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II MA

THEORY OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND CLASSICS IN TRANSLATION

1. What is comparative literature?

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field. Its practitioners study literature across national borders across periods, languages, genres, boundaries between literature and the other arts like music, painting, dance, film, etc. and across discipline like literature and psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics ,etc. Defined most broadly, comparative literature is the study of literature without borders.

2. What is Remark's definition of Comparative literature?

Remake has provided us with two definitions of comparative literature in which comparative literature is viewed as a study of literature beyond national boundaries and it is concerned with the study of the relationships between literature and other areas of knowledge and beliefs.

3. Write a note on Rubaiyat.

The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is a poem giving philosophical interpretation to the human life from its beginning to the end. It is full of details bordering on symbolism and the theme which is not uncommon but which requires loud thinking. Not only does the poem provide us with a compelling surface story, but a careful look at the text will reveal a rich collection of separate meanings hidden in the poem. Its sparkling narrative form of disparate characters as the moon, god, the snake, the balm of life, not to mention nearly every animal and sexual symbol.

4. Define Oedipus complex.

The Oedipus complex is a psychoanalytic theory proposing sexual desires for their opposite – sex parent as a rival and that the complex is resolved when children overcome their incestuous and competitive emotions and begin to view their same sex parent. It is a crucial stage in the normal development.

5. What is Electra complex?

The Electra complex is a psychoanalytic term used to describe a girl's sense of competition with her mother for the affection of her father. It is comparable to the Oedipus complex in males. According to Sidmund Freud , during female psychosexual development, a young girl is initially attached to her mother.

6. What is the significance of the title of Gothe's poem?

Gothe's Nearness of the Beloved has the immediate presence of the two opposites merged into one. While he sings that his beloved is nearer, he is also conscious that she is far away beyond his reach.

7. Explain the form Hatim Tai.

The Arabian practice the Hatim Tai. It is a well-known tradition of generosity calling the people to supper.

8. Explain the psychological typology of Carl Jung.

Carl Jung has an elaborate psychological typology, according to which the extrovert and the introvert subdivide the four types based on the dominance of thinking, feeling, intuition and sensation.

9. How does the society influence a writer?

The writer is not only influenced by the society: he influences it. Art not merely reproduces life but also shapes life. People may model their lives upon the patterns of fictional heroes and heroines. They have made love, committed crimes and suicide according to the book, be it Goethe's *Sorrow of Werther* or Dumas' *Musketeers*.

10. What is meant by borrowing process?

The borrowing process is the ramification of imitation process. It ranges from the refashioning of the best parts of a foreign work in a way that fits well with the national public taste.

Section –B

11. Write a note on the difference between French School and American Schools of comparative literature.

Remak defines Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the boundaries of a particular country and it is the study of relations among the literatures and other scientific areas of knowledge and beliefs.

French Schools and American Schools:

The French school prefers to go into issues that can be solved on the basis of substantial evidence based generally on the personal documents. It tries to exclude the literary criticism from the area of comparative literature. It looks at the studies depending on the mere comparison and indication of the similarities and differences. Even issues of the impact were being addressed with caution, as each of the Carre and Guiar has called to focus on issues such as the reception, the middlemen and the travel abroad means transfer of literary material from its borders to the outside, receiving of Arts in other borders, crossing points and the medium means that helped it to move. They both give the importance to the study of attitude towards a particular country in the literature of another country during a limited period. However, the French school, to study the impacts and avoid the issues of special artistic tastes and technical evaluation or literary criticism.

The second part of the definition, which revolved around the relationship between literature and other fields of knowledge, it can be said that there is a radical difference between American and French schools. The French, such as Van Tiegem, Guyard and Ren Etiemble rarely showed the attention to this issues, although some of them insisted that the comparison should be held among different nationalities of the literature. The expansion in determining the area of the comparative literature carries

the risk of sliding this general pattern from the literary study. Therefore it will be a loss of its characteristic personality and its authorized presence. He lends to prefer the American concept of Comparative literature. He strongly calls that there is a need to work seriously in order to reach minimum interrelated standards to set some clear limits for any proposed field.

