-violent nationalism is a necessary condition of corporate or civilized life.” (Vol.25, 369)

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Though in the beginning of our independence struggle we find many extremists fighting for Indian independence believing in the Western form of violent nationalism, but with the advent of Gandhi in the Indian scenario the extremist's nationalism (similarly violent as the Western nationalism) diminished and a non-violent humanitarian nationalism came into existence. In that, we haven't just imitated the Western sense of nationalism and nation-state, but our nationalism is our own product, which has a life of its own – our nationalism is not only for India, but for the whole world as Gandhi said – “Indian nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefits and service of humanity at large.” (Vol. 27, 255 -256)

Therefore, the nativists could also argue that we are ‘national’ not in the Western sense of the term, but in its Indian sense. Therefore, the celebration of the ‘desi’ or the native, whether it is local, regional or national, seems to be the perfect anti-colonial project or perfect anti-colonial internationalists project.

But at the same time as Vasant Palshikar warns “A nativistic movement can easily go chauvinistic: the aim is to exclude, to restrict, to whip up an anti-feeling, which ordinarily is the part of the power game.” (Quoted in “Towards a Contemporary Indian Criticism” 169) As Gandhi was talking about violent nationalism of the West, similarly if Nativism is practiced in almost in its narrow sense then it can really be ‘chauvinistic’ and ‘violent’; and in that Nativism would fail in its project. Till the moment Nativism tries to remain a critical anti-colonial project it is a project worth carrying on, but at the moment it makes a nation a closed one and stops all communication with other cultures the Indian civilization will be dead. So G.N. Devy's much famous question “How can an Indian critic brought upon the Derridean sense of difference (sic) do justice to literature produced in a society which has never experienced the anxiety resulting from logo-centricism?” (*After Amnesia*, 24) is questioned repeatedly. It may be that Derrida's, theories can't be directly used to read Indian literature, culture and society but as Paranjape suggested we can use Derrida's deconstructive argument to question textual and institutional authority. So, in following Nativism, one should not narrow oneself down to such an extent to obstruct any outside influence because that will be bad for Indian culture.

Dilip Chitre in the After word of his collection of poems *The Mountain* complains “My own Marathi citizenship and status as a poet is of no use to me when as a bilingual poet writing in English, the nativists cast aspersions on my nativity.” (*The Mountain* 44) Thus Nativism should not narrow itself down to such an extent, and then it would be really difficult to practice nativism in the real sense. But Bhal Chandra Nemade in his essay “Nativism in Literature” did not talk about any such exclusion of the outside influences, instead he wrote – “Culture is a network of interacting systems. Every living and potent culture has the in-built capacity to convert and absorb all external influences into a native system. The process of such assimilation may be termed as nativization.” (*Nativism in Literature* 243)

Thus Nemade's project of Nativism with its 'selective assimilation' process makes sense against the Western or International hegemony of discourse. But G.N. Devy's unnecessary formulation of the hegemonic 'marg' (Sanskrit and Tamil) tradition's domination over the bhasa literature and literary theory, and the idea that everything Western has a negative connotation makes nativism a narrower discourse, which is one of the reason why the so called internationalists see Nativism in bad light. It is high time that the Nativists come out of their narrow discourse and try to make it a broader one to counter the Western hegemony. G. N. Devy's optimism of a possible time when 'nativistic awareness' will emerge in the consciousness of Indian scholars and their discourse would not help in fighting the so called internationalists. Instead what they should do is to propound as RabindraNath Tagore did, when he wrote – "Form yourself into a nation, and resist this encroachment of the Nation." (Nationalism in India 18 -19)

The first 'nation' is what the nativists should now try to construct as against the scholars like Arjun Appadurai who thinks that "we need to think ourselves beyond the nation," (411) because it is the only way to resist the encroachment of the second type of nation that is the West which is now thinking in terms of 'post-nation'. Partha Chatterjee is right when he attacks Appadurai in his essay 'Beyond the Nation? Or within?' because in the present context of India we need to look within our nation, we need to focus on the local, the regional (though Partha Chatterjee never argues in this line), so that we can build a strong nation and only through the building of a strong nation we can be truly international.

But is it really possible? Aijaz Ahmed in the essay 'Culture, Nationalism, Intellectuals' says –

Even at its best, nationalism alone cannot be the answer because capital can and does breakdown all national boundaries, especially in its cultural forms, and because most kinds of nationalism can easily accommodate themselves is the capitalist universalization. (405) If Aijaz Ahmed's statement is true then the project of Nativism is obviously going to fail in opposition to the Universalist capitalism. Is Arjun Appadurai then suggesting the future of the world that we need to begin to think ourselves as post-national when 'electronic media' has made the world a small place and 'mass migration' (Diaspora) is making nations 'multicultural'. Is it possible in the present context really to think of national boundaries? May be nations are coming together (like European Union) to form a post-national organization, but for India its very essential at this moment to make ourselves truly 'national' before we become international or post national. That is the project which Nativism should propound to fight against these kinds of universality or internationalism. Now it's a matter of time to see whether the Nativists succeeds in achieving what it aims at or it remains "a narrative (which) thinks of itself as a kind of merchandise" (Barthes) in the era of capitalist universalism.

With these notions of nations as have been provided in the box above it seems quite clear that when we talk about literature it is very evident that literature written at a particular point of time presents to the world the highlighting notions of the time which are often connected to the national interests. When we will come to

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the chapter on various schools of Comparative Literature and discuss the French School of Comparative Literature, it will be evident to us that the French Scholars thought that it was necessary to compare literatures across the world which has a kind of national history and consciousness. Many other scholars even feel that this kind of analysis of Comparative Literature with a kind of National boundary and consciousness is very parochial and chauvinistic; but when one says that one is taking a very narrow view of nation.

So what is required is to think in broader terms about the term “nation” and then the term “National Literature” does not feel to be chauvinistic; otherwise if one thinks of nation in narrow terms that there were a vast body of literature which would not and could not be brought under the ambit of the study of Comparative Literature. Therefore, later the American School of Comparative Literature took away the notion of national literature from the study and scope of Comparative Literature so as to free the discipline from its narrower limits.

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### 3.3 W. H. HUDSON: NATIONAL LITERATURE

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As an author is being read, what needs to be done next is to read the age to which the author belongs. Hudson is of the opinion that one needs to study an author in his or her tradition and for that matter he talks about a nation’s literature which he defines by saying – “A nation’s literature is not a miscellaneous collection of books which happen to have been written in the same tongue or within a certain geographical area. It is the progressive revelation, age by age, of such nation’s mind and character.” (some ways of studying literature p. 33).

Thus, we see that there is a separate Greek literature which provides a sense of the Hellenic thought. Any Greek text or author needs to be read in that tradition of Greek thought process, only then the true meaning of a work of art will become clearer. Or for example, when we are studying Elizabethan dramatists, there are certain similarities that we can see between the dramatists – “Elizabethan dramatists are united by a number of elementary characteristics which sharply distinguish them as a group from the men of Pope’s time and the men of Wordsworth’s time. It is these group-characteristics which we have now to investigate if we would grasp the underlying principles and the historic significance of that large and intensely fascinating body of work which we call roughly the Elizabethan, or, more correctly, the English romantic drama, and if we would see that work in its vital relationships, not with this or that author only Shakespeare or any other but with the whole social world out of which it came.” (p. 35)

In other words, it can be said that “Our chief object will then be to investigate the origin, growth, and decay of literary fashions and tastes, the formation of schools, the rise and fall of critical standards and ideals, the influence of particular men in initiating fresh tendencies and giving a new direction to literature, and so on ; keeping meanwhile strictly to the literary phenomena themselves, and conceiving

of these as explicable by reference only to such forces as lie within the field of literary activity.” (p.37)

### Check Your Progress

1. State the controversial comment made by Frederic Jameson.
2. Define nativism.
3. What was the main aim of Indian nationalism according to Nehru?
4. What united the Elizabethan dramatists?

### NOTES

## 3.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Frederic Jameson made a famous controversial comment that “All third world literatures are national allegories.”
2. Nativism, as Ganesh N. Devy defines it, is a critical project that “understands writing as a social act and expects of it an ethical sense of commitment to the society within which it is born”.
3. Nehru believed that the main aim of Indian nationalism is not only to free India from colonial power, but it has a duty to the still larger cause of humanity.
4. Elizabethan dramatists are united by a number of elementary characteristics which sharply distinguish them as a group from the men of Pope’s time and the men of Wordsworth’s time.

## 3.5 SUMMARY

- Frederic Jameson made a famous controversial comment that “All third world literatures are national allegories.”
- When the notion of “nation” was encountered by the third world countries for the first time from the European counterparts they thought of making themselves as a nation.
- As Sudipta Kaviraj and many other would like to believe that before the advent of the colonial power in India, we were nothing but kingdom(s) sometime ruled by one rulers, sometimes by many – ever expanding and decreasing size of the kingdom depending on the ability of the ruler ruling.
- Apparently it seems that the narratives of Nativism and Internationalism are opposed to each other as the Nativists seem to be championing the local, the regional, based on language, as G. N. Devy says, “Nativism is a language specific way of looking at literature” (1995, 120) and the Internationalists

## NOTES

seem to believe that the western parameters of looking at history, literature, culture and society are the only valid categories.

- Nativism, as Ganesh N. Devy defines it, is a critical project that “understands writing as a social act and expects of it an ethical sense of commitment to the society within which it is born”.
- In the present context of globalization when the Euro-American theories are profoundly dominating the Indian academy and when the literatures written in regional languages are neglected, the nativists’ call for cultural self-respect has immense importance in the decolonization of the Indian mind, but there are many basic ambiguities in Nativism itself.
- Makarand Paranjape in the essay ‘Towards a Contemporary Indian Tradition in Criticism’ writes – “desi can be translated as regional, country or even national”.
- Nehru believed that the main aim of Indian nationalism is not only to free India from colonial power, but it has a duty to the still larger cause of humanity.
- Sudipta Kaviraj writes (in a different context) that “it was in that sense impossible to achieve the kind of firm identification between people and a form of politicized space which is presupposed in the political ontology of the modern nation state.”
- Rabindra Nath Tagore in his essay ‘Nationalism’ gives a brilliant analogy of the pre-colonial state and the colonial and post-colonial nation state.
- It may be that Derrida’s, theories can’t be directly used to read Indian literature, culture and society but as Paranjape suggested we can use Derrida’s deconstructive argument to question textual and institutional authority.
- Dilip Chitre in the After word of his collection of poems *The Mountain* complains “My own Marathi citizenship and status as a poet is of no use to me when as a bilingual poet writing in English, the nativists cast aspersions on my nativity.”
- So what is required is to think in broader terms about the term “nation” and then the term “National Literature” does not feel to be chauvinistic; otherwise if one thinks of nation in narrow terms that there were a vast body of literature which would not and could not be brought under the ambit of the study of Comparative Literature.
- As an author is being read, what needs to be done next is to read the age from which the author belongs.
- Hudson is of the opinion that one needs to study an author in his or her tradition and for that matter he talks about a nation’s literature which he defines by saying – “A nation’s literature is not a miscellaneous collection of books which happen to have been written in the same tongue or within a certain geographical area. It is the progressive revelation, age by age, of such nation’s mind and character.’



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### 3.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Parochial:** Relating to a Church parish.
- **Chauvinistic:** Displaying excessive or prejudiced support for their own cause, group, or sex.
- **Narrative:** It refers to a spoken or written account of connected events; a story.

### NOTES

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### 3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. Define National Literature in your own words.
2. What are the different modes of representing nation? Write with examples.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss Makarand Paranjape's idea of 'being national' in his essays.
2. Give a detailed description of national literature as given by W. H. Hudson.

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### 3.8 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 4 GENERAL LITERATURE

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 W. H. Hudson: What is Literature?
- 4.3 Terry Eagleton: What is Literature?
- 4.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 Key Words
- 4.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 4.8 Further Readings

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### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

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Literature is a discipline which is distinct from other disciplines in many vivid ways. But when a student of literature is asked to define what literature is it becomes very difficult for him or her to define. In this unit, we will focus on what it means to be literary and what constitutes literature and how literature is different from other disciplines. When one studies a unit like General Literature one necessarily means what constitutes literature.

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### 4.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the meaning of Literature
- Distinguish Literature from other disciplines

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### 4.2 W. H. HUDSON: WHAT IS LITERATURE?

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Before one engages oneself with any kind of literary exegesis, it is essential to know the subject — Literature. Therefore, as students of literature it is our primary task in understanding what Literature means or what stands for literature. Many scholars and writers from ages have tried to define literature and therefore there is no monolithic, unified view / notion about it. The definition of literature is as divergent and different as literature itself.

In this unit, we will be trying to look at the notion of literature as presented by W. H. Hudson in the Chapter “Some Ways of Studying Literature.” Though you should keep in mind that definition of Literature is not constricted to what W. H. Hudson opines in his unit. For further understanding of what Literature consists of we will also be discussing it further where we discuss the Introductory

Chapter of Terry Eagleton's book "What is Literature?" which will attempt to give a fuller and much deeper view about what literature consists of.

*General Literature*

W. H. Hudson begins his book *An Introduction to the Study of Literature* with defining what literature is. Defining literature will enable us to understand the concept and the rubric with which one deals with when one tries to study literature.

## NOTES

W. H. Hudson quotes two instances of definition of literature –

Shall we follow Charles Lamb, who (half humorously, it is true) narrowed the conception of literature to such an extent that he excluded the works of Hume, Gibbon, and Flavius Josephus, together with directories, almanacks, and " draught-boards bound and lettered on the back " ? Shall we adopt the view of Hallam, who, under the general head of literature, comprised jurisprudence, theology, and medicine? (pp. 9 -10)

What Charles Lamb or Hallam did was to include books of some authors or subjects as literature and considered others as not. When one tries to do so one falls into the trap of exclusion and inclusion into the canonization of literature which is a problematic thing. Instead of doing so, Hudson provides a direct definition of literature which is easily fathomable / understandable.

### Canonization

Canonization is the act by which Christianity declares a deceased person to be a saint, upon which declaration the person is included in the canon, or list, of recognized saints. The term is being borrowed in the field of arts to mean the way the literary scholars and critics declare works of art to be significant to be studied and preserved. In the process, the other works of art that are not mentioned by the scholars are forgotten and a canon is formed.

According to W. H. Hudson –

"Literature is composed of those books, and of those books only, which, in the first place, by reason of their subject-matter and their mode of treating it, are of general human interest; and in which, in the second place, the element of form and the pleasure which form gives are to be regarded as essential. A piece of literature differs from a specialised treatise on astronomy, political economy, philosophy, or even history, in part because it appeals, not to a particular class of readers only, but to men and women as men and women; and in part because, while the object of the treatise is simply to impart knowledge, one ideal end of the piece of literature, whether it also imparts knowledge or not, is to yield aesthetic satisfaction by the manner in which it handles its theme." (p. 10)

Let us try to understand this definition of Hudson in an easier way to make sense of what he means by literature. According to him, literature has two functions–

- One, to impart knowledge; and
- The other, to provide pleasure to its readers.

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From that point of view, any books which fulfil these two essential functions can be termed as literature. W. H. Hudson further adds –

“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 expression of life through the medium of language.” (10)

In other words, W. H. Hudson is of the opinion that Literature functions as a means of experiencing all those aspects of life which interest all of us. Literature is “an expression of life” through language. What is significant here is that when one reads literature one experiences different facets of life which one has not experienced earlier. Literature provides a proxy experience of life. One often encounters things in literature which one lives in life. The experiences of life find manifestation in literature. In other words, it can be said that when one reads literature one gets enriched about different facets of life; one comes to know about things that one has not imagined about life, one gets to critically engage with life in such a manner that it enriches the minds of the readers in a healthy way.

Let us take an example to understand it. When one sees a rose one finds it beautiful if it is properly situated in the place where it should be – either in a garden or in a flower vase. But if the same flower is there on the roadside then probably we will all overlook the rose and walk over it. If a photographer takes a photograph of the same rose on the roadside and enlarges it and puts it as a poster on the wall, again the same rose will look beautiful to us.

A writer is like a photographer who through his language finds extraordinary beauty in ordinary things through his or her power of language. What the photographer achieves through his lens, the writer achieves through his words. Common things of life where we see no literature, which seems to be very common place, becomes the subject matter of literary man as through his power of language he or she is able to find something in it which touches our heart.

It is to be remembered here that the two functions that we talked about of literature (to provide knowledge and pleasure to its readers) are not of equal standing. One has to remember here that to give pleasure is probably the first and foremost function of literature. A text should be pleasurable reading only then the readers will read it. Do you read anything if it does not give you pleasure? Probably not! Only when one gets pleasure in reading things, one reads it and then while reading one achieves the knowledge. Let us take the example of a newspaper article. If the headline does not interest you, you do not read the article. If the first few paragraphs of the article do not interest you, then one does not read the whole article. Similarly, any literary text first should be pleasurable to read; only then the readers carry on reading it to gain knowledge.

Hudson opines that “The great impulse behind literature may, I think, be grouped with accuracy enough for practical purposes under four heads:

- (i) Our desire for self-expression,
- (ii) Our interest in people and their doings,
- (iii) Our interest in the world of reality in which we live in and in the world of imagination which we conjure about our existence, and
- (iv) Our love for form as form

These, according to W. H. Hudson, are the primary impulses behind any literary expression. All literary expressions are somewhere or the other linked to the human impulse to find certain kind of expression of our own selves in such a way that it talks about the reality that we live in. In other words, literature is an expression of the reality in which we live in.

Sometimes, literature does not deal with real, but with imaginative things. Such imaginative things are also of much significance as these imaginative things are nothing but better versions of the reality than which we live in. Literature according to Aristotle, is all about “what should be.” It is about the ideal. The ideal is represented in literature so that one can aspire for better reality than one is living in in this world. Therefore, poets and writers often create a reality which seems to be better than this reality. This makes famous romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley say that “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.” Poets or writers are legislators as they provide a better legislation, a better world than the world in which we live in.

Based on the ways in which the forms of literature varies from one to another, Hudson comes up with the following division of literature –

“..., we get a fairly comprehensive scheme of classification, and one which, as will be seen, it has the advantage of resting upon natural foundations. We have, first, the literature of self-expression, which includes the different kinds of lyric poetry, the poetry of meditation and argument, and the elegy; the essay and treatise where these are written from the personal point of view; and the literature of artistic and literary criticism. We have, secondly, the literature in which the writer, instead of going down into himself, goes out of himself into the world of external human life and activity; and this includes history and biography, the ballad and the epic, the romance in verse and prose, the story in verse and prose, the novel and the drama. And, thirdly, we have the literature of description, not in itself a large or important division, since description in literature is ordinarily associated with, and for the most part subordinated to, the interests of self-expression or narrative, but comprising in the book of travel, and the descriptive essay and poem, some fairly distinct minor forms of literary art.” (p. 14)

W. H. Hudson again emphasizes that whatever be the literary expression, literature always is, as Matthew Arnold says, “a criticism of life.”

## NOTES

## NOTES

**Matthew Arnold “Poetry as Criticism of life”**

Moreover, poetry is the ‘criticism of life’ which is ruled by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty. It is in this aspect of poetry as ‘criticism of life’ that poetry would provide some respite to the human race, when other aspects of human life are fall apart – “In poetry, as in criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty, the spirit of our race will find, we have said, as time goes on and as other helps fail, its consolation and stay. But the consolation and stay will be of power in proportion to the power of the criticism of life. And the criticism of life will be of power in proportion as the poetry conveying it is excellent rather than inferior, sound rather than unsound or half-sound, true rather than untrue or half-true.”

Hudson further adds that it is not just a criticism of life; but more than that as for him “it is an interpretation of life as life shapes itself in the mind of the interpreter.” (pp. 15 – 16). One has to remember here, as emphasized earlier too, that literature is basically a representation of life – life seen through the lens of the author. The author sees life around him with his artistic lens and produces that vision through his literary mind in such a way that reading that piece of literary work of art is a pleasurable exercise. What George Eliot says about art in general is especially true of the art of literature as it “is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot.” (p. 19) Literature interprets life in the way the author sees it. It is philosophical in that sense as philosophy deals with how to live life. Literature in its efforts to interpret life makes a representation of life in such terms that one understands the essence of life.

**4.3 TERRY EAGLETON: WHAT IS LITERATURE?**

Literature can be defined as “imaginative” writing in the sense of what fiction is. It can be said that there is a difference between “historical truth” and “artistic truth”, and both of them do not correspond to each other. Aristotle has said in his famous book *Poetics* that literature is “what should be”, the ideal that is impossible in the real world. In that sense literature is the imaginative portrayal of a world of different reality which has no association with the reality in which we live in. thus the question comes to the distinction between fact and fiction. But at the same time, it’s true that though we can differentiate between fact and fiction but the fiction is based on this reality. The fiction writers are products of this world and their writing is bound to have the political and socio-economic and cultural markers of this world. However, much they try to create an imaginative reality, they are always dependent of this reality. For example, the science fiction which is utopian in nature, is something that deals with something which is not of this world but ultimately it questions and critiques the reality of this world. In that sense what facts do the fiction also serves the same purpose to some extent.

Therefore, the Twentieth Century Literary Theory takes a different approach in defining literature. The Russian formalists try to see literature moreover from the point of view of “language”. According to the Russian scholar Roman Jakobson, literature represents an “organized violence committed on ordinary speech. Let us take the example of the first two lines of *Ode to a Nightingale* by John Keats –

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

The use of language by Keats in these first two lines of the poem is not that of the language that the ordinary people use in their everyday language. Taking the last four words of the second line “. . . hemlock I had drunk” doesn’t even follow the syntactical order of English language. Thus, Keats deliberately inverts the order and gives prominence to object because he wants to give more stress to “hemlock”. Thus, Keats deliberately makes use of the organized violence on speech because he has to make his writing more poetic. Terry Eagleton writes –

In the routines of everyday speech, our perceptions of and responses to reality become stale, blunted, or, as the Formalists would say, ‘automatized’. Literature, by forcing us into a dramatic awareness of language, refreshes these habitual responses and renders objects more ‘perceptible’.

Thus, the Formalists thought that “making strange” was the way through which one can say what literary is. The differential relations between one sort of use of language with another define what literariness is all about. But the problem comes when one thinks about prose. In poetry there can be violence on the ordinary speech, but in prose the writer doesn’t do any such thing to achieve literariness. How then is it possible to define prose fiction as literature? Therefore, in the term of the Formalists it’s not very easy to give a definition which is all encompassing. Terry Eagleton rightly says that “to think of literature as the Formalists do is really to think of all literature as poetry.”

Instead what Terry Eagleton has to say about literariness is quite interesting, as he writes –

. . . many of the works studied as literature in academic institutions were ‘constructed’ to be read as literature, but it is also true that many of them were not. A piece of writing may start off life as history or philosophy and then come to be ranked as literature; or it may start off as literature and then come to be valued for its archaeological significance. Some texts are born literary, some achieve literariness, and some have literariness thrust upon them.

Thus, **canonization** of literature is what Terry Eagleton talks about when he tries to define the literariness of literature. Let us think about the Bible. Can the Bible be considered as a literary text? Many a university in India and worldwide today teach The Bible as one of the greatest literatures ever written. How the Bible is considered today as Literature is something that the Universities can tell. As universities carried on prescribing it, it was considered as literature. There are many other texts which have received similar treatment. Thus, the universities have

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## NOTES

a great role to play in the canonization of literature. Even fifty years earlier Popular Fiction was not considered to be worth studying in academic institutions. The texts that are read by the mass were not something that can truly be studied in colleges and universities was the view of the academicians. It is only after the emergence of the Marxist scholars like Raymond Williams, Antonio Gramsci, Christopher Pawling and others that Cultural studies became one of the branches of study and people started studying the mass culture academically.

Popular fiction entered as courses in academics as late as 1970's and 80's. Though popular fiction is included we will still see that there are some standard texts that have become the centre in the study of popular fiction. But the novels of Mills and Boons are still considered to be lower grade which cannot be studied in academia. Why is it so? The academicians have no answer to it. Moreover, if they study at all then they will try to do a research on the reasons of its popularity not on the content of these novels. It is sometimes said that there is nothing much to study in it as popular fiction is "formulaic" in nature and if one reads one novel seriously, he can very well predict what is going to happen in the other novels of the same genre.

The point is that people think that these texts are written in Utopian way therefore it doesn't bear any resemblance to reality and neither does it present reality in a critical way. Christopher Pawling has an interesting study to make in his book *Popular Fiction: Ideology or Utopia*. In the introduction to this book Pawling shows how the Main stream Elite literature has neglected the literature of the masses and portrayed them as third grade in the world of academician. Pawling shows how popular fiction not only deals with the utopian thoughts, but they are the bearer of the dominant ideology of the society. In that way studying popular fiction can be a way to understand not only the popular culture of a given society but also is a way by which one can understand the ways in which the ideological state apparatuses are used by the ruling classes to perpetuate their dominance in the society. Marxist Scholar Gramsci therefore terms the ideology of the popular fiction as "common sense" ideology and Marxist Structuralist thinker Louis Althusser terms it as "lived ideology", the ideology that we live by in our daily life.

Thus, the definition of what literature is and what literariness consists of changes with the process of time and there cannot be a definite definition of what literature is, as literature is a very "subjective" term. Therefore, English Literature includes Shakespeare, Webster, Marvell, Donne, Milton, the Romantic poets, many others, but at the same time, The Bible, Essays of Francis Bacon, Bunyan's *Spiritual autobiography*, even, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* are also considered as literary. Therefore, Terry Eagleton is of the opinion that "what counts as literature is a notably unstable affair."

Thus, when it is difficult to define what literature is, it is presumable that what counts for literature is what in general is taken to be literature. Therefore, the unit is consciously named as General Literature so as to acquaint you with the general notions of literature.



### Check Your Progress

1. How does W. H. Hudson begin his book *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*?
2. What is canonization?
3. What is the function of literature?
4. What is literature according to Aristotle?

### NOTES

## 4.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. W. H. Hudson begins his book *An Introduction to the Study of Literature* with defining literature.
2. Canonization is the act by which Christianity declares a deceased person to be a saint, upon which declaration the person is included in the canon, or list, of recognized saints.
3. W. H. Hudson is of the opinion that Literature functions as a means of experiencing all those aspects of life which interest all of us.
4. Literature according to Aristotle, is all about “what should be.” It is about the ideal.

## 4.5 SUMMARY

- Many scholars and writers from ages have tried to define literature and therefore there is no monolithic, unified view / notion about it. The definition of literature is as divergent and different as literature itself.
- W. H. Hudson begins his book *An Introduction to the Study of Literature* with defining what literature is.
- What Charles Lamb or Hallam did was to include books of some authors or subjects as literature and considered others as not.
- When one tries to do so one falls into the trap of exclusion and inclusion into the canonization of literature which is a problematic thing.
- Canonization is the act by which Christianity declares a deceased person to be a saint, upon which declaration the person is included in the canon, or list, of recognized saints.
- The term is being borrowed in the field of arts to mean the way the literary scholars and critics declare works of art to be significant to be studied and preserved.

## NOTES

- W. H. Hudson is of the opinion that Literature functions as a means of experiencing all those aspects of life which interest all of us.
- What is significant here is that when one reads literature one experiences different facets of life which one has not experienced earlier.
- It is to be remembered here that the two functions that we talked about of literature (to provide knowledge and pleasure to its readers) are not of equal standing.
- One has to remember here that to give pleasure is probably the first and foremost function of literature. A text should be pleasurable reading only then the readers will read it.
- Hudson opines that “the great impulse behind literature may, I think, be grouped with accuracy enough for practical purposes under four heads”.
- These, according to W. H. Hudson, are the primary impulses behind any literary expression.
- Literature according to Aristotle, is all about “what should be.” It is about the ideal.
- The ideal is represented in literature so that one can aspire for better reality than one is living in in this world.
- This makes famous romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley say that “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.”
- Poets or writers are legislators as they provide a better legislation, a better world than the world in which we live in.
- W. H. Hudson again emphasizes that whatever be the literary expression, literature always is, as Matthew Arnold says, “a criticism of life.”
- Literature can be defined as “imaginative” writing in the sense of what fiction is.
- It can be said that there is a difference between “historical truth” and “artistic truth”, and both of them doesn’t correspond to each other.
- Canonization of literature is what Terry Eagleton talks about when he tries to define the literariness of literature.

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## 4.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Philosophy:** It is the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline.
- **Aesthetic:** It refers to a set of principles underlying the work of a particular artist or artistic movement.
- **Astronomy:** It is the branch of science which deals with celestial objects, space, and the physical universe as a whole.

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## 4.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. How can you distinguish Literature from other disciplines?
2. List the primary impulses behind any literary expression as given by Hudson.
3. What does Terry Eagleton have to say about the literariness of literature? What role does canonization play?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Define in your own words what literature means and enumerate the ways in which literature can be defined.
2. How does W. H. Hudson define literature? Give a detailed description with quotes.
3. 'Definition of literature is subjective.' Critically comment and elaborate.

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## 4.8 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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## UNIT 5 WORLD LITERATURE: FRENCH AND AMERICAN SCHOOLS

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### Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 The French School
- 5.3 The American School
- 5.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 Key Words
- 5.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.8 Further Readings

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### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

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Littérature Comparée is the French term for ‘Comparative Literature’, which first emerged in France around the beginning of the nineteenth century. From then on, Comparative Literature has been a subject of discussion in the international academic world and people have been coming to the notion of Comparative Literature from different points of view. Though there are many contrasting views that exist about the way one should approach Comparative Literature; yet there are primary two ways in which Comparative Literature has been dealt with. They are the French School and the American School. Both the schools have their differences and it is the subject matter of discussion in the present unit where we will focus on the primary differences between the two schools to understand our approaches to Comparative Literature.

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### 5.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the characteristics of French School of Comparative Literature
- Explain the features of American School of Comparative Literature
- Discuss the differences between the French School and the American School

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## 5.2 THE FRENCH SCHOOL

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The founding fathers of The French School define “Comparative Literature” as a branch of literary study which traces the mutual relations between two or more internationally and linguistically different literatures or texts. Here it is interesting to understand that when the literatures of internationally different literatures are being compared, they necessarily have to be linked to history as every literature has historical and cultural links without which it is impossible to study literature. Therefore, Jean Marie Carré comes to propose in his foreword to Marius Francois Guyard’s book *La Litterature Comparée* that “comparative literature is a branch of literary history, for it tackles the international spiritual affinities.” Moreover, it also has to be kept in mind here that there is a propensity to link literature to nations and thus a notion of national literature is of supreme significance in the French School of Comparative Literature.

Though the French School of Comparative Literature is very popular across the world, but at the same time it has to be kept in mind that there are many problems with the French School.

- (a) The French theorists have failed clearly to define the terminology and methodology of Comparative Literature as the theorists were busy with outside impacts on the literary work such as the ‘causality’ of relations between literary works, while ignoring the internal aspects of the texts in question.
- (b) This makes ‘comparative literature’ lose touch with other critical or aesthetic approaches.
- (c) Another good reason is that no credit can be given to a comparative study based upon linguistic differences only, leaving out the factor of culture, though language and culture are intermingled.
- (d) It is more accurate, therefore, that a comparison should take place between literatures in a single language, inasmuch as they are products of different cultural contexts – a hypothesis which the American scholars have adopted as one of the bases of their so-called ‘American School of Comparative Literature’

Some of the significant concepts of the French School of Comparative Literature is being talked about below.

### **The Concept of Influence**

There are many arguments surrounding the term ‘influence’, but one can define it simply as the movement (in a conscious or unconscious way) of an idea, a theme, an image, a literary tradition or even a tone from a literary text into another. But

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scholars do not stop here; rather, they classify influence into distinct types as follows.

- (a) **‘Literary’ and ‘Non-literary’ Influence:** The concept of ‘literary influence’ originated in the type of comparative study that seeks to trace the mutual relation between two or more literary works. This sort of study is the touchstone of the French comparative literature.
- (b) **‘Direct’ and ‘Indirect’ Influence:** A ‘direct influence’ between two literatures, beyond the boundaries of place and language, is marked when there is an actual contact between writers. More specifically, a literary text can have no existence before its writer’s reading of another writer’s ‘original’ text or having direct contact with him or her.

### The Concept of Reception

No influence of a literature or a writer can take place without the reception of a literary work outside its national borders. In other words, for reception of a work of art it is necessary that the writer or the work of art has its relevance in the country where it is received. For example, Magic realism and Marquez had found a worldwide reception as the political and cultural atmosphere of the world was so that Marquez and his magic realist technique which questioned the Euro-centric ways found ready audience all over the world.

### The Concept of ‘Imitation’ and ‘Borrowing’

Often writers borrow and imitate other writers and thus produce new works. None of the Shakespeare’s plays are original as he has borrowed the ideas from erstwhile stories and tales, but modified them with his creative mind to such an extent that they become great literature. Even if we think of Samuel Johnson and his famous poem “*The Vanity of Human Wishes*”, it is an imitation of the tenth satire of Juvenal. In the Indian context, it is very evident that the early Indian English writers were very much influenced by the Romantic poets and their writings and borrowed heavily from the western writers. Borrowing is nothing bad; it only shows how a writer of a particular place is influenced by a writer of a different place. The role of Comparative literature is also to look at these imitations and borrowings; and make a just estimation of the literatures across the world.

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## 5.3 THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

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The founding father of this school was Henry Remak who states that “comparative literature should not be regarded as a discipline on its own but rather as a connecting link between subjects or ‘subject areas.’ A comparison thus can be made between two or more different literatures and between literature and other fields of cognition (music, painting, sculpture, architecture, philosophy, sociology, psychology, religion, chemistry, mathematics, physics, etc).” In this, Remak leaves it all to the comparatist

to lay the grounds for his or her study, which should not be involved in the problem of 'nationalism.' Whereas the French School of Comparative Literature heavily emphasized on the nationalist aspect of Comparative Literature, the American school starting from Remak depoliticizes Comparative Literature from its nationalist perspective and tried to make Comparative Literature much more of an interdisciplinary subject.

When one talks about literature primarily from the point of view of the nationalism one is in most cases chauvinistic and thinking in terms of political boundaries where these kinds of approach is not always true when one thinks of literary studies. It is not always true that nations are always and need to be always different from each other. There are many nations which share a common heritage and culture and the literature produced in those nations may be similar to each other. In such a circumstance, to think in terms of parochial national boundaries when one is dealing with literature makes one's study very narrow and chauvinistic.

Therefore, Susan Bassnett, the eminent Comparative Literature and Translation Scholar, is of the view that "the American perspective on comparative literature was based from the start on ideas of interdisciplinarity and universalism." Thus whereas the French School of Comparative Literature basically harped on the study of Literary texts from the point of view of affinities and differences; the American School primarily focuses on understanding Comparative Literature from the point of view of much more interdisciplinary aspect.

In other words, it can also be said that the French School was quintessentially humanistic, as they liked study of Comparative Literature to "the social evolution, individual evolution, and the influence of the environment on the social and individual life of man." But the American School tried to be different from the French School by putting across a much more liberal study of Comparative Literature and therefore they came up at least with two important concepts – 'parallelism' and 'intertextuality.'

- **The 'Parallelism' Theory:** The Egyptian-born American critic Ihab Hassan has severely criticized the comparative literary study based on the principle of 'influence,' believing it to be inaccurate and ambiguous which led him to suggest 'parallelism' as an alternative to the theory of 'influence' in comparative literature. This theory is derived from the idea of similarities in humanity's social and historical evolution, which means harmony in the process of literary development. Any study of parallelism claims that there are affinities between the literatures of different peoples whose social evolution is similar, regardless of whether or not there is any mutual influence or direct relation between them.
- **The 'Intertextuality' Theory:** 'Intertextuality' can simply be talked about as the reference of a text to another. M. Enani defines it as the relation between two or more texts at a level which affects the way or ways of

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reading the new text (the ‘intertext,’ allowing into its own contexture implications, echoes or influences of other texts). Roland Barthes takes the position in looking upon the text as a ‘network’. In interpreting the text the author is no longer ‘the great originator’ or ‘the creative genius,’ but as someone whose task is to put together in a certain literary form and structural pattern ‘linguistic raw materials.’ Literature in this way is no more or less than a reworking of frequently-dealt-with materials, with a certain amount of change.

