

# LITERATURE WITH ITS ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any single body of written works. More restrictively, literature is writing considered to be an art form, or any single writing deemed to have artistic or intellectual value, often due to deploying language in ways that differ from ordinary usage. Its Latin root *literatura/litteratura* (derived itself from *littera*: letter or handwriting) was used to refer to all written accounts, though contemporary definitions extend the term to include texts that are spoken or sung (oral literature). The concept has changed meaning over time: nowadays it can broaden to have non-written verbal art forms, and thus it is difficult to agree on its origin, which can be paired with that of language or writing itself. Developments in print technology have allowed an evergrowing distribution and proliferation of written works, culminating in electronic literature. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction, and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama; and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre).

## DEFINITION

Definitions of literature have varied over time: it is a "culturally relative definition". In Western Europe prior to the 18th century, literature denoted all books and writing. A more restricted sense of the term emerged during the Romantic period, in which it began to demarcate "imaginative" writing. Contemporary debates over what constitutes literature can be seen as returning to older, more inclusive notions; Cultural studies, for instance, takes as its subject of analysis both popular and minority genres, in addition to canonical works.

## ORIGIN

The history of literature follows closely the development of civilization. When defined exclusively as written work, Ancient Egyptian literature, along with Sumerian literature, are considered the world's oldest literatures. The primary genres of the literature of Ancient Egypt didactic texts, hymns and prayers, and tales were written almost entirely in verse; while use of poetic devices is clearly recognizable, the prosody of the verse is unknown. The question of whether Sumerian literature was poetry or prose remains unanswered. It did contain at least one feature of poetry (left-justified lines), but the style of writing precludes the detection of certain other identifying features.

Different historical periods are reflected in literature. National and tribal sagas, accounts of the origin of the world and of customs, and myths which sometimes carry moral or spiritual messages predominate in the pre-urban eras. The epics of Homer, dating from the early to middle Iron age, and the great Indian epics of a slightly later period, have more evidence of deliberate literary authorship, surviving like the older myths through oral tradition for long periods before being written down. Literature in all its forms can be seen as written records, whether the literature itself be factual or fictional, it is still quite possible to decipher facts through things like characters' actions and words or the authors' style of writing and the intent behind the words. The plot is for more than just entertainment purposes; within it lies information about economics, psychology, science, religions, politics, cultures, and social depth. Studying and analyzing literature becomes very important in terms of learning about our history. Through the study of past literature we are able to learn about how society has evolved and about the societal norms during each of the different periods all throughout history. This can even help us to understand references made in more modern literature because authors often make references to Greek mythology and other old religious texts or historical moments. Not only is there literature written on each of the aforementioned topics themselves, and how they have evolved throughout history (like a book about the history of economics or a book about evolution and science, for example) but one can also learn about these things in fictional works. Authors often include historical moments in their works, like when Lord Byron talks about the Spanish and the French in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto I" and expresses his opinions through his character Childe Harold. Through literature we are able to continuously uncover new information about history. It is easy to see how all academic fields have roots in literature. Information became easier to pass down from generation to generation once we began to write it down. Eventually everything was written down, from things like home remedies and cures for illness, or how to build shelter to traditions and religious practices. From there people were able to study literature, improve on ideas, further our knowledge and academic fields such as the medical field or trades could be started. In much the same way as the literature that we study today continue to be updated as we continue to evolve and learn more and more.

As a more urban culture developed, academies provided a means of transmission for speculative and philosophical literature in early civilizations, resulting in the prevalence of literature in Ancient China, Ancient India, Persia and Ancient Greece and Rome. Many works of earlier periods, even in narrative form, had a covert moral or didactic purpose, such as the Sanskrit *Panchatantra* or the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. Drama and satire also developed as urban culture provided a larger public audience, and later readership, for literary production. Lyric poetry (as opposed to epic poetry) was often the speciality of courts and aristocratic circles, particularly in East Asia where songs were collected by the Chinese aristocracy as poems, the most notable being the *Shijing* or *Book of Songs*. Over a long period, the poetry of popular pre-literate balladry and song interpenetrated and eventually influenced poetry in the literary medium.

In ancient China, early literature was primarily focused on philosophy, historiography, military science, agriculture, and poetry. China, the origin of modern paper making and woodblock printing, produced the world's first print cultures. Much of Chinese literature originates with the Hundred Schools of Thought period that occurred during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (769–269 BCE). The most important of these include the Classics of Confucianism, of Daoism, of Mohism, of Legalism, as well as

works of military science (e.g. Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*) and Chinese history (e.g. Sima Qian's *Records of the Grand Historian*). Ancient Chinese literature had a heavy emphasis on historiography, with often very detailed court records. An exemplary piece of narrative history of ancient China was the *Zuo Zhuan*, which was compiled no later than 389 BCE, and attributed to the blind 5th-century BCE historian Zuo Qiuming.

In ancient India, literature originated from stories that were originally orally transmitted. Early genres included drama, fables, sutras and epic poetry. Sanskrit literature begins with the Vedas, dating back to 1500–1000 BCE, and continues with the Sanskrit Epics of Iron Age India. The Vedas are among the oldest sacred texts. The Samhitas (vedic collections) date to roughly 1500–1000 BCE, and the "circum-Vedic" texts, as well as the redaction of the Samhitas, date to c. 1000–500 BCE, resulting in a Vedic period, spanning the mid-2nd to mid 1st millennium BCE, or the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The period between approximately the 6th to 1st centuries BC saw the composition and redaction of the two most influential Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, with subsequent redaction progressing down to the 4th century AD. Other major literary works are Ramcharitmanas & Krishnacharitmanas.

