

**UNIT  
11**

**LITERATURE AND HISTORY**

**: STRUCTURE :**

**11.0 Objectives**

**11.1 Introduction**

**11.2 Understanding the Word ‘History’**

**11.3 History as a Source of Inspiration**

**11.3.1 Historians and their Purpose**

**11.3.2 The task of History**

**11.3.3 History and its Relationship with other Disciplines**

**11.3.4 History as a Science and Art**

**11.4 Understanding the Word ‘Literature’**

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**Answers**

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**11.0 OBJECTIVES**

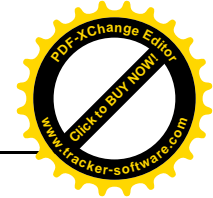
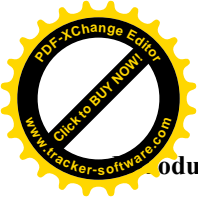
In this Unit we shall;

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

**Outcomes :**

On completing the unit, you should be able to;

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



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## 11.1 INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1

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

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

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## 11.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF THE WORD 'HISTORY'

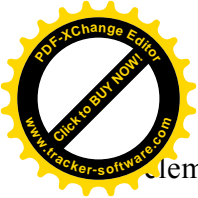
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The word History derives its meaning from Greek word *ιστορία*, *historia*, meaning "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation"

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

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

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



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

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 2**

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

- (i) What is the meaning of History ?  
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- (ii) What are the two generally accepted meanings of history ?  
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- (iii) What does the modern study of history include ?  
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- (iv) What are the fields where history is taught ?  
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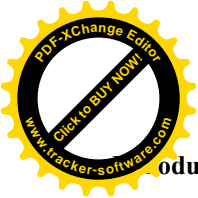
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**11.3 HISTORY AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION**

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

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



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 3

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

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

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- (ii) What does Hegel say about history ?

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

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- (iv) History has been referred to as

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(Complete the statement based on the paragraph given above)

#### **11.3.1 Historians and its Purpose :**

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

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

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

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



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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 4**

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

- (i) What is the purpose of the historian ?  
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- (ii) What are the dual functions of a good historian ?  
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- (iii) What is the primary purpose of intelligent construction of history by the historians ?  
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**11.3.2 The task of History :**

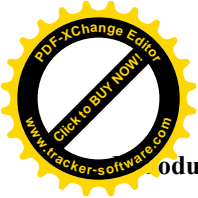
The task of history is to understand the past as many people want to know about the past for emotional or intellectual satisfaction. Historical knowledge gives a prevision, an insight to the understanding of future. It is the human past which is the primary object of the historical study. If the past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

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 5**

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

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

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

#### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 6

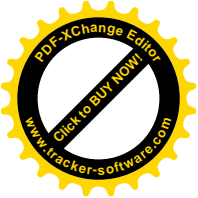
**ANSWER THE QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW AND CHECK YOUR ANSWERS WITH ONES GIVEN AT THE END OF THE UNIT.**

- (i) What are the common aims shared by history and social sciences ?  
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- (ii) What are the different sources employed by the historian to construct history ?  
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- (iii) Name two functions that history performs.  
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### 11.3.4 History as a Science and Art :

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

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



**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 7**

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

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

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

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

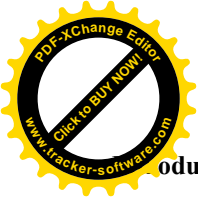
Literature is a form of human expression. But not everything expressed in words, even when organised and written down, is counted as literature. The derivation of the word literature implies writing, there exists also a large proportion of oral literature. Literature becomes a form of universal truth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

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 8**

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

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

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(iii) Write a note on Literature.

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**11.4.1 Relationship between History and Literature :**

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

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 9**

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

(i) Bring out the relationship between History and Literature

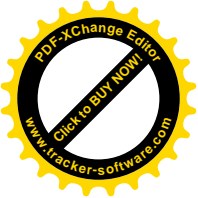
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**11.4.2 Social Environment and its Influences on Literature :**

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

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





**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 10**

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

- (i) Which two forces condition human imagination?  
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- (ii) What does critical analysis of literature prove ? Or how does critical analysis affect literature?  
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**11.4.3 Relationship between Historical Writings and Literary Forms :**

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

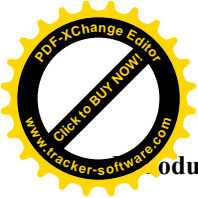
It is common to distinguish history from literature on grounds that history deals in the realm of fact while literature moves in the realm of fiction. Historian may not invent the facts or references while the literary writer may have a greater margin of freedom in exploring relationships. History and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

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 11**

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

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

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**11.4.4 Difference between Histories and Novels :**

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

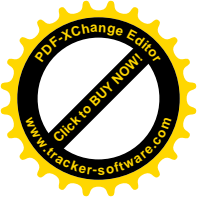
History and fiction are like stories or narratives of events and actions. But for history both the structure of the narrative and its details are representations of the past actuality and the claim to be true representation which is understood by both writer and reader.

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

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

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

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



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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 12**

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

- (i) Compare and contrast Histories and Novels.

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**11.4.5 Post Modernism : History and Literature :**

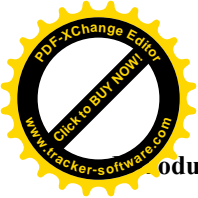
The theory of postmodernism also advocates the use of literature in history. Recent critical readings of both history and fiction have focused more on what the two modes of writing share than how they differ. They both are identified as linguistic constructs highly conventionalized in their narrative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

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

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

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

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



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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 13**

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

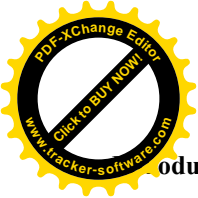
Fiction borrows as much from history as much history, borrows from fiction according to Paul Ricoeur.

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

**CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 14**

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

- (i) History and fiction are inseparable, explain.  
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- (ii) What are the views of post modernists on history and fiction?  
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- (iii) Foucault's views on history and fiction :  
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(iv) According to Paul Ricœur Fiction,

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(Complete the sentences from the text given above)

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

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### 11.6 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you have learnt;

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

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### 11.7 KEY WORDS

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**Inspiration** : the process of being mentally stimulated

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

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

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

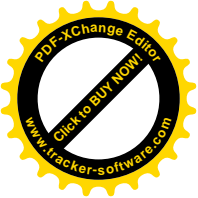
**Postmodernism** : a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific, or objective efforts to explain reality

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### 11.8 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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



## ANSWERS

### Check your progress 1

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

### Check your progress 2

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

### Check your progress 3

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

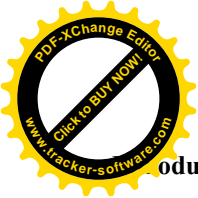
### Check your progress 4

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

### Check your progress 5

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





**Check your progress 6**

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

**Check your progress 7**

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

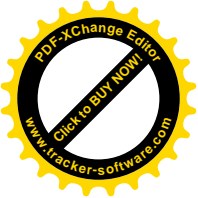
**Check your progress 8**

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

**Check your progress 9**

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





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

**Check your progress 10**

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

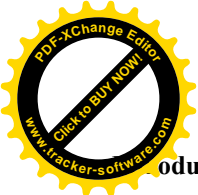
**Check your progress 11**

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

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

**Check your progress 12**

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



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

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

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

**Check your progress 13**

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

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

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



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

**Check your progress 14**

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