### Check Your Progress

1. How is comparative literature defined under the French School?
2. Define ‘influence’.
3. How did the concept of ‘literary influence’ originate?
4. Who founded the American School?

## 5.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The founding fathers of The French School define “comparative literature” as a branch of literary study which traces the mutual relations between two or more internationally and linguistically different literatures or texts.
2. Influence is defined as the movement (in a conscious or unconscious way) of an idea, a theme, an image, a literary tradition or even a tone from a literary text into another.
3. The concept of ‘literary influence’ originated in the type of comparative study that seeks to trace the mutual relation between two or more literary works.
4. The founding father of the American School was Henry Remak.

## 5.5 SUMMARY

- Litterature Comparée is the French term for “Comparative Literature”, which first emerged in France around the beginning of the nineteenth century.
- From then on, Comparative Literature has been a subject of discussion in the international academic world and people have been coming to the notion of Comparative Literature from different points of view.
- The founding fathers of The French School define “Comparative Literature” as a branch of literary study which traces the mutual relations between two or more internationally and linguistically different literatures or texts.



- Here it is interesting to understand that when the literatures of internationally different literatures are being compared, they necessarily have to be linked to history as every literature has historical and cultural links without which it is impossible to study literature.
- Therefore, Jean Marie Carré comes to propose in his foreword to Marius Francois Guyard's book *La Litterature Comparée* that "comparative literature is a branch of literary history, for it tackles the international spiritual affinities."
- Though the French School of Comparative Literature is very popular across the world, but at the same time it has to be kept in mind that there are many problems with the French School.
- The French theorists have failed clearly to define the terminology and methodology of comparative literature as the theorists were busy with outside impacts on the literary work such as the 'causality' of relations between literary works, while ignoring the internal aspects of the texts in question.
- There are many arguments surrounding the term 'influence', but one can define it simply as the movement (in a conscious or unconscious way) of an idea, a theme, an image, a literary tradition or even a tone from a literary text into another.
- 'Literary' and 'Non-literary' Influence: The concept of 'literary influence' originated in the type of comparative study that seeks to trace the mutual relation between two or more literary works.
- A 'direct influence' between two literatures, beyond the boundaries of place and language, is marked when there is an actual contact between writers.
- No influence of a literature or a writer can take place without the reception of a literary work outside its national borders.
- In other words, for reception of a work of art it is necessary that the writer or the work of art has its relevance in the country where it is received.
- Often writers borrow and imitate other writers and thus produce new works.
- None of the Shakespeare's plays are original as he has borrowed the ideas from erstwhile stories and tales, but modified them with his creative mind to such an extent that they become great literature.
- In the Indian context, it is very evident that the early Indian English writers were very much influenced by the Romantic poets and their writings and borrowed heavily from the western writers.
- The founding father of the American School was Henry Remak who states that "comparative literature should not be regarded as a discipline on its own but rather as a connecting link between subjects or 'subject areas.'"

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- When one talks about literature primarily from the point of view of the nationalism one is in most cases chauvinistic and thinking in terms of political boundaries where these kinds of approach is not always true when one thinks of literary studies.
- Susan Bassnett, the eminent Comparative Literature and Translation Scholar, is of the view that “the American perspective on comparative literature was based from the start on ideas of interdisciplinarity and universalism.”
- The French School was quintessentially humanistic, as they liked study of Comparative Literature to “the social evolution, individual evolution, and the influence of the environment on the social and individual life of man.”
- The ‘Parallelism’ Theory: The Egyptian-born American critic Ihab Hassan has severely criticized the comparative literary study based on the principle of ‘influence,’ believing it to be inaccurate and ambiguous which led him to suggest ‘parallelism’ as an alternative to the theory of ‘influence’ in comparative literature.
- The ‘Intertextuality’ Theory: ‘Intertextuality’ can simply be talked about as the reference of a text to another.
- In interpreting the text the author is no longer ‘the great originator’ or ‘the creative genius,’ but as someone whose task is to put together in a certain literary form and structural pattern ‘linguistic raw materials.’

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## 5.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Linguistics:** It is the scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of grammar, syntax, and phonetics.
- **Intertextual:** Relating to or involving a relationship between texts, especially literary ones.
- **Parallelism:** It is the state of being parallel or of corresponding in some way.

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## 5.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short essay on the American School of Comparative Literature.
2. Differentiate between the French School and the American School of Comparative Literature.
3. Briefly state the concept of reception.

### **Long-Answer Questions**

1. Critically discuss the French School of Comparative Literature. What are the problems associated with it?
2. Explain all the significant concepts of the French School of Comparative Literature.
3. Critically examine the theories of parallelism and intertextuality.

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## **5.8 FURTHER READINGS**

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Bassnett, Susan. 1993. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. US: Wiley.

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## UNIT 6 RELEVANCE OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN INDIA

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### Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Comparative Literature in India
- 6.3 Indian Writing in English vs. The Vernacular Indian Literature
- 6.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 6.5 Summary
- 6.6 Key Words
- 6.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 6.8 Further Readings

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### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

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In the last few units we have understood the basic concepts of comparative literature and have also acquainted ourselves with the various schools that have been developed from where we can and do approach comparative literature. In this unit, we will focus on what makes Comparative Literature such an important discipline in the Indian context. It is to be understood that India as a nation is very different from other nations which we have discussed in the unit on National Literature. So in the Indian context how Comparative Literature is a discipline which needs to be taken seriously is something that we will focus on in this unit.

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### 6.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the relevance of comparative literature in India
- Compare Indian writing in English with Vernacular Literature

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### 6.2 COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN INDIA

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The field of Comparative Literature as an academic discipline is comparatively new in India though it should also be pondered over in this context that much before Comparative Literature as an academic discipline came into being; there

were many practitioners and scholars who were already working on this field with much interest and enthusiasm. It is the interest and enthusiasm of these scholars which eventually led to the formation of Indian Comparative Literature Association in 1981. The objective of such an institution was to study Indian literature in a much more comparative way so as to accomplish an understanding of people across India as well as to help in national integration. The aim of Indian Comparative Literature Association as it was declared during its formation was

“to arrive at a conception of Indian literature which will not only modernize our literature departments but also take care of the task of discovering the greatness of our literature and to present a panoramic view of Indian literature activities through the ages.”

From the above stated objective of the Indian Comparative Literature Association it has probably become very clear that the main objective of studying Comparative Literature in India was to form a notion of the national literature. (We have earlier seen how the notion of national literature is of much significance to the French theoreticians as they emphasized on studying texts which are deeply rooted in the national history and trying to find affinities and differences between different national literatures.) It is to be remembered here in this context that the formation of Indian literature as a whole was a difficult proposition as there are a number of languages in which literature is produced in the Indian context leading to its diversity which is unique in its own way. Because of this uniqueness of the Indian Literature as a whole there are also many problems for those studying Indian Literature as a whole as it is / was impossible for a scholar or a person to have knowledge of such diverse languages and its literatures.

Therefore, in this context, it is extremely necessary that one engages oneself in the study of Comparative Literature in the Indian context so as to make sense of the way Indian literature has developed over the ages. Therefore, it can be claimed that the most basic piece of work of Indian comparative literature is the act of stating or claiming forcefully about the great value, meaning or effect of the way of behaving or a belief that has been established for a long time, or the practice of following behaviour and beliefs that have been so established. It was based on the creation of a literary history built upon Indian models. Amiya Dev is of the view that India is a country of many literatures. They are based on history, set of beliefs or theory, and times on politics. He argues: “In the case of India the study of literature should involve the notion of the literary process and a dialectical view of literary interaction.”

There are thousands of languages spoken in India; amongst which eighteen are recognized in the Indian Constitution as major languages. The Sahitya Akademi has also recognized these languages. They are Assamese, Bengali, Dogri, Indian English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Kashmiri, Maithaili, Malayalam,

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Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu. Urdu and Tamil are ancient languages among them. Because of this diversity of the languages and its literature it can easily be stated that there is a certain kind of plurality of the Indian literature which also offers a certain kind of multiculturalism. It is this multicultural India which is the subject of discussion in much of the Comparative Literature that one ponders over today.

It is to be reiterated here that Indian Comparative Literature is distinct of its own because of the diversity it has in its linguistic diversity. This linguistic diversity has led to a situation where we have much of literature written in different languages which often does not come under the purview of the mainstream literary studies. All these literatures which do not come under the purview of the mainstream literary studies often find its place in Comparative Literature as it studies all literatures written in different languages in a systematic way to forge an identity of Indian literature.

Often Translation of the literature written in lesser known languages are being translated into major languages as a part of the Comparative Literature. (We will discuss Translation as a part of the Comparative Literature in Block III of this book.) Translation is an important activity of Comparative Literature especially in India as Translation of literary texts which are in lesser known languages often find the mainstream audience/ readers as they are being translated. It is not that the translation always has to be done in terms of they being translated into major languages; but it can also be that the texts in major languages are also translated in languages which are lesser known. For example, there is much of Bodo (Assamese) Literature that the mainstream Indian literature is not aware of because of manifold reasons; but of the Bodo Literature is being translated into English or into Hindi then it will get a greater audience which will at least do two things:

- Make Bodo Literature known to the other Indians
- Enhance our understanding of Bodo Culture and thereby help in national integration.

Thus, translation has to be a major component of comparative literature in India.

Apart from Translation, when a Bodo literary text is being compared to other literatures across India for its similarities and differences as well as intertextuality as influences, the national integration of different cultures and languages becomes easier. Therefore, for a nation like India it is very essential that we undertake a serious study of Comparative Literature so as to make our nation stronger as well as to establish greater ties between people living across India.

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### 6.3 INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH VS. THE VERNACULAR INDIAN LITERATURE

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In the present world scenario where English has become the language of the hegemonic nations the writers from India aspire to write in English for international readership, instant international recognition, fame and awards. A writer writes not only for himself, but also for the readers and therefore he has to keep in mind not only what reader wants but also in which medium he would get the most readers. Therefore in the present day scenario we see that there are many Indian writers who choose to write in English and the vernacular writers think that as their medium is English therefore they can't do justice to whatever they want to portray in literature and they are often called "necromancers" who are trying to sell India to the west. More over as the Kannada writer U. R. Ananthmurthy says "there are any number of top-quality regional writers who don't get international recognition only because their language is not the global language of America."

The contest that is there between the regional writers, that is the writers writing in vernacular languages and the writers writing in English is that while one group of writers get international recognition because of their English language while the others remains unnoticed. Language plays the important role here as far as the popularity of the writers is concerned. It's not that the regional writers don't have that much of caliber, as they are not in the main stream therefore, they are not recognized. Therefore the writers like Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and others get so much of importance while the regional writers like Sunil Gangopadhyay, Dilip Chitre, M. T. Vasudev Nair, Basheer and others, even if they produce brilliant literature they don't have so much of value in the international academic panorama. There are people like Bhal Chandra Nemade and Ganesh N. Devy who think that the Indian writers should have a nativistic commitment towards their region and language. Devy in *After Amnesia* and Nemade in "Nativism in Literature" point out to the fact how the writers of India should have a nativistic awareness to fight against the colonial hangover. Nemade said in an interview, about the regional writers that "we don't need international prominence. Just as Shakespeare didn't seek prominence anywhere but in English, I need prominence in my own language. It doesn't upset me really that they make so much money out of their writing. They are such necromancers, creating something out of nothing."

That the Indian English writers make such a monetary profit is something true but at the same time it is not true as that they are necromancers as they also try to portray the reality of India as they perceive. At no circumstances we can undermine the novels like Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* or Amitav

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Ghosh's *Calcutta Chromosome* or *The Shadow lines*. The way they dealt with the language and the personal and political aspect if the Indian nation is something which needs appreciation. At the same time it is also true that in today's context many things are sold in the name of Indian writing in English which have no literary value at all. Probably the Regional writers have problems with such writings which are done deliberately as it would sell in the market. Therefore, some time these writers present a biased image about India where the true reality is not portrayed, such as Pankaj Mishra's *The Romantics* where he is simply a tourist who doesn't know the inner psyche of the people. Here the exotic and erotic element of India is deliberately overplayed so that it either becomes a creatively written traveler's guide or it becomes "export-oriented" exotica.

It is true that a writer should be ethically committed to his writing and to the place he belongs to. That the third world writer should write back against the empire is something that all the readers can expect from him. That a female writer would fight for a just society for women in her writing is something that we do expect. That a black in U.S. would fight for his rights even through writing is something that is quite evident. But at the same time, it should not be expected from them that they should write in their mother tongue. It may happen in many cases that the Indian English writers don't know how to creatively express oneself in any other language except from English. Moreover, when we say that English is a language of the colonizer and therefore, we have to give it up is something which seems to be outdated as English is not anymore, a link language or a foreign language for India. But in the past we have been using the English language in such a wide way that it has become a language of our own. Raja Rao rightly said that English is the language of our intellect. What he means is that in academia we think in English in most of the cases. And if it is so then there is nothing wrong in it. Moreover, in the past few years in the process of learning English he has not just imitated the west but also had contributed to the vocabulary of the English language and also has tried to create a different and distinct space for Indian English.

Every writer cannot be like the African writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o who would first write in his mother tongue Swahili for the readers of his community and then would translate it to English for the international readers. Everyone can't be Rabindra Nath Tagore to write *Gitanjali* in Bangla and then translate it into English for the world. Therefore, we can't expect that from the Indian English writers, as in some cases the regional ethos is also presented in the Indian English such as in Raja Rao's novels or as U. R. Ananthamurthy says "the best of the IWE (Indian Writing in English) do manage to convey the ambience of the provincial language and ethos. Arundhati Roy's contribution, for instance, is English whose energy comes from the Malayali Culture and ambience. Even Rushdie draws from the ethos and Hindi of Bombay, while R. K. Narayan draws from Tamil and Kannada



influences, and Raja Rao does from Kannada. There are as many English as there are regional languages. That is what makes their English distinct.”

*Relevance of  
Comparative Literature  
in India*

### **Check Your Progress**

1. When was the Indian Comparative Literature Association formed?
2. State the main objective of studying Comparative Literature in India.
3. How is Ngugi Wa Thiong’o different from many regional writers?

### **NOTES**

## **6.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS**

1. The Indian Comparative Literature Association was formed in 1981.
2. The main objective of studying Comparative Literature in India was to form a notion of the national literature.
3. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o would first write in his mother tongue Swahili for the readers of his community and then would translate it to English for the international readers.

## **6.5 SUMMARY**

- The field of Comparative Literature as an academic discipline is comparatively new in India.
- Though it should also be pondered over in this context that much before comparative literature as an academic discipline came into being; there were many practitioners and scholars who were already working on this field with much interest and enthusiasm.
- It is the interest and enthusiasm of these scholars which eventually led to the formation of Indian Comparative Literature Association in 1981.
- The objective of such an institution was to study Indian literature in a much more comparative way so as to accomplish an understanding of people across India as well as to help in national integration.
- It is extremely necessary that one engages oneself in the study of comparative literature in the Indian context so as to make sense of the way Indian literature has developed over the ages.
- Therefore, it can be claimed that the most basic piece of work of Indian comparative literature is the act of stating or claiming forcefully about the great value, meaning or effect of the way of behaving or a belief that has been established for a long time, or the practice of following behaviour and beliefs that have been so established.

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- It was based on the creation of a literary history built upon Indian models.
- Translation is an important activity of comparative literature especially in India as Translation of literary texts which are in lesser known languages often find the mainstream audience/ readers as they as being translated.
- In the present world scenario where English has become the language of the hegemonic nations the writers from India aspire to write in English for international readership, instant international recognition, fame and awards.
- It is true that a writer should be ethically committed to his writing and to the place he belongs to.
- That the third world writer should write back against the empire is something that all the readers can expect from him.
- Even Rushdie draws from the ethos and Hindi of Bombay, while R. K. Narayan draws from Tamil and Kannada influences, and Raja Rao does from Kannada.

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### 6.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Belief:** It is an acceptance that something exists or is true, especially one without proof.
- **Translation:** It is the process of translating words or text from one language into another.
- **Necromancer:** It refers to a person who practices necromancy; a wizard or magician.
- **Vocabulary:** It is a set of familiar words within a person's language.
- **Colonizer:** It refers to a country that sends settlers to a place and establishes political control over it.

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### 6.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What is the relevance of comparative literature in India?
2. Discuss the significance of Comparative Literature in the Indian scenario.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Critically comment on the debate between Indian Writing in English and Vernacular literature.
2. Indian Comparative Literature is distinct of its own. Explain.

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## 6.8 FURTHER READINGS

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- Bassnett, Susan. 1993. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. US: Wiley.
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**BLOCK - II**  
**INFLUENCE AND RECEPTION STUDIES**

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**UNIT 7 LITERARY GENRES:  
WEISSTEIN'S APPROACH  
TO GENRE STUDIES**

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**Structure**

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Ulrich Weisstein's Approach to Genre Studies
- 7.3 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 7.4 Summary
- 7.5 Key Words
- 7.6 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.7 Further Readings

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**7.0 INTRODUCTION**

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By definition, genre theory is studied under genre studies as a branch of general critical theory in several different fields, including the literary or artistic, linguistic, or rhetorical. Literary genre studies is a structuralist approach to the study of genre and genre theory in literary theory, film theory, and other cultural theories. Genre Studies, an academic discipline, explores other educational streams like linguistics, literature, rhetoric, other arts under genre theory being an offshoot of criticism.

The study of a genre in this way examines the structural elements that combine in the telling of a story and finds patterns in collections of stories. In literature, it tends to roll back historically on the golden days of Classical Antiquity in the writings of Plato and Aristotle where they also mentioned how one genre could transcend into the other as one work of art may exercise many genres at once such as a drama can be a tragedy or comedy or both.

This unit analyses Ulrich Werner Weisstein's approach to genre studies.

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**7.1 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of genre studies
- Discuss Ulrich Weisstein's approach to genre studies

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## 7.2 ULRICH WEISSTEIN'S APPROACH TO GENRE STUDIES

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*Literary Genres:  
Weisstein's Approach to  
Genre Studies*

Ulrich Werner Weisstein (1925-2014) was a German-born American-English (naturalised in the USA in 1959) scholar (Professor Emeritus of German and Comparative Literature, Indiana University Bloomington), author, critic, theoretician, and awardee of many prestigious scholarships, degrees, grants and prizes. He is noted for his interdisciplinary command on literature being strong voice on comparative literature and literary theory beside his expertise on genre studies and other disciplines influencing literature. He is greatly admired and recalled for his 'wealth of knowledge,' a man to have worked on genres like photography, visual arts, opera, drama being 'one of the first theoreticians of the field but also as a guiding voice in the development of what he called "Comparative Arts."' This indefatigable author, translator and editor has more than four hundred publications to his merit and he holds a very distinctly eminent place in the realm of Comparative Literature in the world as a scholar, and critic. His Ph. D. itself credits to his love for genre studies which he did in 1954—

'He received his M.A. in literary theory in 1953 and in 1954 he defended his Ph. D. dissertation on the genesis of two operatic texts, *Otello* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. This study marked the beginning of a new branch of musico-literary studies, "Librettology" (the study of the libretto as literature), to which he contributed throughout his career.'

('Emeritus Memoriam: Ulrich Weisstein,' Claus Clüver, 2015)

His first and oft-quoted book 'Comparative Literature and Literary Theory: A Survey and Introduction' (1973) was conceived and penned down first in his native language German as 'Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft' in 1968 which was a handbook for graduate introduction in Comparative Literature. The first initiative of the kind, his work owns scriptural value in this discipline of study. Some of his works comprise — 'Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages,' 'Expressionism as an International Literary Phenomenon' (1973), 'Prolegomena to a Poetics of Opera,' 'The Essence of Opera' (1964), 'Literatur und Bildende Kunst: Ein Handbuch zur Theorie und Praxis eines Komparatistischen Grenzgebietes' as a companion volume to 'Scher's Literatur und Musik' (1984), 'Selected Essays on Opera' (2006), 'Heinrich Mann' (1962), 'Mann and Bertolt Brecht' (1986), 'The Grotesque in Art and Literature' (translation, 1963), and many more beside these as he worked ceaselessly on 'Intertextuality,' 'Interrelations of Literature,' 'Mutual Illuminations of the Arts,' 'Modern Literature and Other Arts,' 'Literature and Music,' 'Literature and the Visual Arts,' etc. Weisstein believed deeply that there is connectivity between 'word-and-image,' and he did comparative study of visual arts and literature from the Renaissance till his age. The paradigm of his interest had equal shift on 'word-and-music' with so much of attention and hard work that he received his honorary Doctoral degree by Lund University, Sweden. He frequently wrote, edited and

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translated his national literature and many other European writers from ancient to modern. He established 'Friends of the Opera Society' in Graz where he settled after his retirement from the United States and served as its president for long.

As a segment of *Structuralist Criticism* methodology, genre studies, studies the cultural aspects which decide a wider panorama in which a work is created in order to have a higher level comprehension of it. The literary genre studies under its academic structure include literary, visual and cultural theories. Therefore, a genre study encompasses construing parts of a story or tale which structure it whereby detecting an inherent pattern or meaning conveyed through it. When the implied reading of a structure begins to produce a semiotic code, which indicate and provide information, a genre is born of it. There are – Systematic Functional School, English for Specific Purposes under linguistic genre studies; whereas Rhetorical Genre Studies focus on 'Genre as Social Action' which is always under movement, and part of social understanding, etc. There are certain principles which traditionally come recognised as enclosures with a particular genre like— a domestic novel will deal with family atmosphere and human relationships, pastoral elegy in poetry will carry mourning or death in a country set up or a pop artist will try to follow by adding his or her own within the continuing norms of pop-culture, and so forth: for these Paul Alpers argues that these conventions provide common meeting ground on which the history and the present connect together. Fishelov adds that these conventional rules which they term as generic rules are important for genre studies in order to comprehend difference – 'a challenge, or a horizon, against which the writer and his reader have to define themselves...;' and the reader, on the other hand, is also expected to know the conventional rules which are like institutions to genre studies, in order to judge whether the writer has been able to add new creative inventions to the existing genre, or not.

Genre studies in literature tend to roll back historically on the golden days of Classical Antiquity in the writings of Plato and Aristotle where they also mentioned how one genre could transcend into the other as one work of art may exercise many genres at once such as a drama can be a tragedy or comedy or both. In comedy genre also, it can be a farce, a masque, a burlesque, and many others. But at the same time, the ancient Greek writers had defined, especially Aristotle, the definite class of some of the genres in literature, and their partaking characteristics. Cascading down the centuries the genre studies, considered now in this era, looks at simplification of a huge of something, sort of streamlining from among a large number of available information on whatever. It applies order into a mass, type of similarities to identifying anything; and has sub-categories like metagenre.

Literary genres as well as others, have witnessed long drawn strict categorisation till what they are now: earlier there was authority of either poetry or prose or theatre which gradually broke all traditional barriers in literature to reach where it is now, what can be termed as complexity due to modernity in life, an arbitrary thing, and something specific as film theory, spirit of the age or zeitgeist; and every form of art, or writing is held as an active agent as social construct,

institution having brilliant power of creativity to lodge person, culture, interest, incident, knowledge, behaviour, ideology, and others within it which keep potentials to evolve. As a genre, comparative literature signifies its place under literary history, believes J. M. Carré; there are differences in methodologies of other disciplines when compared to literature, the fact that influences genre studies. For, the authenticity and defining line of a particular genre, and how it merges into others depend on the writer, Wellek describes—

‘The literary kind is not a mere name, for the aesthetic convention in which a Work participates shapes its character. Literary kinds “may be regarded as institutional imperatives which both coerce and are in turn coerced by the writer.” Milton, so libertarian in politics and religion, was a traditionalist in poetry, haunted, as W. P. Ker admirably says, by the “abstract idea of the epic;” he knew himself “what the laws are of a true epic poem, what of a dramatic, what of a lyric.” But he also knew how to adjust, stretch, alter the classical forms — knew how to Christianize and Miltonize the *Aeneid*, as in *Samson* he knew how to tell his personal story through a Hebrew folk tale treated as a Greek tragedy.’

(‘Theory of Literature,’ René Wellek and Austin Warren, P.- 235)

He argues that every part of study needs a structure, every art or science needs a structure: that specific rule or construction can be called a genre, and basically it is so. As rules set by the ancient writers, each genre has its jacket of some norms which, as Ker said, would be changing or exchanging its normal shape developing into something else, according to the creator (author or artist), and it also depends on its analyser or perceiver (the scholar, audience or reader). Each work of literature will have genres which will have their stylistics, approaches, characteristics, cultural context, historicity, intellectual and academic purport or existence, relevance, and expected future: they will also have an ‘emitter, intermediaries or transmitters, and receivers,’ describes Ulrich Weisstein. Each genre is supposed to influence its relevance to other genres, and that influence can either be—fundamental, straight, or figurative, partial, metaphorical, ethnographical, or other any particular type. It can be on the level of surface, or deeply, unfathomably psychological. Stylistics of each genre of art tend to preserve their purity such as ‘burlesque, satire, parody, caricature’ if we talk about imitation of a character but its influence is cognised as negative.

Modern writers adopted style or seasoning of their work on a plan, pattern which encased many ancient and concurrent methods applied in the same work of art. And modern critics, scholars – when they analyse a genre or go by generic rules studying a text, they also scrutinise if it has a scientific way of life involved within, such as Ulrich Weisstein’s own works as a music and opera lover, and those of others describing this fact — ‘Collage, Montage, and Related Terms: Their Literal and Figurative Use in and Application to Techniques and Forms in Various Arts’ (1978), ‘Mediating Order and Chaos: The Water-Cycle in the Complex Adaptive Systems of Romantic Culture’ (Rodney Farnsworth, 2001),

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'The Baroque in English Neoclassical Literature' (J. Douglas Canfield, 2003), 'The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature' (Gilbert Highet, 1985), 'Photography and Literature in the Twentieth Century' (David Cunningham, Andrew Fisher & Sas Mays, 2008), 'Writings and Drawings' (Bob Dylan, 1973), 'Hollywood Foto-Rhetoric: The Lost Manuscript' (Bob Dylan, 2008), 'Literature and Food Studies' (Amy L. Tigner & Allison Carruth, 2017), 'Architecture and Modern Literature' (David Spurr, 2012), etc.

Ulrich Weisstein asserts that the idea of reception applies to a large number of disciplines, subjects, study or practice, the interdisciplinary relations, activities, interrelations, their social milieu, atmosphere, and all possible ranges of things, people concerned with such as writers, publishers, readers, critics, reviewers, and even its aura. He quotes in his book 'Comparative Literature and Literary Theory' that the defined and pure division of a genre pertains to its classical or neoclassical lineage, or that bent of thought. According to his point of view, it is almost impossible to effectuate, acquire or meet a parallel level with specific genre characteristics. Paul Van Tieghem, the French comparative litterateur, says that comparative literature investigates and speculates scholarly into the 'actions and influences exerted by individuals' but he does not include the unnamed trajectory of old, traditional and middle age literatures in it. Weisstein is of the view that scholars who prefer to produce *belles lettres* instead of writing for practical use, may tend to acknowledge ancient and medieval literatures as segments of comparative literature. Tieghem has opined that categories such as 'classical tragedy, romantic play, sonnet, rustic fiction, pastoral poetry, sentimental novel,' and the likes play hindrance or often elude the circumference which permits inquiries from modern literary points of views.

Professor Henry H. H. Remak (1916-2009) of the Indiana University Bloomington in his 'Comparative Literature, its Definition and Function' (1961) established principles of the *American School* defining how they were different from the *French School*, whose explanation on comparative literature includes 'other spheres of expression.' The study of genres under comparative literature transcends its national borders tracing, reading, focussing on vital connections, credence and knowledge passed between literature and subjects like history, arts, philosophy, social science, theology, science, etc. The exclusion of the ancient and medieval works from the periphery of comparative literature study is partly because of the *extinct or vague* availability of texts from the Antiquity or the Middle Ages. The overshadowingly influential literatures which exist from the Greek and Roman relics, have imagined or hypothetical bases where there is, as Ulrich Weisstein puts forth, no proof of a genre which remained, breathed in reality whose archetype we are following today. It is not sure if *satire* as genre existed from the 'satyr play.'

On the other hand, the modern requirements for literary genre studies, creations have an altered perspective as well as a writer today does not really



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need to religiously follow those ancient-set convictions of genres as literary artists. Contradictions are there as the ideas which establish certain guidelines for a genre do fade or dilute under the guidelines on techniques in the context of literature. It also employs certain changes in techniques according to different geographical regions and social cultures like in Japan where the old art of short-pithy poem like Haiku, traditional (ancient) dramatic performance as Noh are inherent parts of their cultural identity: therefore it would be unfeasible or unthinkable removing them from their natural historio-geographical scenario and bloom them elsewhere in the world maintaining similarities. These kinds of literary genres inherent, innate and fundamental to a special socio-cultural territory for instance in dramatic art—Kathakali in Kerala, Bhand Pather in Kashmir, Swang in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, Raasleela in Uttar Pradesh, Bhavai in Gujarat, and many others in India as well as other parts of the world, can hardly be implanted on a soil where it has not originated. However, as an art form, literary and other genres are open to investigation and practice worldwide. Weisstein says that strict analogical study of genre history in comparative literature might proliferate either Oriental (Eastern) or Occidental (Western) literatures. Among mixed genres like play, epic poetry, didactic literature and lyrics, Weisstein classifies didactic writing as a way, style or technique of representation and expression which he does not consider specifically as genre. Biography, autobiography and essay, as he says, are marginal literary forms and he explains about their generic characteristics.

Then, Weisstein analyses some genres by leaning on, involving Aristotle's theory of 'Imitation' in which he argues how as a poetic genre like *epic* is judged or estimated by the use of language and quality of diction engaged in it whereas *verse* as type is identified by its application of metrical adroitness and fleeciness. If it is short story, novella or novel, they are to be valued by their length, and number of words. Whether a work of art uses sentiments or is 'nÓive' has to be seen by the psychological impact that it leaves on its readers or recipients. Poetry is justified as an art form by its 'intended effect' and tragedy too is acknowledged by discerning and feeling similar criterion whereby a tragedy must arouse both pity and fear as its effect as put by Aristotle. The poetry that envelops a mythological theme should be narrative in technique and it should present some points of views. The noted twentieth-century movement called 'stream-of-consciousness' in fiction or any other method of writing or representation, are but 'technical or stylistic devices.' Elegies and satirical poetry too are understood and classified as genre according to their employment of the metres specified and assigned for them from the ancient times.

Fictional forms such as political novel, courtly novel, bildungsroman, utopian or pastoral novel—are ascertained and categorised by their subject-matter. At the end, Prof. Weisstein summarises his approach to genre studies by saying that a critic or scholar should aptly categorise the literary genres being familiar with its historicity and conditions coherently existing on humanistic plane. He or she should

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be 'sure' that his or her 'terminology is consistent' about a literary genre. On this very message, he ends his observation regarding genre studies. Northrop Frye connotes the same:

"The basic distinction of generic principles in literature appears to be the radical of presentation. Words may be acted in front of a spectator; they may be sung or chanted; or they may be written for a reader.... The purpose of criticism by genres is not so much to classify as to clarify such traditions and affinities, thereby bringing out a large number of literary relationships that would not be noticed as long as there were no context established for them."

And for the recent times in which we exist when the world of literature has become mostly reader-centric, yet the classical categories or divisions of genres do obsess our writers, scholars and critics. Perhaps what Croce spoke on the idea of genres, is distinct in Maurice Blanchot, and there are accents against any such division or classification,—

"A book no longer belongs to a genre; every book stems from literature alone, as if literature held in advance, in their generalities, the secrets and the formulas that alone make it possible to give to what is written the reality of a book. It would be thus as though, the genres having faded away, literature were asserting itself alone in the mysterious clarity that it propagates and that each literary creation sends back, multiplied — as if, then, there were an 'essence' of literature."

However, history is a proof, and so is our modern literature, where genres, whether single or diluted, do exist; they may not be entertained as threadbare as they have earlier been because of the rapidity and pace involved in the too-demanding axes of our lives and work-culture globally; but in a broad sense of the term, they continue to inspire aspects and appeal which protect their unique form by adding, hemming exuberance into them, and by those which from other faculties of explorations and studies, keep influencing, heightening and altering their beauty as well as diversity—

"The genre represents, so to speak, so to speak a sum of aesthetic devices at hand, available to the writer and already intelligible to the reader." ('Theory of Literature,' Wellek & Austin, P.- 245)

Above all, genre categorisation has objective behind which 'Men's pleasure in literary work is compounded of the sense of novelty and the sense of recognition.' And genre studies continue to attract and engross scholars because '... the obvious values of genre study is precisely the fact that it calls attention to the internal development of literature, to what Henry Wells (in *New Poets from Old*, 1940) has called, "literary genetics." Whatever the relations of literature to other realms of value, books are influenced by books; books imitate, parody, transform other books — not merely those which follow them in strict chronological succession." (Wellek & Austin, 245-246)

### Check Your Progress

1. Where was Ulrich Werner Weisstein born?
2. What is Librettology?
3. Swang is associated with which state in India?
4. When was *New Poets from Old* by Henry Wells published?

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## 7.3 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Ulrich Werner Weisstein was born in Germany.
2. Librettology is the study of the libretto as literature.
3. Swang is an art associated with Uttar Pradesh.
4. *New Poets from Old* by Henry Wells was published in 1940.

## 7.4 SUMMARY

- Ulrich Werner Weisstein (1925-2014) was a German-born American-English scholar (Professor Emeritus of German and Comparative Literature, Indiana University Bloomington).
- He was an author, critic, theoretician, and awardee of many prestigious scholarships, degrees, grants and prizes.
- He received his M.A. in literary theory in 1953 and in 1954 he defended his Ph. D. dissertation on the genesis of two operatic texts, *Otello* and *Der Rosenkavalier*.
- Weisstein believed deeply that there is connectivity between 'word-and-image,' and he did comparative study of visual arts and literature from the Renaissance till his age.
- **Genre Studies**, an academic discipline, explores other educational streams like linguistics, literature, rhetoric, other arts under genre theory being an offshoot of criticism.
- Genre studies in literature tend to roll back historically on the golden days of Classical Antiquity in the writings of Plato and Aristotle.
- They also mentioned how one genre could transcend into the other as one work of art may exercise many genres at once such as a drama can be a tragedy or comedy or both.
- Literary genres as well as others, have witnessed long drawn strict categorisation till what they are now.

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- Each work of literature will have genres which will have their stylistics, approaches, characteristics, cultural context, historicity, intellectual and academic purport.
- Modern writers adopted style or seasoning of their work on a plan, pattern which encased many ancient and concurrent methods applied in the same work of art.
- Ulrich quotes in his book 'Comparative Literature and Literary Theory' that the defined and pure division of a genre pertains to its classical or neoclassical lineage, or that bent of thought.
- According to his point of view, it is almost impossible to effectuate, acquire or meet a parallel level with specific genre characteristics.
- The exclusion of the ancient and medieval works from the periphery of comparative literature study is partly because of the *extinct or vague* availability of texts from the Antiquity or the Middle Ages.
- As an art form, literary and other genres are open to investigation and practice worldwide.
- If it is short story, novella or novel, they are to be valued by their length, and number of words.
- Whether a work of art uses sentiments or is 'nÓive' has to be seen by the psychological impact that it leaves on its readers or recipients.
- Elegies and satirical poetry too are understood and classified as genre according to their employment of the metres specified and assigned for them from the ancient times.
- According to Ulrich, a critic or a scholar should be 'sure' that his or her 'terminology is consistent' about a literary genre.
- Above all, genre categorisation has objective behind which 'Men's pleasure in literary work is compounded of the sense of novelty and the sense of recognition.

