

# LITERARY CRITICISM AND CREATION



- LITERARY AESTHETICS
- COLONIAL AND POST COLONIAL THEORIES
- SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL
- SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL
- MAJOR TRENDS
- CRITICAL CONCEPTS
  
- IDEAL CRITIC
- PRINCIPLES
- CRITICAL DISCOURSE AND CREATIVITY

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Published in India by Prowess Publishing,  
YRK Towers, Thadikara Swamy Koil St, Alandur,  
Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600016

ISBN: 978-1-5457-5415-3

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication

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# I

## ART AND ITS FUNCTIONS

*(Art speaks where words are unable to explain- Mathiole)*

**Meaning:** Art is basically a creation, which is the product of both the man and nature. Nature creates wonderful things, beautiful fleeting visitations such as sunset, fall of mist, snowfall, cloudy weather, serene mountain peaks, gorgeous waterfalls, wonderful creatures beautiful animals, and colourful flowers, totally there is diversity in the divine creation etc. So also, man creates art in reflection of what really he conceives in Nature. As Dr. G.B. Sajjan puts, “*Art is an attempt to create, through some medium, an illusion of reality*”. In other words art may be defined as a creation of an illusion out of reality, by means of some media such as words, colours etc. So, art is an attempt of a man to show the world that he could create things in contrast with the creation of God and tries to stand equal to Him. That is why there are many wonderful creations of man at our disposal which are outcome of his intellectual stimuli and colourful dreams and illusions and his aspiration to live in platonic world which is free from all the worries and anxieties of life. Artist finds happiness and satisfaction in art which he does not find in real life. Art is also created by the inventive powers like imagination and fancy, the two faculty of mind which are gifted with the artists.

Art comprises the wide variety of subjects which originates out of imagination and intellectual stimuli of man. Art mainly includes literature, painting, music etc. Art needs a media to represent the illusion of reality. For instance, a painter paints the picture of Sunset, which appears to be real, but in reality it is only a picture that we are watching. The poet or the writer describes the same sunset by means of words as T.S. Eliot captures in the line: “*As if the Patient etherized upon the table*” we also witness in the lines of Thomas Gray’s *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly over the lea,  
The ploughman home ward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness, and to me

The tolling of the church bell, the slow move of the wind over the lea, the tired farmer walks home ward with the heavy steps of tiredness because of his day labour, reminds a true evening scene which is commonly to be found in all villages. Here both the sunset of a painter and what poet creates with the words out of his illusion are the reflection of reality. Both delight us when we experience of them. Both create an impression of reality. Both are created out of imagination. Both seem real and give joyful experience. As Aristotle defines, “Art is an imaginative representation of reality”. Art imitates life, so all arts are imitative. What the painter creates with his paints, the same is created by the poet by means of words. Both the poet and the painter try to reproduce a “suspension of disbelief” and we are willing to take the illusion for reality.

### **Why is man so fascinated to art?**

It is learnt that art imitates life and art is an illusion of life. Then why do we need that illusion, when there is real life itself is available at our disposal. The reasons for this are obvious, firstly every art aims at feeling out what nature leaves undone. Art completes the incomplete job of nature when nature fails to give necessary expressions in the form of images at a given moment. For instance, nature is in constant flux, it goes on changing its attire with the changing seasons but the artist wants to seize the beautiful images, fleeting visitations and gives memorable expressions of them through art for the people who live alien from nature and not often being the constant companions. And also, an artist always wants to give outlets to his feelings of pleasure, displeasure, fear, anger, love, frustrations and disappointments. Those emotional expressions and pent up feelings take an outlet in the form of art. Art in other words, is the psychological necessity of man. As Rabindranath Tagore says, “*Man is fond of emotional energy, which is not completely preoccupied with his preservation; this surplus seeks its outlet in the creation of art*”. So man has innate

desire to give memorable expression to what he has seen, heard or experienced of it, such a work becomes the artifice of eternity as John Keats did in *Ode on Grecian Urn*.

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express.

A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme: The sweet and flowery tales of man in history are expressed in art.

