CHAPTER II

THE WORLD OF EXPRESSIONISM

Expressionism as an art movement began in painting, particularly in the paintings of Pablo Picasso, Matthias Grunewald and El Greco. In 1910, the term Expressionism was initially used by the Czech art historian Antonin Matejeck. It covers a wide range of fine arts. The fine arts used to concentrate on the concrete presentation of emotive and focused on subjectivity. The use of dynamic colours and abstract distorted forms are characterized by Expressionism. The mood is captured through these abstract shapes, vivid shades and contrasting colours. The impression of an object on the artists mind is presented through the paintings of the Expressionist artists. It has an all over approach that encompasses the totality of the impression in particular the mental impression, German Expressionism is mainly characterized by the film movement. In literature Expressionism is a reaction against materialism, urbanization and mechanization. Expressionism puts emphasis not on the external world but on the evocation of the states of mind. The inner development of the protagonists’ character is explored. Expressionism aims at presenting a higher spiritual vision of life. August Strindberg and Frank Wedekind are the forerunners of Expressionist drama. It has been stated that Expressionism covers a wide range of literary movements such as Dadaism, Magical Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Modernism as well as Post-Modernism. The interrelationships among these art movements and the other fine arts have been explained. The conceptual background of the present study is offered through the in-depth analysis of Expressionism.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 Expressionism Origin

French symbolist poets, Pablo Picasso from Spain, Matthias Grunewald and El Greco from Germany, and the social, economic and political changes have called for appropriate changes in similar fine arts such as music and literature. These changes introduced modernism in English language and literature. Imagism, Impressionism, Naturalism and other Art movements supplied a lot to literature. These movements
were related to give and take relationship. Futurism and Surrealism too contributed to the literary movement. The literary movement of Expressionism brought together artists, novelists, poets and dramatists from all over Europe and America. Some of them were Franz Kafka, Eugene O’Neill, Ernst Barlack, George Kaiser, Ernst Toller, Oscar Kokoschka, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller and Edward Albee. These dramatists used Expressionism to treat the thematic networks and to supply narrative techniques.

Expressionism as a movement initially began in painting. In the early decades of 20th century it developed in Germany and then in Europe. It became a progressive avant-garde style before the World War I. It remained popular during the Weimar Republic particularly in Berlin. There are two alternate views about the origin of the term Expressionism. It is traced in paintings exhibited in 1901 in Paris by an obscure artist named Julien Auguste Herve. The term is believed to have been coined by the Czech art historian Antonin Matejcek in 1910. Expressionism differs from impressionism. It is difficult to define, because it ranges many ‘isms’ of the modern times such as Naturalism, Modernism, Futurism, Vorticism, Cubism, Suralism, Dadaism, and many others. Expressionism covers a wide range of the fine arts. Expressionist architecture, painting, literature, theatre, dance, film and music are in vogue. Painters like Matthias Grunewald and El Greco are expressionists. Matthias Grunewald has presented an altar that has five different motifs which are Biblical. Mother Mary and the worshippers have brought out what the artist felt mirroring his mind through art. El Greco’s painting shows how Jesus Christ healed the blind. Christ’s gracious blessings have healed the blind, the lepers and even the dead. Christ is the Saviour of the people of the World who trust Him with all their might and heart. The term is applied mainly to 20th century works. The Expressionists emphasize on individual perspective. It has been a reaction to positivism and other artistic styles. Expressionism is a challenge to Naturalism and Impressionism. Expressionism generally refers to a series of art movements. These art movements share a common interest. They depict emotions. They put focus on subjectivity. The use of vivid shades and dynamic colours and designs and distorted forms is made in paintings which are characterized by Expressionism. Expressionism attempts to describe emotion and feelings through visual and graphic presentations. This might be through a portrait. This portrait exaggerates certain features of a face to make it seem more
expressive as noticed in Pablo Picasso’s paintings. It may be vibrant and contrasting colors such strategies may create an overall mood through artistic, impressionistic and expressionistic features of arts. Expressionistic art displays an artist’s internal mind. It presents subjective experience to the world. Expressionistic art may be a depiction of a dream. It may be an improvised abstraction. It may be a highly stylized painting of a street scene. The artist in an Expressionist School is imbued with his own interpretation. The impressionists saw color as a reflection of light and representation of the physical world. Expressionists on the other hand, view color as an emotional device. Expressionistic paintings tend to employ vivid colors. Most paintings bring out emotional reactions from the viewers. They communicate the deep emotional state of the artist. Most Expressionistic paintings present images of recognizable objects like humans or horses. They render them in exaggerated forms. Frequently they present a sense of movement through blurred edges or curving brushstrokes. Even abstract paintings employ this kind of dynamism. They show a fluidity of line and movement throughout the painting. Each movement within Expressionism has had its own distinct style. Art of the Fauves (Wild Beasts), including that of Matisse, was intensely colored. It presented distorted shapes balanced into compelling compositions. They however, remained fairly representational. German Expressionism continued this highly stylized approach. It strongly changed into abstraction and improvisational compositions. This is particularly noticed in the work of Wassily Kandinsky. Abstract Expressionism expanded the canvas. It employed an ‘all over’ approach to creating large-scale highly abstract paintings.