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## 7.5 KEY WORDS

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- **Didactic:** Intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as an ulterior motive.
- **Parody:** It is an imitation of the style of a particular writer, artist, or genre with deliberate exaggeration for comic effect.
- **Modern:** Relating to the present or recent times as opposed to the remote past.
- **Ancient:** Belonging to the very distant past and no longer in existence.
- **Literature:** It refers to the written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit.

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## 7.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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*Literary Genres:  
Weisstein's Approach to  
Genre Studies*

### Short-Answer Questions

1. Who was Ulrich Werner Weisstein?
2. What is the meaning of genre studies? What does literary genre studies include under its academic structure?
3. How does Weisstein summarises his approach to genre studies?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Why are ancient and medieval works excluded from the periphery of comparative literature study? Explain.
2. How does Aristotle's theory of 'Imitation' influence Weisstein's understanding of genre studies? Discuss.

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## 7.7 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 8 INFLUENCE AND MOTIVATION

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Introduction to Influence and Motivation
- 8.3 Period
- 8.4 Age
- 8.5 Epoch
- 8.6 School
- 8.7 Movement
- 8.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 8.9 Summary
- 8.10 Key Words
- 8.11 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 8.12 Further Readings

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### 8.0 INTRODUCTION

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Influence is a widely acknowledged spreadsheet which does not escape motivation as well. In literature, 'influence' has been recognised as prominent *contour* alongside centuries whether it is content, or style, or production which leaves its unfading imprint on parallel or contemporaneous, and the posterity, and creates a new life for that specific work of art where influence or motivation has been transported in the shape of a new domain, creation. When writers give a foreword, title or a quote beside other technical or thematic inspirations applied in their book or work, the readers are reminded of that previous literary work again and again whenever they read them like Hardy (1840-1928) immortalising—'Far From The Maddening Crowd' (1874) from Gray's (1716-1771) famous 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' (1751), Faulkner (1897-1962) implying – 'The Sound and The Fury' (1929) extracted from a soliloquy from 'The Tragedy of Macbeth' (1606) by Shakespeare (1564-1616), Bob Dylan (born 1941) living again the philosophy of 'A Red, Red Rose' (1794) of Robert Burns (1759-1796), *The Bard of Scotland*. Human life does not exist in solitude. It has reciprocal existence and if reciprocation is inevitable, so are influences and motivations.

This unit discusses the concepts of influence and motivation as well as explains the various terms such as period, age, epoch, school and movement as used in art and literature.

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## 8.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the concepts of influence and motivation
- Examine the use of terms such as period, age and epoch in literature
- Describe the meaning of school and movement in literature

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## 8.2 INTRODUCTION TO INFLUENCE AND MOTIVATION

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Both influence and motivation entwine aspects such as cultural background, time, period of literature, school of productions, literary movements, and above all—the creative mind. Writers, scholars, their works, their critics, the readers and their researchers have evidently sealed truth on the fact that influence encapsulates motivation as a powerful resource. English literature, which looks back to the Saxons, Jutes and the Middle Ages for its development, sustenance and expansion year by year, has history that manifests what influence and motivation from the past and the contemporary world have attributed to its classics which people hold in awe today. ‘Motivation’ in literature is evaluating or reading someone’s demeanour or work based on certain, specific characteristics. It is the cause which directs a person’s action or manner. If a person is inclined to follow a typical mode of action, or doing something which is under his will, such a behaviour is ranged under the category of motivation.

Motivation is classified under two kinds: intrinsic, and extrinsic. The former is driven by a person’s own inclinations, interests, likes or dislikes, thinking, wisdom, etc. The latter has a wide range of perspectives and reasons in terms of all kinds. It can be obtained from the sources of physical fulfilment, money, rewards, ability, etc. Intrinsic motivation comes from within whether pushed by good reasons or evil. Extrinsic ones might also be noble or swept by someone or something’s connection. If a look is taken at some of the most inspiring stories or poems in English literature, we get plenty of such examples. The story and character of ‘Hamlet’ (1599-1602) are true emblems of motivation in every step that he makes. His state of indecision, his action of revenge, his righteousness and utter nobility – all indicate at personal motivation which is part of his being—

“Hamlet—  
 ‘How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,  
     Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
     .....  
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother





And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
 Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, ’ “

(Act- I, Scene- V. ‘*Macbeth*,’ William Shakespeare, 1606)

Similarly, *Satan* in Milton’s (1608-1674) monumental epic ‘*Paradise Lost*’ (1667) is driven by revenge motif which is a negative influence,—

“The mind is its own place, and in it self  
 Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n.

What matter where, if I be still the same,  
 And what I should be, all but less then hee  
 Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
 We shall be free; th’ Almighty hath not built  
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:

Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce  
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:

Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav’n.”

(Lines 254-263, ‘*Paradise Lost*,’ Book- I, John Milton, 1667)

or in the play ‘*Dr. Faustus*,’ the protagonist, Dr. Faustus, by Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), sells his soul to the Devil in order to gain magical and supernatural power. His passionate lust and greed for unusual universal strength misleads him overpowering, dooming his good sense—

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and  
 there’s no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so  
 consequently die:

Ay, we must die an everlasting death.

What doctrine call you this, Che serà, serà,

What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!

[He picks up a book of magic.]

These metaphysics of magicians,

And necromantic books are heavenly;

Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;

Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.

O, what a world of profit and delight,

Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,

Is promis’d to the studious artizan!

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All things that move between the quiet poles  
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings  
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,  
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;  
But this dominion that exceeds in this,  
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;  
A sound magician is a demigod:  
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.”

(Act- I, Scene- I. ‘*Doctor Faustus*,’ Christopher Marlowe, 1604)

If a reader picks literature from Africa, as English literature no more can be tied belonging to the British territories only, he would rather have English flavoured by African culture, region, custom, personal traits of the writer, his or her learning and taste, and multiple unexplored nooks which a Polish or English writer would not view that way.

Literature is transmittable, rather a great medium of transforming someone’s in-built mechanism and inspire creative inputs in a person to produce something special mixed along with his or her own genius. It is a contributory action. It breathes confluence by influence:

“Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow’d Homer ruled as his demesne;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold;”  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He star’d at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look’d at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.”

(‘*On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer*,’ John Keats, 1816)

Literature flourishes in league with a person’s culture—regional, or catholic—represents person’s emotional milieu, depicts the writer’s strategic design of outpouring imagination stabilised within his or her specific persona, political-national-philosophic judgements, economic conditions, various sentiments which often are at plane with the universal and the general, subjective and objective vision, self-discipline and ken where ken denotes influence and the backdrop of his historical past. As each flower belongs to a certain caste of planthood or tree, literary influence and motivation have been corresponding entities and have come up from a large

composite force that weaves art as a creation adding it to history nominating it a recognisable place. Lexically, motivation means the act of inspiring someone or something very deeply—

“Others abide our question. Thou art free.

We ask and ask –Thou smilest and art still,

Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,

Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,”

(‘*Shakespeare*,’ Matthew Arnold, 1899)

Thus, both influence and motivation have wrought, crafted deeply on art and literature; and it is also true that the end of an art is to correspond its message to someone; in that sense, influence and motivation are inevitable, invincible literary tools which have been in the skyless impartable air, as legends of works are created by many great writers, and their readers might have carried their very essence to create another exemplary specimen in an art—

“No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists.

You can not value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism.”

(‘*Tradition and Individual Talent*,’ T. S. Eliot, 1919)

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### 8.3 PERIOD

Lexically, ‘Period’ means a certain part or length of time. When we consider literary influence and motivation as study, we tend to look into distinct slots of time which show varied characteristics that do not match with either their former, or latter ones. Thus period is a length of time which owes some new things historically for which it stands uniquely distinguishable. There is hardly any difference between Period and Age if we consider literary study of influence and motivation as both these words indicate length of time. If we say, *Romantic Period* of English Letters, we often name it *Romantic Age* of English letters. Hence, literally, there is little or no individuality assigned to these particular terms. They overlap on each other sense wise. Historically, English literature has periods such as the Anglo-Saxon Period or the Old English Period (around 410 AD-1066 AD), the Medieval English Period or Middle English Period (1066-1500), the Early Modern Period or the Renaissance (1500-1600), the Commonwealth Period (1649-1660), the Restoration Period (1660-1700), the Neo-Classical Period (1660-1785), the Romantic Period or Romantic Age (1785-1830, 1800-1850), the Victorian Period or Victorian Age (1832/37-1901), the Edwardian Period (1901-1910), the

Georgian Period (1910-1914), the Modern Period (1914 onward), and the Post-Modern Period (1945 onward).

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When the Roman Empire fell in 476 AD (and foreigners commenced invasion on what we currently know as England), albeit it did not completely fall as Constantine the Great (306-337 AD) yielded to convert to Christianity from Polytheistic religious faith that their race had been following, the Germanic tribes began to settle and rule parts of England dominated by the native Celts by dispensing, rending them off. Despite Germanic tribes like Angles, Saxons, Franks, Jutes, and later, the Vikings (Norsemen) from the Frisian Islands, Anglen, Saxony and Jutland overpowered the Western Roman Civilisation in England, in protest of pervading and slowly gripping Christianity, the Diocletianic often named the Great Persecution (303-313 AD), took place consequently melting to the minority sect by allowing them rights by adopting policies of toleration like Constantine unlike the policies of Galerius and Diocletian. The concept of uninterrupted power to monarchy having started with Diocletian remained in England till 1453 as Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire and its capital Constantinople (330-1453) were captured by the Ottoman (Turks) Empire (1453-1923).

The Celtic land of Britain, after Roman Empire and successive Germanic invasions who came more like settlers than conquerors mingled with their culture and language, had a massive influence of these invaders on every aspect of their lives. They had brought West Germanic language, Frisian, Angeln, Modern Frisian, and frequently added them to the native Celt. The settler Germanic as 'barbarians' and the native Celts as 'weales' (later, Wales) were constantly at strife: one asserting the will of preserving their native rights, the other for washing natives off to distant corners of Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall and Wales spreading their wings to usurp all. The tale of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table belongs to this period of time, a native folklore which motivated minds like Sir Thomas Malory (1415-1471) in his 'Le Morte Darthur (1485) which is collected stories about Arthur, the English king; Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) wrote 'Idylls of the King' (1859-1885), set of a dozen poems about King Arthur based on Sir Malory's work, and his next work 'Morte d' Arthur' (1842) which was later compiled into *Idylls*, is an allegory which is set in medieval England but in reality describes personal sentiments of Tennyson. Influence does not only remain territorial to writing but Malory's Arthur was adopted for movie versions in 'Knights of the Round Table' (1953) and 'Excalibur' (1981).

During the period of Germanic and Norman Conquest as the pagan settlers adopted Christianity and became naturalised, much of the literature that flourished into this era, is epic poetry, religious manuscripts, sermons, ecclesiastical records or hagiographies, legal documents, historical works, etc. of which 'Beowulf' (975-1025) which is epic poetry containing 3182 alliterative verse about a Scandinavian hero Beowulf and his heroic feats comes remarkably the foremost along with outstanding literary outputs like 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle' (during 871-899 in the

ninth century with revision till 1154) which is a historical record, Caedmon's 'Hymn' (658-680), the 'Ecclesiastical History of English People' (731 AD) by Venerable Bede (672-735 AD), 'Heliand' (ninth century epic poem in Old Saxon), translations of the Bible, etc. Every such record of literary spirit has inspired and set path for later authors. The tradition of alliterative verse in English is Germanic by origin which has been adopted, practised apart from the Old English verse, by William Langland (1332-1386 or 1330-1400) in his '*Piers Plowman*' (1370-90), 'Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight' (1360 AD/fourteenth century) which is a chivalric romance about Gawayne who was a Round Table Knight of King Arthur, etc.

In the modern age, academicians like J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1973) experimented with alliterative poetry like '*The Lays of Beleriand*' (1985), Gothic verse, and contributed with translations, Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) in his '*Narrative Poems*' (1972), Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973) in his '*The Age of Anxiety*;' the American poets and intellectuals Richard Purdy Wilbur (1921-2017), Ezra Pound (1885-1972) and the Irish Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) are among many others who kept the tradition of alliterative verse form alive in their own style during recent era.

The literature created during the Medieval Period (1066-1500), the Renaissance Period (1500-1600), the Commonwealth Period 1649-1660) and the Restoration Period (1660-1700) has great poets, critics, playwrights, prose writers and essayists whose legacies have worked profoundly on the subsequent generation of litterateurs; not only that, foreign influences like Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) in his epic poetry, Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) in his sonnets, Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375) in his biographical sketches or art of story-telling during the Middle English Period, have gifted, shaped art of England similarly. The influence and motivation from the ancient Greek and Roman literatures can be witnessed on all aspects of literature in England whether it has been poetry, drama, prose, philosophy, chronicle, religious writings, culture, human life: Homer's two brilliant epics 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey,' the works of Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Socrates, etc. in Classical Greece; in ancient Roman civilisation, the writers had reckoning of the fact that the Greeks had quality literature and were superior than them, hence they also were inspired by the copious horizon of the ancient Greek literature.

The Roman Republic had politicians, writers and thinkers like Cicero, Horace, Virgil, Boethius, Seneca, etc. And all of these writers, historians, public figures or philosophers have had their unmitigated impact on Europe and other parts of the world. Chaucer in the fourteenth century, was a poet, diplomat and critic of human nature who was motivated from Italian, French writers and so were the Elizabethan sonneteers from Petrarch: but have they not left their native influence on succeeding generations? Yes they have. Milton and Dryden (1631-1700) can be witnessed as enlightening inspirations to many modern writers. Shakespeare alone stood Himalaya-like influence on each and every poet, prose

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writer and dramatist who tried those genres after him; as to create something must be in accordance with either on a set norm or changes, diversions which exhibit individual courage and discipline.

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This influence and motivation have travelled across genres as paintings of the Italians and other Europeans like the Renaissance painters, architecture, music, political philosophies, religion – have been inspiring literature in many parts of the world.

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### 8.4 AGE

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In English literature, the term ‘age’ usually denotes carrying a sparkling brilliant personality whose roaring success in his talents segregates his or her age or time from their predecessors or following generations. Such people have been both writers, public figures like monarchs, or people with exuberant achievements, expertise in any field. They create a historical wall between the time of their presence from all sides for which they are distinctly remembered either for good or unpleasant reasons. Before the period of Middle English ended, history gave us the Age of Chaucer (1340-1400) whose art of story-telling, analysis of human character with irony and reserve of humour for the cunning world, prove unsurpassed. Chaucer is called the Father of Modern English, and the Father of Poetry because he raised the status of English from a vernacular to a language, and brought it to common people with abundance of literary works, and the court— the place deigned to Latin and French afore him. He produced literature full of objective outlook with matchless beauty, simplicity, complexity of human nature, metrical forms like Rhyme Royal, First Person narration form, Iambic Pentameter – in his wide variety of poetic productions. His immense contribution to English language still sways, baffles translators, as his ‘*The Canterbury Tales*’ (1387-1400) alone has kept influencing posterity till now for Margaret Atwood (born 1939) manifests its influence in her dystopian dramatic rendition of her novel, ‘*The Handmaid’s Tale*’ (1985), Richard Dawkins (born 1941) uses it for his ‘*The Ancestor’s Tale*’ (2004) which looks back into the human history of evolution, etc.

There have been thin bounds, threads as multiple literary artists have of the straddling pedestal of ages till the Modern Age added accomplished literature thereafter— the Elizabethan Age (1558-1603) of English letters called so as the enlightened impetus, patronage of Queen Elizabeth-I was observed, seen, reflected in her peaceful, stable, affluent reign –garnering and furnishing – an all round development, accomplishment to England both in and abroad on a diplomatic plane, contributing into golden history of literature where gems pure, sparkling, luminous were like the University Wits [end fifteen years of the sixteenth century which produced – Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), Thomas Nashe (1567-1601), Robert Greene (1558-1592), George Peele (1556-1596), John Lyly (1553-1606), Thomas Lodge (1558-1625), and Thomas Kyd (1558-1594)], Edmund

Spenser (1552-1599), William Shakespeare, Roger Ascham (1515-1568) rose to brighten the sky of the English horizon. The motivation by the Queen to her denizens and every other aspect of kingdom became exemplary, continuing to inspire people till now, for a sound solid ground is founded only under a benign and protective Sun. Similarly, the influence of those literary geniuses has eternised the Elizabethan English literature internationally so much so that Shakespeare's day of birth and passing away is celebrated as English Language Day in the world (birth and death date of Shakespeare probably coincide). The English theatre soared to its lofty pinnacle and created an epoch in the history of world literature. During the same age, English literature revels intellectually in the erudite classical comedies, prose and criticism of Ben Jonson (1572-1637).

When influence is born, so is born a change with that. Every age which has picked up a style, genre or writer, has certainly added to the reminiscence of previous generation which creates difference between one age and its after-runner. Countably, further literary ages are — the Jacobean Age (1603-1625) which includes complex, brain-stalking metaphorical charms in the poetry of John Donne (1572-1631) and the other metaphysic like George Herbert (1593-1633), Richard Crashaw (1612-1649), Henry Vaughan (1621-1695), Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), etc.— who were so uniquely endowed, blessed with aesthetic capability and knowledge, that whether it had been virtuosos like Milton, the Augustans, the Romantics or the modern writers like Eliot, only a few can make parallels to them. Their poetic outbursts are cerebral detranquillisers. Of their late seed was born the Londoner, Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), whose mother's gift— Edmund Spenser's mastery of art in his epic romance — '*The Faerie Queene*' (1590-1609), boosted a brilliant mind in him which intellectually perplexed Dr. Johnson to honour, categorise him in his '*Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*' (1779-1781) in the generation of Donne and 'the metaphysical poets' whom Dryden ironically beheld as—

'He affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign...'

(*'A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire,'* 1693)

King James's (James-I) version of the 'Bible' (1611) was such an influential ascent and attainment in the Jacobean Age which every Christian feels obeying and adhering to. Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) terse, epigrammatic prose style with rare phase of growth that he offered to the English prose is noteworthy to the entire English writers of successive generations.

Motivation has always been a two-sided phenomenon: one, there have been influences planted to the English literary soil brought to homeland by the natives; and second, those English writers who have potentially influenced others across territorial or age-bound barriers. Each genre and sub-genre of literature whether it is poetry, play, prose, translation, religious discourse or text, novel, stories, essays, recitation, lecture or any other art form — contains motivation and influence which

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chisel, shape, affect, inspire, accomplish, evolve thought-driven creators. The Caroline Age (1625-1649) is a part of Stuart Period (1603-1714) when the nation saw Civil War between the supporters of the existing monarchy and those who proclaimed for the English Parliament giving birth to rise of Puritanism, repressions by King Charles-I, power shifting to the Parliament, and illustrious writers like Milton (1608-1674), Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) and the Cavalier poets. One of the extensively read, acknowledged, esteemed author John Milton's candid political thoughts, democratic ideals, social critiques, lush poetry, spontaneous religious tracts were mirrors of his age and milieu:

“Christian and humanist, Protestant, patriot and heir of the golden ages of Greece and Rome, he faced what appeared to him to be the birth-pangs of a new and regenerate England with high excitement and idealistic optimism.”

(*A Critical History of English Literature,* Vol.-1, David Daiches)

Edmund Burke (1729-1797) admitted to his ideals in philosophy, Wordsworth's (1770-1850) 'Prelude' (1850) breathed under Milton's shadow,— Blake, George Eliot (1819-1880), Thomas Hardy, Aldous Huxley's (1894-1963) novel 'Eyeless in Gaza' (1936, derived title from Milton's 'Samson Agonistes,' 1671), William Golding's novel 'Darkness Visible' (1979, has its title taken from 'Paradise Lost,') Milton's 'Areopagitica' (1644) is quoted in the 'First Amendment to the United States Constitution,'— are all but examples of influence and motivational realms. Likewise, the Age of Dryden (1631-1700), the great Restoration poet, satirist, playwright and critic — is noted after his name as the most dominant literary figure who kept inspiring Alexander Pope (1688-1744) in the eighteenth century by whom that particular age is known; the eighteenth century is also divided into two mind-sets: the Neoclassical writers like Pope, Dr. Johnson (1709-1784), and the precursors of the Romantic Age like Thomas Gray and William Blake (1757-1827) whose influence appeared in the next generation of writers, changed the style of expression, brought intellectual minds close to social, humanist reforms which made Wordsworth exclaim— 'Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour' ('London, 1802'). *Equality, liberty and fraternity* were chanted across Europe and great awareness kindled to the ordinary class. The latter half of the eighteenth century and the first thirty-five years of the nineteenth century are known as the Romantic Age of English letters when the Romantics Southey (1774-1843), Wordsworth (1770-1850), Coleridge (1772-1834), Lord Byron (1788-1824), Percy Shelley (1792-1822), and Keats (1795-1821) in literature reached such soaring heights of success that readers can see their profound influence on almost every forthcoming poet, playwright and critic. Yeats (1865-1939) among the moderns is one of them.

The beginning of novel as genre was a Spanish influence of Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) whose novel '*Don Quixote*' (1605-1615) sat high governing the brows of all novelists who adopted the type as masterly work of art. The first literary novelists in England whose influence rebound across centuries



were Richardson (1689-1761), Henry Fielding (1707-1754), etc. Latter novelists – Austen (1775-1817), Emily Bront, (1818-1848) and her sisters, Scott (1771-1832), George Eliot (1819-1880), Dickens (1812-1870), Thackeray (1811-1863) and Hardy set their style as master-craftsmen to motivate many twentieth or twenty-first century authors. As the age grew modern technology advanced, and travelling became cheaper as well as easier. Each classification of literature prospered akin to electronic media and movies in the twentieth century. When the Modern Age stepped in, all the major writers’ works were televised and produced as movies as earlier print media had taken the fifteenth to nineteenth century academia by storm especially when journals and newspapers throbbed to brick in as part of each household, public gathering or coffee shop. Printing in England itself was a German (between 1448-1450) influence by Johannes Gutenberg (1400-1468).

As England excelled into Great Britain by having colonies across globe, so spired its language and literature abroad to India, Africa, the isles, Australia, the United States, etc. The Modern Age generated conflicts amongst powerful nations which stemmed into two devastating World Wars: the First World War (1914-1918) engaging Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and all the important powers of the world and it has history of influence on writers who deemed it as great tragic doom whereas a few felt empowered and passionate also:

“—and War’s just a bloody game...  
Have you forgotten yet?...  
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you’ll never forget.  
.....  
Do you remember the rats; and the stench  
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench—  
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?  
Do you ever stop and ask, ‘Is it all going to happenagain?’ “  
(‘Aftermath,’ Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)

The English writers, artists, thinkers and politicians have encompassed frustration on fallen human morale, plasticity of life, mechanisation of human minds, commercialism and much more under global issues as T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) ponders aptly to inspire and leave an undiluted imprint of the panoramic mammoth sketch of his age with tempests crashing intellectual aurain – ‘The Waste Land’ (1922):

“The nymphs are departed.  
And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors;  
Departed, have left no addresses.  
By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept...  
.....

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But at my back in a cold blast I hear  
The rattle of the bones, and chuckle from ear to ear.

Unreal City

Under the brown fog of a winter noon”

(L.- 179-209, ‘The Fire Sermon: *The Waste Land*,’ T. S. Eliot, 1922)

**NOTES**

**Check Your Progress**

1. Lexically, what does ‘Period’ mean?
2. What is ‘*Beowulf*’?
3. Who is called as the Father of Modern English?
4. Which day is celebrated as English Language Day in the world?
5. King James’s (James-I) version of the ‘Bible’ (1611) belongs to which age?
6. The Caroline Age (1625-1649) is a part of which period?

**8.5 EPOCH**

Literary Epochs are periods with a great happening which create a pause in that fleeting of time, year, or years in comparison to previous or post periods. In English letters, such examples of literary epochs can be witnessed in the Renaissance, the Black Death (1347-1351) and Reformation which are literary and humanistic revolutions. Their impact swept across entire Europe altogether whether it was France, Italy, England (1485 till early seventeenth century) and other nations or culture. The Classical Antiquity was explored from Greek and Roman literatures and brought down to common doors by avid scholars and translators. All the great names of both these ancient cultures were frequently read, translated and quoted in the English works for the English readers. English language noticed enormous surge from the status of a mere vernacular to its global popularity by which it gradually replaced Latin and French in the English court. Protestant Reformation during the sixteenth century was a widespread historical, religious awakening and revolution in the whole European continent led by Martin Luther (1483-1546), John Calvin (1509-1564), John Wycliffe (1320?-1384), Erasmus (1466-1536), etc. It principally involved with progress and amendment of Christian theology and later developments in the churches of England. The cited anthropocentric utterance of Protagoras from the Classical Age of Antiquity in Greece— ‘Man is the measure of all things’ — became matter of motivation for successive generations of thinkers, artists, scientists, theologians, political

philosophers and writers for it paved way for humanist reforms in the society in ‘art, architecture, politics, science and literature.’ Petrarch (1304-1374), Da Vinci (1452-1519), Machiavelli (1469-1527),Dante (1265-1321), Michelangelo (1475-1564), Hugo van der Goes (1440-1482), Raphael (1483-1520), Boccaccio (1313-1375), Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444), Pizan (1364-1430), etc. were among those who sowed the seeds of this awakening, and carried that spirit with passionate zeal into their works and art.

Humanism introduced five streams of study: ‘poetry, grammar, history, moral philosophy and rhetoric.’ Other motivated revolutionaries were Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), John Lydgate (1370-1451), Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), Shakespeare, Henry Howard (1517-1547), Wyatt (1503-1542), etc. There was Black Death, a great historical and environmental havoc in Europe and Asia engulfing lives of not less than seventy to two hundred million people. This Great Plague during the fifth and sixth decades of the fourteenth century, which recurred to devastate Europe during ensuing two centuries also, was a major catastrophe inspiring artistic genres – ‘Danse Macabre’ including paintings, plays, Frescoes, woodcuts, etc.

The Romantic Revival and the French Revolution (commencing 1789) of the late eighteenth and first four decades of the nineteenth centuries concurrent with the Industrial Revolution (1760-1840) in Europe and America were epochs which created artists, litterateurs, political thinkers, chroniclers, men of science, journalists, and revolutionaries with a marked difference. After 1750, when men moved from handmade productions to mechanical devices and began to invent or assemble machines which paved stark divergence in their lifestyle, this independence blew airs which affected the society massively: the outgrowing change connected, transformed the world into a global village. As an instance, labours and produce from various colonies by the powerful European nations were brought into the US where they still remain naturalised with a great literary history today as races called— Black Americans, Hispanics; and similar occurrences happened into the other parts of Asia, island countries, Africa and Oceania. There was a huge religio-cultural politico-social shift, ghetto and fusion. No part of this world could remain aloof from this geographical transportation and transmittance which infused intellectual minds with abundant thoughts as it raised their nations in labour, economic independence, growth, global business, slavery, capitalism, rise of women writers, etc. The English movie ‘*Chariots of Fire*’ (1981) extracts its title from—

“And did those feet in ancient time,  
Walk upon Englands mountains green:  
And was the Holy Lamb of God,  
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!  
.....

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Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold:  
Bring me my Chariot of fire!”

(‘*Jerusalem*,’ William Blake, 1808)

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The Industrial Revolution found its fangs overpowering by starching human emotions filling vacuum in life with torturous anxiety, cemented relations, mechanical attitude towards life finding vent in the voices of Thomas Carlyle (‘Signs of the Times,’ 1829), John Ruskin (1819-1900), Charles Dickens (‘Hard Times,’ 1854), Matthew Arnold, Herman Melville (1819-1891), William Wordsworth (‘Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads,’ 1800), Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), Friedrich Schiller (‘Aesthetical Education of Man,’ 1795), William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863), Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), etc.

The French Revolution and the Romantic Revival walked hand in hand, an unusual sway to sweep off long established power of monarchy in France in consequence of the American Revolution (1765-1783) which welcomed republican governance under military dictatorship of Napoleon founding seeds of human rights. It unfolded end of feudalism, the last king was beheaded, French national anthem was chanted and the slogan of ‘Liberty, Equality and Fraternity’ was practised in deed. ‘Liberalism, radicalism, secularism and nationalism’ became political vision and women’s rights were declared (‘Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen,’ 1791 by Olympe de Gouges). Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s (1712-1778) ideas motivated politics, economy, education and social scenarios which empowered the French Revolution. Romantic Revival (1798-1837) occurred in England, an artistic epoch founded on the precepts of the French Revolution which craved humanity and closeness to Nature denouncing artificiality of the polished eighteenth-century city fashion. It is said to have been brought into shape by the works like poetry, prose, films, screenplays, dramas, music, paintings and other art forms of James Thomson’s (1700-1748) ‘The Seasons’ (1726-1730), Thomas Gray’s ‘Elegy’ (1751) and the Pindaric Odes, William Cowper’s (1731-1800) ‘The Task’ (1785), ‘John Gilpin’ (1782) and the Gothic novels of Horace Walpole (1717-1797), Mary Shelley (1797-1851), Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823), William Beckford (1760-1844), etc. The trend influenced later generations like Robert Browning (1812-1889), D. G. Rossetti (1828-1882), W. B. Yeats, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Jane Austen (1775-1817), Tennyson (1809-1892), Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966), Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), Forrest Reid (1875-1947), James Joyce (1882-1941), Harold Pinter (1930-2008), etc.

The massive catastrophe undergone during two great World Wars of the twentieth century might be envisioned as literary epochs which influenced plenteous writers, scientists, artists and thinkers like Wilfred Owen (1893-1918), Rupert Brooke (1887-1915), T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), B. Russell (1872-1970), Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), Christopher Fry (1907-2005), Muriel Spark (1918-2006), W. Churchill (1874-1965), George Orwell (1903-1950), William Golding (1911-

1993), Henry Green (1905-1973), etc. Genres such as post-modernism, post-colonialism, movie and television adaptations, traditionalism, experimentalism, etc. floored after the two Wars which frowned at all human dawns as they occurred, and lives moaned over mute dwarfishness of powerless existence—

“Like a graveyard statue sentry cast  
 In blackened bronze. Is he reading poems?  
 A letter? The burial service? The raindrops  
 Beaded along his helmet rim are bronze.  
 The words on his page are bronze. Their meanings bronze.  
 Sunk in his bronze world he stands, enchanted.  
 His bronze mind is deep among the dead.  
 Sunk so deep among the dead that, much  
 As he would like to remember us all, he cannot.”  
 (*Platform One*, Ted Hughes, 1998)

## NOTES

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## 8.6 SCHOOL

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In English literature, the word ‘school’ connotes a bent of mind which delves into the same philosophical content carried by a group of writers, artists, scientists, thinkers or statesmen whose creative optimisation mirrors each-other’s understanding about their craft. If historically traced, schools have risen and fallen to usher new ones across trajectory of centuries motivating new creative minds with intellectual impetus who have carved letters in golden words astonishing readers during their days as well as today with ever accomplishing newness of charm and beauty rendered in their work. Each of such intellectual school produced a thought which was depicted into works of many writers who believed in the same idea. After the Medieval period went by, which was often addressed ‘the Dark Age’ in English letters, Renaissance emerged as the first literary school, however it was a wide awakening about literature, arts, science, education, politics, religion when Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks, the incident which compelled Greek authors seek refuge in Italy whereby they revived their art and literature, and explored, spread, translated writings of the Classical Age of Antiquity of Greece and Rome, kindling and incanting sparks of interest about their knowledge to the rest of the Europe, and the world—redefining, re-establishing, elevating precepts of political governance, theology, education, human rights,—encapsulating geography, economy, linguistics, sociology, ethics, and multiple spheres of life enhancing, reforming, rectifying, reorganising what was beneficial for, and in human favour.

The romantic and classic schools of drama were led by the University Wits, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and others; poetry was popularised by Edmund Spenser,

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George Chapman (1559-1634), the Elizabethan sonneteers; criticism in the trail of Aristotle was practised by Sir Philip Sidney, Ben Jonson, Leonard Coxe (1495-1549), Thomas Wilson (1524-1581), George Whetstone (1544?-1587), Thomas Lodge (1558-1625), etc.; prose writers include Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Raphael Holinshed (1529-1580), Richard Hooker (1554-1600), etc. The blithe spirit of Renaissance and Reformation gave birth to sonneteers, playwrights, epic writers, and many other literary genres. The Neo-Classical School of writers produced Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Swift (1667-1745), George Saintsbury (1845-1833), A. D. Hope (1907-2000) and others whereas the Romantic School of writers include Milton, Blake, Wordsworth till Dylan Thomas (1914-1953), Thom Gunn (1929-2004), Harold Bloom (born 1930), Philip Pullman (born 1946), etc. The Metaphysical School of poetry believed in array of intellectual art full of energy, conceit, metaphorical imagery, hyperboles, similes, scientific representation-comparison of people, complex style which made Dryden call them the Metaphysical poets. Among the followers of John Donne were Vaughan, Crashaw, Marvell, John Cleveland (1613-1658), Cowley, Herbert, etc.—

“Alas, alas, who’s injured by my love?  
What merchant’s ships have my sigh drowned?  
Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?  
When did my colds a forward spring remove?  
When did the heats which my veins fill  
Add one more to the plaguy bill?...”

(‘*The Canonization*,’ John Donne, 1633)

Donne’s school of thought influenced modern poets like Yeats, Eliot in the twentieth century. In the twentieth century, there emerged certain schools of criticism like the Lemon-Squeezer School of criticism, as Thomas Stearns Eliot addresses them, enunciated by Ransom (1888-1974), Warren (1905-1989), Tate (1899-1979), Brooks (1906-1994), Blackmur (1904-1965), Empson (1906-1984); the Chicago School of critics consisted Crane (1886-1967); the Sociological School of critics were ‘Edmund Wilson (1895-1972), F. O. Matthiessen (1902-1950), Newton Arvin (1900-1963), Harold Rosenberg (1906-1978) and Christopher Caudwell (1907-1937)’ profoundly inspired by Karl Marx’s (1818-1883) philosophies; the Valuation School of criticism was led by F. R. Lewis (1895-1978), Yvor Winters (1900-1968), Earnest Boyd (1887-1946); the Impressionistic School of criticism was initiated and led by Charles Lamb (1775-1834), William Hazlitt (1778-1830), Walter Pater (1839-1894), Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859), Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Anatole France (1844-1924), Lemaitre (1853-1914), Saintsbury, F. L. Lucas (1894-1967), etc.

## 8.7 MOVEMENT

The word ‘movement’ in literature signifies works created by some writers or artists over a period of time belonging to similar style, form, content, notion, philosophy, frame and understanding. Literary movements have motivated thoughtful minds over periods of time again and again to create unrivalled literature in any part of the world. England alone has had countless movements which have produced unparalleled literature. Religious proceedings at church handed over drama to the posterity as Miracle, Mystery and Interlude plays from where they descended to the young Oxford and Cambridge University graduates who were called ‘the University Wits’ in English letters setting trend for English drama for centuries to follow. Shakespeare diverted into romantic tragedy, comedy and tragi-comedies; Jonson chose to be disciple of the dramatists of Classical Age of Antiquity and created the ‘Comedy of Humours’ whereas Congreve (1670-1729) and Wilde (1854-1900) chose to satirise the society in fashion of the Greek, and the French playwrights. Sonnets were popularised in England by the poets who came apparently to be impressed with their Italian and other European counterparts; and the poetic genre was vigorously practised over generations of writers who added so much to the beauty, intensity and form of this art till the modern age of English letters. The form, though practised by many outstanding poets across generations since the fifteenth century, received much of accomplishment and growth in the hands of every modern writer too, who laid their hands on it whether it is Andrew Belsey or Mark Jarman (born 1952)—

“Only until this cigarette is ended

.....

And in the firelight to a lance extended,  
Bizarrely with the jazzing music blended,  
The broken shadow dances on the wall,  
I will permit my memory to recall  
The vision of you, by all my dreams attended.”

