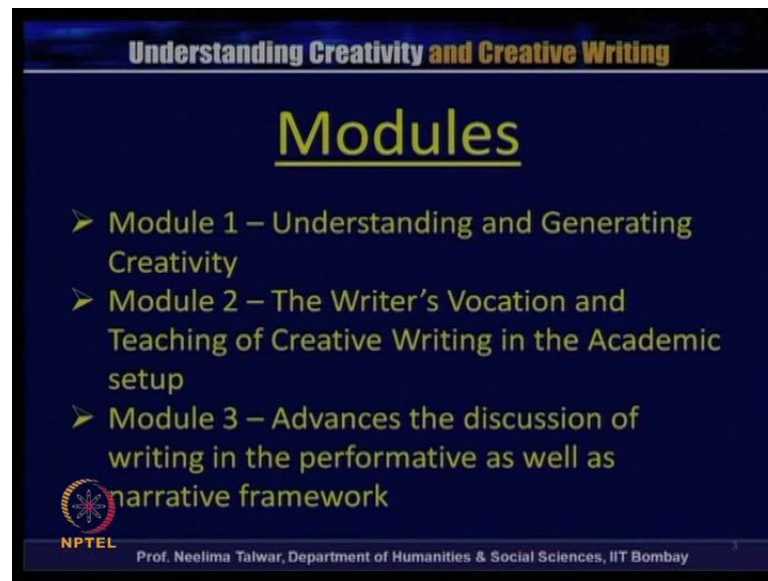


**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**  
**Prof. Neelima Talwar**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay**

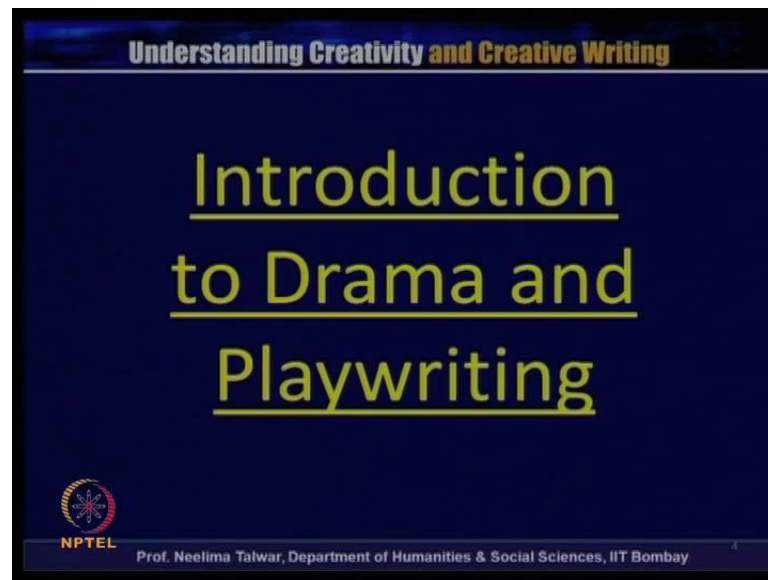
**Lecture - 25**  
**Introduction to Drama**

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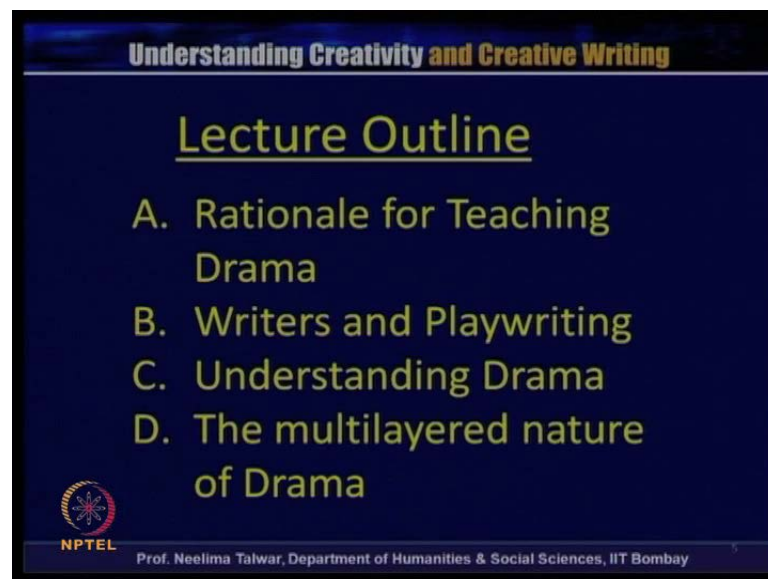
This is the third module and it is titled drama - the performative mode. The first two modules were devoted to understanding and generating creativity, and to the writers vocation and teaching of creative writing in the academic setup. This module advances the discussion of writing in the performative as well as narrative framework.