12. What is the relationship between literature and society?

The relation between literature and society is usually discussed by quoting De Bonald's phrase, 'literature is an expression of society'. There are many considerations to decide this factor. First there is the sociology of the writer and the professions and the institutions of literature, the economic basis of literary production, the social status of the writer, his social ideology revealing itself in his works. Then there is the problem of social content, the implications of social purpose of literature. Finally there are the problems faced by the audience and the social influence of the work in question. To examine how far literature is actually determined by social change and development it is necessary to have in mind all the three divisions namely, the sociology of the writer, the social content of the works themselves and the influence of literature on society. There is also the possibility of cultural integration. Since every writer is a member of society, he can be studied as a social being. Though his biography is the main source, such a study can easily widen into one of the whole milieu from he came and in which he lived. It will be possible to accumulate information about the social prominence, the family background, the economic position of writers. We can show what the exact share of aristocrats, bourgeois and proletarians was in the history of literature; for example we can demonstrate the predominant share which the children of the professional and commercial classes take in the production of American literature.

13. Bring out the mutual relationship between Comparative literature and National literature and Comparative literature and General literature.

Comparative literature and National literature:

It should be noted that the definition of comparative literature, which is developed by the French researcher @ Paul Van Tiegem is very accurate. In his opinion National literature, Comparative literature and General literature represent three cascading levels. National literature studies issues enclosed within the scope of National Literature. Comparative literature studies the issues shared by two different literatures. In a comparative literary study the National literature remain the initial treasure, as being the pillars for the survey. In a study National literatures are simply examples for international trends. It is true that the final division among National Literature

Comparative literature and General literature:

The term General literature is used to mark the course and publications of foreign literatures through the English translation or more broadly it is used for the marking of those scripts, which are difficult to be classified under any title of literary studies. They sometimes refer to the literary trends or problems and sometimes to the theories of general interest or aesthetics. The group of texts and critical studies or comments address several kinds of literatures, which are classified under the literary category. We must remember that the term General literature – like the term, world

literature, has a comparative method, but it is not necessarily included in Comparative literature. There is a difference between those studies in General literature on the one hand and the studies of National literature and Comparative literature on the other hand. The nature of the studies in the General literature is not to care about national borders of the literatures and not be limited into two or three literatures, but its research deals with each literary movement of all literatures, which have developed that movement. Its tricks a blind eye to all that is called local or specially related to a particular national language, ignoring everything related a place or a certain national literature except what has an echo in the World literature and what has its influence in guiding the intellectual currents outside the boundaries of the national literature.

Section -C

14. Write a critical appreciation on Omar Khayyam's The Rubaiyat.

The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is a poem giving philosophical interpretation to the human life from its beginning to the end. It is full of details bordering on symbolism and the theme which is not uncommon but which requires loud thinking. Not only does the poem provide us with a compelling surface story, but a careful look at the text will reveal a rich collection of separate meanings hidden in the poem. Its sparkling narrative form of disparate characters as the moon, god, the snake, the balm of life, not to mention nearly every animal and sexual symbol the human mind come up with.

With the Carpe Diem idea, signifying the utility and taking due advantage of the daytime. Khayyam is unable to come to terms with the philosophy of afterlife. So he stresses on the present as fitting enough for the day. What one spends in the course of the present time may not lost long, for he has to keep in mind the fact that everyone will one day come down to the dust. At such a time he may not be in a mood to relish his life's enjoyable things like the wine, sweet songs and happy scenes. The ultimate destiny of man remains a mystery not to be unravelled that easily. There is perhaps one intelligent way of doing things in one's life, that is ,getting relieved of the anxiety of one's life and its fateful designs. The way out is to drink the lethe of wine. By so doing the man may be feeling intoxicated and thereby he can forget the past and the future. He should live only for the pleasure of the moment.

Every human being is subject to the ultimate fate, written as a part of his existence. If something untoward or extraordinary happens. It is not within the control of man. Though he may have his own readymade factors to stand against the vagaries of the fate, finally it is the fate which wins over man's desperate efforts to cross over the fateful bridge. Fate is portrayed as a moving finger and its power is such that it is able to move on and play with men's life style and many-sided activities. Even those found with piety or good sense cannot escape from its cruel hands. No one can push it back and win over it. If anyone sheds tears over the fateful happenings, it also is of no avail because fate is the ultimate power that calls the shot.

The poet makes continuous reference to death in a mood of seriousness and melancholy. As it is inevitable, no one can escape from it. Some that we loved as the best that time and fate could produce have already drunk their cup and now lie at rest. And we who now make merry when summer blooms will one day also lie beneath the

couch of earth. So the poet urges that we should make the most of the pleasure we have left unused, before we too settle into dust without wine or song or singer. The poet sends out the reminder that those who prepare for today shall ever remember that there is tomorrow staring at us all the time. A Muezzin from the tower of darkness cries calling us as fools and reminding that man should not look for rewards either on earth or in the other world. Saints and wise men who have discussed these worldly tendencies now lie silent, their words scattered to the wind and their mouths stopped with dust.