(‘Only until this cigarette is ended,’ Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1921)

The British poet Andrew Belsey’s sonnet— ‘*Lost Love*’ (2002)

“So now there’s just a thin pale moon above,  
Casting pale sad shadows on cold ground,  
Too little light to fuel fresh thoughts of love,  
I’ve lost the only hope I thought I’d found.  
My heart aches full of memories and fears  
And on my cheeks two rolling streams of tears.”

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also depicts the form in the current day scenario in everyday use of tongue. Other significant English literary movements are— the English Renaissance and Reformation, the Puritan Movement with Milton and the Cavalier poets Lovelace (1617-1657), Davenant (1606-1668), etc.; Gothic novels, Sentimental novels, Picaresque fiction which covered both eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood came with D. G. Rossetti (1828-1882) and the followers of the same philosophy during the late nineteenth century which later blossomed into the Decadents movement participated by Oscar Wilde, Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880), Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867); Transcendentalism emerged with Emerson (1803-1882) and Thoreau (1817-1862); in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Realism was practised by Flaubert (1821-1880), W. D. Howells (1837-1920), Stendhal (1783-1842), Balzac (1799-1850), Tolstoy (1828-1910), Dostoevsky (1821-1888), etc.; naturalist and biologist, Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) influenced litterateurs like Émile Zola (1840-1902), Stephen Crane (1871-1900), Thomas Hardy, etc. who depicted effects of Naturalism in literature; political philosophy of Socialist Realism of Joseph Stalin (1878-1953) was backed in the works of Maxim Gorky (1868-1936), Lu Xun (1881-1936), Takiji Kobayashi (1903-1933), and many others as a noted twentieth century movement.

Magical Realism is a widely attended movement of the current era where magical elements seem to illumine reality and it has been moulded in literature by Gabriel Garcia Márquez (1927-2014), Octavio Paz (1914-1998), Günter Grass (1927-2015), Salman Rushdie (born 1947), Sadeh Hedayat (1903-1951), Malay Roy Choudhury (born 1939); inspired by the French *fin de siècle* movement, Symbolism hit the shores of Great Britain where it remains being practised till date by a number of authors like W. B. Yeats (1865-1939), James Joyce (1882-1941), Samuel Beckett; Stream of Consciousness, in which mind's map is portrayed, was put into art by James Joyce, Virginia Woolf (1882-1941); Imagism was chiefly a poetic movement which believed in descriptive form concentrating on 'natural object' as 'the adequate symbol' used by Ezra Pound (1885-1972), T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), Richard Aldington (1892-1962), H.D. (1886-1961); Modernism invoked distortions of the modern age, recalled tradition, objectivity in art and decorum with individualistic accomplishment as a twentieth century artist would have, in the pens of Dylan Thomas (1914-1953), Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Hilda Doolittle, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein (1874-1946), etc.; German offshoot of Expressionism rejects crude realities and subjectivism in art which dominated theatre and literature in Franz Kafka (1883-1924) and others.

Then we have two subsequent generations of War or Trench poetry motivating writers such as Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967), Wilfred Owen (1893-1918), Rupert Brooke (1887-1915), Hedd Wyn (1887-1917), Edmund Blunden (1896-1974), Robert Graves (1895-1985), Issac Rosenberg (1890-1918) during the First World War; where the Second World War (1939-1945) poets and novelists were – Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), Keith Douglas (1920-1944), W. H. Auden (1907-1973), John Ciardi (1916-1986), Randall Jarrell (1914-1965), etc.



The Movement was a literary wave during mid-twentieth century based on the ideals of simple, traditional poetry which negated romanticism however a few poets followed the trend. It inspired Philip Larkin (1922-1985), Donald Davie (1922-1995), John Wain (1925-1994), Kingsley Amis (1922-1995), Thom Gunn, Robert Conquest (1917-2015), etc. Surrealism, Postmodernism, Absurdism and Postcolonialism have been practised by André Breton (1896-1966), J. L. Borges (1899-1986), Samir Roychoudhury (1933-2016), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), Albert Camus (1913-1960), Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), Gao Xingjian (born 1940), V. S. Naipaul (1932-2018), Derek Walcott (1930-2017), Salman Rushdie, Wole Soyinka (born 1934), Chinua Achebe (1930-2013), etc. Modern movements like Spoken Word and Performance Poetry inspire all literary genres to include writers to present their speaking voice like Spalding Gray (1941-2004), Piri Thomas (1928-2011), Taalam Acey (born 1970), Mark Smith (born 1949); and New Formalism, mainly in the United States, is a poetic movement which re-establishes traditional metre forms motivating Molly Peacock (born 1947), Timothy Steele (born 1948), etc. Some British poets of the twenty-first century carrying forward the legacy of their rich traditional past associated with the movement called British Poetry Revival are— Don Paterson (born 1963), J. H. Prynne (born 1936), Alice Oswald (born 1966), etc.

“forget the ink, the milk, the blood—  
all was washed clean with the flood  
we rose up from the falling waters  
the fallen rain’s own sons and daughters  
and none of this, none of this matters.”

(‘Rain,’ Don Paterson, 2009)

### Check Your Progress

7. What was Black Death?
8. When did the French Revolution commence?
9. Which period was often addressed as ‘the Dark Age’?

## 8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Lexically, ‘Period’ means a certain part or length of time.
2. ‘Beowulf’ (975-1025) is an epic poetry containing 3182 alliterative verse about a Scandinavian hero Beowulf and his heroic feats.
3. Chaucer is called as the Father of Modern English.
4. Shakespeare’s day of birth and passing away is celebrated as English Language Day in the world.

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5. King James's (James-I) version of the 'Bible' (1611) belongs to the Jacobean Age.
6. The Caroline Age (1625-1649) is a part of Stuart Period (1603-1714).
7. Black Death was a great historical and environmental havoc in Europe and Asia engulfing lives of many people.
8. The French Revolution commenced in 1789.
9. Medieval period was often addressed as 'the Dark Age'.

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## 8.9 SUMMARY

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- Influence is a widely acknowledged spreadsheet which does not escape motivation as well.
- In literature, 'influence' has been recognised as prominent *contour* alongside centuries whether it is content, or style, or production.
- Human life does not exist in solitude. It has reciprocal existence and if reciprocation is inevitable, so are influences and motivations.
- Both influence and motivation entwine aspects such as cultural background, time, period of literature, school of productions, literary movements, and above all—the creative mind.
- 'Motivation' in literature is evaluating or reading someone's demeanour or work based on certain, specific characteristics.
- It is the cause which directs a person's action or manner.
- Motivation is classified under two kinds: intrinsic, and extrinsic.
- The former is driven by a person's own inclinations, interests, likes or dislikes, thinking, wisdom, etc.
- The latter has a wide range of perspectives and reasons in terms of all kinds. It can be obtained from the sources of physical fulfilment, money, rewards, ability, etc.
- There are certain tools of motivation: ambition is one very significant of them.
- In an instance, motivation is ambition of a person who only aspires within himself and who is outwardly a very nobleman.
- Literature is transmittable, rather a great medium of transforming someone's in-built mechanism and inspire creative inputs in a person to produce something special mixed along with his or her own genius.
- Lexically, motivation means the act of inspiring some one or some thing very deeply.
- Lexically, 'Period' means a certain part or length of time.

- When we consider literary influence and motivation as study, we tend to look into distinct slots of time which show varied characteristics that do not match with either their former, or latter ones.
- Influence does not only remain territorial to writing but Malory's Arthur was adopted for movie versions in 'Knights of the Round Table' (1953) and 'Excalibur' (1981).
- The influence and motivation from the ancient Greek and Roman literatures can be witnessed on all aspects of literature in England.
- The Roman Republic had politicians, writers and thinkers like Cicero, Horace, Virgil, Boethius, Seneca, etc.
- And all of these writers, historians, public figures or philosophers have had their unmitigated impact on Europe and other parts of the world.
- Milton and Dryden (1631-1700) can be witnessed as enlightening inspirations to many modern writers.
- In English literature, the term 'Age' usually denotes carrying a sparkling brilliant personality whose roaring success in his talents segregates his or her age or time from their predecessors or following generations.
- Chaucer is called the Father of Modern English, and the Father of Poetry because he raised the status of English from a vernacular to a language.
- Shakespeare's day of birth and passing away is celebrated as English Language Day in the world (birth and death date of Shakespeare probably coincide).
- King James's (James-I) version of the 'Bible' (1611) was such an influential ascent and attainment in the Jacobean Age which every Christian feels obeying and adhering to.
- The Caroline Age (1625-1649) is a part of Stuart Period (1603-1714) when the nation saw Civil War between the supporters of the existing monarchy and those who proclaimed for the English Parliament.
- As the age grew modern technology advanced, and travelling became cheaper as well as easier.
- Each classification of literature prospered akin to electronic media and movies in the twentieth century.
- As England excelled into Great Britain by having colonies across globe, so spired its language and literature abroad to India, Africa, the isles, Australia, the United States, etc.
- Literary Epochs are periods with a great happening which create a pause in that fleeting of time, year, or years in comparison to previous or post periods.
- The Classical Antiquity was explored from Greek and Roman literatures and brought down to common doors by avid scholars and translators.

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- It principally involved with progress and amendment of Christian theology and later developments in the churches of England.
- There was Black Death, a great historical and environmental havoc in Europe and Asia engulfing lives of not less than seventy to two hundred million people.
- ‘Liberalism, radicalism, secularism and nationalism’ became political vision and women’s rights were declared.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s (1712-1778) ideas motivated politics, economy, education and social scenarios which empowered the French Revolution.
- In English literature, the word ‘School’ connotes a bent of mind which delves into the same philosophical content carried by a group of writers, artists, scientists, thinkers or statesmen.
- Each of such intellectual school produced a thought which was depicted into works of many writers who believed in the same idea.
- The blithe spirit of Renaissance and Reformation gave birth to sonneteers, playwrights, epic writers, and many other literary genres.
- The Neo-Classical School of writers produced Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Swift (1667-1745), George Saintsbury (1845-1833), A. D. Hope (1907-2000) and others.
- Whereas the Romantic School of writers include Milton, Blake, Wordsworth till Dylan Thomas (1914-1953), Thom Gunn (1929-2004), Harold Bloom (born 1930), Philip Pullman (born 1946), etc.
- Donne’s school of thought influenced modern poets like Yeats, Eliot in the twentieth century.
- The word ‘Movement’ in literature signifies works created by some writers or artists over a period of time belonging to similar style, form, content, notion, philosophy, frame and understanding.
- England alone has had countless movements which have produced unparalleled literature.
- Sonnets were popularised in England by the poets who came apparently to be impressed with their Italian and other European counterparts.
- Magical Realism is a widely attended movement of the current era where magical elements seem to illumine reality.

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### 8.10 KEY WORDS

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- **Metaphysics:** It refers to the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, identity, time, and space.

- **Polytheism:** It means having faith in many deities set into one Pantheon of Gods and Goddesses carrying their own religions and sacred rituals.
- **Magic Realism:** It is a literary or artistic genre in which realistic narrative and naturalistic technique are combined with surreal elements of dream or fantasy.

*Influence and Motivation*

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### 8.11 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. Whose translation of ‘Homer’ roused Keats’s interest in that famous epic poet?
2. Which period occurred during 1660 to 1700 in the English literature? Who is the most influential writer of this period?
3. What are the two kinds of motivation?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss John Donne as a great influence on the Modern Age of English literature.
2. Discuss the Romantic Revival as an epoch in the history of English literature. Cite its influence on later generations of writers.
3. How does ‘intrinsic motivation’ function as a literary tool to support building of a plot in literature? Cite instances to prove the above statement.

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### 8.12 FURTHER READINGS

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- Arnold, Matthew. 1899. *Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold*. Macmillan & Co.

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## UNIT 9 RECEPTION STUDIES

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#### Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Reception Theory in English Literature
  - 9.2.1 Important Publications and Writers on Reception Study
  - 9.2.2 Reception Theory in the Digital Era
- 9.3 Reception Study of Epoch
- 9.4 Reception Study of Period
- 9.5 Meaning of Generation in Reception Theory
- 9.6 Importance of Movement in Reception Theory
- 9.7 Thematology in Reception Theory
- 9.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 9.9 Summary
- 9.10 Key Words
- 9.11 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 9.12 Further Readings

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### 9.0 INTRODUCTION

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Reception Study is part of 'Theory of Communication' in criticism which deals with academic evaluation and analysis of a particular reader's response on a particular text or work of art. As an arm of modern literary study, Reception Study encompasses scholastic speculations into methods, manners or style which a work of art incorporates. It might have a text's epistemological, cultural, political, sociological, hagiographical, psychological, theological, scientific, anthropological or any other kind of diachronic or synchronic interpretation rooted on a reader's situation, mind-set or given circumstances. Reception Theory refers to a historical application of the Reader Response theory, emphasizing altering interpretive and evaluative responses of generations of readers to a text. It focuses on the scope for negotiation and opposition on the part of the general public, over a period of time in history, as they interpret the meanings of a text based on their respective cultural background and life experiences. Since the linguistic and aesthetic expectation of readers change over the course of time, and since later readers and critics have access to the text as well as its criticisms, there develops an evolving historical tradition of interpretations and evaluations of a given literary work. Jauss refers to this tradition as a continuous dialectic between the text and the horizon of successive readers; the literary text, in itself possesses no inherent meaning or value.

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## 9.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss reception theory in English Literature
- Explain reception theory of epoch and period
- Describe the meaning of generation in reception theory
- Assess the importance of movement in reception theory
- Explain thematology in reception theory

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## 9.2 RECEPTION THEORY IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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The Father of Reception Theory is the German-born historian, Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997) who paved way for this evaluative theory of art called ‘Reception Aesthetics’ in several of his books and researches— ‘Towards an Aesthetic of Reception’ (1978), ‘Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics’ (Theory and History of Literature, 1977), and in his inaugural lecture— ‘Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory’ (1967). Hermeneutics, a term of Philosophy, refers to methodical judgement or analysis of texts. Literary hermeneutics is contextual which is above literal or formal meaning of a read; it is study of a cultural past, language and nature as historical phenomenon which formed and brought comprehensibility into existence. Any integrated content to be assessed involves words, events and symbols for a higher purpose. In the modern world the inclusion of technological boom such as skype, audio books, social media, print culture which includes any kind of communication into print form,— all have facilitated modern hermeneutics with an understanding how digitalised, recorded, or transformed texts are interpreted.

Reader-Response Criticism is often considered the forerunner of the Reception Theory, however there is perpetual denying to this argument by various scholar-critics. Hans Robert Jauss founded the Konstanz School along with Wolfgang Iser (initially a West-German literary movement) and conceptualised Reception Theory which brought Germany, France and the United States to develop their own thoughts regarding it, like the reader-response criticism which grew in England and the United States. Jauss asserts that literary history is reciprocity both between writers and readers. He argues that significance of literature was sought by the Formalist and Marxist critics by shrinking, dwarfing the role of a receiver —

“My attempt to bridge the gap between literature and history, between historical and aesthetic approaches begins at the point at which both [the Marxist and the Formalist] schools stop. Their methods conceive the *literary fact* within the closed circle of an aesthetics of production and of representation. In doing so,

they deprive literature of a dimension that inalienably belongs to its aesthetic character as well as to its social function: the dimension of its reception and influence. Reader, listener, and spectator – in short, the factor of the audience – play an extremely limited role in both literary theories.”

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(‘Literary History As A Challenge To Literary Theory,’  
Hans Robert Jauss, P.- 189)

He believes both these schools of criticism do put readers on a plane where his or her identity is just of someone who takes in the intended literary directions or directives which is not what the role a beholder, spectator, reader or listener plays—

“Both the methods lack the reader in his genuine role, a role as unalterable for aesthetic as for historical knowledge: as the addressee for whom the literary work is primarily destined.”

(‘Literary History As A Challenge To Literary Theory,’  
Hans Robert Jauss, P.- 90)

To say, why is a reader so essential, to whom a literary work is addressed, he further reinstates, elucidates his argument,—

“The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them.”

(‘Literary History As A Challenge To Literary Theory,’  
Hans Robert Jauss, P.- 190)

To what aid is this concept to building of an active history, he says, that existence and value of a literary history should assume an activity of communication between the work and its reader which inspires preconception of a new work that might take place based on the correspondence that the ‘message’ and ‘receiver’ create and undergo. It finds out solutions to questions that storm up providing stability to that continuity of communication, where this wide arena (‘horizon’) along with existing mutual correspondence (‘dialogue’) overcomes if there is any contradiction betwixt its aesthetic and historical characteristics: “Thus the thread from the past appearance to the present experience of literature, which historicism had cut, is tied back together.”

It is essential for literature has both appeals on a reader: historical, and aesthetic. When a reader picks a text, in its first reading the significant most impression he or she has is its aesthetic sweep on him/her, where in his/her brain there is already a horizon of other works that exists which has created his/her concept of aesthetic appreciation or an appreciation for art which grows in course of time: “The obvious historical implication of this is that the understanding of the first reader will be sustained and enriched in a chain of receptions from generation to generation; in this way the historical significance of a work will be decided and its aesthetic value made evident...” (‘Literary History As A Challenge To Literary Theory,’ Hans Robert Jauss, P.- 190) And then Jauss establishes his basis, premises



on which literary history should be constructed again in the form of seven theses which he discusses further in his lecture.

### 9.2.1 Important Publications and Writers on Reception Study

Beside Jauss, there are other famous theorists whose scholastic approaches and words have measured, strengthened, developed walls of the Reception Theory in literature like Stuart Hall (1932-2014), Wolfgang Iser (1926-2007), Wolfgang Kayser (1906-1960), John Dixon Hunt (born 1936), Umberto Eco (1932-2016), Harold Marcuse (born 1957), Edmund Husserl (1889-1938), and many others. Years ahead of the foundation of Konstanz School, Louise Michelle Rosenblatt (1904-2005) who wrote 'Literature as Exploration' (1933) endorsed the views that a text should not be held as absolute speaker but both the text and the reader develop a 'dialectic relationship' which should be considered:

"Attempting to reframe our conception of the reading experience, Rosenblatt contends

That 'reading is a constructive, a selective process over time in a particular context.

The relation between reader and signs on the page proceeds in a to-and-fro spiral,'

She adds, 'in which each is continually being affected by what the other has contributed.'"

(*'Formalist Criticism and Reader-Response Theory,'*  
T. F. Davis & Kenneth Womack, 2002)

The powerful force behind reception theory is the work 'Truth and Method' (1960) by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) who was teacher of Hans Robert Jauss, and who believed that the significance of 'hermeneutics' is to create the understanding 'what the human sciences truly are, beyond their methodological self-consciousness, and what connects them with the totality of our experience of world.'

According to Jauss and his Konstanz School, a reader has his 'horizon of experience' about a genre and when he reads a text, he tries to analyse that text on the basis of his experience and knowledge; and, it is assumed or anticipated from a text that it will widen, enlarge or expand the horizon of the reader whereupon its aesthetic or artistic merit is deemed. If the text has been able to enrich 'the horizon of the reader ultima,' it adds into its social functionality because it can aid into the reader's social behaviour, demeanour. By exploring the 'work's original horizon,' it is conceivable to perceive the mind of the reader when he or she would have been writing a particular work; therefore a reader can have more authentic function in the arena of a text as he or she can go back to its day of creation attending one plane of understanding with its author unlike the Formalists's belief of text as 'fact.' To Jauss, a work is rather an 'event.' Therefore during the Renaissance, the readers and translators would have discovered new horizons, panoramas, dimensions,

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meanings, aspects in those ancient works, and the scholars felt one with those great writers of historical past and magnitude. So it was by their effort that they altered the normal history into a ‘special history.’

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In his book ‘Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics, he has further elucidated on this point that literature contains, has seeds of ‘social formative power’ and ‘political ideologies’ which run inseparable as part in that phase of history when certain work is created or a movement takes place, by the point of view of reception. Aesthetic pleasure, according to him, could be seen as *Poiesis* which signifies the creator’s happiness that made him produce that work of art; second, *Aesthesis* is about reaction and understanding of the senses towards that work together with artistic pleasure derived from going through the deep recesses of that work of art and being received by it also (when we derive pleasure by understanding something we are also interwoven into the texture of that thing being its part); and third is *Catharsis* which tells how well literature is able to convey its ‘aesthetic experience’ along with how effectively it is able to help into ‘social function.’

Wolfgang Iser’s ‘The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett’ (1974) furnishes analysis of contributing, renowned English novelists beginning from ‘John Bunyan, Henry Fielding, Sir Walter Scott to William Thackeray, James Joyce or Samuel Beckett.’ Novel too like other genres of literature challenges readers with situations and happenings generated from its specific social, political, linguistic and historic atmosphere leaving its judgement on them. Iser theorises these evaluating ‘literary effects and aesthetic responses’ making, strategizing it on *theme of discovery*, devising reading activity founding on *Phenomenological Method*. Thus, the act of reading becomes purely methodical and systematic but Iser stresses more on the response side of reading: ‘A theory of response has its roots in the text; a theory of reception arises from a history of readers’ judgements.’

In the *Applied Theory* of reception, a writer – analyser – scholar would judge any text in his own historical timeframe like ‘The Taming of a Tragic Heroine: Electra in Eighteenth Century Art’ (Anastasia Bakogianni, 2009), the movie adaptations of famous literary works, etc. There have been other methods like *Omni-local model study, a Theory of Justice, anthologies on reception study, Network Theory (social networks)* exemplified in ‘Reception Studies: The Cultural Mobility of Classics’ (Emily Greenwood, 2016), ‘The Island’ (1973) by Jack Mapanje is reception of ‘Antigone’ (either in 441 BC or earlier) by Sophocles, ‘The Reception of John Rawls in Europe’ (Cécile Laborde, 2002), ‘Reconstructing Ancient Worlds: Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt’ (Stephanie Moser, 2015), ‘Reception Theory and the Representation of Historical Meaning’ (Martyn P. Thompson, 1993), ‘A Companion to Classical Receptions’ (Lorna Hardwick & Christopher Stray, 2007), ‘Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies’ (James L. Machor &

Philip Goldstein, 2001), 'Analysis of an Ancient Network: Personal Communication and the Study of Social Structure in a Past Society' (Michael C. Alexander & James A. Danowski, 1990), 'Elite Networks, and Heresy Accusations: Towards a Social Description of the Origenist Controversy' (Elizabeth A. Clark, 1992), 'The Jesus Movement and Social Network Analysis: Part- I, Part- II' (Dennis C. Duling, 1999, 2000), 'Paul's Aegean Network: The Strength of Strong Ties' (Dennis C. Duling, 2013), 'Understanding Social Networks: Themes, Concepts, and Findings' (Charles Kadushin, 2012), 'Models and Methods in Social Network Analysis' (Peter J. Carrington, John Scott & Stanley Wasserman, 2005), etc.

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### 9.2.2 Reception Theory in the Digital Era

Reception Studies hugely involves media these days as watching every reader's views or spectator's views or recording them separately, would seem almost impossible because of which social media or voting or recording statements and other kinds of sources are used to collect their views for further research and study. The most comprehensively engaging thing is that readers and scholars are ever reading a text and analysing it: so the element of reception criticism or study is never going to be hushed off from the foregrounds of literary criticism like many other critical branches have been. The time-serving element of reception criticism is not bracketed because each published work is ought to be read, and then, the scope for the current study is endless; and in this way, contemporaneity of history and 'horizon' will also remain to be.

Today on internet, a website called 'Reception Study Society' exists, and there are plenteous like them created by many groups, university peers which encourage, stimulate both formal and informal dialogues (or chats) among scholars, teachers, theorists from across the world on different subjects, and realms of reception study. Reception Study in this *global village*, as we call the world today, has hardly any distance of miles in borders to cross like earlier: hence literature attempted at any part of the world is frequently read, adapted, translated, critiqued, analysed and cited:

"...the significance of Ezra Pound's translations, if they can be called such, of Chinese poetry that resulted in his *Cathay* lies in how the poems were read when they appeared and in the precise historical moment when they were published."

( 'Reflections on Comparative Literature in the Twenty-First Century,'  
Susan Bassnett)

When reception of this work in latter generations in course of time changes and adds to its configuration, much can be observed on the same work of art, as argues Susan: 'As Hugh Kenner points out in his book *The Pound Era*, the *Cathay* poems may have started out as translations of ancient Chinese verse, which is what Pound intended them to be, but in the way they were received they were transformed into war poems that spoke to the generation coping with the horrors of the trenches in Flanders.' Not only until this, as the eighteenth-century

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neo-classicists employed art learnt from Horace or Juvenal to shape a certain type of poetry or prose, similarly Pound employed Fenellosa, finally shaping his art as a product of Imagist School providing challenge to future translators as well as poets.

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### 9.3 RECEPTION STUDY OF EPOCH

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In comparative literature, epoch, period, generation and movement stand for *conceptual structure for periodic literary groupings*. Recipients of any work of art are intermediaries who serve important stage among history, author and the future of the text. Weisstein mentions that the proposition or notion of Periods or Epochs is similar to the value of ‘concepts in philosophy,’ or what ‘class’ stands for in the study of natural things. It segregates one type from the other denoting a historical event eventually discussing a special part of a long process. In his book ‘Comparative Literature,’ Ulrich Weisstein mentions that historical divisions are important for the value attached with them as they help demarcating a certain length of time or traits related to them; but they should not be followed blindly. Epoch is defined by him as ‘the larger segment of history of the mankind.’ It involves religious overtones: “Epochs are determined by an event or time of an event making the beginning of a relatively new development.” Its example can be seen in the Renaissance and Humanism, the emergence of Protestantism or other branches of Christian faith in Europe, the religious upheavals in the West and Central Asia, and Africa.

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### 9.4 RECEPTION STUDY OF PERIOD

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Under the aegis of comparative theory of literary groupings, ‘part of a real international, cross-cultural movement’ is termed Period. René Wellek and Austin Warren feel that diversification due to growth under nineteenth and twentieth centuries, winged wide horizons for genre just like period—

‘With the vast widening of the audience in the nineteenth century, there are many more genres; and, with the more rapid diffusion through cheap printing, they are short-lived or pass through more rapid transitions. “Genre” in the nineteenth century and in our own time suffers from the same difficulty as “Period:” we are conscious of the quick changes in literary fashion — a new literary generation every ten years, rather than every fifty: in American poetry, the age of verslibre, the age of Eliot, the age of Auden.’

Literature, above all, is a huge stock of knowledge where ‘philosophical ideas are appropriated or absorbed by creative writers and in the manner in which certain ideas undergo transformation as they pass from one period to another’ (‘Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective,’ Horst Frenz & Newton P. Stallknecht, 1961). According to Weisstein in his ‘Comparative Literature,’ he mentions that period in comparison to epoch is a shorter division

of time which is a frame of years upon which certain qualities of writings and art dominate ('Period is a time-section dominated by a system of literary norms, standards and connections...') like the Elizabethan Period in England when drama was at its pinnacle of development and success in the hands of Kyd, Marlowe, Shakespeare and Jonson; eighteenth century prose when writers concentrated on the growth of prose based on neo-classical norms and literature spread to ordinary homes due to periodicals and journals earning lot of public awareness and appreciation; the German 'Weimarer Klassizismus' and the 'Sturm und Drang' headed by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller; or the Spanish epoch created by Miguel de Cervantes which studded the literary world into an unfading horizon.

Periods are short-lived and in that specific time slot, the system by which literature can be observed or studied, is optimistically clear, as Weisstein observes: a period's 'introduction, spread and diversification, integration and disappearance can be traced.' For example if we undertake the post-colonial literature for reception study, it is both the study of literature and translations discussed in the works of Australian, American, South Asian, African, Canadian, or other colonised territories incorporating issues of globalisation, politics, the traditional and recently growing diasporas, indigenous literature, post-imperialistic societies, etc. The period of study would be after the colonised nations became independent from the rules that dominated them by the European countries which brought them into unique cultural connect with each other. In the historical segment of literary period, as Weisstein adds, there were longer periods of one particular norm or set of ideas in the centuries prior to the twentieth century. It covered at least forty to fifty years span.

But in the modern age, one literary period became shortened than a decade and a half, and at times even less than that. The historical survey of literature should be done via annalistic approach in which many events can be estimated, valued at the same time. It is a more comprehensive approach rather than separating them under decades, centuries by 'periodizing' them. Weisstein declares that a literary historian must possess knowledge of 'art history and musicology' because both of them have styles in common. The terms used to denote periods have been an influence from other arts, therefore literature is a fusion of arts.

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## 9.5 MEANING OF GENERATION IN RECEPTION THEORY

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The concept of Generation in the realm of interpretation and the Theory of Communication by the Germans surged, waved in the third decade of the twentieth-century onwards. If they could divide certain generations of writers in literature, probably it would enable them easy understanding of an estimated correlation between art and human experience. By segregating generations, certain

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characteristics could be drawn, and then the scholars would be able to delve deep into an epoch's clear-sighted features—

“The influence of literary circles such as the ‘Georgekreis’ and the rapid succession of literary movements immediately after the turn of the century argued for the validity of such an approach. Scholars hoped that they could establish the characteristics of a specific generation and, in doing so, gain insight into the unique features of a given literary epoch. Some even hoped to find causal connections between the generation and the individual artist, his society, his genealogy, and his stage in life.”

(‘The Generation Theory in German Literary Criticism,’ Janet K. King)

The trend had been in application incorporating study of various other streams effectuating literature or an artist. Writers, critics and scholars from Sociology, History, Psychology, Pedagogy, and other disciplines participate and partake into such study. A generation usually consists of a thirty year period which is the ‘lowest temporal limit of period’ (‘Comparative Literature,’ Ulrich Weisstein).

#### Check Your Progress

1. Who is The Father of Reception Theory?
2. What is Hermeneutics?
3. Who founded the Konstanz School?
4. Who wrote the book ‘*Comparative Literature*’?

## 9.6 IMPORTANCE OF MOVEMENT IN RECEPTION THEORY

In ‘Comparative Literature and Literary Theory,’ Weisstein dwells on the point that when scholars draw close to the study of the recent literature (era), it is then they witness the shortest of time spans assigned to one particular literary type or style. In literature, after 1870, ‘periods are replaced by movements.’ Movements under reception studies are characterised by ‘reduction in size’ and the urge to seek or do something new (denoted by him as ‘frequency of change’), and this is linked to the fact that after Romanticism in literature, a restless nature took home in art where the ‘artists became more and more self-conscious,’ and the existing traits, conditions, achievements never left them contented for a longer period of time; hence they sought new manifestations of their creativity. Movement is always about a fresh group of young writers or artists who are dedicating their art to evolve one principle or set of ideas like Surrealism, Imagism, Dadaism, etc. Movements, as Weisstein explains, do not survive post a generation.

They change before a generation ends. There is difference between a movement and a school of thought, for a movement is made up of coexistent artists (‘coevals’) where all have equal importance, and there is no teacher-student

equation; whereas in a school, there are few people or a person who founds a certain set of principles or ideas which are developed and followed by that generation, or other generations of writers, artists. The scholastic investigation into literature and art confined to the limitation of a period or movement, demands and requires the reckoning, consideration of the 'artistic intentions as it is voiced in the theoretical manifestos' such as Surrealism.

The example of international literary movement like Romanticism displays different characteristics in France, Germany, England or other parts of the world existing with the same name. The beginning of this movement marks difference in years in different geographical regions. Albeit it was a movement, the nations involving it do not carry similar principles or unity of thought. At the end of his discussion, Weisstein asserts that historical concepts of periodization are stems to bolster literary pillars for the sake of studying it as a subject but he calls it 'foolish to employ terms like era, age, movement or period statically and mechanically instead of dynamically and flexibly.'

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## 9.7 THEMATOLOGY IN RECEPTION THEORY

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The lexical connotation of the term 'Thematology' refers to 'study or science of theme.' This study of themes is part of study demarcated by geographically separated cultures across the world. As an integrant of comparative literature, Thematology speaks about the distinguishing or difference-setting scholarly exploration of themes in literary works. The French School of comparative literature proposes Thematology as a relative study of themes of literary works which relate, mention, refer or are similar to works in some other countries. The area of this study prescribes probing in themes only. For example, the literary works produced by the Heptanese School of literature, famously known as Ionian School, bear apparent influence from their Italian counterparts in poetry in terms of Thematology in the portrayal and representation of truthfulness of the facts, real-life happenings, scenes and images.

A theme in this context may include the overall impression of plot, the idea behind the situations, the story, the subject-matter, etc. As subject, themes break free the barriers of conventionality by including words and concepts which usher life and its various hues, shades into very wide ambit encompassing emotions (love, hatred, revenge), issues (relationships, war, politics, orphanhood, marriage), necessities (money, health), wishes (kingship, wealth, prosperity), death, education, nature (humour, absurd, passion), utopia, the unchangeable (physical stature or make, fate, destiny, situations in life, vicissitudes), etc.

Thematology is a traditional comparative mode of study and it is surviving for long in its approach to literary investigation which involves cultural studies such as Oriental (the Eastern philosophy or thinking of life) and Occidental (the Western philosophy or thinking of life). Every literary text is a whole of two components:

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form (structure) and content (subject, story, idea). Form contains language related aspects which present the story or see how the story is presented whereas content decides what is being said or told in the story. This content or the main theme may be factual or fictitious. When it would be a fact, it would refer to life-like, real situations; a fiction may refer to anything starting from Alice's *Wonderland*, to allegorical 'The Jungle Book,' Golding's *child-adults* marooned on that island where they play their unobstructed instincts— to human abstractions, obsessions, philosophies, religiosity, metaphysics, anything. A comparatist scholar is supposed to discern that pattern which is weaving the theme, and hear the inner voice of the literary text undertaken, in order to develop a proper understanding to the ideas in the text, and work on its reception part likewise. A comparatist must look forward to know more about works as most of the comparisons are done with the ancient texts which have been cited for centuries rigorously. It is also a fact that many writers try those ancient themes intertexted within modern circumstances and among the play of genres.

Theme interweaves surface, underhand themes, motifs, leitmotifs, and vivid units which culminate into one whole. From the reception point of view, it also has to be analysed on the basis of what a particular theme from the writer's social background does to the recipient's socio-cultural situation and ken. A writer chooses a specific form, genre to affix value to the content of his or her choice. Richardson chose to put 'Pamela' (1740) under epistolary form as a sentimental fiction, or Keats would present his praise in the form of odes, lyrics or sonnets, a group of British writers during the mid-twentieth century would choose to depict in drama and novel their anger and rebuff towards the existing socio-political establishment in Britain, and the kinds. The literary speculation or scrutiny employing thematological view point should have 'approaches of functional and ontological type as nodal concepts to understand literature.' It not only requires a sound knowledge of national but other cultures which plish similar accomplishments in other parts of the world.

**Check Your Progress**

5. In literature, after 1870, periods were replaced by what?
6. What does the lexical connotation of the term 'Thematology' refer to?
7. What is the Heptanese School of literature famously known as?
8. What is Oriental philosophy Occidental philosophy?

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## **9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS**

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1. The Father of Reception Theory is the German-born historian, Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997).



2. Hermeneutics, a term of Philosophy, refers to methodical judgement or analysis of texts.
3. Hans Robert Jauss founded the Konstanz School along with Wolfgang Iser.
4. Ulrich Weisstein wrote 'Comparative Literature'.
5. In literature, after 1870, periods were replaced by movements.
6. The lexical connotation of the term 'Thematology' refers to study or science of theme.
7. Heptanese School of literature is famously known as Ionian School.
8. Oriental is the Eastern philosophy or thinking of life and Occidental is the Western philosophy or thinking of life.