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The lecture is titled introduction to drama and play writing.

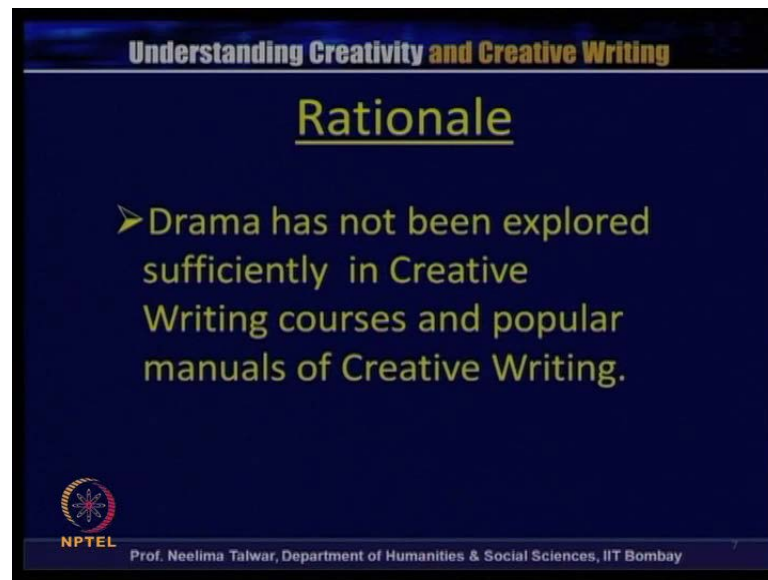
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It is divided into four parts part. Part one deals with the rational for teaching drama; the second part deals with writers and play writing; the third one with understanding drama and specially it is ancient origin, and the last part deals with the multilayered nature of drama especially in print culture.

First of all, let us examine this rationale for teaching drama. This is very, very important part of what we have added to our effort, because we find that very often a drama has not been explored sufficiently in creative writing courses.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

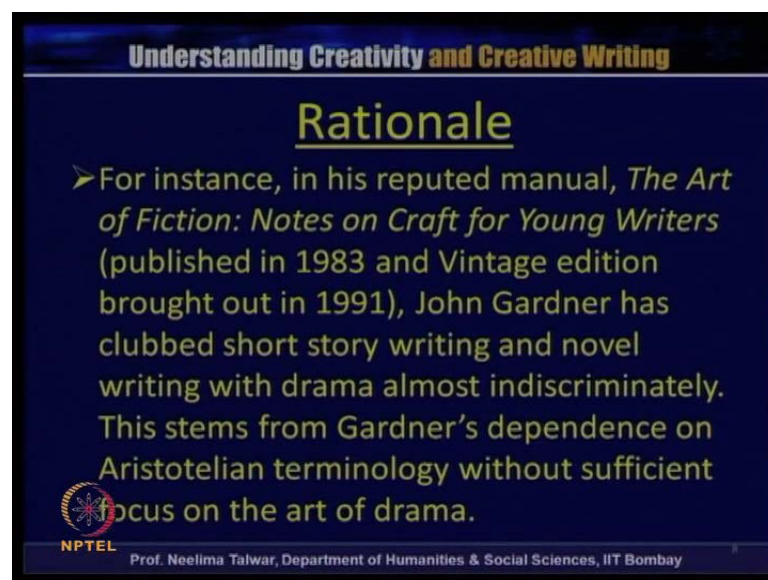
## Rationale

- Drama has not been explored sufficiently in Creative Writing courses and popular manuals of Creative Writing.

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And also various fairly well established manuals of creative writing.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## Rationale

- For instance, in his reputed manual, *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers* (published in 1983 and Vintage edition brought out in 1991), John Gardner has clubbed short story writing and novel writing with drama almost indiscriminately. This stems from Gardner's dependence on Aristotelian terminology without sufficient focus on the art of drama.