Secondly, an artist may add a gleam to existing forms of beauty and there by create more beautiful forms; He may even seek to supply the deficiencies of nature by molding reality after his own heart. So that the poet's creation becomes an idealization of reality, Which is free from pain, worries, anxiety and daily tensions of life, which can be witnessed in Tagore, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and other romantic poets who wish to see life more beautiful and ideal etc as Wordsworth puts in *Rainbow*, "*My heart leaps up when I behold Rainbow in the sky*" and P.B. Shelley expressed optimistic view for the disillusioned souls as "*When winter comes can spring be far behind*".

Thirdly, an art can make the eternity of some specific lives and their significant contribution to the world, for instance the melodies of great singers in the world like S.P. Balasubramanyam, Gangubai Hangal, Bhimsen Joshi, Mukesh, Mallikarjun Mansur became immortal in the world of music. Puttanna Kanagal, Dr. Rajkumar, Vishnuvardan, Raj Kapoor, Satyajit Ray became immortal in the field of movie. Michael Angelo, Ravi Verma, M.F. Hussain in painting, Newton, Galileo, Einstein, C.V. Raman in science form, it has become an attempt to express the inexpressible or untold, by means of symbols or an attempt to find an 'Objective Correlative' remained immortal for their contribution to creativity or art.

Fourthly, the impulse of art is quite natural in man. If a man has more and more leisure, time to spend, surely he will devote more time for art as Worsfold observes, "*civilized men love works of art as we can find the existence of statues, pictures, music, and literature in our midst*". The primitive man also must have loved art, the pictures and paintings in the caves and historical monuments are the best illustrations.



Nowadays art has become more abstract, expressive and symbolic. As Mr. Clive Bill says, “Art is a significant for subjective experience or emotional complex as T.S. Eliot points out in his critical essay *Tradition and Individual Talent*.”

Thus art is a representation of life that is imaginatively conceived and imaginatively expressed. A creative artist is not satisfied till he communicates his vision of beautiful and social urge as we notice in the lyrics of Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth. In this respect the artist differs from common man. The artist not only sees the beauty in the objects but also he tries to reproduce it, imitates it, and communicates it to others by means of art.

Art can be classified as

1. Useful arts or mechanical arts, such as carpentry, pottery, automobile, designing etc.
2. Fine arts such as poetry, music, painting, architecture etc.

### **Functions of art:**

- The primary function of art is to give aesthetic pleasure. According to our taste and standard we all appreciate and admire art, which appeals to our mind and enjoy its beauty and feel joyous.
- Art reproduce the reality, capture fleeting visitations, beautiful sceneries, memorable moments of life and, communicates them to the next generation or to man as and when he is in need of it.
- All arts have their own specific functions. Each of the art uses its own form and symmetry. Some art have their form that can be experienced with our eyes such as statues, painting, poetry and some arts can be experienced by listening such as music, song.
- According to Philip Sidney, art helps to correct the religion.
- Ruskin viewed that art is the divine origin. It is the witness of the glory of God. It is the gift of God.
- Ruskin, Aristophanes, Aeschylus, Aristotle and other Greek writers held moralistic view of art.

- The business of art is to show life as it looks in ideal hues and colours.
- According to Mathew Arnold, “Art is a criticism of life and it holds mirror up to nature of life, it has a direct concern with human affairs, interests, values, good and evil, pleasure and pains of life.”
- Nowadays art like music is used in medical science as a therapy to keep the mind healthy and pleasant. It is because of this reason Florence Nightingale advocated flowers in the room of patients which would create positive feelings in them.
- Art completes undone parts of nature. Art helps to understand the sensuous beauty.
- Art makes the beautiful things immortal in the universe.
- Art is the only means to see the events happen in imagination, which are not possible in real life.
- It is in the art, the dreams, aspirations; hopes of man are partially fulfilled and give joyful experience.
- Art enlightens, entertains and educates people.

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# 2

## LITERATURE

*(Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people, and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary- Boris Pasternak)*

Literature is an art of writing by means of words. It has a direct link with life and its realities. Literature is nothing but the reflections of life. It deals with human hopes, aspirations, joys, sorrows and conflicts. Nothing in the world comes so close to life as literature. In short, it holds mirror up to life and society.

A creative literature grows out of realities of life and life without creative literature has no inner significance. Men of literature continuously have been participating in the various social movements. They strive hard to reform the society and try to correct the social mistakes and failures in general. So literature acquires human significance as Basavanna, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Voltaire did in the previous generation to solve the problems of their contemporary society.