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### 9.9 SUMMARY

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- Reception Study is part of 'Theory of Communication' in criticism which deals with academic evaluation and analysis of a particular reader's response on a particular text or work of art.
- The Father of Reception Theory is the German-born historian, Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997) who paved ways for this evaluative theory of art called 'Reception Aesthetics' in several of his books and researches.
- Any integrated content to be assessed involves words, events and symbols for a higher purpose.
- Robert Jauss founded the Konstanz School along with Wolfgang Iser (initially a West-German literary movement).
- It is essential for literature has both appeals on a reader: historical, and aesthetic.
- According to Jauss and his Konstanz School, a reader has his 'horizon of experience' about a genre and when he reads a text, he tries to analyse that text on the basis of his experience and knowledge.
- If the text has been able to enrich 'the horizon of the reader ultima,' it adds into its social functionality because it can aid into the reader's social behaviour, demeanour.
- Reception Studies hugely involves media these days as watching every reader's views or spectator's views or recording them separately, would seem almost impossible.
- Because of which social media or voting or recording statements and other kinds of sources are used to collect their views for further research and study.
- Reception Study in this global village, as we call the world today, has hardly any distance of miles in borders to cross like earlier.

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- Hence literature attempted at any part of the world is frequently read, adapted, translated, critiqued, analysed and cited.
- In comparative literature, epoch, period, generation and movement stand for conceptual structure for periodic literary groupings.
- Recipients of any work of art are intermediaries who serve important stage among history, author and the future of the text.
- Weisstein mentions that the proposition or notion of Periods or Epochs is similar to the value of 'concepts in philosophy,' or what 'class' stands for in the study of natural things.
- It segregates one type from the other denoting a historical event eventually discussing a special part of a long process.
- Under the aegis of comparative theory of literary groupings, 'part of a real international, cross-cultural movement' is termed Period.
- According to Weisstein in his 'Comparative Literature,' he mentions that period in comparison to epoch is a shorter division of time which is a frame of years upon which certain qualities of writings and art dominate.
- Periods are short-lived and in that specific time slot, the system by which literature can be observed or studied, is optimistically clear.
- In the historical segment of literary period, as Weisstein adds, there were longer periods of one particular norm or set of ideas in the centuries prior to the twentieth century.
- It covered at least forty to fifty years span.
- But in the modern age, one literary period became shortened than a decade and a half, and at times even less than that.
- The historical survey of literature should be done via annalistic approach in which many events can be estimated, valued at the same time.
- The concept of Generation in the realm of interpretation and the Theory of Communication by the Germans surged, waved in the third decade of the twentieth-century onwards.
- The trend had been in application incorporating study of various other streams effectuating literature or an artist.
- In literature, after 1870, 'periods are replaced by movements.'
- Movement is always about a fresh group of young writers or artists who are dedicating their art to evolve one principle or set of ideas like Surrealism, Imagism, Dadaism, etc.
- Movements, as Weisstein explains, do not survive post a generation. They change before a generation ends.

- The example of international literary movement like Romanticism displays different characteristics in France, Germany, England or other parts of the world existing with the same name.
- The lexical connotation of the term ‘Thematology’ refers to ‘study or science of theme.’
- This study of themes is part of study demarcated by geographically separated cultures across the world.
- A theme in this context may include the overall impression of plot, the idea behind the situations, the story, the subject-matter, etc.
- Every literary text is a whole of two components: form (structure) and content (subject, story, idea).
- Form contains language related aspects which present the story or see how the story is presented whereas content decides what is being said or told in the story.
- This content or the main theme may be factual or fictitious.
- A comparatist must look forward to know more about works as most of the comparisons are done with the ancient texts which have been cited for centuries rigorously.
- Theme interweaves surface, underhand themes, motifs, leitmotifs, and vivid units which culminate into one whole.
- The literary speculation or scrutiny employing thematological view point should have ‘approaches of functional and ontological type as nodal concepts to understand literature.’
- It not only requires a sound knowledge of national but other cultures which plenish similar accomplishments in other parts of the world.

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### 9.10 KEY WORDS

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- **Phenomenology:** It is a philosophic process of trying to know the living experiences of a human life by using two ways: epoché and reduction Paul Van Tieghem – [1871-1948] noted French comparatist.
- **Ontology:** Branch of philosophy, metaphysics which studies nature of beings; in a subject, concepts or classifications which manifest their integrals and connectivity between them.
- **Polysemy:** In Linguistics— a word, sign, phrase, symbol having multiple meanings or ‘semes’ (or ‘sememes’); they are mostly connected within the semantic region of one type.

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## 9.11 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. 'Comparative literature studies the actions and influences exerted by individuals.' Whose theory is this?
2. What similarities are between the ideas of Prof. Henry Remak and Prof. Ulrich Weisstein about their views on genre studies in comparative literature?
3. Which country in the world had the greatest impact of the Reception Theory?
4. Did the key figure Hans Robert Jauss derive his principles of Reception Theory from Reader-Response Theory?
5. Which two theories of criticism does Jauss reject, and why?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. 'The study of arts exists in their mutual interpretation.' Explain this statement with reference to Ulrich Weisstein's approach to genre studies.
2. What is Reception Theory and on which principles does it work? Furnish this question with fundamentals of Reception Theory and its chief exponents' views.

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## 9.12 FURTHER READINGS

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**BLOCK - III**  
**TRANSLATION STUDIES**

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*The Study of Translation*

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**UNIT 10 THE STUDY OF  
TRANSLATION**

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**NOTES**

**Structure**

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 The Study of Translation: History
  - 10.2.1 Brief History of Translation in the West
- 10.3 History of Translation in India
- 10.4 Different Types of Translation
- 10.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.6 Summary
- 10.7 Key Words
- 10.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.9 Further Readings

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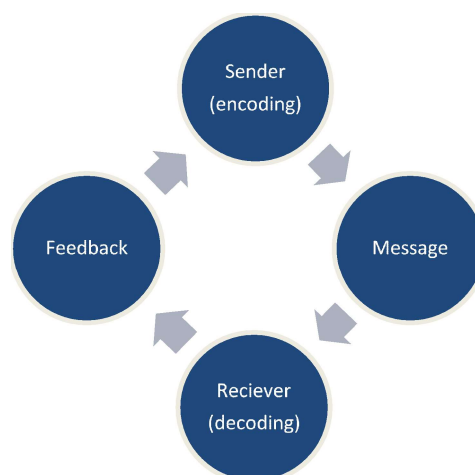
**10.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Gone are the days when ‘translation’ used to be thought of as an anonymous, unappreciated activity practiced by a select few as a hobby or professional necessity. Today translation is a term which has gained wide currency and the discipline of ‘translation studies’ is considered an immensely fertile area of work and research. In simple terms, to ‘translate’ is to meaningfully convey or to carry across a message from one language to another.

The concept of ‘translation’ itself has come across its parent discipline of linguistics and has more or less become a part of the general psyche of people. Take for instance the ease with which one translates currency while shopping at a grocery shop– “thirty rupees” to ‘*tees rupaye*’ i.e. from English to Hindi and vice versa. Translation is primarily a process of communication in which an idea is conveyed from the language it is originally expressed in, which is called the source language (SL), into a language comprehensible to the intended/target audience, which is called the target language (TL). The process of translation involves multiple steps, quite similar to that of the communication cycle:

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In this unit, you will study about translation in detail.

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### 10.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept of translation
- Describe the history of translation
- Analyse the significance of translation in India

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### 10.2 THE STUDY OF TRANSLATION: HISTORY

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The significance of translation lies in the different languages being used by the two parties, the sender and the receiver. Translation therefore becomes an exceedingly complex activity because no two languages share the same structures of grammar, composition and so on. This is what Eugene A. Nida refers to when he declares ‘Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations’. According to another definition provided by noted linguist and critic J. C. Catford, Translation is ‘the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL).’

#### 10.2.1 Brief History of Translation in the West

Translation integrates in itself both the arts and science and is deeply rooted in the history of humankind itself. One can say that translation is as old an activity as human history – from the time one community of people started communicating with the other community for different purposes such as business or trade, they had to communicate through translation. Thus translation can be seen as a linguistic activity which is as old as human beings interactions. Moreover, it can also be

thought that any utterance (whether oral or written) is a translation of a thought though the recent linguists are of the opinion that one cannot think beyond language. But when we speak or write we usually tend to translate our thoughts into some kind of an expression. In that sense, if we take translation, then it is an activity which is inherent in human beings.

William Shakespeare's famous character Bottom from *Midsummer Night's Dream* when transformed into an ass head was called as "Bottom, thou are translated!" This suggests that when one translates something one necessarily moves away from the original, if there is anything original. So in the process of translation we move away from the original thought/ text and try to add something or the other to the already existing idea/ text/ etc. So even though, there is no theoretical writing on translation (existing) from the age of antiquity, still it can be surmised that translation as a human activity is as old as human beings and people time and again have made efforts to comment on the process of translation which can be taken to be the basis of some of the translation theory that exists in today's world.

Literary historians have traced formal translation as far back as 3000 B.C. when the proclamation of emperor Sargon of Assyria about his adventures in Asian languages was translated into several other languages which were spoken in his vast empire. Translation is often thought to be a Roman invention, according to Eric Jacobsen (1903-1985). Lucius. L. Andronicus (284-204B.C.) is the Greek writer and the first translator of *The Odyssey* into Latin around 240 B.C. The works of Euripides (484-407B.C.) were translated by the early Latin writers – Gnaeus Naevias (264-194B.C.) and Quintus Ennius (239-169B.C.). Catullus (84-54B.C.) was another remarkable translator of that period and subsequently followed the translations of Greek into Latin and vice versa. Theodore Savory in *The Art of Translation* says: "This practice continued as long as there was literature to be translated and a tradition of long to appreciate the results" (*The Art of Translation*, Savory Theodore, 1968.)

Indeed it will not be an exaggeration to say that translation plays an important role in the construction of the collective history and composite culture of people. Roman philosophers like Cicero and Horace were among the first theoreticians on translation. Originally written in Hebrew, the Bible is perhaps the most translated text till date. With the translation of the Bible, came the idea of an accurate rendering of the word of God. St. Jerome who revised early unsatisfactory translations of the Bible and completed the translation of the Hebrew Bible was an important influence on translation theory as he propounded the idea of sense for sense translation.

Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from the Greek – except of course in the case of the Holy Scripture, where even the syntax contains a mystery – I render not word-for-word, but sense-for-sense.

(St Jerome 395 CE/1997: 25)

Later William Tyndale's translation of the Bible became one of the major sources for King James' 'authorized version'. All these translations of the Bible helped English language gain currency over Latin. In the modern period, translations

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of the Bible continue to be produced all over the world into different languages. Besides such religious translations, other literary endeavors also strengthened English language, like King Alfred's translation of the *Pastoral Rule* of Gregory the Great, rendering the original 'sometimes word for word and sometimes sense for sense' (qtd in Sir Ifor Evans' *History of English Literature*). He also made available through translation into English significant texts like Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, *History of the World of Orosius*, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* before finally overseeing the compilation of the remarkable *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* which first imbued the English people with a sense of Englishness.

The first European to assume that one translates satisfactorily only toward his own language may have been Martin Luther (1483-1546), the translator of The Bible into German. Compounding these demands upon the translator is the fact that not even the most complete dictionary or thesaurus can ever be a fully adequate guide in translation. Alexander Fraser Tytler (1747-1813) emphasized that assiduous reading is a more comprehensive guide to a language than are dictionaries in his *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1790).

In the Elizabethan age, translations of scholars like Plutarch, Montaigne were major influences on the writers of the era. It is equally important to recall George Chapman's translation of the Greek literary giant Homer's works into English. Also, eminent writers like John Dryden and Alexander Pope made enriching contributions to the corpus of translation. While Dryden translated Virgil's magnum opus, the *Aeneid*, he believed that translation needed to tread a middle path between strictly adhering to the original source text i.e. word for word and, conveying the general sense of the source text.

It was Dryden who first spoke of the basic terminology for translation i.e. the ideas of 'metaphrase' which means a thoroughly rigid word by word and line by line mode of translation which is quite similar to literal translation; 'paraphrase' referring to an act of translation which keeps the author of the source text in focus while at the same time, not adhering to his very words like the sense for sense translation; and, 'imitation' which involves an absolute free hand with both the original words and sense intended by the author making it a free translation or even perhaps an adaptation or abridgement.

Alexander Pope translated the *Odyssey* where he undertook to convey the essence of the source text into the target language. However, in the age of Dr. Johnson, special emphasis began to be laid upon absolute adherence to the source text while translating. Alexander Fraser Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1790) is considered to be the first book on translation theory in English where Tytler has prepared a case for word-for-word translation as far as possible and took a position clearly contrary to that of Dryden.

Translations from and into English continued in the romantic period with the likes of Goethe and Byron being widely translated. German philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher in his significant work *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens* ('On the different methods of translating') (1813) set another ball



rolling in the field of translation methodology— that of retaining the original foreign flavour of the text, a certain ‘alienating’ approach which would give the reader an opportunity to receive the translated text embedded with the original. While eminent pre-Raphaelite poet D.G. Rossetti believed in the subservience of the translator to the original while William Morris subscribed to the view of retaining the foreignness of a text to be passed on to a prospective reader in translation.

Later, Matthew Arnold advocated following a more open method of translation in his lecture *On Translating Homer* though he also gave it an elitist turn by identifying only the qualified elites to be the best judges of a translation. In the colonial era, orientalist scholars like Fitzgerald, Charles Wilkins and William Jones worked with a view to improve and polish by translating what they thought inferior or perhaps even barbaric qualities of the source language; and taking liberties with the text was not a limitation at all. In this fashion, Jones translated Kalidasa’s *Abhijnanasakuntalam* from Sanskrit.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, Translation Studies emerged as a separate discipline in its own right. The linguistic turn in the field of critical theory heralded a renewed interest in the theory of translation. Schools of critical theory like Russian formalism, structuralism and post structuralism have been instrumental in bringing about a wave of intense research and analysis in translation studies. Language and its study became important leading to a fresh perspective in translation as well. Hitherto, translation had never been an activity of primary interest and neither the translator’s art nor identity was usually recognized in public.

In other words, it can be said that earlier it was thought that translation was a secondary activity which does not have much literary or creative significance as it is dealing with the works of someone else. But when one translates one knows the fact that translation is not such an easy activity, it requires as much of critical understanding of the text which is translated as creative linguistic so as to make the translation such which will have the flavour of the original as well as have an distinct identity of its own. The modern translation studies have emphasized on these aspects as it has come to the realization that translation is a much complex and necessary activity for human survival and civilization. This understanding led scholars to build up a translation theory which we will be focusing on in the next unit. The necessary springboard for translation studies in England was provided by the publication of J. C. Catford’s book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* in 1965. This book is considered to be a significant one in the purview of translation studies as it is somehow paving the path for a serious study of translation in the twentieth century.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

1. Who were among the first theoreticians on translation?
2. The Bible was originally written in which language?
3. Who translated *The Odyssey*?
4. Which book is considered to be the first book on translation theory in English?

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### 10.3 HISTORY OF TRANSLATION IN INDIA

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#### NOTES

India is a land of many languages. Translation, here, is one of the most significant activity from time immemorial. People who speak different languages get themselves involved in translational activities for the purpose of everyday communication as well as for other administrative, cultural as well as literary needs. India being a land of such a kind has been subject to much of translation from the ancient past. A documentation of the same was not possible as these translational activities were done naturally. They had no written history to study it methodically. In other words, it can be said that in a multilingual and culturally diverse country like India, any attempt to trace the history of translation would be a futile attempt; especially so, since its history is shrouded in the annals of myths and legends impossibly intertwined with religious beliefs and sentiments.

Bharata's *Natyasastra* is considered to be one of the earliest texts written in the country. The twin grand epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* believed to be composed by Valmiki and Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa were passed down from one generation to the other primarily through a vibrant oral culture. Sanskrit, aptly known as the language of the Gods, was the only language used for literary creations of any merit. Though it does not mean that literature written in other languages was not present in India. There was much which was also done in *Prakrit*, but because of various reasons (primarily political and cultural) *Prakrit* literature did not survive. Whatever little was written in *Prakrit* got lost in the annals of history of India.

It is generally seen that Sanskrit was the vehicle for all *abhinaya* and *natya* activities performed in the cities while dialects like Prakrit, Magadhi, Pali, Suraseni were to be spoken by the classes down the varna system like the women and other lower castes. In the Dravidian culture of South India, a prescriptive text similar to *Natyasastra* called the *Tolkappiam* composed by Tolkappiar in Tamil was sacred to all practitioners of literature and culture.

It would be hard to imagine the continued existence and relevance of these texts in the absence of translation since their respective times of creation to the contemporary era, though there is a lacuna created by the lack of reliable evidence regarding the same. Major historical events like foreign invasions, widespread cultural and religious movements like the bhakti movement and decisive flow towards ideas of a united community necessarily ensured greater interaction between languages and dialects and hence, inevitably, translation. Moreover, the very presence of an overwhelming number of versions of classical Indian texts including epics, plays, poems and so on indicates a healthy interaction between languages in the plurality of Indian experience.

Just as we saw in the previous section about western history of translation, how translation of the Bible played an important role in consolidating the status of languages and bringing to fore lesser-known dialects; this holds true in the Indian context as well. For instance, translations of Valmiki's *Ramayana* exist in almost

all languages of India, like Tulsidas's famous *Ramchariatmanas* in Awadhi, Kamban's *Ramavataram* in Tamil, *Kotha Ramayana* in Assamese, *Bhavartha Ramayana* in Marathi, *Sri Ranganatha Ramayanamu* in Telugu, *Krittivasi Ramayana* in Bengali, *Kumudendu Ramayana* in Kannada, *Adhyatma Ramayanam* in Malayalam and so on. Later in the Mughal period, a necessary interaction of cultures precipitated translations from and into Persian, Arabic, etc. Under the colonial rule of the British, the infamous dictum of Macaulay ensured an abiding interest in translating the oriental texts into western languages with a view to improve upon their barbaric quality and to aid the British to comprehend the colony better. Charlie Wilkins translated the *Bhagwad – Gita* (1784) and William Jones translated Kalidasa's *Abhijnanashakuntalam* (1789). Gradually, rise of Indian nationalism gave a boost to translations from the coloniser's language to native languages and vice versa, imbued with a fierce spirit of rebellion and the growing need to hit back in the same medium. For instance, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Anandamath* (1882) which contained *Vande Mataram* that became the national song of India, was translated into many Indian languages, fanning the rising national consciousness.

After India gained Independence, the whole socio-cultural rubric of the nation underwent a lot of change. This involved concerted attempts at reviving the native traditions, languages and dialects of the country. Setting up of schools imparting education in the mother tongue of different linguistic communities as well as teaching of more than one language from the primary level ensured a greater degree of seriousness towards a linguistic and cultural revival. In the face of such diversity being integrated in the nation, translations became necessary in order to ensure and enhance a sense of unity and development of a collective public consciousness. The Sahitya Akademi, established in 1954 emerged as a major player in the scene of literary translation in India as it not only commissions and publishes translations from and into English and different regional languages (including tribal languages), it also recognizes and awards exceptional works of translation. Noted translators like A.K. Ramanujan, P. Lal, Dilip Chitre, R. Parthasarathy, Arun Kolatkar, Sujit Mukherjee, Harish Trivedi, G. N. Devy, Md. Asaduddin, Tejaswini Niranjana and the like have kept up the momentum of translation studies and the quality of translations in India. Today translation studies has grown into an interdisciplinary, multilingual and multi-faceted discipline with wide ranging applications in everyday life.

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### Check Your Progress

5. Which text is considered to be one of the earliest written in India?
6. Who composed the twin grand epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*?
7. Who wrote the national song of India, *Vande Mataram*?
8. When was The Sahitya Akademi established?

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## 10.4 DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRANSLATION

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### NOTES

This section explains the different types of translation in detail.

#### Semantic and literal translation

Semantic translation is translation of the meaning of a particular expression. It is the method of sense-for-sense translation. It is also known as free translation. Careful attention is paid to the meaning that the source text is projecting and the same is conveyed into the target language. Semantic translation takes into account the context and all other extra-linguistic features of the source text while conveying it to the target language. This may involve some amount of interpreting as well, in order to find the closest possible equivalent. Semantic translation therefore produces a certain naturalness of the translated text in the target language.

M.H. Abrahms in his *Handbook of Literary Terms* defines Semantics as ‘the study of the meaning of words and of combination of words in phrases, sentences, and larger linguistic units’. It was in the field of semantics that swiss linguist Saussure introduced the concepts of *sign* (a single word) as composed of a *signifier* (the speech sounds or written marks composing the sign) and the *signified* (the conceptual meaning of the sign). Peter Newmark talks of Semantic translation in his *Approaches of translation* (1981). He says:

“Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original.”

**Literal Translation** on the other hand, is also known as word-for-word translation and as the name implies, it aims at finding exact equivalents of the words of the source language in the target language with lesser regard to context and other socio-cultural attributes of the expression. It tries to conform to the lexical, syntactical and grammatical structure of the source as far as possible. Literal translation is considered the inferior form of translation because it is capable of arm-twisting the meaning into something completely unintended.

J. C. Catford, in his *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, describes free and literal translation in the following words:

“The popular terms free, literal, and word-for-word translation, though loosely used, partly correlate with the distinctions dealt with here. A free translation is always unbounded—equivalences shunt up and down the rank scale, but tend to be at the higher ranks—sometimes between larger units than the sentence. Word-for-word translation generally means what it says: i.e. is essentially rank-bound at word-rank... Literal translation lies between these extremes; it may start, as it were, from a word-for-word translation, but make changes in conformity with TL grammar (e.g. inserting additional words, changing structures at any rank, etc.); this may make it a group-group or clause-clause translation. One notable point, however, is that literal translation, like word-for-word, tends to remain lexically word-for-word, i.e. to use the highest (unconditioned) probability lexical equivalent for each lexical item” (1965:25)

For instance, a direct-literal translation of a sentence in Hindi, “*Maine apne haathon se usey kitaab di*” can create a funny situation in “I gave her the book with my own hands” (as if one could give someone something by using someone else’s hands!) whereas a better way to translate it semantically could be “I gave her the book myself”. Similarly, “*Woh meri byaahtha hai*” can lead to an awkward literary translation as “She is my wedded wife” (there is no concept of an *unwed* wife!) and a better semantic translation as “She is my wife”. A sentence like “*Doosro ke kaam me taang mat adaa*” can be literally translated as “Do not put your leg in the work of others” (which sounds hilarious!) or with a little application of meaning with regard to the conventions of the target language, “Do not poke your nose in the work of other people”. Again, while a simple sentence like “I am here” can be literally translated as “*Main hoon yahaan*”, it can lead to quite an intriguing understanding as the tone changes while repositioning the verb “*hoon*” in accordance with the source text in English.

A weaker form of literal translation could be the one seen in advertisements, bill boards, newspapers etc. where though the syntax is not copied verbatim, but a natural flow of target language is missing in the translated text. This kind of translation is not as inferior as the exact literal translation, but inferior nevertheless. For instance, you would have heard the bilingual announcements in the Delhi Metro, they go something like this: “*Agla station Rajiv Chowk hai*”, “The next station is Rajiv Chowk”; “*Yahan blue line ke liye badlein*”, “Change here for the Blue Line”; “*Doori ka Dhyaan rakhen*”, “Mind the gap.” There can be more examples like the phrase “follow me” could become “*mera peeche karo*” or “*mere peeche aao*” both of which being literally translated, fail to convey the meaning of the original phrase. So a newspaper headline might read “Stay on caste-based rallies in UP” and literally translated, it becomes “*UP mein jaatiyon ki rally par lagi rok*”, advertisements could read “Lose weight now, ask me how!” and translated as “*Vazan ghatayen abhi, mujhse poochen kaise!*”.

One application of literal translation is while translating proverbs, idioms and metaphors. Being specifically rooted, these are subjected to partial or fully literal translation. English idioms like “After a storm comes calm” is translated as “*Toofaan ke baad ki shaanti*”, “Simple living, high thinking” becomes “*Saada jeevan, uchcha vichaar*” and “As you sow, so shall you reap” becomes “*Jaisa bowoge, waisa kaatoge*”. According to the flavor of Hindi however, a better job is accomplished in cases like “Diamond cuts diamonds” which becomes “*Lohey ko lohaa kaat ta hai*”, “Raining cats and dogs” becomes “*Moosaladhaar baarish*” and “Where there is a will, there is a way” finds an equivalent in the Hindi “*Jahaan chaah, wahaan raah*”.

### Functional and Communicative Translation

Functional approach to translation values the context and desists from treating language merely as a code as done in the communicative approach. The actual action or the event unfolding at a particular time is also relevant for functional translation. British

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tradition of linguistics led by J. R. Firth sought to reorient the focus of translation to its functional aspect which was intricately linked to derivation of meaning from the context. On the other hand, translation was considered akin to Communication because both involved codification and de/re-codification and the message was relayed with minimum distortion. Nida (1964) spoke of this by explaining that in a communication process, most information lies in the part which is unpredictable and the predictable parts are deficient in information. Similarly, in translation, when a message is being conveyed from one language to another, it becomes the translator's job to compensate for the loss of predictability in order to prevent information overload. Mona Baker (2001), while explicating Nida's position further, states that such a loss of predictability may occur due to many reasons which include linguistic and cultural unfamiliarity with the source text. The translator thus affects the compensation by creating a redundancy into the target text i.e. by stretching the message to re-distribute whatever information overload. According to Peter Newmark, Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. This concept of Newmark is similar to Nida's concept of Dynamic equivalence which we will discuss in the next chapter.

### **Administrative/Technical/Official Translation**

The three terms, administrative or technical or official translation indicate the same scope of translation— one which pertains to a professional requirements and is contrary to entertainment or literary translations for aesthetic purposes. It could be scientific or legal or simply put technical in its subject matter. This includes translation of official documents (like office orders/ notices/ rules and regulations etc.), manuals of machines (like electrical appliances), details of technical processes, installation guides, user manuals, in effect, any texts with technical application. This kind of translation, therefore, requires thorough knowledge of the subject, its specialized vocabulary and its conventions. It may be highly codified or formulaic in nature, repetitive and complex requiring a greater degree of accuracy in translation. One may also require specialized training in order to achieve expertise over the kind of jargon involved in this kind of translation. For instance, 'amendment', 'minutes', 'agenda' 'action', 'defer', 'deportation', 'enclosure', 'stock-taking' etc. are terms specific to administrative vocabulary and cannot be translated randomly by any bilingual/multi lingual person. Similarly, words like 'acquit', 'confiscation', 'prosecutor', 'article', 'revocation', 'caveat', 'amicus curiae' are applicable in legal terminology. Also, terms like 'condenser', 'magnetic field', 'amplifier', 'integrated circuit', 'potential difference' are clearly the terms used in mechanics and hence require specialized knowledge in order to convey their meaning in a different language. Hence the role of a translator covering administrative or technical or official translations is significant as he creates a coherent discourse which packs in itself actual activity and knowledge. These days, Information and Communication technology is being put to good use for technical/official translations as various softwares and machines are easily accessible for the purpose.

## Transcreation

Transcreation is effectively the art of adapting a text into another language. The ideas of modifying, retelling or reworking a text in the same language as that of the source has been in currency since times immemorial. Hence one finds different versions of the same story in the same language, as is particularly true in the case of classics and religious stories. Again there is the perennial dilemma of the limits of creativity of the translator, but nevertheless, such translations are as popular as the originals. For instance, many more stories of *Sherlock Holmes* exist today with major or minor variations from the original by Arthur Conan Doyle. Transcreation effectively amounts to a creative translation which anoints the translator as the author of a 'new' text itself.

To talk a bit about literary transcreation, one of the pioneers of publishing and translation in India, P. Lal has advocated freedom for a translator to transcreate a text on his/her own terms in the target language. His observations stem from his own translation of Kalidasa's *Abhijnanashakuntalam* where in the preface, he discussed the implications for the modern-day translator of translating such a dated text. He propounds that in order to convey the beauty and essence of the original, the translator would necessarily have to transcreate as otherwise, if one was to translate semantically or literally, the gulf between the classical and modern day. Hence for P.Lal, the translator will need to take a recourse to an alternative method, that of transcreation, whereby he/she will be able to "edit, reconcile and transmute" the source text in order to present an optimum version for consumption by a modern reader.

In the globalized world, transcreation is popularly used in the field of mass media, in advertisements, websites, posters and brochures; in other terms, for most market/consumer-oriented activity. It permeates audio-visual mediums as well. Transcreations are commissioned to target specific linguistic/cultural groups with an aim to tap into broader markets. A particularly apt example of transcreation could be the introduction of 'Indian' Spiderman, which entails the creation of a whole industry dealing in literature (comics), merchandise (from clothing to toys) and T.V. programs.

## Gender and Translation

The influx of critical theory, cultural studies into the discipline of translation studies opened up a vast terrain for translation beyond the usual linguistic one. Feminist theory was one such influence which prompted a rethinking over concepts like that of 'translation', 'culture', 'fidelity' etc. which had hitherto been used unproblematically. When one reads the translation theories of the pre-twentieth century, one finds there are certain words which dominates the discourse on translation. They are 'faithfulness', "fidelity" etc. these terms are used in translation theories as it is thought that the translator should be faithful to the original text and should not add or do away with anything that the author has intended in the text. The question remains – what is the role of a translator?

If you ponder over the terms "fidelity," "faithfulness" you will figure out that these words are burdened with gender stereotyping as these are the terms that the

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patriarchal society usually uses for females. Women are usually asked to be faithful and the question of ‘fidelity’ never arises with males. When the translation theory harps on these terms, it looks at the author of the source language text to be a male and the translator to be a female who needs to adhere to the norms of the male to be faithful.

Translation scholar Sherry Simon in her *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (1996) adopts the lens of gender-studies to rethink the notion of translation whereby she discerns a language of sexism in translation studies. She points out that translation theory has heavily rested on the terms of dominance, aggression, fidelity and betrayal which are sexually and culturally loaded against the feminine. Simon significantly observes that “Whether affirmed or denounced, the femininity of translation is a historical trope which runs through centuries of Western culture” and further, since it is the ‘original’ which is attributed with all the authority “the original is considered the strong generative male, the translation the weaker and derivative female”. It is thought that the translated text is similar to that of the image of ‘les belles infidels’ of the seventeenth century as the translated text is a beautiful creation and an addition to the original text but is mostly unfaithful. It was traditionally thought to be an oxymoron for a woman to be both beautiful and faithful at the same time! Further, if the analogy of the author/male and translator/female was to be pursued, then the covert suggestion of the flaws of translation being piled up on the translator (female) and not on the author/source text (male) was quite disturbing. Now the question comes – whether it is possible to be equivalent to the source text when one is translating. We have discussed this when we talked about it in the section on “Equivalence.” It is true that it is almost impossible in many cases to find an equivalent to the source language in the target language. The feminist theorists point out that there is a clear parallel between the way patriarchal society has marginalized and tried to silence women and the way a translator is viewed in the realm of translation studies. In such a rethinking, some very pertinent issues regarding the visibility of female translators in the documentation of the history of translation, gender neutrality in the terms used in translation theory, are raised by the feminist discourse of translation. It was the seventeenth century British theorists who first attributed gender roles of father/husband and child/wife to that of the text and translation respectively which for feminist theorists, brought in the immensely problematic baggage of a vulnerable ‘chastity’ and a prized ‘fidelity’ into the picture. Simon minces no words as she identifies the core of feminist translation theory, which is directed towards a conscious project to ‘identify and critique the tangle of concepts which relegates both women and translation to the bottom of the social and literary ladder’. Simon is of the view that the supposed fidelity in translation should be directed toward neither the author nor the reader, but toward the writing project – a project in which both writer and translator participate. (Simon 1996)

Theorists therefore explicate that the focus of fidelity needs to be reoriented from the personae of the author or translator towards the mutual and participatory project of writing itself. In Lawrence Venuti’s Translation studies reader, another scholar Lori Chamberlain discusses the changing gender roles of the text/translator and import of a concept like ‘fidelity’ with respect to varied purposes and contexts



of translation. In some cases, 'fidelity' may refer to the relation of the female text to the male author or the translator while in other cases, fidelity could be defined in terms of the relation of a female mother tongue to the male author which is to be protected by the translator who now dons the role of a chivalrous knight.

Chamberlain talks of the crucial work of a scholar Serge Gavrinsky, which divides translation metaphors into two major groups: pietistic and cannibalistic. The pietistic group consists of "metaphors based on the coincidence of courtly and Christian traditions, wherein the conventional knight pledges fidelity to the unravished lady, as the Christian to the Virgin" while the cannibalistic group harbors an aggressive translator feeding on the original text and appropriating it from the author to his own unique expression, an exercise which also frees the translator from the proverbial bondage of fidelity to the original. Gavrinsky draws from psychoanalytic terminology, defining an oedipal relationship which ends with removal of the father/original in the cannibalistic model.

In the course of her reworking and reevaluation of feminist translation, Simon does some digging into the past to bring to fore, the contribution of women translators in history. She notes the huge sixty-volume body of translation produced by Constance Garnett who introduced in Russian classics to an English audience, works like that of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekov and Gogol. That translation was historically relegated to the feminine sphere of activity is evident from the fact that it was perhaps the only literary activity that was allowed to women in medieval Europe which gathered momentum in the reformation period, with educated women like the sister of Sir Philip Sidney, Mary Sidney who herself declared having translated many 'godly books'. One of the exceptional women Playwrights Aphra Behn translated from classical languages like Latin and French; her translation of the work of La Rochefoucauld and the philosopher Fontenelle are considered to be her major contributions to translation. In the contemporary era, the work of Edith Grossman is significant in exploring the field of Spanish literature, having translated works of Miguel Cervantes's Don Quixote Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mario Vargas Llosa and other Latin American greats like Carlos Fuentes. Her contribution has also been to the field of translation theory through her book *Why Translation Matters*.

Feminists have integrated their ideological stances in the very practice of Translation. Simon gives examples of Canadian feminist translators like Barbara Godard from Quebec who seek to emphasize their identity and ideological stance in the translation project; quoting Godard, "The feminist translator, affirming her critical difference, her delight in interminable rereading and re-writing, flaunts the signs of her manipulation of the text." (Godard 1990)

Simon has quoted Luise von Flotow's useful categorization of three distinct phases in the process of feminist translation which are: supplementing, prefacing and footnoting, and 'hijacking', which effectively means appropriation by the feminist translator. Simon cites the example of Susanne de Lotbiniere-Harwood who translated a Canadian writer Lise Gauvin's French work *Lettres d'une autre*, into English as *Letters from Another*. An interesting work came out as a part of

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close collaboration between the author and the translator, where by making significant interventions by mutual consensus, the translator acquired the same status as that of the author. What Harwood effectively did, was to make the language of the translation gender neutral, which was not the case in the original, and Harwood explicitly stated the purpose of the strategy used herein which was to: “make the feminine visible in language”. Simon observes that this feat was accomplished by close coordination of the translator and the author, which is essential to carry forward the “dynamics of feminist translation, where there is deliberate collusion and cooperation between text, author, and translator”. Chamberlain would differ from Simon, to argue that feminist translators should yet engage with works however ideologically offensive, as the contrary would seem as if they were capitulating “to that logic which ascribes all power to the original” (326). Chamberlain quotes another translator Carol Maier, and states that “It is essential that as translators, women get under the skin of both antagonistic and sympathetic works. They must become independent, ‘resisting’ interpreters who do not only let antagonistic works speak . . . but also speak with them and place them in a larger context by discussing them and the process of their translation” (326).

In the Indian context, Susuie Tharu and K. Lalita’s two-volume anthology *Women Writing in India* is very crucial for having resurrected mainly through translations, the works of virtually unknown women writers in India. Dedicated women’s publishing houses like Zubaan, Women Unlimited, and formerly Kali for Women, publish women’s writings from all over the country in original as well as translation.

### Check Your Progress

9. What is Semantic translation?
10. What is Literal Translation?
11. What is Transcreation?
12. What are the two major groups into which translation metaphors can be divided?

## 10.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Roman philosophers like Cicero and Horace were among the first theoreticians on translation.
2. The Bible was originally written in Hebrew.
3. Alexander Pope translated the Odyssey.
4. Alexander Fraser Tytler’s Essay on the principles of translation (1790) is considered to be the first book on translation theory in English.
5. Bharata’s Natyasastra is considered to be one of the the earliest texts written in India.