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To give you an instance, in *The Art of Fiction* written by the famous writer novelist and also a teacher of creative writing John Gardner, titled *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers*. We find that he has used lot of terminology from Aristotle in order to

describe short story and its plotting devices, Character formation within short story novels etcetera. And although these Assumptions are based on sound understanding of Aristotle, but for the learner there is not sufficient clarity provided. And I think that clarity is needed to be pitched into the history and origin and the special features of drama as an art form, because surely there is very, very big difference between drama as performative form and fiction, which is read in the silence of one's own choice of place.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

**Rationale**

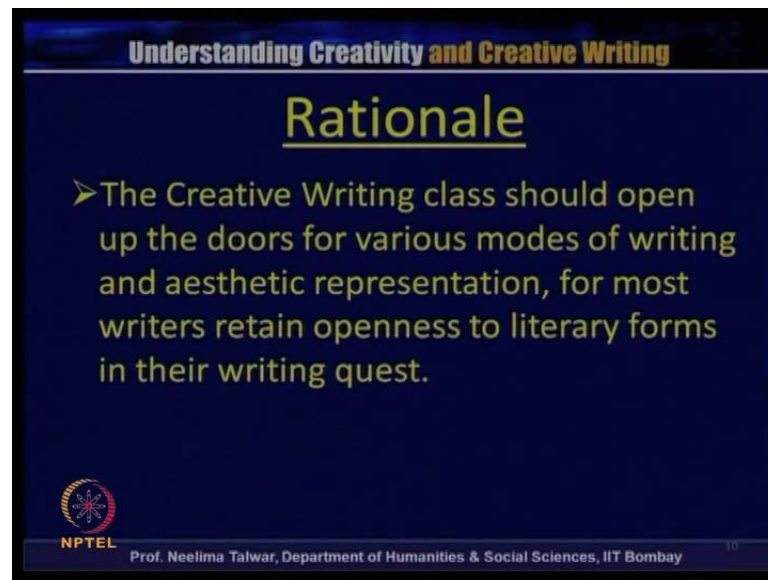
➤ *Drama needs to be placed within Creative Writing courses through its history as a performative form which in turn may lead to any kind of innovative genre-crossing to fiction/novel, poetry, cinema, television, internet.*

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So, in other words, I would say that you know when we talk about drama we are not suggesting that you need to commit yourself to a specific form write from the beginning, but at the same time what we are suggesting is a kind of openness. So that you can examine number of forms - literary forms, in order to arrive at your own sense of purpose as a writer. So, drama therefore, in our opinion needs to be placed within creative writing courses through its history as a performative form, which in turn may lead to any kind of innovative yarned crossing to fiction that is novel, poetry, cinema, television, internet.


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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

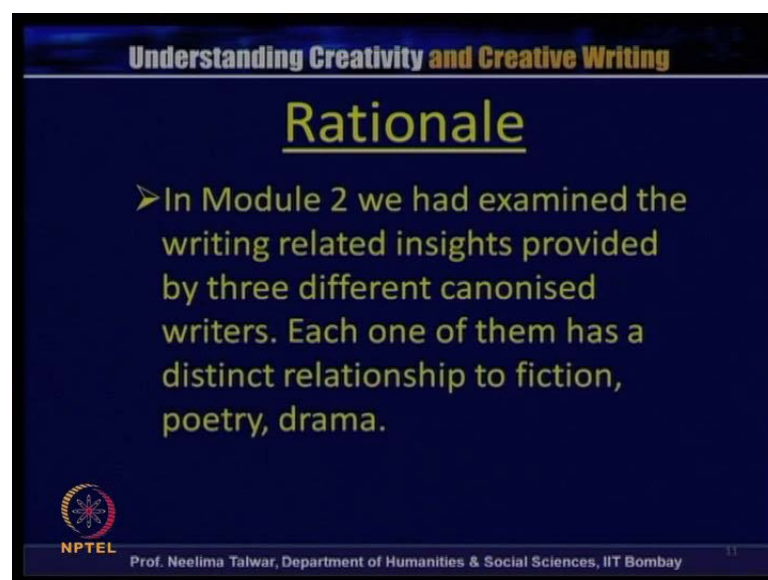
## Rationale

- The Creative Writing class should open up the doors for various modes of writing and aesthetic representation, for most writers retain openness to literary forms in their writing quest.

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And we keep that whole range in mind and we will also examine some work which brings in these connections in a interesting new innovative manner. The creative writing class therefore should start with drama as an art form, and therefore, I would say that we would like to really place before you some of the most fascinating features of drama as a performative form.


