



# Literature Theory & Criticism

## (M.A. English Sem. III)



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## **M.A 3<sup>RD</sup> SEMESTER**

PAPER NAME: LITERARY THEORY & CRITICISM-I

### **UNIT-1**

### **NATYASHASTRA**

Natyashastra, in full Bharata Natyashastra, also called Natyashastra, detailed treatise and handbook on dramatic art that deals with all aspects of classical Sanskrit theatre. It is believed to have been written by the mythic Brahman sage and priest Bharata (1st century BCE–3rd century CE).

Its many chapters contain detailed treatments of all the diverse arts that are embodied in the classical Indian concept of the drama, including dance, music, poetics, and general aesthetics. Its primary importance lies in its justification of Indian drama as a vehicle of religious enlightenment. Natyashastra is the earliest literature on music and drama – written somewhere around 500 BC by Bharata Muni. Comprising 6000 couplets in Sanskrit and spread over thirty-six chapters, Natyashastra's focus was on dance and drama, with music as an aid. The title is a combination of two Sanskrit words – Natya and Shastra. Natya refers to technique of dance and drama, and shastra refers to science. It is the magnum opus that describes – relation between director and audience, structuring a play, acting techniques, costumes and make-up, music and musical instruments to be used, the dimensions of the stage and its decorations with lighting, and size of the hall and seating of audience. Directors and producers of plays mention that its relevance is high even in this date and age.

Chapters 28 to 33 dwell on music – vocal and instrumental (melodic and rhythmic) and their deployment in drama/theatre. Thus, we may categorise Bharata Muni's description of music as

- (1) vocal,
- (2) instrumental,
- (3) vocal and instrumental,
- (4) preliminary music (as in before the drama begins or just at commencement of drama, and
- (5) Dhruva music – authored by the director and set to music

Bharata Muni expounded the relationship between performers and audience through rasa-bhava anubhava. He elucidated eight types of "rasas" and their corresponding "bhavas" that is emotions. A "rasa" is an emotional state. Very simply put, it means "juice" or sap. A "rasa" is usually the dominant emotional theme through a work of art. It is the delight and pleasure experienced directly from art. "Bhava" means to become. It is a state of mind whose outcome is a "rasa".

Bhava is the emotion felt by the character and communicated to the audience via various dramatizations by the performer, resulting in the audience experiencing the rasa. As per Bharata, bhava by itself is incomplete and carries no meaning without the rasa.

Rasa	Bhava	Emotion
Sringar	Rati	Romance
Hasya	Hasa	Humour
Karuna	Shoka	Compassion
Roudra	Krodha	Anger
Veera	Utsaha	Valour
Bhayanaka	Bhaya	Fear
Bibhatsa	Jugupsa	Disgust
Adbhuta	Vismaya	Marvel

The Natya Shastra discusses a wide range of topics, from issues of literary construction, to the structure of the stage or mandapa, to a detailed analysis of musical scales and movements (murchhanas), to an analysis of dance forms that considers several categories of body movements, and their effect on the viewer.

Bharata describes fifteen types of drama, composed of from one to ten acts. Full-scale plays of five or more acts are classified as either history or fiction. The “Natya Shastra” describes eight types of shorter plays, from one to four acts: heroic, tragic or comic plays, together with the satirical monologue; the street play; and three kinds of archaic plays about gods and demons. There is also a secondary four-act “light play,” a fictitious, sensitive comedy about a real character. The principles for stage design are laid down in some detail. Individual chapters deal with aspects such as makeup, costume, acting, and directing. A large section deals with how the meanings conveyed by the performance (bhavas) can be particularly emphasized, leading to a broad theory of aesthetics (rasas).

Four aspects of abhinaya (acting, or histrionics) are described: the messages conveyed by motions of parts of the body (angika); speech (vachika); costumes and makeup (Aharya); and on the highest level, by means of internal emotions, expressed through minute movements of the lips, eyebrows, ear, and so on (sattvika).

The “Natya Shastra” claims that drama originated because of the conflicts that arose in society when the world declined from the Golden Age (Kṛta Yuga) of harmony, and therefore a drama always represents a conflict and its resolution. The conversion of a story into a dramatic plot is based on the single main element which ends the conflict, elaborated in its elements and conjunctions. Each full-scale play embodies five “conjunctions:” opening, re-opening, embryo, obstacle, and conclusion. Each of these “conjunctions” is filled out with up to a dozen dramatic incidents and situations which show the characters in action. A large number of dramatic devices are available to express the causes and effects of emotion.

The Nāṭyashāstra delineates a detailed theory of drama comparable to the Poetics of Aristotle. The purpose of drama is to entertain the audience. The joy (harṣa) and solace

experienced by the audience is induced very deliberately by the actors through special acting techniques.