2.1.2 German Expressionism

German Expressionism is a film movement that emphasizes on the expression of inner thoughts or emotions through the control of stylistic elements. The film movement was born directly under the influence of German defeat during The World War I. It used an expressive form to describe the mentality of a defeated nation suffering with poverty and anger. German Expressionist films are therefore notable for their dark themes of insanity, horror, death and fatality. They mainly translate into the film’s mise-en-scene and narrative. It counters the principle of realism. It practices extreme distortion as a means to communicate inner emotional reality (Johnson, 2010). Old ideals and conventional photographic representation of reality is discarded conveying
messages in stylization as found in *Old Stone Mansion* or *Long Day’s Journey into Night* becomes symbolic of the real world. The story takes place in a constructed reality. The characters live in a world of distortion as noticed in the six plays selected for the study. A subjective viewpoint is expressed by abstracting realistic details and contingencies. This is done in order to bring out the essence of an object, situation or state of mind. Expressionism as a distinct style or movement refers to a number of German artists. There are Expressionistic Austrian, French, and Russian artists. They became active in the years before the World War I, thus remained active throughout the interwar period.

Expressionism in literature arose as a reaction against materialism. It is a reaction against the complacent bourgeois prosperity, rapid mechanization and urbanization. It reacts against the domination of the family within the Pre World War I European society. It was the dominant literary movement in Germany. It was the movement of the World War I and after in interwar years. In forging a drama of social protest, Expressionist writers aimed to convey their ideas through a new style. Their concern was with general truths rather than with particular situations. Hence, they explored in their plays the predicaments of representative symbolic types rather than of fully developed individualized characters. Emphasis was laid not on the outer world. This external world is merely sketched in and barely defined in place or time. The focus was put on the internal, on an individual’s mental state. Hence the imitation of life is replaced in Expressionist drama by the ecstatic evocation of states of mind. The leading character in an Expressionist play often pours out his or her woes in long monologues. The protagonist expresses him or herself in a concentrated, elliptical, almost telegraphic language that explores youth’s spiritual malaise. Its revolt is against the older generation, and the various political or revolutionary remedies that present themselves. The leading character’s inner development is explored. It is presented through a series of loosely linked tableaux. He revolts against traditional values. He seeks a higher spiritual vision of life.

August Strindberg and Frank Wedekind were notable forerunners of Expressionist drama. The first full-fledged Expressionist play was Reinhard Johannes Sorge’s *Der Bettler* (*The Beggar*). This play *Der Bettler* by Sorge Reinhard Johannes was written in 1912 but not performed until 1917. This play dramatizes the conflict of the
generations. The youngsters reject the father figure. They expressed a firm faith in youth in messianic terms. The principal German playwrights of the movement were George Kaiser, Ernst Toller, Paul Kornfeld, Fritz von Unruh, Walter Hasenclever, and Reinhard Goering. By the mid 1920s inflation was over and stability returned. The expressionist wave passed the nebulous unity of the expressionist camp fragmented into different ideologies. But expressionism in the wider sense, a technique rather than a specific view of life can be traced in other countries too. In the 1920s American theatre was open to experimentation; Elmer Rice’s *The Adding Machine* (1922) mocked the depersonalized drudges of capitalism. John Howard Laws used expressionism for radical purposes in *Roger Bloomer* (1922) and *Processional* (1925). A late example of agitation expressionism was Irwin Shaw’s anti-militarist *Bury the Dead* (1937). The most notable American exponent of Expressionism was Eugene O’Neill. In the *Emperor Jones* (1920) he put subjective visions on the stage. In *The Hairy Ape* (1922) he turned both oppressors and oppressed in a class society into puppet. In *All God’s Chillun Got Wings* (1924) he portrayed racial conflict in bold two-dimensional imagery.