6. The twin grand epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are believed to be composed by Valmiki and Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa respectively.
7. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Anandamath (1882) contained Vande Mataram.
8. The Sahitya Akademi was established in 1954.
9. Semantic translation is translation of the meaning of a particular expression.
10. Literal Translation is also known as word-for-word translation.
11. Transcreation is effectively the art of adapting a text into another language.
12. Translation metaphors can be divided into two major groups: pietistic and cannibalistic.

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### 10.6 SUMMARY

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- The concept of 'translation' itself has come across its parent discipline of linguistics and has more or less become a part of the general psyche of people.
- The significance of translation lies in the different languages being used by the two parties, the sender and the receiver.
- Translation therefore becomes an exceedingly complex activity because no two languages share the same structures of grammar, composition and so on.
- This is what Eugene A. Nida refers to when he declares "Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations".
- Roman philosophers like Cicero and Horace were among the first theoreticians on translation.
- Originally written in Hebrew, the Bible is perhaps the most translated text till date. With the translation of the Bible, came the idea of an accurate rendering of the word of God.
- In a multilingual and culturally diverse country like India, the any attempt to trace the history of translation would be a futile attempt; especially so, since its history is shrouded in the annals of myths and legends impossibly intertwined with religious beliefs and sentiments.

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### 10.7 KEY WORDS

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- **Translation:** The process of translating words or text from one language into another.
- **Elizabethan age:** It is the time period associated with the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603).

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- **Contrary:** It means opposite in nature, direction, or meaning.
- **Linguistic:** Relating to language or linguistics.
- **Multilingual:** It means using several languages.
- **Lexical:** Of or relating to the words or vocabulary of a language, especially as distinguished from its grammatical and syntactical aspects.
- **Fidelity:** Faithfulness to a person, cause, or belief, demonstrated by continuing loyalty and support.

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## 10.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a brief note on the history of translation in the West.
2. Write a brief note on the history of translation in India.
3. What are the different types of translation activities? Enumerate them with examples.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. What is the relationship between Gender and Translation? Write a short critical note on the same.
2. What is translation? Do you think translation is an essential field of academic activity in the present times? Why do you think so? Give reasons for your answer.

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## 10.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 11 A THEORY OF LITERARY TRANSLATION**

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### **NOTES**

#### **Structure**

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 A Theory of Translation: Equivalence
- 11.3 Some Significant Translation Theorists of the Twentieth Century
- 11.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 11.5 Summary
- 11.6 Key Words
- 11.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 11.8 Further Readings

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### **11.0 INTRODUCTION**

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In the last unit, we have been introduced to the notion of translation where we have come across various kinds of translation activities that are being undertaken in the present age to suit the present purposes. We have also seen how translation is not a new thing in the present age and that translation activities have been happening around the world – both in West as well as in India – from time immemorial as it was an activity by which people across cultures would communicate between themselves. In this unit we will focus on the means by which a translation activity is undertaken – that is, the actual process of translation in which the theory of Equivalence is most significant. We will also discuss some significant translation theorists of the twentieth century.

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### **11.1 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept of equivalence
- Describe the process of translation
- Discuss the significant translation theorists of the twentieth century

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### **11.2 A THEORY OF TRANSLATION: EQUIVALENCE**

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According to Roman Jakobson, interlingual translation involves ‘substitute(ing) messages in one language not for separate code-units but for entire messages in some other language.’ The role of a translator, therefore, is to read the original carefully, recodify accurately and transmit the message meaningfully in the target

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language. Hence it can be said that translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes. Roman Jakobson, in his “On linguistic Aspects of Translation” (1959), talks about the problem of equivalence in meaning between words in different languages. He points out that “there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units.” (139) What he means is that when one is trying to translate from the source language, one figures out that sometimes it is impossible to find an exact, equivalent word or expression in the target language. The reason is that our language is based on the socio-cultural practices. Roman Jakobson takes up the example of “cheese” in English, which is not identical to the Russian ‘syr’ because the Russian word ‘syr’ does not include the concept of cottage cheese. Thus if one is trying to translate the term “cheese” in Russian language one finds that it is very difficult to directly find an expression equivalent to the English word.

Let us take an Indian example – suppose you are translating a message or a document for primarily English - Western readers who are not familiar with Indian culture. The word “sindur” appears somewhere in the document / message, which we generally translate as “the vermillion mark.” The problem is that the literal translation would not translate the cultural connotations associated with the word ‘sindur.’ The translator then would need to convey the message probably by providing details about what is the significance of “sindur” in Hindu culture (may be in foot notes). There can be many examples like this. It is not a problem that is faced only by the translators, but it is also faced by the Indian English writers writing about India. In one instance, Mulk Raj Anand had to translate the term “namak haram” into English and he coined the expression “spoiler of the salt.”

Now let us take an example where the English word “subway” has to be translated into Hindi. In our city life, we all are accustomed to Subways, but if someone says “*bhumigat paidal paar path*” it will take some time for us to decipher what the person is saying whereas the literal translation of “subway” is “*bhumigat paidal paar path.*” Thus, translation is a tricky affair as it is very difficult to find the right equivalent in target language.

Thus, if the translation has to be accurate or equivalent to the source message then it is not necessary that the code units that one translates into will be always similar and accurate. One cannot always translate word to word. What assumes more significance is to translate the sense of the source message in the translated message. For example, if one is translating Shakespeare famous sonnet “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day” (Sonnet 18) into Hindi, the problem that the translator would obviously face is how to translate the phrase “summer’s day.” In India, the summer season is very different from the English Summer which is quite pleasant. Now if the translator merely compares the beloved with summer then the meaning of the ‘pleasant presence’ would be lost in translation. Therefore, Jakobson significantly says that ‘Languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey’ (p. 141). So if one has to translate the phrase “a summer’s day” then instead of a literal translation of summer, one needs to translate the sense.

In the translation activity that you just did, what you probably figured out is that you have been trying to find equivalence in your mother tongue for the words and sense that is expressed in these two lines of a famous poem by John Keats (Ode to a Nightingale). According to American scholar Eugene Nida and many other translation scholars of the twentieth century the cardinal problem of translation studies is the question of equivalence. Nida tried to solve the problem by making translation scientific. Based on his experience of translating *The Bible*, Nida's theory of translation as science finds its expression in two major works in the 1960s: *Toward a Science of Translating* (Nida, 1964) and the co-authored *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Nida and Taber, 1969).

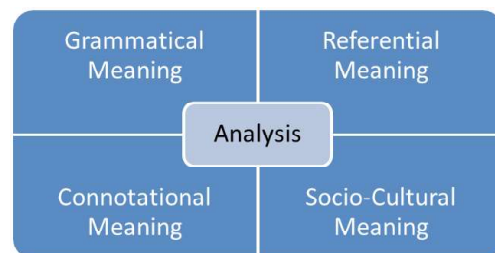
Based on the theoretical linguistic developments of 1960s, Eugene Nida started with the premise that a word does not have a fixed meaning and but 'acquires' meaning through its context, in the culture and setting that one uses the word. The meaning is attributed to the word from that context and culture. Therefore, Nida's model of Translation does not merely talk about the act of translation, but mentions a three-stage system of translation –

- analysis,
- transfer and
- restructuring

#### (a) Analysis

Translation is a three-stage process as the first role of a translator is to be a good reader. The deeper the translator can critically understand the text in the source language, the better will be his or her rendering of it in the target language. So the first step is crucial to translation as translation is not always done word for word. The sense and the spirit of the text needs to find its manifestation in the target language and till the time the translator does not fathom the sense and spirit of the original text, in no way can he or she deliver it in the translated text.

A careful analysis would involve looking at multiple aspects of the source text.



Let us look at these briefly. Analysis of **Grammatical meaning** would be entirely linguistic in nature. This would involve carefully looking at the different sub parts constituting say, a sentence, that is to be translated. For instance: While a sentence like “Meena played the game.” Can easily be translated into Hindi as “*Meena ne khel khela*”, its passive form i.e. “The game was played by Meena” leads to a

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translation “*Khel Meena dwara khela gaya.*” Where the highlighted word is capable of further giving a twist to the story as it may mean “Meena was able to play the game.” This is an example of grammatic ambiguity which needs to be clarified by the context. Now to look at **Referential meaning**, which pertains to extra-linguistic features, let us consider a specific reference to an event. “The Home Minister wrote to the Defense Minister about the recent spate in terrorist activities in Mumbai. He stressed on the need for improving patrolling around sensitive areas there.” While translating this statement, the translator will have to keep in mind that the pronoun “He” in the second sentence refers to the Home minister and not the other; also that, ‘there’ refers to a specific location in Mumbai. **Connotative meaning** would refer to the abstract value associated with a certain word. For instance, the word “fire” while actually standing for a physical event that burns, might be used to connote the ideas of “intensity” or “ambition”. Similarly the color “white” may connote “innocence, purity or peace” depending upon its context. Finally looking at the **Socio-cultural meaning**, which is basically social and cultural significance attached to a certain word or expression, for instance, the color “white” (discussed above) when used to describe a Hindu woman’s clothing would refer to her state of marital being a widow. This meaning will not be available to, say, a person from western culture where a woman gets married wearing white attire.

Hence we can say that a careful observation and analysis of words/phrases/expressions is of primary importance as the first step in the process of translation.

### (b) Transfer

As the translator is done with the first step the second stage of **Transfer** comes to being, where the translator needs to find the equivalence between the language of the Source text to that of the target language. In other words, after the analysis of the source text, the translator needs to transfer the meaning in the target language (by finding the right equivalent) and then restructure the whole thing to make it appealing to the readers. If the reading of the translated text is not similarly pleasurable as the source text then the translator has failed in his attempt of translation.

The process of transferring a message requires a clear understanding of the fact that no two languages are the same grammatically or otherwise, and, each language conveys a different meaning through its unique structures. Hence while transferring a message from the source language to the target language, the translator must first establish a common route of communicability between the SL and TL and thereafter try and render as accurate a meaning in the TL as possible without interfering with the actual content of the SL.

To understand this with the help of an example, culture specific ideas such as striking up a conversation with a total a stranger by means of addressing him honorifically as “mama” in Tamil is not available in English. In Tamil, the same expression can also be used to address an actual relative. To translate it in English



would therefore require some application on the part of the translator, who will first need to figure out a way of communicating the connotation, and then convey the message without altering the thrust of the message, which in the case of this word, can be done by substituting it with “Uncle”.

### **(c) Restructuring**

**Restructuring** is the final step of the process of translation which depends most on finding the most suitable equivalent in the TL. Restructuring is affected by cultural characteristics of the SL and TL, the grammatical structures and vocabulary of the two languages, as well as the varying intent and method of the author versus that of the translator. While restructuring a message into the TL, the translator may either choose to be accurate to the source language: whereby he/she will try to present the expression closest to its true form (for instance, by translating “*Bhai*” from Hindi as “*Bhai*” in English with a small note describing it as a form of addressing a gangster in Mumbai); or by choosing to be closer to the target language and naturalizing the cultural connotation in favor of the target reader (for instance, by translating “*saala*” from Hindi to “rascal” in English without going into the intricacies of it also meaning “brother of one’s wife/brother-in-law”).

In the context of equivalence, it needs to be kept in mind that the ideas of ‘literal’, ‘free’ and ‘faithful’ translation were thought to be redundant by Nida in favour of ‘two types of equivalence’ (Nida 1964):

1. Formal Equivalence and
2. Dynamic Equivalence.

**Formal Equivalence:** “Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content . . . One is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language.” (Nida 1964a: 159) While the translator is trying to find formal equivalence, what he or she is doing is to closely follow the form, content and structure of the source text. In some cases, these kinds of translations have their own importance; for example, in an academic environment. If a student of Indian literature is reading a Latin American Novel, originally written in Spanish and translated into English, and if the translation is done from the point of view of Formal Equivalence, then it will be better as that would allow the student to have access to the Latin American culture and its linguistic peculiarities. Many a times the translator may have to use elaborate foot notes to make the readers aware of the cultural and linguistic practices of the Latin American Culture.

If you remember the example of “Sindur” which we have talked about earlier, in that case the translator may choose to give a footnote explaining the significance of Sindur in Indian culture and Tradition.

**Dynamic Equivalence:** Dynamic, or functional equivalence is based on what Nida calls ‘the principle of equivalent effect’, where ‘the relationship between

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receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message' (Nida 1964). In case of Dynamic Equivalence, the translator focuses more on the culture and linguistic expressions of the target language and translates accordingly. In other words, the translator tries to figure out 'the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message' (Nida and Taber 1969). Therefore, what the translator does is to eliminate the foreignness of the source language and culture as much as possible and bring the translated text as close to the Target language culture and grammatical and linguistic rules as possible so that the readers while reading the text does not feel awkward. The naturalness with which the reader reads a text of his or her own mother tongue, the same effect should also be there in the translated text.

Thus, for Nida, the success of the translation depends above all on achieving equivalent response. It is one of the 'four basic requirements of a translation', which are:

1. making sense;
2. conveying the spirit and manner of the original;
3. having a natural and easy form of expression;
4. producing a similar response.

Translators face innumerable problems in their quest for equivalence. For instance, if English is the source language and Hindi is the target language, one may face a problem conveying the multiple meanings denoted by a common English word like Snow. In English, Snow may express the following forms of snow with minor variations: icicle or sleet or floe (Icicle: a hanging, spike-like piece of ice formed by the freezing of dripping water; Sleet: rain in the form of small ice pellets; and, Floe: a sheet of floating ice, chiefly on the surface of the sea.) But in Hindi, the usual term *barf* will not be able to convey these meanings. To take another example, the bird 'owl' may be understood the same way universally, but at the same time, while it conveys the positive ideas of being insightful, mystical, a symbol of grace and wisdom in the Western culture, being called an 'owl' or '*ullu*' in Hindi/ Indian culture is understood to be a mildly offensive way of hinting at someone's stupidity, mediocrity, pessimism and so on, which are definitely negative.

Though Nida favored Dynamic Equivalence over Formal Equivalence, but to always translate thus would be ruining the source text completely and would be creating a new text. In Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when Bottom turns to an ass head, it is said that: "Bottom, Thou are translated." The meaning of 'translation' here is that of a kind of transformation, a physical one in this case. In Dynamic equivalent translated text, the same would happen as the translation would be very different from the source language text leading to a new text altogether.

Thus, equivalence is the cardinal issue in translation but as Mona Baker says equivalence 'is influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors and is

therefore always relative' (Baker 1992: 6). Susan Bassnett in her book sees the process of translation as potentially the process of finding the exact equivalent as she writes –

“Translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages ... Once the translator moves away from close linguistic equivalence, the problems of determining the exact nature of the level of equivalence aimed for begin to emerge. (Bassnett 2002: 34)

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### Check Your Progress

1. What is the role of a translator?
2. Who wrote the poem “*Ode to a Nightingale*”?
3. “The Theory and Practice of Translation” was authored by Nida and whom?
4. What is the final step of the process of translation?

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## 11.3 SOME SIGNIFICANT TRANSLATION THEORISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Let us discuss some significant translation theorists of the twentieth century.

### J. C. Catford

J. C. Catford is one of the well-known scholars of translation studies in the twentieth century. He wrote *A Theory of Translation* (1965) in which he classifies translation into categories. He developed his theory on Halliday's ‘scale and category’ model of linguistic analysis. According to him ‘Translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language.’ In translation there is a substitution of TL meanings for SL meanings; not transference of the SL meanings into TL. In transference there is an implantation of SL meanings into the TL text. These two processes must be clearly differentiated in any theory of translation. (J. C. Catford, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, 48) The word ‘text’ as used by Catford implies a complex structure composed of different kinds of materials—grammatical, lexical, phonological and graphological components.

Depending on the extent, level and ranks of translation, Catford divides translation into the following broad categories.

#### (A) Extent of translation: Full vs. Partial Translation

**Full translation:** In this translation, the whole of a given text is submitted to the translation process i.e., every unit of meaningful part of the source language text is replaced by equivalent textual receptor language material.

**Partial translation:** In this translation some part or parts of the source language text are left untranslated. They are simply transferred to TL text. The reason to do

so may be either the translator thinks that they are ‘untranslatable’ or to introduce ‘local colour’ into the TL text.

### **(B) Levels of Translation: Total vs. Restricted Translation**

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**Total translation:** Translation in which all levels of the source language texts are replaced by TL material is called ‘total translation’ or ‘translation’ as the word generally used. In this type the source language grammar and lexis are replaced by equivalent receptor language grammar or lexis. This itself entails the replacement of the source language phonology / graphology by the receptor language phonology / graphology but this replacement is not by equivalent receptor language items.

**Restricted translation:** This translation is the replacement of the source language textual material by equivalent receptor language textual material, at only one level, that is at the level of phonology or graphology or grammar or lexis.

### **(C) Rank Translation**

‘Rank-bound’ and ‘Unbounded’ translations

**Rank-bound translation:** In this translation the selection of receptor language equivalents is deliberately confined to ‘one rank’ in the hierarchy of grammatical units. It may be at the rank of word or group of words or sentence. A rank bound translation in which the rank of translation is the unit word is called the word for word translation.

A rank bound translation in which the rank of translation is the unit group is called the ‘literal’ translation. It may also start from a word-for-word translation and change structures at the rank even of the unit clause. The changes are done in conformity with receptor language grammar. But in one respect it is also a word-for-word translation i.e., to use the highest (unconditional) probability lexical equivalent for each lexical item.

**Rank unbounded translation:** This translation is not confined to any one rank. Sometimes equivalences are set up between units larger than the sentence. It is characterized by lexical adaptation to receptor language’s collocational and idiomatic requirements.

A translator may opt for any one of the above three types. Sometimes he may combine all the three in different proportions. It is determined by the nature of the work to be translated and the readers it is meant for.

Catford’s theory of translation is text oriented and it ignores some vital aspects of the translation processes – the aim of the translator, the translator’s attitude toward the SL text and its writer, the intended reader, and the type of material that is being translated. His theory also ignores the implications of discourse levels above the sentence level that are important for a theory of translation, in particular for a theory of literary translation. This vital aspect is included in the theory of translation put forward by Nida.

## **Eugene Albert Nida**

Eugene Albert Nida was born in Oklahoma City, the United States. He was interested in the Bible Studies and obtained his Master's degree in Greek New Testament. He, then, received his Doctorate in Linguistics. With the knowledge of the Bible and Linguistics, he made a great influence to the Bible translation in the 20th century and also to the translation theory. His famous work is *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) proposes not only "dynamic equivalence" but also the three-stage model of translation process including analysis, transfer and restructuring, as has been discussed earlier. Eugene Albert Nida is often thought to be the greatest contributor to translation theory in the twentieth century.

As Eugene Albert Nida was too much involved in translating the Bible therefore many of his academic and professional concerns were related to that, though, as we mentioned that he also worked in general on translation theory and is known for his contribution in terms of "equivalence" in translation. In 1969, in Nida's work *From One Language to Another*, he started to use the term 'functional equivalence' to replace the notion of 'dynamic equivalence'. However, in all practical purposes, there are not many differences between them. Functional equivalence can be thought to be the nucleus of his Translation theory. According to Eugene Albert Nida, the process of translation consists in the reproduction of the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of styles (Nida, 1964:117). What therefore one needs to do while translating is to look for the signification of the text to be translated which needs to be put in the target language and then one needs to match the style as far as possible while translating. Eugene Nida described functional equivalence in the following terms

"Basically, dynamic equivalence has been described in terms of functional equivalence. The translation has been defined on the basis that the receptors of a translation should comprehend the translated text to such all extent that they understand how the original receptors must have understood the original text." (Nida, 1969).

Functional equivalence is thought to put emphasis on the information instead of the direct formal equivalence in translation. Besides this, there are four aspects of functional equivalence. They are:

- (a) **Lexical equivalence**—For the lexical equivalence, the meaning of a word lies in its usage in language. In translation practice, what confuses us is how to find the corresponding meaning in target language.
- (b) **Sentence equivalence**— For sentence equivalence, the sentence structure and grammar, such as number, gender and tense are to be strictly followed while translating.
- (c) **Passage equivalence**— To achieve passage equivalence, language is not the unique element to be considered, how the language represents meaning and performs its function in a specific context matters most.

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**(d) Stylistic equivalence**– Different stylistic works have different language features, achieving stylistic equivalence needs good mastery of both source language and target language. Different language styles represent different culture elements.

Nida then sets forth the differences in translation, as he would account for it within three basic factors:

- (a) The first is the nature of the message. In some messages, the content should be of primary consideration, and in others the form must be given a higher priority.
- (b) The second is the type of the audience. Prospective audiences are different both in decoding ability and in potential interest.
- (c) The last one is the purpose of the author and the translator. To give information on both form and content and aim at full intelligibility of the reader, he may understand the full implications of the message. And the imperative purposes aim at not just understanding the translation but also at ensuring no misunderstanding of the translation.

Tyler is of the opinion that a good translation is one which the value of the original work is so wholly transfused into the translated language so that the reader can strongly feel what the reader of the original text has felt. Nida thought that the focus of translation should be the receptor's response; so the notion dynamic of functional equivalence needs to be kept in mind by the translator first. Nida held that a dynamic equivalent translation must fit the translated text's language and culture in order to make the translated message comprehensible and accepted to the target language readers. Eugene Albert Nida further polishes his theoretical premise in his 1990s book *Language, Culture and Translating*, where he divided 'functional equivalence' into different degrees of adequacy from minimal to maximal effectiveness on the basis of both cognitive and experiential factors. The minimal definition of functional equivalence is "The readers of a translated text should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciated it." The maximal definition of functional equivalence could be stated as, "The readers of a translated text understood and appreciated it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did."

In all cases, one must measure both the designative and associative meanings, not merely in terms of lexical and syntactical features but also in terms of the total rhetorical impact and the complete communication event (Nida, 224). The term "equivalence" must be understood in a broad sense of "having essentially the same function" although never possessing an identical function. Thereby, Nida's functional equivalence theory opens up a new perspective to translation studies and makes the translators feel much more comfortable with the translation process.

## **Peter Newmark**

Peter Newmark was born in Czech Republic. In 1921, he moved to the UK and studied in Cambridge. Peter Newmark is also often thought to be one of the greatest translation theorists of the twentieth century. His main work is *Approaches to Translation* (1981) that proposes “semantic translation” and “communicative translation” which exert tremendous influence all over the world. Another significant work is *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) that concludes theories and principles, translation methods and culture. Peter Newmark’s view on translation is that translation rests on at least three dichotomies –

- (a) cultures,
- (b) languages,
- (c) the writer and the translator (Newmark, 7).

He puts forward his famous translation theory

- (a) semantic translation and
- (b) communicative translation.

Peter Newmark defines ‘Semantic Translation’ as “attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original”. Besides, his communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on readers of the original. Communicative translation focuses on the reader, aiming at making the text more native and original. Meanwhile, semantic translation emphasizes the contextual meaning of original.

Theoretically, there are many differences between semantic translation and communicative translation. Communicative translation tries to address solely to the reader of the translated text and therefore often a liberal transport of foreign elements into his own culture as well as his language where necessary. But, at the same time, the translator needs to respect and work on the form of the source language text as the only material basis for his work. While in case of semantic translation, the original culture assists the reader only in its connotations if they constitute the essential human message of the text. The purpose of communicative translation is accessible to the reader and to effect on its readers’ minds. The suitable texts conclude most non-literary writings, journalism, textbooks, scientific and technological writings, public notices, serious literature and informative texts. By contrast, the purpose of semantic translation is to create precise flavour and tone of the original to preserve the author’s idiolect. The suitable texts conclude quotations, autobiography, private correspondences, minor literature, definitions and explanations.

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<b>Semantic Translation</b>	<b>Communicative translation</b>
Author centered	Reader centered
Pursues author's thought process related to thought	Pursues author's intention related to speech
Concerned with author as individual	Adapts and makes the thought and cultural content of original more accessible to reader
Semantic- and syntactic - oriented. Length of sentences, position and integrity of clauses, word position, etc preserved whenever possible.	Effect oriented. Formal features or original sacrificed more readily.
Faithful, more literal	Faithful, freer.
Informative	Effective
Usually more awkward, more detailed, more complex, but briefer	Easy reading, more natural, smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional, conforming to particular register of language, but longer
Personal	Social
Source language biased	Target language biased
Over translated: More concentrated and more specific than original	Under translated: Use of 'hold-all' terms
Out of time and local place eternal	Ephemeral and rooted in its context, 'existential'.
Wide and universal. 'tailor made' or targeted for one category of readership	does one job, fulfills one particular function

**Roger T. Bell**

Roger T. Bell in his 'Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice' (1991) lists out the knowledge and skills that are required for a translator. He also analyses the process of translation and offers a model of translation process. The translator must, as a communicator, possess the knowledge and skills that are common to all communicators. Bell envisages a translator expert system containing the kinds of knowledge and skills. It has two basic components namely:

- i) A knowledge base and
- ii) An inference mechanism.

A knowledge base consisting of:

- (a) Source language knowledge; the syntactic rule systems of the code, its lexicon and semantics and its text-creating systems
- (b) Target language knowledge: equivalent to that in the source language
- (c) Text type knowledge
- (d) Contrastive knowledge of each of the above

An inference mechanism which permits:

- (a) The decoding of texts, i.e. reading and comprehending source language texts
- (b) The encoding of texts i.e. writing target language texts, e.g. a writer's assistant system which helps with the writing



He considers translation as the phenomenon of human information processing and suggests an outline model of translation process. The process is modeled as a cascaded and interactive process with three main stages viz. syntactic, semantic and pragmatic processing.

### **Cultural Untransability**

It has been harped upon till now that translation has been one of the foremost literary as well as formal activity which the world is engaged in a setup of globalization as cultural exchanges between nations have increased more than it had been in the history of the humankind. Even though, translation is going on across the world for different purposes and yet we know for sure that when one translates one necessarily is not able to recreate the original in another language. There have been attempts to translate the same text more than once because the translators are always unhappy with the translation that they do as they think that they are not faithful enough to recreate the original text when they have translated. The Question is – Why does it happen?

The answer to this lies in the fact that when one tries to translate a text, one is not only looking for linguistic equivalences and putting them in the syntactical order of the translated language; but one is doing more than that. One is also looking for cultural equivalents so that a person from the other culture when he or she reads the translated text, he or she is able to grasp what the author wanted to signify in the text.

#### **Check Your Progress**

5. What are the two components of translator expert system?
6. What is rank bound translation?

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## **11.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS**

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1. The role of a translator is to read the original carefully, recodify accurately and transmit the message meaningfully in the target language.
2. John Keats wrote the poem “*Ode to a Nightingale*”.
3. “The Theory and Practice of Translation” was authored by Nida and Taber.
4. Restructuring is the final step of the process of translation.
5. The two components of translator expert system are:
  - A knowledge base and
  - An inference mechanism.

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6. In rank bound translation the selection of receptor language equivalents is deliberately confined to 'one rank' in the hierarchy of grammatical units. It may be at the rank of word or group of words or sentence. A rank bound translation in which the rank of translation is the unit word is called the word for word translation.

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### 11.5 SUMMARY

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- The role of a translator is to read the original carefully, recodify accurately and transmit the message meaningfully in the target language.
- Hence it can be said that translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes.
- Roman Jakobson, in his "On linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959), talks about the problem of equivalence in meaning between words in different languages.
- If one is trying to translate the term "cheese" in Russian language one finds that it is very difficult to directly find an expression equivalent to the English word.
- Thus, if the translation has to be accurate or equivalent to the source message then it is not necessary that the code units that one translates into will be always similar and accurate.
- One cannot always translate word to word. What assumes more significance is to translate the sense of the source message in the translated message.
- According to American scholar Eugene Nida and many other translation scholars of the twentieth century the cardinal problem of translation studies is the question of equivalence.
- Translation is a three-stage process as the first role of a translator is to be a good reader.
- The deeper the translator can critically understand the text in the source language, the better will be his or her rendering of it in the target language.
- A careful analysis would involve looking at multiple aspects of the source text.
- Analysis of Grammatical meaning would be entirely linguistic in nature.
- Connotative meaning would refer to the abstract value associated with a certain word.
- After the analysis of the source text, the translator needs to transfer the meaning in the target language and then restructure the whole thing to make it appealing.

- Restructuring is the final step of the process of translation which depends most on finding the most suitable equivalent in the TL.
- Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content.
- Many a times the translator may have to use elaborate foot notes to make the readers aware of the cultural and linguistic practices of the Latin American Culture.
- In case of Dynamic Equivalence, the translator focuses more on the culture and linguistic expressions of the target language.
- Translators face innumerable problems in their quest for equivalence.
- Mona Baker says equivalence ‘is influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors and is therefore always relative’.
- J. C. Catford is one of the well-known scholars of translation studies in the twentieth century. He wrote *A Theory of Translation* (1965) in which he classifies translation into categories. He developed his theory on Halliday’s ‘scale and category’ model of linguistic analysis.
- According to him ‘Translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language.’ In translation there is a substitution of TL meanings for SL meanings; not transference of the SL meanings into TL.
- Eugene Albert Nida was born in Oklahoma City, the United States. He was interested in the Bible Studies and obtained his Master’s degree in Greek New Testament. He, then, received his Doctorate in Linguistics.
- With the knowledge of the Bible and Linguistics, he made a great influence to the Bible translation in the 20th century and also to the translation theory.
- Peter Newmark was born in Czech Republic. In 1921, he moved to the UK and studied in Cambridge. Peter Newmark is also often thought to be one of the greatest translation theorists of the twentieth century.
- His main work is *Approaches to Translation* (1981) that proposes “semantic translation” and “communicative translation” which exert tremendous influence all over the world. Another significant work is *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) that concludes theories and principles, translation methods and culture.
- Roger T. Bell in his ‘Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice’ (1991) lists out the knowledge and skills that are required for a translator. He also analyses the process of translation and offers a model of translation process.

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## **11.6 KEY WORDS**

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- **Manifestation:** It refers to an event, action, or object that clearly shows or embodies something abstract or theoretical.
- **Ambiguity:** It is the quality of being open to more than one interpretation.
- **Connotative:** (Of a word or expression) signifying or suggestive of an associative or secondary meaning in addition to the primary meaning.
- **Socio-cultural:** Related to the different groups of people in society and their habits, traditions, and beliefs.
- **Redundant:** It refers to something no longer needed or useful.
- **Dynamic:** (Of a process or system) characterized by constant change, activity, or progress.

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## **11.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

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### **Short-Answer Questions**

1. What is Equivalence in Translation? Write a short note on different kinds of equivalence.
2. Write a short note on the theory of translation so as to enumerate the translation process.

### **Long-Answer Questions**

1. Describe Nida's model of Translation and discuss in detail the three-stage system of translation.
2. Explain in detail the two types of equivalence.
3. Discuss some of the significant translation theorists of the 20th century.

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## **11.8 FURTHER READINGS**

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*A Theory of Literary  
Translation*

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## **UNIT 12 ADAPTATION AND ABRIDGEMENT: LITERARY VS NON-LITERARY RENDERING**

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### **Structure**

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Adaptation and Abridgement
- 12.3 Translation of Literary and Non-Literary Texts
- 12.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 12.5 Summary
- 12.6 Key Words
- 12.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 12.8 Further Readings

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### **12.0 INTRODUCTION**

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As we have seen in the earlier units that there are different translation needs for different purposes. Some translations are done for the sake of communication between people across cultures and in some context, translations are done where changes are done to the translated text to suit the purposes of the audience or readers such as adaptation and abridgement. There is also a difference between translating a literary text and a non-literary text as for translating a literary text the translator has to be much more creative while translating a non-literary text, the translator needs to be much matter of fact. These aspects of translation will be discussed in this unit.

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### **12.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the notions of adaptation and abridgement
- Differentiate between literary and non-literary texts
- Analyse the approaches of translation of literary and non-literary texts

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### **12.2 ADAPTATION AND ABRIDGEMENT**

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The term “adaptation” can be traced for its origin in the early 17th century Latin word “*adaptare*” which means to “fit in.” In the twentieth century as many works

are being adapted into films, there was a growth of adaptation theory and people like John M. Desmond and Peter Hawkes (who wrote *Adaptation: Studying Film and Literature*), George Bluestone (who wrote *Novels into Film*), Linda Hutcheon (who wrote *A Theory of Adaptation*) and Brian McFarlane (who wrote *An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation Novel to Film*) started working on the adaptation theory to see how film adaptation worked as a distinct field in itself. These works offered new insights into the genre of adaptation and enriched the film theory.

James M. Welsh and Peter Lev in the 'Introduction' to their book *The Literature/FilReader: Issues in Adaptation* are of the view that:

“After a century of cinema, movies have changed substantially, both technologically and stylistically, but after a hundred years, mainstream cinema is still telling and retelling stories, and most of those stories are still being (or have been) appropriated from literary or dramatic sources, as much as 85 percent by some calculations and accounts. Adaptation has always been central to the process of filmmaking since almost the beginning and could well maintain its dominance into the cinema’s second century.”

Referring to this intimate relationship between literature and cinema over the last century Brian McFarlane even talks about “the pervasive nature of the interest in this confluence of two art forms”.

According to Linda Hutcheon the first perspective which needs to be discussed regarding the concept of adaptation is it being seen as a “formal entity or product ... an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works.” What she means by that is while making an adaptation, the film maker is transposing a work of art from one medium to another. Secondly, Hutcheon sees adaptation as “*a process of creation*, the act of adaptation always involves both (re)interpretation and then (re-)creation; this has been called both appropriation and salvaging.” The final perspective that Hutcheon offers to adaptation is that of its “*process of reception*, adaptation is a form of intertextuality: we experience adaptations (*as adaptations*) as palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation.” These three positions that Linda Hutcheon takes in regard to film adaptation makes it a very significant genre in itself and therefore it is regarded by her as “an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works. A creative and an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging. An extended intertextual engagement...”

It is to be remembered that films often target a much larger audience than a book and therefore the reach of a film is much more than a book, in most cases. This unit, apart from looking at the ways in which film adaptation is being done across the last century, will also try to look at the comparative understanding of books and their corresponding films to figure out why there is so much emphasis by film makers to reproduce the books in the silver screen.

But before going into the complex process of translating books to silver screen, let us have a look in general about the different translation activities and

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the way translation does the necessary cultural function of the society to bring together people belonging to different cultural situations. It is one of the main motifs of translation to bridge cultures and to make people across cultures come together so that they understand each other in a better fashion.

The significance of translation lies in the fact that it is an exceedingly complex activity because no two languages share the same structures of grammar, composition and so on. This is what Eugene A. Nida refers to when he declares –

“Since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence there can be no fully exact translations.”

According to another definition provided by noted linguist and critic J. C. Catford, Translation is “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL).”

Thus, translation itself is a complex activity; and when it comes to cinematic translation or adaptation of a literary text into silver screen, it becomes more of a multifaceted and intricate activity as words have to be translated with images/videos along with sounds in most cases, which can often be loosely termed as audio-visual translation.

What a cinematic translator of a film maker does it to transform the linguistic text (words – the source text) into images (also videos) and sounds along with it (the target text). For example, William Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* which was cinematically translated by many film directors such as Japanese Akira Kurosawa who made *Throne of Blood* based on *Macbeth*. In India, Vishal Bhardwaj made the movie *Maqbool* which is also based on the same text, *Macbeth*. What these movie makers did was to put the original text *Macbeth* within a specific cultural context of their individual circumstances and then tell the story with certain twists and turns.

Both the film makers approached the play *Macbeth* from a different perspective and each of them tried to contextualize the play within their own cultural ambience, therefore the end products are very different. Apparently, there is not much similarity between *Macbeth* and *Throne of Blood* or *Maqbool* apart from the fact that the later two are inspired and to some extent adapted from the earlier one.

The film directors did at least two things in the process of adapting the film –

- (a) Changed words into images – that is linguistic medium is changes to audio-visual medium where by reading of the text (literary) is replaced by viewing (as well as listening) the text in real terms.
- (b) Changed the cultural contexts of the Source text and adapted it to the context of his or her viewers/ audience so that the text / film become easily accessible, identifiable and understandable by the mass.



