**Dr Badra Menouer**

**LMD1 LECTURES**

**Lecture One**

**II The Functions of Literature**

**1.5 The Functions of Literature**

Literature expresses the many thoughts, experiences, and desires of human beings’ everyday lives that are expressed in a variety of types or styles in literary work. The development of human emotions, ideas, and interests is one of the functions literature has. Generally speaking, literature serves a variety of functions, which can be grouped into several categories:

* **Artistic Function**: Literature is often valued for its aesthetic qualities, such as its use of language, imagery, symbolism, and other literary devices. Literature can also be seen as a form of art that expresses human creativity and imagination.
* **Cultural Function**: Literature can reflect and shape cultural values, beliefs, and customs, providing insights into the history, traditions, and social norms of a particular society or period. By studying literature, we can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural context in which it was created.
* **Educational Function**: Literature can be used as a tool for education, providing readers with knowledge and information on a variety of subjects, from history and science to politics and philosophy. Literature can also teach readers important moral lessons and values, such as empathy, compassion, and respect for diversity.
* **Psychological Function**: Literature can serve a psychological function, helping readers to explore their own emotions and experiences through the characters and themes of the works they read. Literature can also provide a sense of catharsis, allowing readers to release pent-up emotions and connect with others through shared experiences.
* **Social Function**: Literature can have a powerful impact on society, serving as a catalyst for social change and political reform. By addressing important issues and challenging social norms, literature can inspire readers to take action and effect meaningful change in the world.
* **Entertainment Function**: Literature can be enjoyed simply for its entertainment value, providing readers with a sense of escape and enjoyment from the stresses of daily life. This function is especially important for people who may not have access to other forms of entertainment, such as television or movies.

Overall, literature serves a range of functions that are both practical and meaningful, from providing entertainment and education to shaping cultural values and inspiring social change. It gives knowledge of those particularities with which science and philosophy are not concerned, it also makes humans perceive what humans see and imagine, what humans already know, conceptually or practically, and last it releases people from the stress of their emotions, whether they are writers or readers. By studying literature, we can gain a deeper appreciation for its many uses and functions, and learn to appreciate its value as an essential aspect of human culture.

Literature also functions to contribute values of human life. Literature in education programs can contribute significantly to the development and knowledge of students. The contribution of literature in education covers intrinsic values and extrinsic values.

* The intrinsic values are the reward of a lifetime of wide reading recognizable in the truly literate person,
* While the extrinsic values facilitate the development of language skills and knowledge.