2.1.3 Development

The roots of the German Expressionist School lay in the works of Vincent van Gogh, Edvard Munch, and James Ensor. Each of these artists from 1885 to 1900 evolved a highly personal painting style. These artists used the expressive possibilities of colour and line to explore dramatic and emotion laden themes. They through these devices conveyed the qualities of fear, horror, and the grotesque. They simply celebrated nature with hallucinatory intensity. They broke away from the literal representation of nature in order to express more subjective outlooks or states of mind. The second and principal wave of Expressionism began about 1905. This was led by German artists. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner formed an association called Die Brucke. The group included Erich Heckel, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, and Fritz Bleyl. These painters were in revolt against what they saw as the superficial naturalism of academic Impressionism. They wanted to rein fuse German art with a spiritual vigour they felt it lacked. They sought to do this through an elemental, primitive, highly personal and spontaneous expression. Die Brucke’s original members were soon joined by the Germans Emil Nolde, Max Pechstein, and Otto Muller. The Expressionists were influenced by their
predecessors of the 1890s. They became interested in African wood carvings. They were interested in the works of such Northern European Medieval and Renaissance artists as Albrecht Durer, Matthias Grunewald, and Albrecht Altdorfer. They were also aware of Neo-Impressionism, Fauvism and other recent movements.

The German Expressionists soon developed a style notable for its harshness and visual intensity. They used jagged, distorted lines. They used crude and rapid brushwork. They made use of jarring colours to depict urban street scenes and other contemporary subjects in crowded, agitated compositions notable for their instability and their emotionally charged atmosphere. Many of their works express frustration, anxiety, disgust, discontent and violence. They generally express a sort of frenetic intensity of feeling in response to the ugliness, the crude banality, and the possibilities and contradictions that they discerned in modern life. Woodcuts, with their thick jagged lined and harsh tonal contrasts, were one of the favourite media of the German Expressionists. The works of Die Brucke artists stimulated Expressionism in other parts of Europe. Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele of Austria adopted their tortured brushwork and angular lines. Georges Rouault and Chaim Soutine in France, each developed painting styles marked by intense emotional expression and the violent distortion of figural subject matter. The painter Max Beckmann, the graphic artist Kathe Kollwitz, and the sculptors Ernst Barlach and Wilhelm Lehmbruck, all of Germany, also worked in Expressionist modes. The artists belonging to the group known as Der Blaue Reiter are sometimes regarded as Expressionists. Their art is generally lyrical and abstract, less overtly emotional, more harmonious and more concerned with formal and pictorial problems than that of Die Brucke artists. Expressionism was a dominant style in Germany. It suited the postwar atmosphere of cynicism, alienation and disillusionment. George Grosz and Otto Dix developed a more pointed, socially critical blend of Expressionism and realism known as the Neue Sachlichkeit. Abstract Expressionism and Neo-Expressionism, the spontaneous, instinctive and highly emotional qualities of Expressionism have been shared by several subsequent art movements in the 20th century.
2.1.4 Expressionism and Drama

Expressionism was a fascinating, but short-lived theatrical style in Germany in the early 1900s. Expressionism was inspired by works in literature and the visual art such as Edward Munch’s painting *The Scream* (1893). Edward Munch presents the pains, tragic anguish, tormenting sorrows and suffering through the Scream. The Norwegian painter has presented this masterpiece of Expressionism to bring out what Expression is through his painting. Later influencing practitioners Bertolt Brecht and Erwin Piscator, Expressionism made way for other more militant performance styles in Germany, such as Epic theatre. The form later spread to Europe and America, soon impacting audiences across the globe as playwrights from Sean O’Casey to Eugene O’Neill dabbled in the new form, producing expressionist plays of their own.

2.1.5 Characteristics of Expressionist Drama

- Most of the Expressionists used the concept of class solidarity. They used Expressionism to create a literature in which masses and not individuals were the protagonists. The protagonists are often given specific names as Father, Cashier, Nameless Billionaire and Daughter rather than specific names.

- The most striking characteristic of expressionistic drama is its weird, fantastic or unreal setting and atmosphere. Everything is distorted or oversimplified. The elements of conflict are presented in their bare essence rather than encumbered with detail.