Omar Khayyam, in his capacity as a poet foresees the future, even as he lives in the present and has experienced the past. Like all wise men and saints he informs the people of the world that only noble work done by them will stand as a lasting memory representing them as having lived in their time. Since death is a factor which cannot be denied and pushed away as an unwanted thing, mankind should realise that they cannot escape from fate or destiny which will finally emerge on the scene and take them away.

15. Write an essay on literature and psychology.

It is believed that psychology and illuminate the creative process. We know that attention has been given to the varying methods of composition, to the habits of authors in revising and rewriting. There has been the study of the genesis of work at the early stage, the drafts, the rejected readings, etc. Yet the critical relevance of the much of the information, especially the anecdotes about the writers habits is certainly overrated. A study of revisions, corrections and the like has been more profitable. It may help us to perceive critically relevant fissures, inconsistencies, turnings and distortions in work of art. A writer distinguishes several layers in his text.

There remains the question of psychology in the literary works. The characters in the plays and novels are judged to be psychological true. The situations are praised and plots accepted because of this quality. Sometimes a psychological theory held consciously or dimly by an author, seems to fit a figure or a situation. Thus critics argue that Hamlet fits the type of sanguine man's suffering from melancholy adust, which is known to the Elizabethans from their psychological theories. Proust has a whole psychological theory of memories, important even for the organization of his work. Freudian psychoanalysis is used quite consciously by novelists such as Conrad Aiken or Waldo Frank

Any modern treatment of the creative process will chiefly concern the relative parts played by the unconscious and the conscious mind. It would be easy to contrast literary periods to distinguish romantic and expressionistic periods which exalt the unconscious from classical and realistic periods which stress intelligence revision and communication. The authors wish naturally to discuss conscious technical procedures, the unselected experiences which is their matter. The most famous document on the topics Poe's Philosophy of Composition professes to explain by what methodological strategies his Raven was constructed. In Poe the division is terrifyingly complete between the unconscious which provides the obsessive themes of delirium, torture and death and the conscious which literally develops them.

In this manner it can be pointed out that the field of psychology has a lot of valid and reliable ideas to supply to the literary artist who goes about exploring the mind and complex conditions of the characters in question. The psychiatrist does his bit to help the frenzied man or woman to recover his or her senses through the stages of recovery.

The link between the mind and the other parts of the body at work has to be in perfect coordination or else the serious condition will result in extreme states leading to complete madness and delirium. Literature takes the valuable hints from psychology so as to steer clear of all kinds of disorder and disharmony.

16. Illuminate the chapters of Thirukkural 'Veracity'.

Valluvar on Truthfulness

Introduction

Truth is difficult to define. Philosophers have struggled to come up with a clear definition of truth which covers its many aspects. Among the many definitions and theories regarding truth, the one given in Merriam Webster's dictionary is simple and straightforward. The Merriam Webster's dictionary defines truth as the property of being in accord with fact or reality. In other words, a statement is said to be true if it is in accordance with fact or reality.

Valluvar's definition of truthfulness and almost truthfulness

Valluvar has a slightly different definition of truth. He states that truth is speech that is free from all evil.

Speech that is in accordance with fact but not causing any harm whatsoever to anyone is truth. (kural - 291)

Valluvar's definition of truth seems to imply that truth is different than mere fact. According to him, truth is not merely a factual statement. It is more than that. As Dr. T. P. Menakshisundaran, a renowned Tamil scholar points out, "Truth is not terminal exactitude. But, it is the manifestation of the inner *arul* (compassion) in speech." It is the intent behind what is said makes it a truth.

In the next kural, Valluvar states that even a false statement may be considered as truth if it produces unmitigated good. How can that be? Consider the situation where a little girl wearing a new dress asks her father, "Dad, don't I look very pretty in this dress?". Even if the father does not think that the dress makes her look pretty, his response would be, "Yes. Honey, you really look very pretty in this dress." The father's statement is not consistent with the fact. But, there is no harm done by the father's statement that the girl looked pretty in that dress. In this case, the father's intent is absolutely good. He wants to make his daughter happy. Although the father's statement is technically a falsehood, it is almost like truth.

Even a false statement is almost like a truth if it can produce a benefit without the least blemish.