Bharata refers to bhavas, the imitations of emotions that the actors perform, and the rasas (emotional responses) that they inspire in the audience. The eight basic bhavas (emotions) are: love, humor, energy, anger, fear, grief, disgust and astonishment. These are not conveyed directly to the audiences, but are portrayed through their causes and effects. In observing and imagining these emotions, the audience experiences eight principal responses, or rasas: love, pity, anger, disgust, heroism, awe, terror and comedy. Bharata recommends that plays should mix different rasas but be dominated by one. The audience essentially enjoys the play, but is also instructed by observing both good and bad actions, and the motivations which inspire them.

Each rasa experienced by the audience is associated with a specific bhava portrayed on stage. For example, in order for the audience to experience sringara (the 'erotic' rasa), the playwright, actors and musician work together to portray the bhava called rati (love).

**Dance**-Dancing is closely related to drama, and like drama, is a portrayal of the eight emotions. Drama employs chiefly words and gestures; dance employs music and gestures. The “Natya Shastra” classifies thirteen positions of the head, thirty-six of the eyes, nine of the neck, thirty-seven of the hand, and ten of the body. Modern Indian dancers still dance according to the rules set forth in the “Natya Shastra.”

Group dances or individual dances could be introduced into a drama whenever appropriate. The lasya, a solo dance invented by Parvati, represented a story, or part of a story, within a drama.

**MUSIC**-After the Samaveda that dealt with ritual utterances of the Vedas, the “Natya Shastra” is the first major text that deals with music at length. It is considered the defining treatise of Indian Classical Music until the thirteenth century, when the stream bifurcated into Hindustani classical music in North India and Pakistan, and Carnatic classical music in South India.

While much of the discussion of music in the “Natya Shastra” focuses on musical instruments, it also emphasizes several theoretical aspects that remained fundamental to Indian music:

1. Establishment of Shadja as the first, defining note of the scale or grama. The word Shadja (means 'giving birth to six', and refers to the fact that once this note (often referred to as "sa" and notated S) is fixed, the placement of other notes in the scale is determined.

2. Principle of Consonance: Consists of two principles:

- a. The first principle states that there exists a fundamental note in the musical scale which is Avinashi and Avilopi that is, the note is ever-present and unchanging.

b. The second principle, often treated as law, states that there exists a natural consonance between notes; the best between Shadja and Tar Shadja, the next best between Shadja and Pancham.

3. The “Natya Shastra” also suggest the notion of musical modes or jatis, which are the origin of the concept of the modern melodic structures known as ragas. Their role in invoking emotions is emphasized; compositions emphasizing the notes gandhara or rishabha are said to be related to tragedy (karuna rasa), and rishabha is to be emphasized for evoking heroism (veera rasa). Jatis are elaborated in greater detail in the text Dattilam, composed around the same time as the “Natya Shastra.”

The “Natya Shastra” discusses several aspects of musical performance, particularly its application to vocal, instrumental and orchestral compositions. It also deals with the rasas and bhavas that may be evoked by music.

**Impact-** ‘ ‘Natya Shastra” remained an important text in the fine arts for many centuries, and defined much of the terminology and structure of Indian classical music and Indian classical dance. Many commentaries have expanded the scope of the “Natya Shastra,” including Matanga's Brihaddesi (fifth to seventh century); Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabharati (which unifies some of the divergent structures that had emerged in the intervening years, and outlines a theory of artistic analysis); and Sharngadeva's Sangita Ratnakara (thirteen-century work that unifies the raga structure in music). The analysis of body forms and movements also influenced sculpture and the other arts in subsequent centuries. The structures of music outlined in the “Natya Shastra” retain their influence even today, as seen in the seminal work Hindustani Sangeetha Padhathi, by Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande, written in the early twentieth century.

## UNIT-2 ON THE SUBLIME

Longinus wrote in the Classic Greek period. Longinus cannot be properly identified. It is thought he was actually a Greek master of rhetoric, though, for simplicity, the writer is consistently called Longinus. During the Classic period, Longinus had no appreciable impact or influence. This is said to be true because he is not referenced in any other known Classic Greek works, neither is he nor The Sublime mentioned in the Medieval period.

Longinus defines the literary sublime as "excellence in language", the "expression of a great spirit" and the power to provoke "ecstasy" in one's readers. Longinus holds that the goal of a writer should be to produce a form of ecstasy.

Longinus says that the false sublime is characterised first, by timidity or bombast of language, which is as great an evil as swellings in the body. “It is drier than dropsy.” Secondly, the false sublime is characterised by puerility, which is a parade and pomp of language, tawdry and affected, and so frigid. Thirdly, the false sublime results when there is a cheap display of passion, when it is not justified by the occasion, and so is wearisome. True sublime, on the other hand, pleases all and “pleases always,” for it expresses thoughts of universal validity—thoughts common to man of all ages and centuries—in a language which instinctively uplifts our souls. Longinus, in Section XV of his treatise, argues that figurative language, done well,



can play a vital part in the creation of sublimity. This is a very interesting example of how Longinus argues that excellence in literature comes through a marriage of natural talent and genius and learnt skill, such as the ability to use figurative language well to describe something.