- The dialogue is often spoken in a sort of telegraphic style. The dialogue, unlike conversation, was poetical, febrile, and rhapsodic. At one time it might take the form of a long lyrical monologue. At some places it made use of staccato telegraphic made up of phrases of one or two words or expletives. The dialogue is increasingly clipped, fragmented and unreal. It became known as ‘telegram style’.

- Expressionist play often dramatizes the spiritual awakening and sufferings of their protagonists.

- The struggle against bourgeois values and established authority is another key note of expressionist plays.
• In expressionist plays the speech is heightened, expansive and rhapsodic or telegraphic.
• Characters lost their individuality and are merely identified by nameless designations like The Man, The Father, The Son etc.
• The plot and structure of the play tends to be disjointed and broken into episodes, incidents and tableaux. Instead of dramatic conflict of the well made play the emphasis is on a sequence of dramatic statements.
• Its typical trait is, it presents the world solely from a subjective perspective distorting it radically for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists sought to express meaning or emotional experience rather than physical reality.
• There is a rejection of materialism.
• Symbolism and dreamlike elements is another feature.
• Personal tragedies usually end in the destruction of the character. As presented in Garbo, Reflection and Old Stone Mansion by Mahesh Elkunchwar.
• The expressionist play reflects the social protest in which representation of the outer World takes second place and the inner turmoil experienced by the main character takes the front, expressed through long monologues.
• Expressionism seeks to transform nature rather than imitate it, in hopes of showing a reality in process of transformation.
• Distortion of reality.
• Expressionism has a psychological or spiritual reality rather than the material or physical reality.
• In form, there is no logical sequence of events and haphazard sequencing is found in the presentation of episodes.
• Particular characteristics and techniques became associated with the early (German) expressionist play; its atmosphere was often vividly dreamlike and nightmarish. The mood was aided by shadowy, unrealistic lighting and visual distortions in the set. A characteristic use of pause and silence carefully placed in counterpoint with speech and held for an abnormal length of time, also contributed to the dream effect.
• Settings avoided reproducing the detail of naturalistic drama, and created only those starkly simplified images the theme of the play called for. The décor was often made up of bizarre shapes and sensational colors.

• The style of acting was a deliberate departure from the realism of Stanislavsky. Moreover in avoiding the detail of human behavior, a player might appear to be overacting and adopting the broad, mechanical movements of a puppet.

**Characteristics associated with German expressionism in its mature phase:**

• Settings are virtually abstract and unlocalised. The scene frequently appears angular and distorted, suggesting a bad dream. The properties are few and symbolic.

• The action of the play is still episodes, and these may represent stages in the hero’s life or a sequence of visions as seen through his subconscious mind, as in a dream play as in *Desire under the Elms* and *Long Day’s Journey into Night*.

• The characters for the most part remain nameless and impersonal, often moving grotesquely. They always represent some general class or attitude, their characteristics being emphasized by costume, masks or make-up as in *Old Stone Mansion* by Mahesh Elkunchwar.

• Crowds are also impersonalized and are moved with mass rhythmic movements, often mechanically.

The style of acting is hard to reconstruct from the text. Expressionist films have established its general characteristics known as the ‘ecstatic’ style, it was intense and violent. It expressed tormented emotions. Actors might erupt in sudden passion and attack each other physically. Speech was rapid, breathless and staccato, with gesture and movement urgent and energetic eyes rolling, teeth bared, fingers and hands clutching like talons and claws.
2.2 OTHER RELATED LITERARY MOVEMENTS OF THE 20\textsuperscript{TH} CENTURY