The question is why does the film director do so? – The answers to this question are many, primarily being –

- (a) For the sake of art and aesthetics;
- (b) For economic profit;
- (c) For communicating with the people of certain ideas, etc.

Scholars and theorists are divided over the issue whether literary texts should be translated to silver screen or not. They are divided in their opinion as the two mediums are for two very different target audiences. A book is primarily meant for selective readers who has the required sensibility to understand the cope with the sensibilities of the author who is writing the book, while a movie is for each and everyone and there is no scope of discrimination in terms of being equipped to be the audience or not.

In other words, it can be said that a movie is meant for a much larger audience where there is no scope of any discrimination to become an audience where as a book's readers are very selective depending on the reading ability as well as the desire to read a work of fiction. Therefore, it is to be taken into account that when a literary work is adapted to cinema, the circulation of the text broadens leading to reaching out to more people. Cinema makes the text more accessible by different means –

- (a) Words are substituted with images/ videos making it more appealing to the audience,
- (b) Ambiguity is eased as far as possible so as to make it understandable to more people,
- (c) Cultural context is taken much care about so that the target audience does not feel alienated while watching the movie

Every writer of film director always keeps in mind his or her target readers/ audience. Keeping the target readers/ viewers in mind, the film director uses different signs, symbols and other aspects such as style of living, etc into account through which the text will be more accessible to the audience.

It may be conjectured here that therefore in film adaptation or cinematic translation much of the original text changes. In Elizabethan dramatist William Shakespeare's *Mid summer Night's Dream*, when Bottom turns into an ass head, Shakespeare uses the phrase "Bottom, thou are translated!" What Shakespeare had in mind is that translation is at the same time some kind of transformation. Translation in that sense is not an exact reproduction of the original; each time a translator tries to translate a text he or she gets far away from the original text or the source text; but at the same time, it is also true that he or she creates a new text each time he or she translates.

Each translator has the license to interpret the text according to his or her ideological position / context and based on that interpretation transfer the source

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text to the target text. Similarly, the film maker also has the freedom to change the text to meet the needs/ backgrounds/ cultural contexts of his or her target audience.

Often the question of “faithfulness” of the translated text to the source text is the subject of discussion; but one should keep in mind that the translated text is not the same as the source text and therefore the question of fidelity or faithfulness does not and should not arrive. But scholars dealing with the film adaptation are divided in their opinions about it.

If you ponder over the terms “fidelity,” “faithfulness” you will figure out that these words are burdened with gender stereotyping as these are the terms that the patriarchal society usually uses for females. Women are usually asked to be faithful and the question of ‘fidelity’ never arises with males. When the translation theory harps on these terms, it posits the author of the source language text to be a male and the translator, to be a female who needs to adhere to the norms of the male in order to be faithful.

Translation scholar Sherry Simon in her *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (1996) wields the lens of gender-studies to rethink the notion of translation whereby she discerns a language of sexism in translation studies. She points out that translation theory has heavily rested on the terms of dominance, aggression, fidelity and betrayal which are sexually and culturally loaded against the feminine.

Simon significantly observes that “Whether affirmed or denounced, the femininity of translation is a historical trope which runs through centuries of Western culture” and further, since it is the ‘original’ which is attributed with all the authority “the original is considered the strong generative male, the translation the weaker and derivative female.” It is thought that the translated text is similar to that of the image of ‘les belles infidels’ of the seventeenth century as the translated text is a beautiful creation and an addition to the original text but is mostly unfaithful. It was traditionally thought to be an oxymoron for a woman to be both beautiful and faithful at the same time! Further, if the analogy of the author/male and translator/female was to be pursued, then the covert suggestion of the flaws of translation being piled up on the translator (female) and not on the author/source text (male) was quite disturbing.

Now the question comes – whether it is possible to be equivalent to the source text when one is translating. We have discussed this when we talked about it in the section on “Equivalence.” It is true that it is almost impossible in many cases to find an equivalent to the source language in the target language. The feminist theorists point out that there is a clear parallel between the way patriarchal society has marginalized and tried to silence women and the way a translator is viewed in the realm of translation studies.

In such a rethinking, some very pertinent issues regarding the visibility of female translators in the documentation of the history of translation, gender neutrality in the terms used in translation theory, are raised by the feminist discourse of

translation. It was the seventeenth century British theorists who first attributed gender roles of father/husband and child/wife to that of the text and translation respectively which for feminist theorists, brought in the immensely problematic baggage of a vulnerable 'chastity' and a prized 'fidelity' into the picture.

Simon minces no words as she identifies the core of feminist translation theory, which is directed towards a conscious project to 'identify and critique the tangle of concepts which relegates both women and translation to the bottom of the social and literary ladder' Simon is of the view that the supposed fidelity in translation should be directed toward neither the author nor the reader, but toward the writing project – a project in which both writer and translator participate.

Theorists therefore explicate that the focus of fidelity needs to be reoriented from the personae of the author or translator towards the mutual and participatory project of narrative itself. In Lawrence Venuti's *Translation Studies Reader*, another scholar Lori Chamberlain discusses the changing gender roles of the text/ translator and import of a concept like 'fidelity' with respect to varied purposes and contexts of translation. In some cases, 'fidelity' may refer to the relation of the female text to the male author or the translator while in other cases, fidelity could be defined in terms of the relation of a female mother tongue to the male author which is to be protected by the translator who now dons the role of a chivalrous knight.

Chamberlain talks of the crucial work of a scholar Serge Gavronsky, which divides translation metaphors into two major groups: pietistic and cannibalistic. The pietistic group consists of "metaphors based on the coincidence of courtly and Christian traditions, wherein the conventional knight pledges fidelity to the unravished lady, as the Christian to the Virgin" while the cannibalistic group harbors an aggressive translator feeding on the original text and appropriating it from the author to his own unique expression, an exercise which also frees the translator from the proverbial bondage of fidelity to the original. Gavronsky draws from psychoanalytic terminology, defining an oedipal relationship which ends with removal of the father/original in the cannibalistic model.

In the course of her reworking and revaluation of feminist translation, Simon does some digging into the past to bring to fore, the contribution of women translators in history. She notes the huge sixty-volume body of translation produced by Constance Garnett who introduced in Russian classics to an English audience, works like that of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekov and Gogol. That translation was historically relegated to the feminine sphere of activity is evident from the fact that it was perhaps the only literary activity that was allowed to women in medieval Europe which gathered momentum in the reformation period, with educated women like the sister of Sir Philip Sidney, Mary Sidney who herself declared having translated many 'godly books'. One of the exceptional women playwrights Aphra Behn translated from classical languages like Latin and French; her translation of the work of La Rochefoucauld and the philosopher Fontenelle

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are considered to be her major contributions to translation. In the contemporary era, the work of Edith Grossman is significant in exploring the field of Spanish literature, having translated works of Miguel Cervantes's *Don Quixote* Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mario Vargas Llosa and other Latin American greats like Carlos Fuentes. Her contribution has also been to the field of translation theory through her book *Why Translation Matters*.

Adaptation of any kind will lead to some alteration or editing. While adapting a story or any other form of narrative to another genre - that of the film alteration is unavoidable and it is relative to the subjectivity of an individual. From the earliest days of cinema, adaptation has been as common as the development of original screenplays. Film adaptation of novels is common these days as many novels are being adapted into films. It has attracted the attention of many critics for building up a connection between film and novel. It is an ongoing process of transmutation among the arts. Adaptation can be seen as 'an interpretation, involving at least one person's reading of the text, choices about what elements to transfer, and decision about how to actualize these elements in a medium of image and sound' (Desmond, Hawkes).

About adaptation of a novel/ text into a film version, P. Torop writes: "The main difference between film and literary work lies in the fact that literature is fixed in a written form, while in a film the image (representation) is supported by sound, in the form of music and words." It deals with how a word can be described through the image with sounds and music in the background. A film version is composed of different elements, such as dialogue, setting, possible voice-overs, musical score, editing, framing, lighting, coloration, close-up, perspective, and in case of human voice, also the timbre and the intonation patterns.

### Check Your Progress

1. To which Latin word can the term "adaptation" be traced for its origin in the early 17th century?
2. Who wrote *A Theory of Adaptation*?
3. What is the work of a cinematic translator of a film maker?
4. Who made the movie *Maqbool*?

## 12.3 TRANSLATION OF LITERARY AND NON-LITERARY TEXTS

We try to see the world in binary opposites, such as light – dark, man – woman, nature – culture, etc. One such binary opposite is Literary – Non-literary, though what comes under literature and non-literary texts is highly debatable; still for the sake for categorization we specify certain characteristics which makes a text literary and others non-literary.

## Literary Text

According to Aristotle literature is “what should be” (Poetics), the ideal. In that sense literature is the imaginative portrayal of a world which is different from the reality in which we live in. But at the same time, it is also true that as writers are products of this world, therefore literature can in no way be independent of the reality of this world. The twentieth century literary theorists take a different approach in defining literature. Moreover, the Russian formalists try to see literature from the point of view of “language”. According to the Russian scholar Roman Jakobson, literature represents an ‘organized violence committed on ordinary speech.’ Let us take the example of the first two lines of “Ode to a Nightingale” by John Keats—

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

The language used by Keats in these first two lines of the poem is not that of the ordinary people as use in their everyday interactions. Taking the last four words of the second line “... hemlock I had drunk” doesn’t even follow the syntactical order of English language (Subject – Verb – Object). Here, Keats deliberately inverts (Object – Subject – Verb) the order and gives prominence to the object because he wants to give more stress on “hemlock”. Hence, one may say that Keats deliberately makes use of the organized violence on speech because he has to make his writing more poetic.

Scholar and critic Terry Eagleton writes in *Literary Theory: An Introduction* –

“In the routines of everyday speech, our perceptions of and responses to reality become stale, blunted, or, as the Formalists would say, ‘automatized’. Literature, by forcing us into a dramatic awareness of language, refreshes these habitual responses and renders objects more ‘perceptible’.” (2001:3)

Thus, the Formalists thought that “making strange” was the way through which one can say what literary is. The differential relations between one sorts of use of language with another define what literariness is all about. But the problem comes when one think about prose. In poetry there can be violence on the ordinary speech, but perhaps in prose, the writer does not do any such thing to achieve literariness. How then is it possible to define prose fiction as literature? Therefore, in the terms of the Formalists, it’s not very easy to give a definition which is all encompassing. Terry Eagleton rightly says that “to think of literature as the Formalists do is really to think of all literature as poetry.”

Instead what Terry Eagleton has to say about literariness is quite interesting, as he writes –

“. . . many of the works studied as literature in academic institutions were ‘constructed’ to be read as literature, but it is also true that many of them were not. A piece of writing may start off life as history or philosophy and then come to be ranked as literature; or it may start off as literature and then come to be valued for its archaeological significance. Some texts are born literary, some achieve literariness, and some have literariness thrust upon them.”

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Hence, *canonization* of literature is what Terry Eagleton talks about when he tries to define the literariness of literature. Let us think about *The Bible*. Can *The Bible* be considered as a literary text? Many universities in India and worldwide today teach *The Bible* as one of the greatest literatures ever written. One can conclude that the academicians and scholars have a great role to play in the canonization of literature.

The definition of what literature is and what literariness consists of changes with the process of time and there cannot be a definite definition of what literature is, as literature is a very “subjective” term. Therefore, English Literature includes Shakespeare, Webster, Marvell, Donne, Milton, the Romantic poets and many others, but also at the same time, The Bible, Essays of Francis Bacon, Bunyan’s Spiritual autobiography, even, Thomas Hobbes’ Leviathan are also considered as literary. Terry Eagleton is of the opinion that “what counts as literature is a notably unstable affair.”

### For Further Information

Literary translation can be typed into broad three categories –

- translation of poetry – the focus is primarily on the emotional effect.
- translation of prose (fiction) – the focus is on the correspondence in meaning, similarity in style (both authorial and text style) and function.
- translation of drama – the focus is on text and performance (readability and performability).

### Non-literary Text

The term “non-literary text” is very broad and vague as whatever is not literary comes under the purview of “non-literary” starting from administrative, legal, bureaucratic, medical, scientific and other official documents. Probably the only common thing that we find in non-literary texts is that they are written in precise terms and in a pragmatic way which has some kind of systematic coherence and thematic structuring. Moreover, what we can perceive is that the language of the non-literary texts is more or less formalized and as Popoviè, (1977: 192) said it stands for a “stylistic operation which is based not on the transfer of aesthetic but pragmatic information.” Even historical, statistical, scientific, sociological documents can be termed as non-literary texts.

Let us take an example of a non-literary text. E. P. Thompson’s *The History of The English Working Class* is an account of the coming up of the working class as a potent force in the nineteenth century England. On the same subject there is a fictional account which provides similar information and knowledge about the state of the working class in nineteenth century Industrial town of England – Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times*. Both the texts — E. P. Thompson’s *The History of The English Working Class* and Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times* deal with the same subject; but the treatment is different and because of the difference of treatment

one becomes fiction / literature and the other a book on sociological history. One deals with facts and analyses facts from a pragmatic and realistic point of view while the other treats facts in a manner by which a fictional account is created which has an aesthetic value about it. Thus, literary and non-literary texts can be distinguished. Moreover, the governmental documents, letters, memos, manuals, etc. are also non-literary texts.

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Non-Literary Text	Literary Text
Is concerned with information, facts and reality	Is concerned with the world of the mind, <i>i.e.</i> ideas and feelings and is grounded on imagination.
Primarily concerned with reality	Deals with a Fictional reality or imaginative reality
Based on precision, reason and can be characterized by more or less logical argumentative progression	products of author's imagination and consequently open to ambiguity and multiple interpretations
Written to be scanned to gather the information	Written to be assimilated slowly or repeatedly and widely appreciated by readership
expected to fulfill a certain pragmatic function	to inspire, offer advice or even shock the readers

### Comparing Translation of Literary and Non-literary Texts

The most significant thing about all the texts that we consider to be literature is that they are works of art which has aesthetic functions. While talking about the novel by Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* we said that though *Hard Times* is a socio-political and cultural documentary of the nineteenth century Industrial town in England, yet at the same time it is considered a literary text as reading it is pleasurable experience aesthetically. Therefore, literary translation or translation of literary texts also has to be similarly “a kind of aesthetically-oriented mediated bilingual communication, which aims at producing a target text intended to communicate its own form, correspondent with the source text, and accordant with contemporary literary and translational norms of the receptor culture” (Burkhanov, 2003: 139).

One can say that in literary translation, the translator has to keep in mind that translation is not merely an act where one translates the sense of the text, but as the same time also needs to translate the aestheticism of the text. If the translated text is not similarly aesthetic, then it cannot be compared to the source text. Thus, in the domain of literary translation, the translator delves in the aesthetic pleasures of the source text and also translates that into the translated text. In case on Non-literary translation, the translator does not need to keep in mind the aesthetic element of the text as in most cases there is none. Hence, the translator can be freer to translate the information contained in the source text. But what is to be kept in mind is that all the information and analysis that the nonliterary source text contains should be translated in a structured manner as it

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is done in a non-literary text. In some cases, in literary texts, the translator can deviate a bit from the original text. For example, while translating Rabindra Nath Tagore's novel *The Home and the World*, the translator Surendra Nath Tagore does something innovative. There are two sisters-in-law of the main character Bimala which the translator thought was not necessary and therefore he interwove the two characters into one in his translation. Such kind of deviation or change is not welcome in a non-literary text as a non-literary text is all about information arranged and structured in a particular way. That structure is very important in translation of non-literary texts.

In the matter of Style, there is also difference. By style what is meant here is the author's linguistic thumbprint on the text. In case of literary texts, every author has his personal style and that style needs to be brought in the literary translation. If one is reading Premchand, it should feel even in translation that he or she is reading Premchand. The style of the author should find its expression in the translated text. But in case of non-literary texts, the style is not such a botheration for the translator as it does not matter.

Thus, it can be said that rendering non-literary text in translation demands frequently complete accuracy to the ST and utmost precision in terminology, which does not allow the translator to have any creative freedom. The role of the translator is moreover mechanical as he or she is dealing with a technical thing. Especially if one is translating a legal document, a scientific document or something like that then the translator should not only have a very in-depth knowledge about the subject which he or she is translating as there are many subject specific words or jargons (register) which the translator needs to translate to bring about the significance of the text completely. In opposition to the non-literary texts, translation of literary text is freer and more creative.

Peter Newmark sums up the difference between non-literary and literary translation as follows:

“Literary and non-literary translation are two different professions, though one person may sometimes practise them both. They are complementary to each other and are noble, each seeking in the source text a valuable but different truth, the first allegorical and aesthetic, the second factual and traditionally functional. They sometimes each have different cultural backgrounds, occasionally referred to as ‘the two cultures’, which are detrimentally opposed to each other” (Newmark, 2004: 11).

### Check Your Progress

5. Who wrote *The History of The English Working Class*?
6. Are letters, memos, manuals, etc. non-literary texts or literary texts?



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## 12.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The term “adaptation” can be traced for its origin in the early 17th century Latin word “adaptare” which means to “fit in.”
2. Linda Hutcheon wrote *A Theory of Adaptation*.
3. Cinematic translator of a film maker transforms the linguistic text into images (also videos) and sounds along with it (the target text).
4. Vishal Bhardwaj made the movie *Maqbool*.
5. E. P. Thompson wrote *The History of The English Working Class*.
6. The governmental documents, letters, memos, manuals, etc. are non-literary texts.

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## 12.5 SUMMARY

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- The term “adaptation” can be traced for its origin in the early 17th century Latin word “adaptare” which means to “fit in.”
- In the twentieth century as many works are being adapted into films, there was a growth of adaptation theory.
- These works offered new insights into the genre of adaptation and enriched the film theory.
- Adaptation has always been central to the process of filmmaking since almost the beginning and could well maintain its dominance into the cinema’s second century.
- It is to be remembered that films often target a much larger audience than a book and therefore the reach of a film is much more than a book, in most cases.
- It is one of the main motifs of translation to bridge cultures and to make people across cultures come together so that they understand each other in a better fashion.
- The significance of translation lies in the fact that it is an exceedingly complex activity because no two languages share the same structures of grammar, composition and so on.
- What a cinematic translator of a film maker does it to transform the linguistic text (words – the source text) into images (also videos) and sounds along with it (the target text).
- Apparently, there is not much similarity between *Macbeth* and *Throne of Blood* or *Maqbool* apart from the fact that the later two are inspired and to some extent adapted from the earlier one.

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- Scholars and theorists are divided over the issue whether literary texts should be translated to silver screen or not.
- Every writer of film director always keeps in mind his or her target readers/ audience.
- It may be conjectured here that therefore in film adaptation or cinematic translation much of the original text changes.
- Each translator has the license to interpret the text according to his or her ideological position / context and based on that interpretation transfer the source text to the target text.
- Women are usually asked to be faithful and the question of ‘fidelity’ never arises with males.
- It was traditionally thought to be an oxymoron for a woman to be both beautiful and faithful at the same time!
- Now the question comes – whether it is possible to be equivalent to the source text when one is translating.
- It is true that it is almost impossible in many cases to find an equivalent to the source language in the target language.
- Chamberlain talks of the crucial work of a scholar Serge Gavronsky, which divides translation metaphors into two major groups: pietistic and cannibalistic.
- In the course of her reworking and reevaluation of feminist translation, Simon does some digging into the past to bring to fore, the contribution of women translators in history.
- Adaptation of any kind will lead to some alteration or editing.
- While adapting a story or any other form of narrative to another genre - that of the film alteration is unavoidable and it is relative to the subjectivity of an individual.
- From the earliest days of cinema, adaptation has been as common as the development of original screenplays.
- We try to see the world in binary opposites, such as light –dark, man – woman, nature –culture etc.
- One such binary opposite is Literary – Non-literary, though what comes under literature and non-literary texts is highly debatable.
- According to Aristotle literature is “what should be” (Poetics), the ideal.
- In that sense literature is the imaginative portrayal of a world which is different from the reality in which we live in.
- The differential relations between one sorts of use of language with another define what literariness is all about. But the problem comes when one think about prose.

- In poetry there can be violence on the ordinary speech, but perhaps in prose, the writer does not do any such thing to achieve literariness.
- Many universities in India and worldwide today teach The Bible as one of the greatest literature ever written.
- Terry Eagleton is of the opinion that “what counts as literature is a notably unstable affair.”
- Probably the only common thing that we find in non-literary texts is that they are written in precise terms and in a pragmatic way which has some kind of systematic coherence and thematic structuring.
- The literary and non-literary texts can be distinguished.
- Moreover, the governmental documents, letters, memos, manuals, etc. are also non-literary texts.
- The most significant thing about all the texts that we consider to be literature is that they are works of art which has aesthetic functions.
- If the translated text is not similarly aesthetic then it cannot be compared to the source text.
- In the matter of Style, there is also difference. By style what is meant here is the author’s linguistic thumbprint on the text.
- In case of literary texts, every author has his personal style and that style needs to be brought in the literary translation.
- Thus, it can be said that rendering non-literary text in translation demands frequently complete accuracy to the ST and utmost precision in terminology, which does not allow the translator to have any creative freedom.
- Literary and non-literary translation are two different professions, though one person may sometimes practise them both.

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### 12.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Abridge:** (Of a piece of writing) having been shortened.
- **Palimpsests:** It is a manuscript or piece of writing material on which later writing has been superimposed on effaced earlier writing.
- **Conjecture:** It means to form an opinion or supposition about (something) on the basis of incomplete information.
- **Formalist:** It is a person who adheres excessively to prescribed forms.
- **Canonization:** It refers to admission into a canon of literary or artistic works.

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## 12.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on adaptation as a translation activity.
2. What is abridgment? Explain in context of the unit.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Give a detailed description of the differences between literary texts and non-literary texts. What are the different translation approaches for them?

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## 12.8 FURTHER READINGS

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- Amos, Flora Ross. 1973. *Early Theories of Translation*. New York: Octagon.
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- Bassnett, Susan. 2002. *Translation Studies*. London and New York: Routledge.
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- Chomsky, N. 1957. *Syntactic Structures*. Gravenhage: Mouton.

**BLOCK - IV****LITERATURE – OTHER DISCIPLINE****UNIT 13 LITERATURE AND OTHER ARTS****NOTES****Structure**

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Music and Literature
- 13.3 Literature and Architecture
- 13.4 Literature and Dance
- 13.5 Literature and Theatre
- 13.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.7 Summary
- 13.8 Key Words
- 13.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.10 Further Readings

**13.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the recent years, many scientific studies have tried to analyse the way emotions get evoked once people study literature; each genre invoking a different set of emotion. Many studies have also shown that based on the emotional connect with a certain kind of literary work that readers have displayed more cognitive connection as well as empathy generation. Of course, discussions related to literature and emotional association has been long chronicled, including being mentioned in Aristotle's *Poetics*. With neuroscience, psychology and literature being studied as interdisciplinary field and neuroscience literature being identified as the new field of study more and more attention is being focused on the impact of literature and other branches of literature.

Similarly, this unit explores the relationship between literature and other arts in detail.

**13.1 OBJECTIVES**

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the relationship between literature and other arts
- Explain the co-relation and importance of music, theatre and dance in literature
- Describe the significance of architecture

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## 13.2 MUSIC AND LITERATURE

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### NOTES

Music and literature have shared a symbiotic relation since the advent of humanity. And scholars have been focusing on the inherent nature of their similarity because unlike other forms, literature and music are “temporal in nature”. But in the last few years focus has intensified in understanding the cultural as well as aesthetic interaction between literature and music which has paved way to an interesting interdisciplinary research domain. There has been a long tradition of scholarship that suggests that recital of music and literature (especially the technique of reciting it) must have had sprung from same source – the art of storytelling. Storytelling, as an art, is as old as human civilization. Much before writing came into existence, storytelling has been around, and it was delivered orally. But soon enough, both literature and music deviated into two different branches of knowledge. Soon with the advent of written literature the connection between oral literature and performance of music decreased. And cultural history will suggest that their relationship has undergone numerous changes based on the location and age they were part of. “Music appears to be universal to all cultures. Some evolutionary psychologists have argued that it serves no useful purpose . . . others have suggested to the contrary that it may serve an adaptive role in sexual selection . . . – an idea that goes back to Darwin . . . Nevertheless, music does depend on some innate predispositions” Again it is not just the adults who find it attractive to listen to music, we also have infants who show clear indications to music. “. . . two-day-old hearing infants of congenitally deaf parents prefer singing that is intended for infants, which is more emotional, than singing that is intended for adults Likewise, infants recognize melodies that are transposed to a new key or played at a different tempo “

Poetry has always been structured in a way so that they can be put into musical pattern. The verse structure has always been pro music. Even though music and poetry seem to have a very close connection, yet one cannot overlook the fact that even the prose writers too have contributed to the musicality of literature through introduction of elements like leitmotiv and sonata. Many literary prose works have also been composed for or been inspired by people who were into music. We cannot ignore that music and musical performance has always been the highlight of many literature composed during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Music was introduced in plays to establish setting, reintroduce theme, connect characters etc. As we know, during 1950s and 1960s the Beat poets introduced rhythms that were inspired from jazz and rock. It is needless to say that in social and cultural life both the art forms are interrelated and that is why they have retained their appeal in the long run. “Work in literature and music thus spans a very wide range of approaches, from investigations whose primary focus is historical - audiences, and the spaces they occupied - to close textual and theoretical analysis of the relationships between the literary and the musical.” Moreover,

“...interrogation of ‘the cultural turn’ in criticism alongside the continuing preoccupation of much recent scholarship in both literature and music with the wider cultural context, seems timely, given reservations expressed by those who pioneered the cultural study of music, and the signs of a renewed, albeit keenly historicised, interest in form within literary studies”.<sup>1</sup>

As far as music is concerned many scholars have suggested that emotions (of varied degree) are evoked based on the kind of music one is listening to. But many argue that music in itself does not have the power to respond to emotions. Hence the emotions connected to the music is definitely connected to the person listening to it. Another study has suggested that while listening to music listeners display, “activation in structures associated with cognitive empathy”. Music has also played a significant role in helping people recover from their illness. Moreover, many a times, the inability to express oneself due to various reasons also plays a major role in finding oneself getting connected to music. This is especially true from sad music which tends to invoke empathy much more than other forms. Recently a number of studies are being undertaken to study the behavioural and physiological influences that takes place while one is listening to music. This is slightly different from literature where a person reading a text might relate more to the characters or situations than to the musical aspect of the writing. But it cannot be denied that the various studies only confirm that both literary reading as well as music listening leads to creation of empathy. Of course the reasons for invocation of these feelings are more scientific. It is not random. Both music and literature, more specifically, the language used to compose these literatures are arranged in a way so as to influence the musicality of the creation. There are other focused stimuli which help in creating this musical connection which might not be possible through the daily conversation that one participates in. Suspense and musical tension – both implying uncertainty and an impending action have been an indispensable component of literature and music. Studies have proven that both of them have the power to modulate physiological responses. Of course, the extent and manner in which the uncertainty is reflected is extremely different.

There are some studies which have focused on the use of ‘voce’ in both music and literature. These can be observed in the musicality of literary works, representation of silenced or marginalized voices, presentation of cultural bonds. Contemporary music have explored the possibilities of introducing various ‘voices’ concerning human understanding. It is also understood that opera studies have been influential in identifying voices which play a significant role in understanding the narrative, cultural as well as cultural roles.

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### 13.3 LITERATURE AND ARCHITECTURE

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Literature and architecture since antiquity have been intertwined through aesthetics. Walter Benjamin had once famously mentioned that architecture possess the most

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significant testimony to the hidden mythology of a society. In the modern sense we understand mythology as a body of knowledge with a set of symbols and narratives. In an interesting turn of relationship between literature and architecture we see, "...architectural metaphors are often used to describe literature, as in "the architecture of a novel". Similarly, in any architectural project there is an inherent "narrative" structure, e.g. a sequence of spaces, surprises and suspensions, hierarchies of space and function, and so on. By using architecture to explore narrative we discover how many of the challenges that writers face is similar to those of architects"<sup>2</sup> So if we consider architecture as a historical witness to mythology than we realize architecture bears a relation to literature. A certain philosophical tradition also puts both architecture and literature in a single thread based on the way they function. This discourse began around eighteenth century, a time, when architecture was identified as a form of fine art and not just a body of knowledge revolving around the science of building. But not everyone found the connection rational. For someone like Hegel both architecture and literature were different from each other because their expression to the spirit of individual as well as to the society was different. According to him "of all the arts, architecture was the first to come into the world because the first task of art consists in giving shape to the objective, physical world of nature."<sup>3</sup> But since architecture primarily deals with matters which are solid and inanimate the 'spirit' remains external in nature. On the other hand, literature in general and poetry specifically, represents absolute and true spirit of the art, because it is capable of conceiving anything with the power of imagination and is actually the expression of inner spirit.

Both literature and architecture deal with atmosphere/space. Atmosphere can be identified with physical space while 'space' can be connected to a feeling that helps in establishing emotional and/or spiritual ambience. Scholars believe that all the art forms aim to project a spiritual atmosphere; so does literature and architecture. Though space holds a greater significance in architecture. It is the power of architect to create variety of spaces so as to include heterogeneous atmospheres. Inclusion of heterogeneous atmospheres can be seen in work of literature where one can simultaneously feel and relate to an air of mysticism, spirituality or adventure at the same time. The literary atmosphere, as well know, is usually reflected as a complete experience. The aesthetic and emotional appeal is usually for the audience to identify and connect to. This mood created for the reader or audience of a literary piece is identified as literary atmosphere. Needless to say, even though the two terms are used in both literature and architecture in different manners and despite some minor technical difference they indeed share a common power to build a mental atmosphere for the reader as well as for the audience who try to understand the creation from the point of view of the artist as well as his/her cultural background.

Another way through which one can find connection between literature and architecture is by understanding the concept of motion. Any good literature is marked by distinctive style, dynamism as well as fluency. It also highlights a



movement towards one's own inner self that is the source as well as the site of the origin of motion that is the epicentre of the literary text. While in architecture we see motion as a tool that helps the architect to understand and realize the spaces that they create in mind. This mental creation of space finally gets echoed through the viewer's perception. It is this act of moving within the spaces which ultimately leads the mind to create various imaginations.

The concept of form and shape is used to define the combination of elements that put together create a wholesome ensemble which is dynamic in nature. Form is responsible for bringing out a harmony between the elements involved in creating elements. In context to architecture "shape refers to the 3-dimensional, material mass of an object that features a certain weight."<sup>4</sup> Even though this might be about the outline of structures that one gets to see at the outer surface there is without a doubt an inner space, which possesses a shape of its own. In terms of literature, form is the outer structure of any literary work. At times, shape is considered to be the combination of elements which unites to form a single complex. Such method involved to establish harmony between various elements helps bring out a unique character to this complex procedure and understanding. Thus, Shape or form is considered to be the method that is used in the presentation as well as expression of a certain piece of creation which refers to the style as well as to the structure of piece of creativity.

Again, "architecture and modern literature ... serve as a foundational introduction to the emerging interdisciplinary study of architecture and literature. ... a broad range of material, including literary, critical, and philosophical works in English, French, and German, and proposes a new historical and theoretical overview of this area, in which modern forms of "meaning" in architecture and literature are related to the discourses of being, dwelling, and homelessness."<sup>5</sup>

Next connection can be established through style. As we all know style in literature is considered to be the process by means of which thoughts finds an expression. Each style of prose or poetry finds its true reflection through the style that a certain individual or an era possessed. The dominant style of a certain school or a nation or a community too finds its way into literature. Of course, style is also the way in which an author decides to express himself or herself. In a more generic way style might be identified as the manner in which the author conceptualizes and finally delivers his works. In architecture, style is indeed about expression of the artist through various distinct form and structure that has an impression of the individual or the age or the community that the artist belongs to.

Like every creativity, in architecture too idea is the epicentre of the creation. It is the fundamental tendency of mind which tries to build certain patterns to create volume or find solutions to a problem. It also is about creating a space or designing overall outline of a structure. Similarly, in literature an idea permeates through the subject matter. It is incepted with the purpose of communicating moral or political or critical notions especially through the use of simile or metaphors which involves one or more events or individuals.

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One aspect that clearly appears both in literature as well as architecture is hierarchy. This hierarchy is created through corporal as well as functional features which are hallmarks of space. A similar hierarchy can be identified in literature that relies on structures and forms to create the final text. Along with hierarchy one element that needs a definite mention in the sense of rhythm. While rhythm is easily identified in literature especially in poetry or music one needs to develop a keen sense to discover rhythm in architecture. Rhythm in architecture can be seen in its most elementary form which is found in the most repeated pattern that appears along a straight line. Even the use of the elements of halting and reclining can be introduced to create a sense of repetition or rhythm. It might not be wrong to mention here that, “Great architects build structures that can make us feel enclosed, liberated or suspended. They lead us through space, make us slow down, speed up or stop to contemplate. Great writers, in devising their literary structures, do exactly the same.”<sup>6</sup>

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### 13.4 LITERATURE AND DANCE

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Dance and literature at the very outset appear to be extremely different. But they are not as different as it might appear to be. Both are forms of creative expressions, but their way of presentations is not similar. As far as dance is concerned people love to narrate their stories or even express their emotions through moving their bodies. While on the other hand, in literature, the author tends to share stories by writing down thought through words that they can share with others. Throughout the historical journey of human civilization, we have come across dance as a significant part of people’s lives, irrespective of the culture they belong to. “Aristotle’s Poetics... dating back to fourth century BCE... outlines the art of creating different genres of dramatic representation – from tragedy, comedy and satire to lyric and epic poetry. It explains manifold components of a theatrical play and stylistic devices in text, such as meter, harmony, musical rhythm and melody, characterization and various modes of representation and acting.”<sup>7</sup> Another important treatise that needs mention in this discussion (and was over looked by western academia for a long time was Bharatamuni’s *Natyashastra* that dates from around the first century CE. As we all know, “Natyashastra in Sanskrit is the name for the trinity of dance, music and theatre ... shastra means rules or the science of. Broad in its scope, and covering many subjects relating to art, this work meticulously prescribes the art of creating a performance – from the modes of representation as detailed as movements of the dancer’s pupils, to the qualities of a spectator, to aesthetic concepts such as the Rasa Theory”<sup>8</sup>

The relationship between dance and literature is one of the most underrepresented features of modernism. The two art forms are reciprocal and each one is influenced and shaped by other. For example, in the folktale Sun and Moon in a Box we witness Native American dance culture used in the tale. In this folktale, Coyote and Eagle participate in the dancing that Kachina Indians are

involved in. Probably it might appear as if the dance was just an insignificant aspect of the story line, but it was not so. Dance is actually integral to the narrative. In the tale, we learn that the sun and the moon are rescued from a box that was stolen by Eagle from the dancing Indians. Without the dance, needless to say, Eagle would not have had a chance to steal the box which had sun and moon and finally letting them go free. There is another folktale, Samba Dance, from Haiti that revolves around the dance form by the same name. In another Haiti folktale, Bouki Dances the Kokioko, we come across a story where the king is so obsessed with dance as art form that he develops his own dance. The king decides to reward any person a huge reward if that person can imitate his dance step for step. The scholars have always found it interesting that the word “Samba” (the dance form) which has an African origin actually means master musician or storyteller! Thus, traditional cultures had intertwined literature and dance to pass on their culture to the next generation. Judith Flanders in her essay<sup>9</sup> mentions that in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, in “the image of the African woman” scene we see that Marlow is just describing movement. These are not a static “image”. Rather we have a woman who is “treading the earth proudly” as long as she is stopped. Without a doubt everything in here is a moment that one experiences in a movement. But unfortunately, it is identified as a tableau. Again, on the other hand, we have Gilles Deleuze, the theoretician, who wrote in detail about Samuel Beckett’s use of names, voices, images and his unconventional strategies for stage directions never mention’s about Beckett’s language of movement. Scholars agree that Beckett’s knowledge of dance was exceptional. And that is why it was formidably integrated in his work that inspired many performances. Some scholars believe that the ancient struggle between Apollonian and Dionysian could be the reason to have created twentieth-century dance, and literature. We come across literature which has over the ages has turned to the ancient, to the ritual practices and to express itself. It carries its own sense of dichotomies of attraction and repulsion. It highlights the individual as well as the community.