In aesthetics, the sublime (from the Latin *sublĭmis*) is the quality of greatness, whether physical, moral, intellectual, metaphysical, aesthetic, spiritual, or artistic. The term especially refers to a greatness beyond all possibility of calculation, measurement, or imitation.- By the word 'sublime' Longinus means "elevation" or "loftiness"—all that which raises style above the ordinary, and gives to it distinction in its widest and truest sense. So sublimity is "a certain distinction and excellence in composition. " Both nature and art, says Longinus, contribute to sublimity in literature. **"Art is perfect when it seems to be nature, and nature hits the mark when she contains art hidden within her." (Longinus)**

Longinus finds five principal sources of the sublime, the first two of which are largely the gifts of nature the remaining three the gifts of art:-

#### 1. Grandeur of thought:-

Nobody can produce a sublime work unless his thoughts are sublime. For "sublimity is the echo of greatness of soul. It is impossible for those whose whole lives are full of mean and servile ideas and habits, to produce anything that is admirable and worthy of an immortal life. It is only natural that great accents should fall from the lips of those whose thoughts have always been deep and full of majesty." Stately thoughts belong to the loftiest minds.

Therefore, he who would attain distinction of style must feed his soul on the works of the great masters, as Homer, Plato and Demosthenes, and capture from them some of their own greatness, This reflects the classicism of Longinus. However, what Longinus has in mind is not mere imitation or borrowing, but that "men catch fire from the spirit of others." To Longinus the operation is one that aims at capturing something of the ancient spirit, something of that vital creative force which had gone to the "making, of the earlier masterpieces; and its effect he describes as that of illumination, guiding the mind in some mysterious way to the lofty standards of the ideal.

The grandeur of conception is to be emphasized and made effective by a suitable treatment of material. Details should be so chosen as to form an organic whole. Amplification or accumulation of all the details of a given subject is also helpful. Such an amplification by its profusion suggests overwhelming strength and magnitude. The use of vivid and compelling images is also useful, for it brings home to the readers the conception of the writer, effectively and forcefully.

#### (2) Capacity for Strong Emotion

The second source of the sublime is vehement and inspired passion. Longinus asserts that nothing contributes more to loftiness of tone in writing than genuine emotion. At one place, for instance, he says, "I would confidently affirm that nothing makes so much for grandeur as true emotion in the right place, for it inspires the words, as it were, with a wild gust of mad enthusiasm and fills them with divine frenzy. " It is for this reason that he prefers the Illiad to

the Odyssey and Demosthenes to Cicero. But the emotions have to be ‘true emotions’ and ‘in the right place’. He thus justifies emotions more artistically than Aristotle. However, the subject of emotions has not been dealt with in detail. The author declares his intention of dealing with it in a second treatise, which unfortunately has not come down to us.

### (3) Appropriate Use of Pictures

The third source of attaining excellence of style is the use of figures of speech which he considers very important, and so devotes nearly one third of his work to it. He shows great discrimination and originality of thinking in his treatment of the subject. Figures of speech should not be used mechanically, rather they must be rooted in genuine emotion. Used naturally, they impart elevation to style, and are themselves made more effective by an elevated style.

The figures of thought and diction have to be judiciously employed. The grandeur of any figure “will depend on its being employed in the right place and the right manner, on the right occasion, and with the right motive.” It strengthens the sublime, and the sublime supports it. We need the figures only “when the nature of the theme makes it allowable to amplify, to multiply or to speak in the tones of exaggeration or passion; to overlay every sentence with ornament is very pedantic.” When the figure is unrelated to passion, it creates a suspicion of dishonesty and is divorced from sublimity. The chief figures that make for sublimity are the theoretical question, asyndeton, hyperbaton, and periphrasis. In brief, the use of figures must be psychological—intimately connected with thought and emotion, and not merely mechanical.

### (4) Nobility of Diction

The fourth source of the ‘sublime’ is diction which includes choice and arrangement of words and the use of metaphors and ornamental language. The discussion of diction is incomplete because four leaves of this part of the book are unfortunately lost. Nevertheless, words, when suitable and striking, he says, have “a moving and seductive effect” upon the reader and are the first things in a style to lend it “grandeur, beauty and mellowness, dignity, force, power, and a sort of glittering charm.” It is they that breathe voice into dead things. They are ‘the very light of ought’—a radiance that illumines the innermost recesses of the writer’s mind. But ‘it should be noted that imposing language is not suitable for every occasion. When the object is trivial, to invest it with grand and stately words would have the same effect as putting a full-sized tragic mask on the head of a little child.’ This necessitates the use of common words which, when in elegant, make up for it by their raciness and forcefulness. Among these ornaments of speech Longinus considers metaphor and hyperbole.