2.2.1 Realism

Realism is a literary movement that attempts to describe life. It neither idealizes nor romanticizes subjectivity. Realism cannot be precisely limited to any period. It is most often associated with a movement in 19\textsuperscript{th} century France (approximately 1840-1890). The term realism was originally used by the thirteenth century scholastics to describe a belief in the reality of ideas. In the 19\textsuperscript{th} century it became associated with a group of writers who claimed it as a slogan for the movement. Friedrich Schiller was the first who used it as a literary term. In his letter to Goethe, on April, 27, 1798, he wrote ‘realism cannot make a poet’. Contrary to him, in the Ideen, No.6 in 1798, Friedrich Schlegel claimed that ‘all philosophy is idealism and there is no true realism except that of poetry’. Honore de Balzac, the author of ‘La comedie humaineis’ is considered to be a precursor of the movement. The first work that belonged to the Realism was the novels of Gustave Flaubert. The short stories of Guy de Maupassant in France, Anton Chekhov in Russia, George Eliot in England, and Mark Twain and William Dean Howells in the USA are realistic short stories. Realists mainly focused on middle-class characters in their everyday environments and highly downplayed the plot. The Anglo-American novelist Henry James developed his characters to such a high degree that it evolved into subgenre the psychological novel. Later, realism evolved literary movements such as Naturalism and Stream of Consciousness and with the arrival of avant-garde art in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, was abandoned in favour of more abstract styles. Realism is a faithful representation of life. It mainly concentrates on middle class life and middle class preoccupations are generally presented through Realism. The scenes of humble life are shown in the realistic writings of Hugo, Balzac, Dickens, Thackeray and John Galsworthy. There is a bitter criticism of social conditions. In realistic writings characters are in centre of interest as opposed to a plot. Subjects are portrayed with simplicity and respect but little elaboration in the writings in which realism is predominant. Honest and matter of fact style is used by writers who practice realism as in Dickens’s description of the town in \textit{Hard Times} (1854). Objects or figures are represented impartially and objectively by the realistic writers. Realism is the forerunner of Expressionism.
Features of Realism:

- Realistic presentation of the harsh and hard conditions of life.
- Photographic portrayal of the junk and the garbage, dirt and lust, pollution and corruption, squalor and hard times.
- Rottenness of modern life.
- Industrialised urbanization has brought in of materialism.
- The bleak, cloudy, smoky atmosphere – loss of ecological balance.
- Mechanization of life.
- Devoid of beauty, religion and morality.
- Realism has been in sync with modernity.

2.2.2 Dadaism

Dadaism is an art and international literary movement. It used nonsense and ridicule in order to emphasize the meaninglessness of the modern world. Originally, it started in 1916 as a protest against the World War I and formally ended in 1923. It is short lived. It is considered to be an ‘anti-literary’ and ‘anti-art’ movement. It had a huge impact on art and literature movements of 20th century such as: Surrealism, Constructivism, Conceptual Art and Minimalism. Its emphasis mainly was on the established artistic freedom. It consists of nonsensical poems of Ogden Nash and other writers of non-sense verse. Combining words randomly is its characteristic feature found in the writings of James Joyce fun fare combined as fun feral, meaning both ‘funeral’ and ‘fun fare’.

Features of Dadaism

- Dadaism is a reaction to concrete presentation.
- Dadaism is a movement that makes ‘fun’ on conventional morality.
- Dadaism leads to abstractions.
- Dadaism defends artistic freedom.
- Dadaism has brought out the meaninglessness of existence.
- Dadaism is a protest against conventionality.
2.2.3 Symbolism

Symbolism was a literary and a visual arts movement initiated in France and Belgium in the late nineteenth century. It lasted approximately until the World War II. It was a reaction against the prevailing standards of realism. The first symbolist book is considered to be Charles Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du mal (The Flowers of Evil)*, which was published in 1857. Symbolism was greatly influenced by works of Edgar Allan Poe. The aesthetics of the movement was developed in the next two decades, mainly by Stephane Mallarme and Paul Verlaine. In an attempt to define the essence of symbolism in 1884 Paul Verlaine wrote a series of essays on ‘poetes maudits’ (accursed poets). He defined the role of the poets referring to the Arthur Schopenhauer’s theory that art was a temporary refuge from the world. Finally on September 18, 1886 Jean Moreas published *The Symbolist Manifesto (1886)* in the French magazine ‘Le Figaro.’ In it, he described Symbolism as opposed to plain meanings, declamations, false sentimentality and matter-of-fact description and stated that its goal was to ‘express the Ideal’. Symbolism is best known for its poetry. It also made a significant impact on drama and prose as well. Plays by Symbolist playwrights were regularly a part of the repertoire of the ‘Theatre de l’Oeuvre’ and the ‘Theatre des Arts’. Symbolism as a movement lasted only a few decades. Its impact on contemporary literature was immense. It was associated with a number of important literary publications such as ‘La Revue blanche’, ‘La Revue wagnerienne’ and ‘La Plume and La Wallonie’. One of the most important Symbolist journals ‘Le Mercure de France’ was founded in 1890 and in 1986 ‘La Vogue’ and ‘Le Symboliste’, the publication founded by Jean Moreas, Gustave Kahn, and Paul Adam. Symbolism was a precursor of Modernism.