It would not be wrong to introduce post dramatic theatre here. It “ is a notion that refers to performance art which is not based on a dramatic text or epic, and despite *Paradise Lost* being based on *Paradise Lost*, this concept deserves introduction due to the non-narrative quality of contemporary dance. The term was introduced by Hans-Thies Lehman in his critical 1999 book *Post dramatic Theatre* to describe the phenomenon happening across modern and postmodern performing arts from the sixties on, which saw a rapid departure from its reliance on a previously conceived narrative.”<sup>10</sup> This work led to Peter Szondi’s introducing the idea of “crisis of drama” in his work. Tis notion “postulated that the themes and subjects suitable to modern epic could no longer be portrayed within the constraints of Aristotelian drama. In fact, the word ‘portrayal’ is ... most problematic.”<sup>11</sup>

Of course, literature was not just meant to educate children. It also provided entertainment to large crowds. In fact, it soon became the major traditional gateway

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for people to connect with their forefathers while upholding their cultural legacy. Through literature one can see what cultures were like many centuries ago and understand the reasons and ways through which it has undergone various transitions. Folktales across cultures usually carry strong sexual themes which might be identified as taboo or inappropriate for living in those times. But it also shows the society's tendency to reflect and include the ideas or practices that were common during the period to be included in the narratives. We can always see dance and literature as a similar creative tool which is used to shape and define communities. As we know, literature is written down so that it can be passed on from one generation to generation. But on the other hand, one has to teach dance as well as perform it so that it can also be passed down to the next generation. Both Dance and Literature are ancient art forms and are extremely important to each culture which still has an influential impact in our lives.

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### 13.5 LITERATURE AND THEATRE

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Theatre is an art form that is concerned almost exclusively with live performances. In theatre the action is meticulously planned to create a coherent as well as significant notion of drama. We know that the word theatre is derived from the Greek word *theaomai* which means "to see"<sup>12</sup>. Such performances are meant to appeal to ear and eye or both. At times, theatre appeals to the intellect. But that does not mean that they are good theatre. A good theatre is invariably marked by great performance. But "good" itself is subjective and depends largely on the spectator. It is the nature and quality of spectator that defines the kind of performance that is put. For example, a socially conscious theatre will have a different kind of performance which will not be similar to a farce being staged. A successful theatre calls for a strong participation of the spectator.

For years people believed that the art of theatre has the power to survive only with the strong content of the script. But to believe that one must realize that theatre is not exactly a literary art. It is no secret that for many years the plays were expected to be 'studied' rather than being performed. Thus, the literary aspect of a theatrical production works makes more sense when it is subordinated to the histrionic. In this context it must be mentioned that the strongest impactful impression on the audience is created through the performances on theatre - acting, singing, and dancing, etc.

Yet it is often assumed that the theatrical experience can be experienced through the reading the text of a play. But such a notion has resulted because of the influence of the critics of who specialized in theatre studies. After all, like writers, they too possess a literary orientation. But the influence of theatre critics is magnified by the fact that it is almost impossible to make serious theatre a mass appealing art form. Caught between the highbrow and low bow art format at times it does not find enough encouragement among critics and at other times not enough impactful to be in scholarly pages. Of course, this does not take the fact away that the

contribution of the author to the theatrical experience is of extreme significance. But author needs the collaboration of artists- actors, musicians, stage designers et al- to make their efforts shine through. After all one cannot deny that a skilled performance has the power to reveal meanings and intentions. While discussing theatre it is important to understand that the audience experiences theatre differently in different parts of the globe. This is decided on the basis of the cultural understanding. For example, western dramatists prefer to bestow an innocent character with sorrows and calamities. But the Indian dramatis solely rely on karma (one's action). Needless to say, the bad things happen to bad people who fall in troubles.

Plays have a close resemblance to poetry than any other art form because they both share compact language. Both the forms rely on a heightened and at times, accelerated form of communication. On the other hand, what is left unsaid forms an integral part of meaning formation. A work of drama is always adopting a present tense as the characters shine vividly alive in our presence. We never get to know what they are instructed told what they are instructed. Rather we observe them from close quarter. The audience is not instructed as to what to think about them, rather they draw their own conclusions. When one tries to read plays the reader's mind changes itself into the stage offering a significant scope for development. The silent reading of a play as the power to create an alternative space with an alternative truth which could be rewarding and might or might not be closer to the playwright's intentions, than one or another actual production. It for sure "... some plays are more self-consciously literary ... more designed to be read, than others. George Bernard Shaw's prefaces and stage descriptions are famously, or infamously, intended to be read; Shaw's doggedly witty, persistently hectoring voice competes with the voices of his dramatic characters for our attention. "<sup>13</sup> This exquisitely scripted plays of any number of classic playwrights always provide for interesting and intense countless readings. Even though most of us are familiar with the classic tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides exclusively through reading. And as many Shakespeare scholars would agree the plays of Shakespeare were meant to be experienced through reading.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

1. In the modern sense, What is mythology?
2. What is the connection between literature and thoughts?
3. What is the one aspect that clearly appears both in literature as well as architecture?
4. What is Natya in Sanskrit?
5. Who introduced the term post dramatic theatre?

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## 13.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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### NOTES

1. In the modern sense we understand mythology as a body of knowledge with a set of symbols and narratives.
2. Literature is considered to be the process by means of which thoughts finds an expression.
3. One aspect that clearly appears both in literature as well as architecture is hierarchy.
4. Natya in Sanskrit is the name for the trinity of dance, music and theatre.
5. The term was introduced by Hans-Thies Lehman in his critical 1999 book Post dramatic Theatre.

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## 13.7 SUMMARY

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- Music and literature have shared a symbiotic relation since the advent of humanity. And scholars have been focusing on the inherent nature of their similarity because unlike other forms, literature and music are “temporal in nature”.
- Storytelling, as an art, is as old as human civilization. Much before writing came into existence, storytelling has been around, and it was delivered orally.
- Poetry has always been structured in a way so that they can be put into musical pattern. The verse structure has always been pro music.
- Many literary prose works have also been composed for or been inspired by people who were into music.
- In the recent years, many scientific studies have tried to analyse the way emotions get evoked once people study literature; each genre invoking a different set of emotion.
- Many studies have also shown that based on the emotional connect with a certain kind of literary work that readers have displayed more cognitive connection as well as empathy generation.
- As far as music is concerned many scholars have suggested that emotions (of varied degree) are evoked based on the kind of music one is listening to.
- Music has also played a significant role in helping people recover from their illness.
- Moreover, many a times, the inability to express oneself due to various reasons also plays a major role in finding oneself getting connected to music. This is especially true for sad music which tends to invoke empathy much more than other forms.

- Both music and literature, more specifically, the language used to compose these literatures are arranged in a way so as to influence the musicality of the creation.
- Contemporary music has explored the possibilities of introducing various ‘voices’ concerning human understanding.
- Literature & architecture since antiquity have been intertwined through aesthetics.
- In the modern sense we understand mythology as a body of knowledge with a set of symbols and narratives.
- By using architecture to explore narrative we discover how many of the challenges that writers face is similar to those of architects.
- For someone like Hegel both architecture and literature were different from each other because their expression to the spirit of individual as well as to the society was different.
- Both literature and architecture deal with atmosphere/space. Atmosphere can be identified with physical space while ‘space’ can be connected to a feeling that helps in establishing emotional and/or spiritual ambience.
- The literary atmosphere, as well know, is usually reflected as a complete experience.
- Another way through which one can find connection between literature and architecture is by understanding the concept of motion.
- The concept of form and shape is used to define the combination of elements that put together create a wholesome ensemble which is dynamic in nature.
- Next connection can be established through style. As we all know style in literature is considered to be the process by means of which thoughts finds an expression.
- Like every creativity, in architecture too idea is the epicentre of the creation.
- It is the fundamental tendency of mind which tries to build certain patterns to create volume or find solutions to a problem.
- While rhythm is easily identified in literature especially in poetry or music one needs to develop a keen sense to discover rhythm in architecture.
- Dance and literature at the very outset appear to be extremely different. But they are not as different as it might appear to be.
- As far as dance is concerned people love to narrate their stories or even express their emotions through moving their bodies.
- While on the other hand, in literature, the author tends to share stories by writing down thought through words that they can share with others.
- The relationship between dance and literature is one of the most underrepresented features of modernism.

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- Of course, literature was not just meant to educate children. It also provided entertainment to large crowds.
- In fact, it soon became the major traditional gateway for people to connect with their forefathers while upholding their cultural legacy.
- Both Dance and Literature are ancient art forms and are extremely important to each culture which still has an influential impact in our lives.
- Theatre is an art form that is concerned almost exclusively with live performances. In theatre the action is meticulously planned to create a coherent as well as significant notion of drama.
- For years people believed that the art of theatre has the power to survive only with the strong content of the script. But to believe that one must realize that theatre is not exactly a literary art.
- Plays have a close resemblance to poetry than any other art form because they both share compact language.
- When one tries to read plays the reader's mind changes itself into the stage offering a significant scope for development.

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## 13.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Symbiotic:** Denoting a mutually beneficial relationship between different people or groups.
- **Recital:** It is a performance of a programme of music by a soloist or small group.
- **Advent:** It refers to the arrival of a notable person or thing.
- **Leitmotiv:** It is a recurrent theme throughout a musical or literary composition, associated with a particular person, idea, or situation.
- **Neuroscience:** Any or all of the sciences, such as neurochemistry and experimental psychology, which deal with the structure or function of the nervous system and brain.
- **Physiological:** Relating to the branch of biology that deals with the normal functions of living organisms and their parts.
- **Aesthetics:** It is the branch of philosophy which deals with questions of beauty and artistic taste.
- **Epicentre:** It is the central point of something, typically a difficult or unpleasant situation.
- **Folktales:** It is a story originating in popular culture, typically passed on by word of mouth.



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## 13.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. How does mythology function as a body of knowledge? What role does architecture play in literature?
2. What is the correlation between literature and dance? How does one compliment the other?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Music and literature have shared a symbiotic relation. Critically comment on the statement and substantiate your answer with examples.
2. Analyse the relationship between theatre and literature in detail.

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## 13.10 FURTHER READINGS

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### End Notes

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2. <http://lablitarch.com/>
3. Berlin lectures on aesthetics in the 1820s
4. <http://www.cwejournal.org/vol10nospl-issue-may-2015/architecture-and-literature-links-and-similarities-an-outlook-over-nasir-khosrows-safarnameh/>
5. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/14036>

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7. <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/52583/MA%20A.Chmiel.pdf?sequence=1>
8. <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/52583/MA%20A.Chmiel.pdf?sequence=1>
9. <https://www.judithflanders.co.uk/modernism-and-dance/>
10. <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/52583/MA%20A.Chmiel.pdf?sequence=1>
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12. <https://www.britannica.com/art/theatre-art>
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# UNIT 14 LITERATURE AND OTHER DISCIPLINES

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*Literature and other  
Disciplines*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
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## 14.0 INTRODUCTION

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We need to understand that interdisciplinary approach helps one to identify the proximity established by various fields of knowledge with one another so that the theoretical interaction of one can be examined with respect to other. The obvious exclusivity paves way for a broader and inclusive approach to knowledge dissemination. Such opportunity arises because humanity intends to make the specialized knowledge more versatile. After all, in this media driven world, every information is available to everyone without much discrimination. And a huge amount of generalized view is available without providing much insight into any ideas.

Of course, “...it is well known that literature is an important source of inspiration for the science of psychology which tries to explain human emotions, behaviors and mental processes from a scientific perspective... literature has played a significant role in Freud’s discovery of psychoanalysis. It will not be wrong to say that psychologists benefit from the study of literature in their analysis of certain concepts, phenomena and theories ... Each and every literary character qualifies as a case for psychological study.”<sup>1</sup>

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## 14.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the relationship between Literature and Psychology
- Discuss the relationship between Literature and other disciplines such as Biography, Philosophy and Sociology

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## 14.2 LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY

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We know that psychology is based on logic. Even though literature too relies on logic, it is different from what we come across in psychology. Psychologists, as scholars would like to argue, prefer to undertake observations that can be replicated. But on the other hand, an author might rely on analogy, metaphor and a certain amount of ambiguity to express the point. Yet without a doubt both fields of studies share the objective of understanding the development of their subjects, irrespective of whether they are real or fictional. Both highlights the conflicts and problems the characters face in life or in the plot. And thus, this knowledge of both psychology and literature will help one understand the author's psychology, idea behind the creative process, behavioral analysis as well as readers response.

If we consider biographies and autobiographies of other writers, we can come across the need to have psychological interpretation especially the way the author decides to present himself or herself. This helps the readers as well as other writers to get an insight into the lives of these people. The psychological aspect focuses on the creative process which identifies the personality of the writer as well as of the other characters. Psychological studies especially that of the process of creation of literary work invariably involves almost all the stages of creative processes that usually one undergoes. Given the context after basing the understanding on psychological logic, a psychological point of view will seek to delineate the character as well as the registration of the attitudes which human subjects tend to make explicit. Though at times they also leave an implied understanding while performing them. In a similar manner, the readers too, respond to the situation in their own way - to the content they read. From an interdisciplinary perspective, Psychology attempts to establish a certain degree of relationship between a work of art and its cultural, social, political surroundings which helps in providing human enlightenment and also allows for an exhaustive study of literature.

“Although the methods may vary, human nature had been and will always be an authentic and invaluable study for professionals, philosophers, artists and authors, celebrating the human nature as an indecipherable tangle. Literature is one of the most fundamental means to understand human nature. Works of literature serve as the tangible instruments of cultural and aesthetic heritage to be studied as the sources of man's creative process. Literature teaches a diversity of themes and notions about feelings, reactions, tensions, anxieties, motives, desires and numerous occasions, related to man and existence.”<sup>2</sup> One must clearly understand that the interdisciplinary dimension of literature cannot be ignored simply because literature is deeply rooted in the psychological, cultural, and philosophical context in terms of its relationships with human world. “Psychology can be used to explore and explain things and phenomena of human life by applying the principle of psychology in the literary work.” For some conscious artist, psychology may have tightened their sense of reality, sharpened their powers of observation or allowed

them to fall into hitherto undiscovered patterns. However, “in itself, psychology is only preparatory to the act of creation, and in the work itself, psychological truth is an artistic value only if it enhances coherence complexity, in short; it is art”<sup>3</sup>

As far as understanding how people think, act, influence and relate to each other, one has to understand the branch of Psychology called Social Psychology. It deals with the social experiences that is internalized by an individual who consciously or unconsciously participates in different social movements. The study of man from social psychological point of view can be categorized as a perceiver, a person who needs as well as a person who solves issues. Given the context, we can read a writer, as an individual. S/he happens to be a unique existence highlighted in his own uniqueness that is the amalgamation of the individual existence. After all a writer’s world is made up of his perceptions, feelings, understanding and imagination. And these feelings are so unique that it cannot be replicated by any one as it is. This individualistic world leads to the writer’s linguistic creation. This helps him think through his senses. As a result, the individual perception of a writer along with his thought as well as his invention all turns into an observation regarding what is perceived. Now, if we consider the writer a ‘type’ then, his personality taken into account especially, the way he is perceived by others and the way he manages to influence them. Each of his traits are observed and analysed to form the scheme of understanding. We come across the traits in the person. But the identification of types are an external viewpoint. Scholars have focused on analysing on fundamental human values that reflects through writings. They then categorize along the lines of aesthetic, theoretical, political, social, as well as religious. It is impossible for an individual to completely belongs to one category. Yet we can understand a personality by examining these values through certain parameters.

It must be emphasized that these parameters and traits as abstractions created to support the schemes of understanding. They are under no circumstances explain the individual completely. We are aware of authors who advocate the need of including the ideal types while there are writers who insist on including the use of empirical knowledge. Generally considering the term “creation” is usually defined as the process or effect of conceiving and inventing. This invention takes place through human, divine or similar superior force for something that does not exist. The process also involves giving shape to a new form that might be used to improve something that already is in existence. It usually is an intellectually triggering notion which is par excellence as it requires the involvement of reasoning as well as that of finer skills required to execute certain complex tasks involved in the process creation.

Some critics are of the opinion that this involvement of sensations, environments as well as emotions are detectable in literary texts which mirrors a symbolic system whose knowledge is a movement that never comes to an end but symbolizes the progress of knowledge. Yet, this imaginary idea conceived by common sense is distinctly different from the general collective imagery. After all in

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collective imagery the subjectivity of a person which is presented to the unconscious differs from the personal imagery. Here, the images of an individual as well as that of a culture are presented to the reader. This in turn helps in the collection of subjectivities as well as cultural notions of a person who is conceived to be a response to the human emotions which is languishing in the face of the finitude of life.

Summing up, one can say, "...it is clear that there is need a literature psychology in order to make a better analysis of a literary work. Despite the obvious need, except for some limited works, the area of literature psychology in the methodical sense has not yet been developed and is still remaining at the terminological level."<sup>4</sup>

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### 14.3 LITERATURE AND SOCIOLOGY

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We have a specialized area of study that focuses on the relationship between a literary work and the social structure, called the sociology of literature. This branch of study reveals that the existence of a literary creation revolves around the existence of social situations. Literary phenomena and social structure share a reciprocal relationship. They are set in socioeconomic conditions, talk about political issues and offer a different world view and takes into account the creativity of the authors. They bring to light the system of the social and political organizations. They also discuss about the thoughts and cultural configurations that are indispensable in a literary work. It creates a natural connection between sociology and literature which takes into account the historical theoretical determinants to understand a text.

While considering the theoretical premises that forms the basis of sociology of literature one must consider the nature and scope of both sociology as well as literature. In a general context, 'sociology' is defined as the scientific knowledge of society. More specifically it is related to human society. Thus, without a doubt one of the major concerns that sociology deals with is society. It focuses on the life and activities of man while taking into account the structure, development, origin of human society. Sociology takes a closer look at various elements of social life and social change. It analyses various forces and factors like artistic, aesthetic, geographical, scientific that might throw light on the numerous problems faced by human world. Thus, we can say that Sociology is primarily the scientific and objective study of man especially in the society that he lives in while analysing the available social institutions and understanding various social processes. Sociology tries to answer the question as to how society is function and why it continues to remain. In the New Oxford Encyclopaedic Dictionary, sociology is defined as 'a study of human, especially civilized, society; study of social problems, especially with a view to solving them'. Etymologically speaking the term 'sociology' owes its origin to the Latin word 'socius' which means companion or associate. It also

has the Greek word 'logos' or 'ology' which means the study of or science of. So, translating it literally, sociology turns into the study of companionship which delves into social interaction and the relationship that exists between individuals and groups. Though this is a limited view as it does not take into account the relationship of sociology with other branches of study like political science, psychology, economics etc.

If we take a close look we realize that the materials of literature are society and individuals. The world outside shapes within the mind and heart of the author. These transformed elements soon become the reality in which we witness literature and become the source of knowledge and pleasure. But it is not an easy thing to define literature as scholars from Plato to till date have defined literature in various ways. In a very general way we can say that a literature can be identified if we come across literary or connotative language which is concerned with reproduction of life through words and ideas. Some critics insist that literature functions as a social institution and hence is involved in social creation. One significant aspect that bothers literature is its relation with society. Certain school of critical thinker insist that the inner structure of literature is more important than the social structure. They do not appreciate the idea of understanding literature through biography or sociology. Yet other critics including those from sociological background have made attempts to explain the correlation that exists between sociology and literature. Scholars from different countries across the world have debated over the reciprocal relationship that is nurtured between literature and society. The most important reason of the building of this relationship is the depiction of life and life as a social reality. Thus, the genesis of both sociology and literature are similar. Hence, their stability is dependent on the major social institutions and crisis that define the society at that juncture. As a society we come across a number of behavior that is reflected through literature. This reflection is hallmark of the reciprocal relationship between literature and society. Many scholars like to believe that literature is a social phenomenon and differs from one society to other. Every society has its own unique structure and characteristics which gets reflected in behaviour, ideas, values and problems. The cultural norms define the ideas, themes, symbols, images etc used in a piece of literary work. Thus a work of literature becomes the mouthpiece of the particular society.

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### 14.4 LITERATURE AND BIOGRAPHY

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Biography is one of the most ancient literary genres. Many people rightly believe that it is part of historiography as it is connected chronologically as well as logically. As we all know biography rarely makes any distinction among the most significant or the most insignificant soul while presenting their lives. His also brings to view what Coleridge's had said, "any life, however in significant would, if truthfully told, be of interest is sound enough." From the perspective of a biographer a writer is nothing more than another man whose moral as well as intellectual development

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can be reconstructed for the benefit of the masses. The emotional and physical journey can be identified by reference to various standards which are highlights to some existing moral codes. A biographer concerns himself with facts, like a historian. Subscribing to this point of view Somerset Maugham had once said, “Familiarity with the life of an author enriches the experiences of reading his or her work.” A biographer must, interpret the documents available at his disposal. He must be in a position to understand the authenticity of auto-biographical materials. The biography should be genuine as well as authentic. But not all biographical writers have to undergo much trouble to instil genuineness. For someone like Shakespeare, for whom biographical materials are not abundantly available then one has to locate it through various tenacious means. But once the biography as a genre started establishing itself, authors, poets, creative artists become self-conscious and started leaving behind authentic documents related to them, for posterity. These writings have brought together many autobiographical statements while attracting much contemporary interest. In today’s date and time the biographical approach appears to be easy, because we can verify professional life against personal life. Biographical elements find expression in the work of Romantic poets who write about themselves as well as their innermost feelings. Like Byron would say how he carries the ‘pageant of his bleeding heart’ around Europe.

Romantic poets spoke of themselves not only in private letters or diaries they also wrote their autobiographies. Scholars’ in the field of literature agree that Wordsworth’s *Prelude* is a nothing but an autobiography. Of course, one always wonders if it is sensible to accept all these documents and materials at their face value without questioning the authenticity of the poetry or the intentions of the poet, who as Goethe would suggest is ‘fragments of great confession.’

“Of course, a biographer would counter, it is not the role of biography to focus on the explication of text so acutely. This is the job of literary criticism, practiced in tentative isolation from biographical investigation. If biography can be said to enhance the reading experience, it is by providing readers with information and perspective they can themselves apply if they find it adds to their enjoyment or appreciation of a particular work.”<sup>5</sup>

The general view that art is an -expression of self makes it a bit of problem material for biographers. Art is considered to be pure and simple which carries within it the spirit of personal feelings and experiences. But this indeed is a false notion. Even though we know there is a close relationship between the work of art with the life of an author. One must never assume that they are the mirror reflection of each other. The biographical readings must not ignore that a work of art is also an embodiment of experience. One piece of art is actually one element in a series of such works. And it is true for all forms of literary creation like a drama, a novel etc. After all each of these pieces are by woven by literary tradition and convention. Thus, from that perspective, it will be not wrong to mention that biographical approach is responsible for disrupting the literary process. This is so because it



disrupts the order of literary tradition so as to substitute the life-cycle of the author.

But of course one cannot ignore the connecting links. There are parallelisms as well as oblique references. There will without doubt be a mask as well as dramatized conventionalization based on the personal experience and social understanding. Thus biographical study must adopt a scientific and rational approach to understanding. The biographical frame work is always helpful in identifying the obvious developmental problems in composing a literature and its reflections in autobiographical materials.

Biography generally is segregated into following categories:

- Popular biography

**Shakespeare: A Life** by Park Honan

This biography is the considered to be the most accurate, as well as complete narrative ever which has been written about William Shakespeare. Park Honan has incorporated fresh information about Shakespeare so as to provide readers with new perception about playwright, while focusing on the bard as a as a poet and actor.

- Historical biography

**Arthur Miller: Attention Must Be Paid** by James Campbell

This biography is interesting in the sense that it is written in the form of a drama. It is presented in two acts (not adhering to the traditional form). The first act deals with Arthur Miller as dramatist, enjoying his early success and love of the most beloved woman in the world while trying to resist tyranny. While the second act takes about Miller's experience with rowdy mob called critics.

- Literary biography

**The Life of Samuel Johnson** by James Boswell

This biography has the ubiquitous distinction of being a perfect example of modern biography. It is also one of the best all-time enjoyable texts of English language. This masterpiece discussed about the whole life of Samuel Johnson. Boswell was absolutely well-acquainted with the talented writer.

- Reference biography

**The Bronte Myth** by Lucasta Miller

The Bronte sisters - Emily, Anne, and Charlotte Bronte- were very famous writers of their time. By the time they reached the peaks of their careers many rumors and gossips were associated with them. Lucasta Miller in his biographical efforts debunks the myths related to these young enigmatic young ladies.

- Fictional biography

**Why this World: A Biography of Clarice Lispector** by Benjamin Moser

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Without a doubt, this is one of the Moser's biographies, where true nuances are reflected in the best way.

“A common defense of literary biographies is that they do indeed help us to comprehend how writers have realized their ambitions, how literary art happens... But this admirable objective never seems to be reached. Even a biographer as indefatigable as Hershel Parker, with his encyclopedic knowledge of almost every moment in the life of Herman Melville, can really only chronicle the process . . . not explain how this process rather than some other resulted in the sort of literary art we encounter when we read Melville”<sup>6</sup>. Thus a biographer can inform us what the writer did. But biographer cannot say why it cannot work. Getting an insight into what writers do might or might not be of much value. Yet, at some point it also has the power to reduce the artistic process into a similar way that reading brings about. Maybe admirers of authors can show keen interest in the circumstances leading to the creation. This however, at times become a satisfying aspect to the understand biographies.

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### 14.5 LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

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Philosophy and literature are areas of study which is connected to both written works of creative nature as well as to the philosophical works. Both the branches of knowledge work towards strengthening human experience while addressing human perplexities. Such an understanding has been reached through a discussion over analytic philosophy that was responsible for bridging the initial hostility between philosophy and literature. The justification to claim that philosophy and literature are viable fields for interdisciplinary studies is because they form a successful correlated association. Plato, as we know, is responsible both for philosophy as well as for considering it to be of higher virtue than literature. Scholars believe that the whole concept was introduced by Plato which was used to investigate new discourse of truth-seeking philosophy. Interestingly, Plato was a writer who learnt as much as he could from the great tragedians. But at the same time he considered their writings to be mere creations without containing much knowledge. Along with it, he considered fiction to be dangerous as it could corrupt the souls of the ideal republic. But many insist that such a paradox was only superficial. After all any new discourse has to rely on newer ways to establish it. That is why philosophy has to be designed with a new language.

If we intend to focus on a slightly different approach and “if we consider the possibility of reading philosophy in terms of the standard literary tropes, we recall Hayden White's tour de force in applying that schematism to the writing of history by the great 19th-century historians- and his conclusion that beneath (or above) their ideological differences there was also a consistent literary impulse: that Marx had written history as tragedy, Burkhardt as satire, and Ranke as comedy. The historian is thus viewed as “exploiting” the data, and in doing this quite naturally, even inevitably, as making use of literary modes of narrative”<sup>7</sup>

The past gives a basic knowledge as to how things could have been. After Plato the whole idea of philosophy as reason and literature as fanciful creations came into being. Literature is identified as creative verbal art. And it survives more on dynamics of writing and has nothing to do with deductive reasoning that philosophy is proud of. Analytic philosophy considers literature as nothing more than a sequence of lies. These literatures are considered to “be sentences which have no reference, sense or anything else much to recommend them to the discourse of truth”<sup>8</sup>. Philosophers have always contested about the cognitive value of literature. They have always doubted that literary works may not be able to provide knowledge of a significant kind. History suggests that this debate related to literature and philosophy might continue forever.

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Of course this notion remained in the academic disciplines for a long time. But with the passage of time with the narrative turn in philosophy scholars adopted an open positive attitude. Soon scholars from philosophy took interest in literature. It is believed that schematic philosopher’s lack emotive appeal. Many philosophers argue that philosophy is a stylistically neutral discourse. But that is an extreme understanding of the situation. There are numerous ways moral or otherwise to understand the power of philosophy. One significant point with philosophy is that it is meant for expanding our vision of the possible and helping us breaking bad habits of thought. What is significant for philosophy as well as literature is that as a field of study, they must remain focused on the perspective and traditions. With the best insight from both ends of the spectrum one can illuminate each other through human experience. And this can definitely be demonstrated through the amount of work which were produced under this interdisciplinary approach.

There are a significant number of works in the western literary canon where philosophical points of views form the locus or remain subordinate to the work of fiction. Some philosophical works in literature would include names like : Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*; Calvino’s *Baron in the Trees*, *The Non-existent Knight*, *The Cloven Viscount*, and *If on a Winter’s Night a Traveller*; Mann’s *Magic Mountain*; Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*; Dostoyevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov*, *Notes from Underground*, *Crime and Punishment*, and *The Idiot*; Camus’s *Stranger*, *Plague*, and *The Fall*; Kundera’s *Unbearable Lightness of Being*, and Eco’s *Name of the Rose* and *The Island of the Day Before*.

Scholars suggest that in expressing philosophical views, philosophers’ approach have definitely changed from poems to lecture notes. They also claim that because of the notion of ‘philosophical truth’ as well as the form of philosophical expression are closely related through internal structures one can always believe that there are several conceptions of truth (as understood by philosophers).

Some thinkers believe that the institutions of philosophy and literature have grown apart, and there is no scope for literary philosophy. Some have pointed out that that Sartre’s *Nausea* is not a philosophical work, but Gabriel Marcel’s *Journal* is a metaphysical text. These thinkers believe that here is only one way to

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approach literature and understand it. Critical thinkers are of the opinion that philosophy and literature are intertwined in a vague way. Quinton, for example, insists that “what distinguishes philosophical poets and philosophical novelists from philosopher-poets and philosopher-novelists ...is that even though philosophical poets and philosophical novelists ‘have fairly coherent general opinions about matters of human interest about the right way to live, the nature of true happiness, the proper response to the great problems of life and so on’, they do not have a system of thought that has traditionally been considered a philosophy.”<sup>9</sup> Some names that Quinton shares to elucidate his point are Shakespeare, Richardson, Goethe, Virgil, Cervantes, Thomas Mann, Wordsworth, Shelley, Dickens, Tennyson, Balzac, Dostoyevsky, Baudelaire etc al.

Exploring philosophy and literature scholars talk about emotional association with the text: “When reading literature, we might have an emotional connection with the author... even when that literature is a work of fiction. But it is unclear how a work of fictional literature could supply the resources for such an experience. It is ...a work of fiction not a report of the author’s experience ... memoir or autobiography.”<sup>10</sup> And as scholars we realize that, “For philosophers and readers who find nothing startling or exceptionable in this conclusion, the task now is to go on to develop the critical instruments- a finer anatomy - for which the literary study of philosophical discourse still waits.”<sup>11</sup> Again we realize that the philosopher is the only person who considers his goal as the ideal of a disembodied text which is probably the literary equivalent of jumping out of one’s skin. This will be “reluctant to acknowledge that whatever else we recognize about the origins of philosophy or its habitat, its methods or its purposes, philosophy characteristically lives inside the text. This seems, moreover, not to be an accident: there is no philosophy as we have come to recognize it in nonliterate societies, and there seems little promise that philosophy would survive the transition to a post-literate society. We need then a theory and practice of literary philosophy for the same reason that we need philosophy itself”<sup>12</sup>.

### Check Your Progress

1. What is the focus of psychology?
2. Define social psychology.
3. What is sociology?
4. Name the most ancient literary genre.

## 14.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The psychological aspect focuses on the creative process which identifies the personality of the writer as well as of the other characters.

2. It deals with the social experiences that is internalized by an individual who consciously or unconsciously participates in different social movements.
3. In a general context, 'sociology' is defined as the scientific knowledge of society. More specifically it is related to human society.
4. Biography is one of the most ancient literary genres.

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### 14.7 SUMMARY

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- We need to understand that interdisciplinary approach helps one to identify the proximity established by various fields of knowledge with one another so that the theoretical interaction of one can be examined with respect to other.
- We know that psychology is based on logic. Even though literature too relies on logic, it is different from what we come across in psychology.
- Psychologists, as scholars would like to argue, prefer to undertake observations that can be replicated. But on the other hand, an author might rely on analogy, metaphor and a certain amount of ambiguity to express the point.
- Both highlights the conflicts and problems the characters face in life or in the plot.
- And thus, this knowledge of both psychology and literature will help one understand the author's psychology, idea behind the creative process, behavioral analysis as well as readers response.
- The psychological aspect focuses on the creative process which identifies the personality of the writer as well as of the other characters.
- Psychological studies especially that of the process of creation of literary work invariably involves almost all the stages of creative processes that usually one undergoes.
- From an interdisciplinary perspective, Psychology attempts to establish a certain degree of relationship between a work of art and its cultural, social, political surroundings which helps in providing human enlightenment and also allows for an exhaustive study of literature.
- As far as understanding how people think, act, influence and relate to each other, one has to understand the branch of Psychology called Social Psychology.
- It deals with the social experiences that is internalized by an individual who consciously or unconsciously participates in different social movements.
- The study of man from social psychological point of view can be categorized as a perceiver, a person who needs as well as a person who solves issues. Given the context, we can read a writer, as an individual.

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- Some critics are of the opinion that this involvement of sensations, environments as well as emotions are detectable in literary texts which mirrors a symbolic system whose knowledge is a movement that never comes to an end but symbolizes the progress of knowledge.
- We have a specialized area of study that focuses on the relationship between a literary work and the social structure, called the sociology of literature. This branch of study reveals that the existence of a literary creation revolves around the existence of social situations.
- In a general context, 'sociology' is defined as the scientific knowledge of society. More specifically it is related to human society.
- Etymologically speaking the term 'sociology' owes its origin to the Latin word 'socius' which means companion or associate. It also has the Greek word 'logos' or 'ology' which means the study of or science of.
- Some critics insist that literature functions as a social institution and hence is involved in social creation.
- Biography is one of the most ancient literary genres. Many people rightly believe that it is part of historiography as it is connected chronologically as well as logically.
- From the perspective of a biographer a writer is nothing more than another man whose moral as well as intellectual development can be reconstructed for the benefit of the masses.
- A biographer must, interpret the documents available at his disposal. He must be in a position to understand the authenticity of auto-biographical materials. The biography should be genuine as well as authentic.
- Romantic poets spoke of themselves not only in private letters or diaries they also wrote their autobiographies. Scholars' in the field of literature agree that Wordsworth's Prelude is a nothing but an autobiography.
- The general view that art is an -expression of self makes it a bit of problem material for biographers. Art is considered to be pure and simple which carries within it the spirit of personal feelings and experiences.
- Philosophy and literature are areas of study which is connected to both written works of creative nature as well as to the philosophical works. Both the branches of knowledge work towards strengthening human experience while addressing human perplexities.
- There are a significant number of works in the western literary canon where philosophical points of views form the locus or remain subordinate to the work of fiction.
- Some thinkers believe that the institutions of philosophy and literature have grown apart, and there is no scope for literary philosophy.

- Some have pointed out that that Sartre’s Nausea is not a philosophical work, but Gabriel Marcel’s Journal is a metaphysical text.

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## 14.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Behavioral:** It means involving, relating to, or emphasizing behavior.
- **Attitude:** It is a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation.
- **Theme:** It is an idea that recurs in or pervades a work of art or literature.
- **Internalize:** It means to make (attitudes or behavior) part of one’s nature by learning or unconscious assimilation.

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## 14.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on social psychology.
2. How is biography categorized?
3. Describe the role of philosophy and its correlation with literature.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. What is the relationship between psychology and literature? How is one similar to or different from the other?
2. Analyse the relationship between a literary work and the social structure.
3. Draw a comparative study on biography and literature.

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## 14.10 FURTHER READINGS

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### End Notes

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