### **Definitions of Literature:**

1. “A great literature is the mirror upon which the realities of life are reflected, blended with the sparks of truth and sincere interpretation of human quest (search) for the perfection of soul as well as the knowledge of absolute truth”. –**A.C. Swinburne**
2. “Literature is the soul of a nation, the true ideals of its civilization, the real message of the people’s inner self”. –**T.S. Eliot**
3. “Literature is a record of the best that has been thought and said in the world”. –**Matthew Arnold**

4. “Literature is the comprehensive essence of the intellectual life of a nation”. –**Scholar Schiller**

From the above definitions it is cleared that literature is a sensitive record of what the authors have been seen, experienced, thought and felt in life. It is nothing but an expression of life through the medium of language. So it is the life and language that give concrete shape to the literature.

## **Nature of Literature:**

Basically literature is the product of language. It is grown out of man. It is an expression of life by means of written words. The passion for knowledge, the desire to know and understand life and culture of man in the universe contribute to the growth of creative literature.

Literature is an expression of life by means of written words. It expresses the hopes, natural desires, struggles and conflicts of man at a given situation. It introduces the world, the true ideals of a particular civilization, the taste, culture, sense and sensibility of a particular nation.

Literature deals with life but it is not an imitation of life or a mere carbon copy of the real world. It is an imaginative representation of life and reality. It represents various virtues, vices; and ideals of a civilization. It looks into life and provides a “**Vishwaroopa Darshan**”. So, *literature is an art of communication of the experience of the heart and mind of a man by means of written words*. As Hudson says “a great human feelings, experience, thoughts, and life is a source of literature, no life, no literature. In other words it is a very soul of life”. Literature is both objective and subjective in its representation.

**Functions of Literature:** The question, why to study literature?, makes us to think different functions of literature.

1. Literature helps us to understand a particular country and its people for example, the plays of **Kalidasa**, the epics of **Valmiki** and **Vyasa** reminds us the Indian society, its ideals, and culture of his time, so also the plays of Shakespeare reveal us the life of English people during his time.

2. Literature throws a light on our character and social life. It helps us to understand our fellow beings. It provides knowledge to distinguish the good from the bad. It helps a man to understand the complexities and conflicts of life.
3. It widens the knowledge of man and purifies his heart and mind.
4. The true literature deals with the conflicts between good and bad, virtue and vice, grace and sin, as is found in the great epics of the world. Such as **the Bible, the Koran, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.**
5. Literature exercises a healthy influence on man. It encourages him to do good and discourages to do evil. It provides moral consciousness.
6. Literature moulds the personality of man; it makes a man cultured, well-read, well-informed and knowledgeable.
7. Literature imparts knowledge. It appeals to the heart and mind irrespective of caste, class, creed and colour.
8. In the present world, the man has become almost the slave of machine, science and technology. He has been reduced to a machine. It is the literature that brings him out of monotony and mechanical way of life. It makes his life more healthy and beautiful as John Drink Water remarks, "The divine power of Milton, allegorical melodies of Spencer, mild satire of Addison, the picaresque novels of Dickens, inspiring poetry of Wordsworth, the vision of Hardy have certainly contribute much more to the moral tone of mankind."
9. Literature deals with the greatest truth, the record of the highest ideals, noblest thoughts and the purest aspirations of the master mind.
10. Literature widens human outlook, broadens his mind and prepares him to face the challenges of life with one of the other illustrations.
11. Literature imparts knowledge as that of history and philosophy. It teaches humanism.

## ══════════════════ **Literary Criticism and Creation** ══════════════════

12. Literature helps us to correct our mistakes and lapses in our personality by means of relevant examples.
13. It opens a way towards national integration and international understanding and socio-political issues of the world.
14. It opens a way of knowledge, a new field of experience and the new lines of thoughts through magnified personalities.
15. It does the criticism of life and tries to reform life and society by means irony and satire.
16. Literature provides aesthetic pleasure. It provides delight to the mind and heart. It entertains along with enlightenment.
17. Literature has been playing a very significant role in the socialization of man against the dehumanized nature of science.
18. Literature has become the store house of knowledge. It educates guides, entertains, and enlightens man. Its true function is to provide a man the very light of path bringing him out of darkness and ignorance.

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