**The main Characteristics of Symbolism**

- Expressing personal emotions, through the use of symbols and imagery.
- Symbolism deals with the complex feelings that grew out of everyday contact with the world. For example ‘gyre’ by Yeats, Water, and Waste land cactus by T. S. Eliot.
- The use of symbolic imagery is unique to the individual poet.
- Symbolism evokes emotive sensations rather than to describe them.
• There is the identification of the separate senses of scent, sound, and colour such as ‘patient etherized’ talking of Michael Angelo, ‘folded trousers’ ‘smell of steals at 6 in the evening’ ‘lonely cab-horse’ and ‘Lighting of lamps’ in *The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock* and other poems.

• It has an inclination towards a free verse.

### 2.2.4 Modernism

Modernism is a literary school that lasted from the beginning of the twentieth century until the end of the World War II. It rejects all literary conventions of the nineteenth century. It rejects all conventional morality, taste, traditions and economic values. The writers in this period employed a wide range of styles. They used a number of literary and political opinions. Which they have in common. Therefore the main characteristic of literary modernism was a determination to respond honestly and unflinchingly to the contradictions of the twentieth century. They used new literary techniques, mostly stream of consciousness. Modernism is the movement in literature in which modern ideas, methods and materials have been used in preference to the traditional ones. Modernism covers the period from 1910 to 1945 and it marks the upheaval in literary works. It is modern which means that it is different from the old, traditional, conventional literature. It puts it emphasis on realistic presentation of themes, events and characters. The socialist and Marxist views are favoured and aristocratic and upperclass values are rejected. It is the common man who is made the protagonist. Modernism is the movement in literature in which modern ideas, methods and materials have been used in preference to the traditional ones. Modernism covers the period from 1910 to 1945 and it marks the upheaval in literary works. It is modern which means that it is different from the old, traditional, conventional literature. It puts its emphasis on realistic presentation of themes, events and characters. The Socialist and Marxist views are favoured aristocratic and upperclass values are rejected. It is the common man who is made the protagonist. Individual and the social circumstances are presented in conflict as by Henrik Ibsen or George Bernard Shaw. Symbolism is the key to the modernism in literature as seen in the works of Lawrence, Conrad, Hemingway and Golding. Free verse is employed by T.S.Eliot, Dylan Thomas, W.H. Auden and others are Left wing writers whose works have reflected political and economic problems. The search for identity the meaning of existence are
the issues treated by modern writers. Freud and Jung have influenced the modernism in literature through bringing psychological theories to the centre of literary works. The psychological method, the use of myths and archetypes, symbols and imagery, the stream of consciousness are the features of modernism in the 20th century literature. Most of the features are present in the dramatic works of Eugene O’Neill, Tennessee Williams and Mahesh Elkunchwar.

2.2.5 Postmodernism

Postmodernism is a literary movement of post 1950s. This is a time marked by the cold war and the excesses of consumption. It differs from Modernism by blurring the conventional boundary between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture. It has a completely loosened structure in both time and space. It works through multiple openings rather than a closure. It is characterized by an attempt to establish Trans historical or Tran’s cultural validity. It claims that search for reality is pointless. The ‘real’ is conditioned by time, place, race, class, gender and sexuality. There is no knowledge or experience that is superior or inferior to another. It is developed in the second half of the twentieth century. It is largely influenced by a number of events that marked this period. Genocide that occurred during the Second World War, Soviet gulags, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, mass destruction caused by atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, insecurity of the Cold War Era, post colonialism issues, as well as the supremacy of multinational corporations and post industrialism with new technologies, violence, counter culture and consumer culture shaped the perception of new authors. Post modernism had a little relevance to poetry and only a limited influence on modern drama.

The main Characteristics of Post Modernism

- Post modernism deals with topics related to the complex absurdity of contemporary life, moral and philosophical relativism, loss of faith in political and moral authority and alienation.
- It employs black humor, parody, grotesque absurdity and travesty.
- It has erased boundaries between ‘low’ and ‘high’ culture.
- There is a lack of grand narrative.
• Avoiding traditional closure of themes or situations is what is aimed in postmodernism.
• It condemns commercialism, hedonism, mass production and economic globalism.
• Reality is represented through language in Post modernism.