### (5) Dignity of Composition

The fifth source of the sublime is the dignity of composition, that is, a dignified composition or the arrangement of words. It should be one that blends thought, emotion, figures, and words themselves—the preceding four elements of sublimity—into a harmonious whole. Such an arrangement has not only ‘a natural power of persuasion and of giving pleasure but also the marvellous power of exalting the soul and swaying the heart of men.’ It makes the

hearer or reader share the emotion of the speaker. But 'if the elements of grandeur be separated from one another, the sublimity is scattered and made to vanish but when organised into a compact system and still further encircled in a chain of harmony they gain a living voice by being merely rounded into a period.' A harmonious composition alone sometimes makes up for the deficiency of the other elements. A proper rhythm is one of the elements in this harmony. Negatively, deformity and not grandeur is the result if the composition is either extremely concise or unduly prolix. The one cripples the thought and the other overextends it.

#### (6) The False and the True Sublime

Making a distinction between the false and the true sublime, Longinus says that the false sublime is characterised first, by timidity or bombast of language, which is as great an evil as swellings in the body. "It is drier than dropsy." Secondly, the false sublime is characterised by puerility, which is a parade and pomp of language, tawdry and affected, and so frigid. Thirdly, the false sublime results when there is a cheap display of passion, when it is not justified by the occasion, and so is wearisome. True sublime, on the other hand, pleases all and "pleases always," for it expresses thoughts of universal validity—thoughts common to man of all ages and centuries—in a language which instinctively uplifts our souls.

#### POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. "Sublime" means "elevation", or "loftiness"—"a certain distinction and excellence in composition."
2. The principal sources of the Sublime are—(1) grandeur of thought; (2) capacity for strong emotion; (3) appropriate use of figures of speech; (4) Nobility of diction, and (5) dignity of composition or a happy blend of the preceding four elements.
3. Sublimity the echo of a great soul; lofty thoughts and ideas a pre-condition for sublimity; trivial thoughts—mean and servile ideas— do not lead to sublimity.
4. The second source of the sublime is the vehement, inspired and genuine emotion.
5. Sublimity can be attained by the appropriate use of the figures of speech which should not be used mechanically but naturally to be rooted in genuine emotion—should be employed in the right place and right manner. The chief figures that make for sublimity are asyndeton, hyperbaton and periphrasis.
6. For sublimity the choice and arrangement of right words. Use of grand words for a trivial object will only be ridiculous.
7. Hence sublimity in a work of art is the result of a happy blending of lofty thought, strong and genuine emotion, appropriate figures of speech and suitable words. Elements of grandeur cannot be separated from each other.
8. True Vs. False Sublime—False sublime is characterized by timidity or bombast of language and also by puerility (a parade and pomp of language). True Sublime, on the other hand, is marked by universality of appeal: it pleases all and always : it uplifts our souls.



## **AN APOLOGY FOR POETRY**

Philip Sidney in his Apology for Poetry reacts against the attacks made on poetry by the puritan, Stephen Gosson. To, Sidney, poetry is an art of imitation for specific purpose, it is imitated to teach and delight. According to him, poetry is simply a superior means of communication and its value depends So, even history when it is described in a lively and passionate expression becomes poetic. He prefers imaginative literature that teaches better than history and philosophy. Literature has the power to reproduce an ideal golden world not just the brazen world.

Stephen Gosson makes charges on poetry which Sidney answers.

The charges are:

- 1. Poetry is the waste of time.**
- 2. Poetry is mother of lies.**
- 3. It is nurse of abuse.**
- 4. Plato had rightly banished the poets from his ideal world.**

Against these charges, Sidney has answered them in the following ways- Poetry is the source of knowledge and a civilizing force, for Sidney. Gosson attacks on poetry saying that it corrupts the people and it is the waste of time, but Sidney says that no learning is so good as that which teaches and moves to virtue and that nothing can both teach and amuse so much as poetry does. In essay societies, poetry was the main source of education. He remembers ancient Greek society that respected poets. The poets are always to be looked up. So, poetry is not wasted of time.

To the second charge, Sidney answers that poet does not lie because he never affirms that his fiction is true and can never lie. The poetic truths are ideal and universal. Therefore, poetry cannot be a mother of lies.

Sidney rejects that poetry is the source of abuses. To him, it is people who abuses poetry, not the vice- versa. Abuses are more nursed by philosophy and history than by poetry, by describing battles, bloodshed, violence etc. On the contrary, poetry helps to maintain morality and peace by avoiding such violence and bloodsheds. Moreover it brings light to knowledge.