Valluvar is consistent in his statements. He is really pragmatic in his approach to define truth. To him, a statement is true if there is no intention to harm anyone. Statements which do not harm anyone and produce pure good, can be considered as almost like the truth. According to Merriam Webster's Dictionary, a lie is a false statement made with deliberate intent to deceive someone. So, when someone is lying, intentional deception is involved. In the example cited above, the father has no intention to deceive or hurt his daughter, therefore, his statement is not a lie. That is why Valluvar says it is almost like truth.

Being true to one's own conscience

When a statement is made by someone, others may not know his real intentions behind that statement. But, his own conscience will certainly know his intentions. Therefore, he certainly knows whether the statement he made was truth or almost truth or simply a lie. According to Valluvar, if it is a deliberate lie, his own conscience will hurt him. Therefore, he advises that one should never tell a lie. However, if someone is true to his own conscience, he will be revered by all.

Do not utter falsehood about whatever your conscience knows to be true. If you do, your own conscience will continue to hurt you. (kural - 293)

He who conducts himself true to his own conscience dwells in the hearts of all in the world.

(kural - 294)

Benefits of not uttering a lie

According to Valluvar there are two ways of life. One is the domestic life where people live with their families. They try to make a living by working. They are expected to share their food and wealth with others who are less fortunate. Performing charitable acts is one of their most important duties. The other way of life is that of the ascetics. The ascetics spend their time in doing penance and focus their attention on getting rid of their desires and attachments and seeking salvation from the chain of births and deaths. It is a rare individual who follows the domestic way of life and yet spend time on penance like the ascetics. Valluvar says one who is true to his own conscience and speaks the truth is superior to those who practice both charity and penance together.

One who is truthful in thought and word is superior to those who practice penance and charity.

(kural – 295)

According to Valluvar, truthfulness is the supreme virtue. He says that being truthful is the most glorious virtue and truthfulness yields all other virtues. Therefore, the only virtue one need to practice is truthfulness.

There is no greater glory than being truthful. Being truthful yields all the virtues without exertion.

(kural – 296)

Truth cleanses the mind

Valluvar makes another interesting observation. He says that water helps to clean our body. In the same manner, truthfulness helps to clean our mind. When someone follows truthfulness meticulously, then he must be true to himself. That means, if he were to be confronted for his actions, he has to confess what he did and meet the consequences for his actions. Eventually, truthfulness will deter him from straying away from the path of virtue. Thus, constant and continuous practice of truthfulness acts as a detergent for the mind and purifies the mind. According to Valluvar, "Virtue is nothing but cultivating a mind without blemishes; everything else is an empty show (kural 34)." If truthfulness would cleanse the mind of all blemishes, there can be no other virtue better than that. Therefore, one who practices truthfulness need not be concerned with following other virtues. In course of time, truthfulness will automatically lead him to all other virtues. This is precisely why, the noble men of perfection consider truthfulness as the only guiding light for them to follow. In fact, Valluvar says that truthfulness is a prerequisite quality for a noble man of perfection.

External purity is made possible by means of water. Truthfulness purifies the mind.

(kural – 298)

If one speaks the truth and nothing but the truth, he need not seek any other virtues.

(kural – 297)

External lamps do not light the path of the noble men. Only truthfulness illuminates their path.

(kural-299)

Love, sense of shame, philanthropic munificence, gracious compassion, truthfulness are the five pillars upon which perfection of character rests.
(kural - 983)

Valluvar's assurance

Valluvar personally acknowledges that he has never seen anything more precious than truthfulness. In the entire Kural, this is one of the rare occasions where Valluvar speaks in the first person and gives an assurance to his readers that he is convinced that truthfulness is the most precious virtue.

Of all things we have seen in our experience, there is nothing more precious than truth.

(kural – 300)

Conclusion

In order for a statement to be considered as truth it must be factual and at the same time, it should not cause any harm to anyone. A falsehood can be considered as almost truth if it can produce a benefit without any blemish whatsoever. A lie is a statement made with the intent of deceiving someone. If someone utters a lie, then his own conscience knows that it is a lie and his own conscience will continue to hurt him. According to Valluvar, truthfulness is the supreme virtue. Continuous and consistent practice of truthfulness cleanses one's mind of all evils. According to Valluvar, virtue is nothing but cultivating a mind which is free of all blemishes. Since truthfulness is the mother of all virtues, men of perfection use that as their guiding light. Valluvar is convinced that truthfulness is the most precious of all virtues.