In ancient Greece, the epics of Homer, who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and Hesiod, who wrote *Works and Days* and *Theogony*, are some of the earliest, and most influential, of Ancient Greek literature. Classical Greek genres included philosophy, poetry, historiography, comedies and dramas. Plato and Aristotle authored philosophical texts that are the foundation of Western philosophy, Sappho and Pindar were influential lyric poets, and Herodotus and Thucydides were early Greek historians. Although drama was popular in Ancient Greece, of the hundreds of tragedies written and performed during the classical age, only a limited number of plays by three authors still exist: Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The plays of Aristophanes provide the only real examples of a genre of comic drama known as Old Comedy, the earliest form of Greek Comedy, and are in fact used to define the genre. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German writer and author of the Faust books.

Roman histories and biographies anticipated the extensive mediaeval literature of lives of saints and miraculous chronicles, but the most characteristic form of the middle Ages was the romance, an adventurous and sometimes magical narrative with strong popular appeal. Controversial, religious, political and instructional literature proliferated during the Renaissance as a result of the invention of printing, while the mediaeval romance developed into a more character based and psychological form of narrative, the novel, of which early and important examples are the Chinese Monkey and the German Faust books.

In the Age of Reason philosophical tracts and speculations on history and human nature integrated literature with social and political developments. The inevitable reaction was the explosion of Romanticism in the later 18th century which reclaimed the imaginative and fantastical bias of old romances and folk-literature and asserted the primacy of individual experience and emotion. But as the 19th century went on, European fiction evolved towards realism and naturalism, the meticulous documentation of real life and social trends. Much of the output of naturalism was implicitly polemical, and influenced social and political change, but 20th century fiction and drama moved back towards the subjective, emphasizing unconscious motivations and social and environmental pressures on the

individual. Writers such as Proust, Eliot, Joyce, Kafka and Pirandello exemplify the trend of documenting internal rather than external realities. Genre fiction also showed it could question reality in its 20th century forms, in spite of its fixed formulas, through the enquiries of the skeptical detective and the alternative realities of science fiction. The separation of "mainstream" and "genre" forms (including journalism) continued to blur during the period up to our own times. William Burroughs, in his early works, and Hunter S. Thompson expanded documentary reporting into strong subjective statements after the second World War, and post-modern critics have disparaged the idea of objective realism in general.

## AWARDS

There are numerous awards recognizing achievement and contribution in literature. Given the diversity of the field, awards are typically limited in scope, usually on: form, genre, language, nationality and output (e.g. for first-time writers or debut novels). The Nobel Prize in Literature was one of the six Nobel Prizes established by the will of Alfred Nobel in 1895, and is awarded to an author on the basis of their body of work, rather than to, or for, a particular work itself. Other literary prizes for which all nationalities are eligible include: the Nestled International Prize for Literature, the Man Booker International Prize and the Franz Kafka Prize.

## LITERARY TECHNIQUES

A literary technique or literary device can be used by authors in order to enhance the written framework of a piece of literature, and produce specific effects. Literary techniques encompass a wide range of approaches to crafting a work: whether a work is narrated in first-person or from another perspective, whether to use a traditional linear narrative or a nonlinear narrative, or the choice of literary genre, are all examples of literary technique. They may indicate to a reader that there is a familiar structure and presentation to a work, such as a conventional murder-mystery novel; or, the author may choose to experiment with their technique to surprise the reader.

In this way, use of a technique can lead to the development of a new genre, as was the case with one of the first modern novels, *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson. *Pamela* is written as a collection of letter-writing correspondence, called "epistolary technique"; by using this technique, *Pamela* strengthened the tradition of the epistolary novel, a genre which had been practiced for some time already but without the same acclaim.

Literary technique is distinguished from literary device, as military strategy is distinguished from military tactics. Devices are specific constructions within the narrative that make it effective. Examples include metaphor, simile, ellipsis, narrative motifs, and allegory. Even simple word play functions as a literary device. The narrative mode may be considered a literary device, such as the use of stream-of-consciousness narrative.

Literary criticism implies a critique and evaluation of a piece of literature and, in some cases, it is used to improve a work in progress or a classical piece, as with an ongoing theater production. Literary editors can serve a similar purpose for the authors with whom they work. There are many types

of literary criticism and each can be used to critique a piece in a different way or critique a different aspect of a piece.

## **CONCLUSION**

Even English literature considered purely as a product of the British Isles is extraordinarily heterogeneous, however. Literature actually written in those Celtic tongues once prevalent in Cornwall, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales called the “Celtic Fringe” is treated separately. Yet Irish, Scots, and Welsh writers have contributed enormously to English literature even when they have written in dialect, as the 18th-century poet Robert Burns and the 20th-century Scots writer Alasdair Gray have done. In the latter half of the 20th century, interest began also to focus on writings in English or English dialect by recent settlers in Britain, such as Afro-Caribbeans and people from Africa proper, the Indian subcontinent, and East Asia.