Sidney views that Plato in his Republic wanted to banish the abuse of poetry not the poets. He himself was not free from poeticality, which we can find in his dialogues. Plato never says that all poets should be banished. He called for banishing only those poets who are inferior and unable to instruct the children.

For Sidney, art is the imitation of nature but it is not slavish imitation as Plato views. Rather it is creative imitation. Nature is dull, incomplete and ugly. It is artists who turn dull nature in to golden color. He employs his creative faculty, imagination and style of presentation to decorate the raw materials of nature. For Sidney, art is a speaking picture having spatiotemporal dimension. For Aristotle human action is more important but for Sidney nature is important.

Artists are to create arts considering the level of readers. The only purpose of art is to teach and delight like the whole tendency of Renaissance. Sidney favors poetic justice that is possible in poet's world where good are rewarded and wicked people are punished.

Plato's philosophy on 'virtue' is worthless at the battlefield but poet teaches men how to behave under all circumstances. Moral philosophy teaches virtues through abstract examples and history teaches virtues through concrete examples but both are defective. Poetry teaches virtue by example as well as by percept (blend of abstract and concrete). The poet creates his own world where he gives only the inspiring things and thus poetry holds its superior position to that of philosophy and history.

In the poet's golden world, heroes are ideally presented and evils are corrupt. Didactic effect of a poem depends up on the poet's power to move. It depends up on the affective quality of poetry. Among the different forms of poetry like lyric, elegy, satire, comedy etc. epic is the best form as it portrays heroic deeds and inspires heroic deeds and inspires people to become courageous and patriotic.

In this way, Sidney defines all the charges against poetry and stands for the sake of universal and timeless quality of poetry making us know why the poets are universal genius.

on what is communicated.

## Summary

**Sidney** tells the reader that he and **Edward Wotton** once studied horseback riding with **Giovanni Pietro Pugliano** at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor. Pugliano did not simply teach them about the art of riding horses (*how* to do it) but invited them to reflect on the activity in a philosophical manner (*why* one should do it).

**Pugliano** argued that soldiers are the most noble of noblemen, and that “no earthly thing bred such wonder to a prince” as skill on horseback. He also praised the nobility of the horse, and spoke so persuasively that **Sidney** admits that if he was not a “logician,” he might have wished that he could have been a horse. Sidney concludes

from this that “self love is better than **Sidney** turns to poetry as another example of this phenomenon: how “strong examples and weak arguments” can nonetheless be convincing. He says that he has “slipped into the title of **the poet**” and so has been provoked to defend his “unelected vocation” because poetry has fallen from its privileged position among the arts to be the “laughing-stock of children.” He jokes that there is danger of “civil war among the Muses any gilding.”

Sidney argues that the critics of poetry are ungrateful. In most cultures, poetry is the means by which the young are educated, the “first nurse” who introduces children to learning.

### ANALYSIS

Sidney begins his Apology with an anecdote that acts as the exordium, or introduction, to his essay, which is modeled on a classical oration. The anecdote establishes Sidney’s status as an aristocratic gentleman, since horseback riding was a symbol of status. Pugliano’s philosophical approach to teaching riding—dwelling not so much on how as on why one should do it mirrors Sidney’s own approach in the Apology: it will not be a guide to writing poetry, but a philosophical essay about the value of poetry.

Pugliano relates the activity of horseback riding to the aristocratic ideals it embodies. His humorous aside about wanting to be a horse indicates that Sidney does not take Pugliano in total seriousness, and that Sidney understands the slightly ridiculous nature of praising horses and horseback riding. He attributes Pugliano’s high-flying rhetoric with self-love: because Pugliano is proud of himself, he must also be proud of what he teaches.

## UNIT-3 AN ESSAY ON DRAMATIC POESY

Essay of Dramatic Poesy is a work by John Dryden, England's first Poet Laureate, in which Dryden attempts to justify drama as a legitimate form of "poetry" comparable to the epic, as well as defend English drama against that of the ancients and the French. The Essay was probably written during the plague year of 1666, and first published in 1668. In presenting his argument, Dryden takes up the subject that Philip Sidney had set forth in his Defence of Poesie in 1580.

The treatise is a dialogue between four speakers: **Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius, and Neander**. The four speakers are Sir Robert Howard [Crites], Lord Buckhurst [Eugenius], Sir Charles Sedley [Lisideius], and Dryden himself (neander means "new man" and implies that Dryden, as a respected member of the gentry class, is entitled to join in this dialogue on an equal footing with the three older men who are his social superiors).

On the day that the English fleet encounters the Dutch at sea near the mouth of the Thames, the four friends take a barge downriver towards the noise from the battle. Rightly concluding, as the noise subsides, that the English have triumphed, they order the bargeman to row them back upriver as they begin a dialogue on the advances made by modern civilization. They agree to measure progress by comparing ancient arts with modern, focusing specifically on the art of drama (or "dramatic poesy").