2.2.6 Naturalism

Naturalism is a literary movement that was developed from realism in the late 19th century. It is based on Darwin’s theory of nature as ‘survival of the fittest’. Humans are completely stripped of any connection with the supernatural. They are presented as creatures whose behavior is predetermined by heredity, environment and physical impulses. This is what is noticed in *Ghosts* by Henrik Ibsen.

The Main Features of Naturalism

• A setting is in extreme environments.
• Characters are poor and under privileged.
• Characters often mentally, psychologically and physically degenerated.
• People are represented as helpless victims.
• Storyline is developed as a series of hardships.
• Detailed description of violence and suffering scenes.
• Approach to novel is ‘slice of life’.
• Style is detached and clinical in manner.

2.2.7 Magical Realism

The term Magic realism (or magical realism) was used by Venezuelan writer Arturo Uslar Pietri. It describes the work of certain Latin American writers. It is a literary genre of 20th century in which magical elements appear in a realistic setting. Often based on folklore or popular myth, it is recognizable by its use of surrealistic elements. There are dense, elegant, whimsical and layered stories with the open ended conclusion.
The main characteristics of Magical Realism

- Characters accept rather than question the logic of the magical element.
- There are sensory details and use of symbols and imagery is extensive.
- Emotions and the sexuality are developed in great details.
- The use of distortion or collapse of time creating a setting in which the present repeats or resembles the past is often made.
- Inversions of cause and effect, incorporated legend or folklore are quite frequently used.
- Presentation of events from multiple standpoints is made.
- Mirroring past against present astral against physical planes or characters one against another is found in the works in Magical Realism features.

These eight literary movements are akin to Expressionism and there are many similar features in these movements and Expressionism.

### 2.3 EXPRESSIONISM AND OTHER ARTS

Strongly influenced by Expressionist stagecraft, the earliest Expressionist films set out to convey through décor the subjective mental state of the protagonist. The most famous of these films is Robert Wiene’s *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), in which a madman relates his understanding of how he came to be in the asylum. The misshapen streets and buildings of the set are projections of his crazy universe, and the other characters have been abstracted through make up and dress into visual symbols. The film’s morbid evocation of horror, menace, and anxiety and the dramatic, shadowy lighting and bizarre sets became a stylistic model for Expressionist films by several major German directors. Paul Wegener’s second version of *The Golem* (1920), F. W. Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922), and Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927), among other films, present pessimistic visions of social collapse or explore the ominous duality of human nature and its capacity for monstrous personal evil.

While some classify the composer Arnold Schoenberg as an Expressionist because of his contribution to the Blaue Reiter almanac, musical Expressionism seems to have
found its most natural outlet in opera. Among early examples of such Expressionist works are Paul Hindemith’s operatic settings of Kokoschka’s proto-Expressionist drama, *Morder, Hoffnung der Frauen* (1907) and August Stramm’s *Sancta Susanna* (1922). Most outstanding of the Expressionist operas, however, are two by Alban Berg: *Wozzeck*, performed in 1925, and *Lulu* which was not performed in its entirety until 1979. The six selected play are fine specimens of the use of the techniques of Expressionism and the related movements.

**SUMMING UP**

Literature and the other Fine arts have influenced one another in an intensive as well as extensive manner as noticed in the art and literary movement like Expressionism. It is an art movement that is much more concerned with the expression, presentation and reflection of what goes inside the artist’s mind. The significance of Expressionism is in the innovative technique of artistic presentation of mental impressions through abstract and distorted shapes, contrasting colours and vivid shapes. Expressionism is the breaking away from the conventional past. It is the clear exposition of the impressions of a creative experience. It is a technical device which has sharpened the focus on the object on which the artist desires to concentrate. It has broadened the mental horizon of the literary artist. *The Hairy Ape* by Eugene O’Neill is an illustration of the Expressionistic technique. Yank, the protagonist, works in the engine room of a ship. His appearance to the shipowner’s daughter Mildred is shocking as she thinks him to be a monster, a beast, and does not recognize being a human being. This raises the question of Yank’s or Everyman’s identity. This existentialist problem is the root cause of the conflicts the protagonists like Eben and Abbey, James and Mary Tyrone, Laura and Amanda, Blanche and Stella’s husband, He in 'Reflection' and Vahini and others face in the plays selected for the study. Symbolic, graphic, cinemematic presentation, the use of visual effects and musical score, stage setting and stage directions contribute to heighten the effect of Expressionism.