The four men debate a series of three topics:

(1) the relative merit of classical drama (upheld by Crites) vs. modern drama (championed by Eugenius);

(2) whether French drama, as Lisideius maintains, is better than English drama (supported by Neander, who famously calls Shakespeare "the greatest soul, ancient or modern"); and

(3) whether plays in rhyme are an improvement upon blank verse drama—a proposition that Neander, despite having defended the Elizabethans, now advances against the skeptical Crites (who also switches from his original position and defends the blank verse tradition of Elizabethan drama).

Invoking the so-called unities from Aristotle's *Poetics* (as interpreted by Italian and refined by French scholars over the last century), the four speakers discuss what makes a play "a just and lively imitation" of human nature in action. This definition of a play, supplied by Lisideius/Sedley (whose rhymed plays had dazzled the court and were a model for the new drama), gives the debaters a versatile and richly ambiguous touchstone. To Crites' argument that the plots of classical drama are more "just," Eugenius can retort that modern plots are more "lively" thanks to their variety. Lisideius shows that the French plots carefully preserve Aristotle's unities of action, place, and time; Neander replies that English dramatists like Ben Jonson also kept the unities when they wanted to, but that they preferred to develop character and motive. Even Neander's final argument with Crites over whether rhyme is suitable in drama depends on Aristotle's *Poetics*: Neander says that Aristotle demands a verbally artful ("lively") imitation of nature, while Crites thinks that dramatic imitation ceases to be "just" when it departs from ordinary speech—i.e. prose or blank verse.

A year later, the two brothers-in-law quarreled publicly over this third topic. See Dryden's "Defense of An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1669), where Dryden tries to persuade the rather literal-minded Howard that audiences expect a play to be an imitation of nature, not a surrogate for nature itself.

John Dryden's *An Essay on Dramatic Poesy* presents a brief discussion on Neo-classical theory of Literature. He defends the classical drama saying that it is an imitation of life and reflects human nature clearly.

*An Essay on Dramatic Poesy* is written in the form of a dialogue among four gentlemen: **Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius** and **Neander**. Neander speaks for Dryden himself. Eugenius favours modern English dramatists by attacking the classical playwrights, who did not themselves always observe the unity of place. But Crites defends the ancients and points out that they invited the principles of dramatic art paved by Aristotle and Horace. Crites opposes rhyme in plays and argues that though the moderns excel in sciences, the ancient age was the true age of poetry. Lisideius defends the French playwrights and attacks the English tendency to mix genres.

Neander speaks in favour of the Moderns and respects the Ancients; he is however critical of the rigid rules of dramas and favours rhyme. Neander who is a spokesperson of Dryden, argues that 'tragic-comedy' (Dryden's phrase for what we now call 'tragi-comedy') is the best form for a play; because it is closer to life in which emotions are heightened by mirth and sadness. He also finds subplots as an integral part to enrich a play. He finds single action in French dramas to be rather inadequate since it so often has a narrowing and cramping effect.

Neander gives his palm to the violation of the three unities because it leads to the variety in the English plays. Dryden thus argues against the neo-classical critics. Since nobody speaks in rhyme in real life, he supports the use of blank verse in drama and says that the use of rhyme in serious plays is justifiable in place of the blank verse.

## **UNIT-4                      PREFACE TO LYRICAL BALLAD**

Preface to Lyrical Ballads by William Wordsworth begins with a discussion of the collection of poems, written mostly by Wordsworth with contributions by S.T. Coleridge. Originally published in 1798, in 1800, Wordsworth added an earlier version of the Preface, which he extended two years later. Because he felt his poems were of a new theme and style, Wordsworth felt they needed an introduction. Some scholars say that Coleridge wanted to write the preface, but never got around to it, so the work fell to Wordsworth instead. As the majority of the poems in the collection are by Wordsworth, this was probably a more appropriate choice, though there is suggestion in some of Coleridge's later writings that the two disagreed about what the Preface should say. In the Preface, Wordsworth writes that the purpose of the collection was to write poems that dealt with things that happen in everyday life. Most importantly, Wordsworth considered each poem in the collection to be an experiment in language usage, or diction. He wanted to find out if conversational language could be used effectively in poetry.

**What, then, is poetry?** Wordsworth sets out to define this particular form of art. In the Preface to Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth outlines his definition of the nature and function of poetry—as well as identifying the qualities that make someone a true poet. For Wordsworth, poetry must reflect spontaneity and an “overflow of powerful feelings.” Passion is key, as are mood and temperament. Although poetry must emerge from spontaneity, it must not be written spontaneously. Rather, Wordsworth asserts that a poem should be the result of long and deep reflection. He also cautions against being too concerned with the poetic rules of Classicism.

Next, Wordsworth breaks down the poet's process into four stages. The first is observation. A person, object, or situation must stimulate powerful emotions in the Romantic poet, and those observations must be noted. Recollection follows, which is the stage when the poet contemplates those observations. For this, tranquility is a must. Memories may surface that are days old or older, and the poet should contemplate those memories to explore how the emotions they provoke relate to past experiences. The third stage is filtering, when the poet clears the mind of all non-essential elements. The result of this is that the poet's personal experience becomes relevant to a wider audience. It's not until the fourth and final stage that the poet should begin to compose. The goal is to express emotions in a way that the reader will understand, and can therefore contemplate.

Wordsworth's next topic is imagination. He begins by discussing how the neo-classicists defined imagination. They said that the mind was passive, and recorded sensations. Imagination, therefore, is a function of memory combined with the ability to associate those sensations with other things that may or may not exist. He provides the example of mythical creatures, which elicit, in literature, real sensations. For Romantics like Wordsworth, imagination is much more creative. Rather than assigning recorded sensations to other objects, the imagination has the power to create a new reality, and to see beyond the material world surrounding the poet. As for what to write about, Wordsworth states that poetry can capture



any and every subject that is of interest to the mind. What matters is not whether a subject is poetic, but rather, whether the poet can add meaning to a subject and therefore make it poetic. Suddenly, themes from common life can be poetic and worthy of the contemplation Wordsworth requires of the poet. The reason this works, according to his argument, is that those who live a rustic lifestyle are closer to nature—and therefore farther away from vanity bred by artifice.

Next, Wordsworth dives deeper into the function of poetry. Unlike the classicists, who value art for the sake of art—the idea that art should be produced regardless of any moral values or concerns--Wordsworth and the Romantics believe in art for the sake of life. That is, Wordsworth sees the function of poetry as ennobling the reader through the teaching of moral and philosophical values and ideals.

Finally, Wordsworth discusses in greater depth the diction of poetry. Diction is basically the use of language, but more specifically, it's the choice of words, phrases, sentence structures, and even figurative language. While diction is important in all of literature, Wordsworth places particular importance on its role in poetry because it is the poet's medium. Whereas prose also has characters, setting, and plot to convey a message, the poet's choice of language, or diction, is the sole means of expression in poetry. Despite this, Wordsworth argues that the diction of poetry and prose is the same, and criticizes the neo-classicists for their “artificial” and “unnatural” language. Passion should drive diction, not ornament, dignity or meter. He wants poetry to center on rustic, humble situations using rustic, humble language. According to Wordsworth, that is the real source of poetic truth and beauty.

## BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

The Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge published *Biographia Literaria*, his semiautobiographical work on aesthetic theory, in 1817. Charting the history of his literary career and melding amusing autobiographical anecdotes with what Coleridge calls “transcendental philosophy” (91), the text is an influential work of literary criticism. Capturing Coleridge's political ideas about the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence, the work is also an important historical document. In its pages, Coleridge uses 19th-century philosophical ideas to contest the precepts of his close friend, Britain's then poet laureate William Wordsworth, and place poetry at the center of reality.

*Biographia Literaria* opens with the recollection of Coleridge's education at Christ's Hospital grammar school and the influence of contemporary writers on developing minds. Coleridge remarks on the temperament of men of genius and the state of contemporary criticism. This leads him to address the critiques made of the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, a collection of poems on which he and Wordsworth collaborated. Coleridge submits a balanced appraisal of Wordsworth's poetic talent before taking up the topic of discrimination in aesthetic matters and mental associations in general.

In Chapters 5 to 7 Coleridge critiques David Hartley's ideas about associational psychology. Coleridge argues that rather than merely receiving ideas and impressions from the world, mind has agency in perceiving reality. In Chapter 8 Coleridge entertains but interrogates Cartesian dualism. Influenced by Immanuel Kant, Coleridge develops his own theory of

Imagination, which he defines as the “esemplastic power” (31). The human soul’s capacity to perceive a unified reality is distinguished from Hartleyan mental “associations,” which Coleridge calls “Fancy” (31). After a digression during which Coleridge recounts the trials and successes of his early literary career, he returns to discussing the nature of reality.

In Chapter 12 Coleridge sets out 10 theses, the core tenets of his “transcendental philosophy” (91). Elaborating on his definition of Imagination, he returns to a discussion of Wordsworth, and in particular the critical reception of Wordsworth’s preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. In Chapter 14 Coleridge defines both “poem” and “poetry” as a means of differentiating his own aesthetic theory from Wordsworth’s. To illustrate his theories, Coleridge examines exemplary poems by Shakespeare and contrasts 16th-century and contemporary literature.

In Chapter 17 Coleridge resumes his critique of Wordsworth’s literary theory, particularly Wordsworth’s investment in “rustic language” (117). Coleridge argues that poetry is inevitably artificial and that it is consciousness, not commonness, that defines poetic genius. Despite his criticisms of Wordsworthian theory, Coleridge lauds his friend as the greatest poet of his era. The superlative quality of Wordsworth’s poetry is due to Wordsworth’s ability to synthesize naturalistic imagery and spiritual profundity. Coleridge inverts Wordsworth’s aesthetic theory of the natural to form his own, which emphasizes the supernatural, accessed via the Imagination.

While Wordsworth seeks to unite prose and poetry, Coleridge distinguishes between prose and poetry, which is a metrical composition. He gives examples of failures in Wordsworth but proclaims that Wordsworth is capable of writing “the first genuine philosophic poem” (176). Coleridge recounts his tour of Germany in epistolary form in a chapter entitled “Satyrane’s Letters.” He describes sailing up the Elbe and his experiences of the German literati. The penultimate chapter is an entertaining review of foreign drama before Coleridge summarizes his theories in the conclusion. Commending his readers to God, Coleridge announces, “with this my personal as well as my literary life might conclude!” (226).

## UNIT-5      TRADITION AND INDIVIDUAL TALENT

The essay Tradition and the Individual Talent is an attack on certain critical views in Romanticism particularly up on the idea that a poem is primarily an expression of the personality of the poet.

Eliot argues that a great poem always asserts and that the poet must develop a sense of the pastness of the past. There is great importance of tradition in the present poem. Tradition should not be inherited but should be obtained by great labor. Past should be altered by present as much as the present is directed by past.

In fact tradition acquires a wider significance in Eliot's writing. It involves a historical sense that is really essential for any work of art. This historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of past but also its present ness. This sense compels a poet to write not only being near to his generation, but to the whole of literary tradition starting from Homer. Thus to write poetry is to write with a consciousness of the timeless and temporal and of the interrelation between the two. In any work the past should be altered by the present just as the preset is directed by the past.

In this way, present affects the past as past effects the present because present poet adopts the tradition of past with hard labor. A good writer or poet identifies his position in present with the comparison to past writers. Therefore, the combination of temporal and timeless is, as whole tradition.

The meaning of the poem is not possible in isolation. Not poet, no any artist has his complete meaning unless we link him/ her to a chain of all poets. Impotence and value of any poet can't be judged in isolation. So there must be the tradition to compare are with another.

To create a good poem, one should surrender the self. This self sacrifice of personality gives birth to a good poem. One should negate his mind. In doing so one loses his individuality and his personality. All the personal emotions, feelings and experience should be sacrificed. There should not be the personal image of poet in his poetry. Poetry should be impersonal. But it does not mean that the poet should not write his personal feelings, but there personal feelings should be converted in to art's feelings. Therefore, we as a critic should not look for personality of poet in his poem because the text is objective. The theory that the poet should surrender his personality is depersonalization. The poet's personal feelings and emotions should be depersonalized. He must be an impersonal and objective like a scientist.

The progress of the artist is a continual self-sacrifice a continual extinction of personality is the individual talent.

To make the concept of depersonalization clear, Eliot brings analogy of creating sulphurous acid.

**Sulphur dioxide (Feeling) + oxygen (Emotion) + platinum (Mind of Poet) = Sulphurous Acid (Poem) (No trace of Poet's Personality)**

As the platinum itself remains unaffected, the mind of the poet remains unaffected also. Poet's personality is just an agent or medium to active the relation between emotion and feelings. So, the poet is never a creator, but like catalyst.

Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion. Eliot point is more like what Keats uses his term 'negative capability'.

Eliot stands against Romantic poets who think that poetry is spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and personal emotions. Romantic writer says poetry is expression of personality and inspiration. But Eliot says poetry is not so but an escape from personality. Poetry is organization rather than inspiration. So, the critic should be objective while treating the poems. The belief that there is a poet speaking in a poem should be checked.

### **Hamlet and His problem Objective Correlative**

In the essay "Hamlet and his problem" Eliot argues that the play Hamlet and the Character Hamlet both are problematic. He says that Hamlet is an artistic failure, because it has not any objective correlative. Here in this play, Shakespeare could not balance between fact and feelings. External situation is needed to express the feelings of character. But in Hamlet, there is no relation between external situation and the feeling of Hamlet.

The madness of Hamlet has not proper relation with his mother's guilt. There are no clear events that are matching with expressed emotion. Matching of events with expressed emotion is what Eliot calls objective correlative.

But, in Hamlet, Hamlet goes mad due to his mother's elopement. This elopement is very minor issue to go mad. So here is not objective correlative. Hamlet lacks objective correlative. Objective refers to situation, events, condition and objective correlative means the proper relationship between situation and expression of feelings. Thus Hamlet is an artistic failure.

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