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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## Rationale

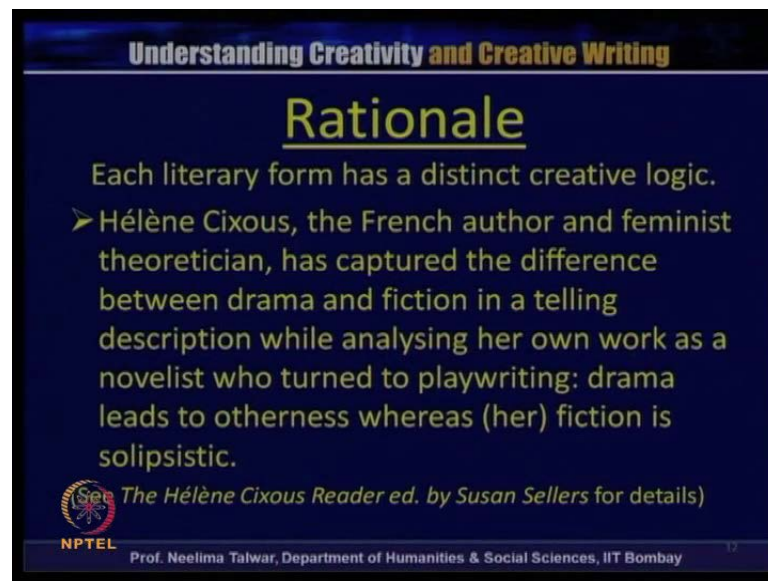
- In Module 2 we had examined the writing related insights provided by three different canonised writers. Each one of them has a distinct relationship to fiction, poetry, drama.

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In module 2, we had examine writing related insights provided by three different canonized writers. And each one of them had a very different relationship to literary,

different literary forms. Most of them really thrived on their, you know acceptance by readers as writers affection, but I think the three of them need to be placed before you again in order to show to you how writers need to explore different literary forms, in order to also hone their own perceptions and skills as writers. However, great they may be I think each one of us needs this kind of honing of one's own skills as writers.

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The slide is titled "Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing" in a yellow font at the top. Below the title, the word "Rationale" is written in a large, yellow, underlined font. The text on the slide is in a yellow font on a dark blue background. It states: "Each literary form has a distinct creative logic." followed by a bullet point: "➤ Hélène Cixous, the French author and feminist theoretician, has captured the difference between drama and fiction in a telling description while analysing her own work as a novelist who turned to playwriting: drama leads to otherness whereas (her) fiction is solipsistic." Below this, there is a small circular logo with the word "See" inside, followed by the text "The Hélène Cixous Reader ed. by Susan Sellers for details)". At the bottom left, the NPTEL logo is visible. At the bottom right, the text "Prof. Neelima Talwar, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay" is displayed, along with a small number "12" in the bottom right corner.

Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## Rationale

Each literary form has a distinct creative logic.

- Hélène Cixous, the French author and feminist theoretician, has captured the difference between drama and fiction in a telling description while analysing her own work as a novelist who turned to playwriting: drama leads to otherness whereas (her) fiction is solipsistic.

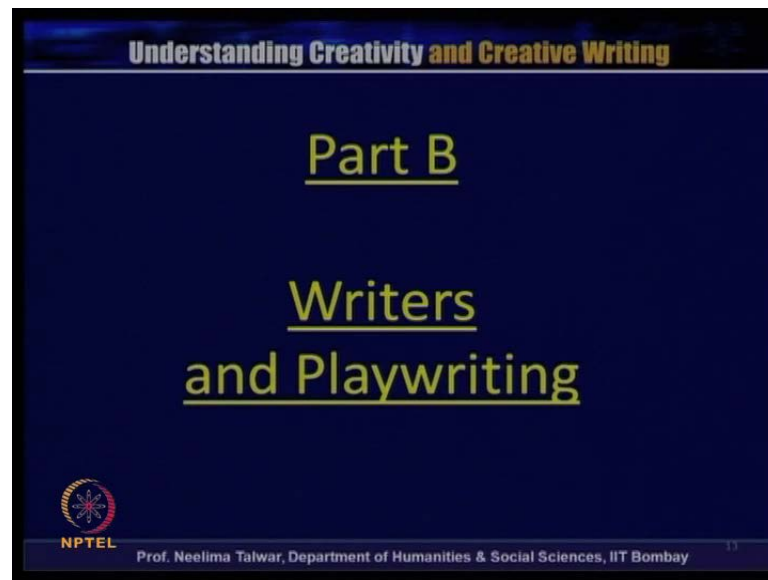
 The Hélène Cixous Reader ed. by Susan Sellers for details)

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And therefore, I would again emphasize this idea by placing Hélène Cixous' point of view, before you because I remember reading her writing and I was quite struck by what she said about her relationship to drama as a post to her relationship to fiction which was a very intense inward looking relationship. And she felt that by writing place she was able to develop or sense of the other which her solipsistic fiction did not for meant. That was a really very, very important observation I felt, because in drama the sense of otherness is really present in a Bun duns and we will see how actually that has happened in drama as a participatory form of representation.

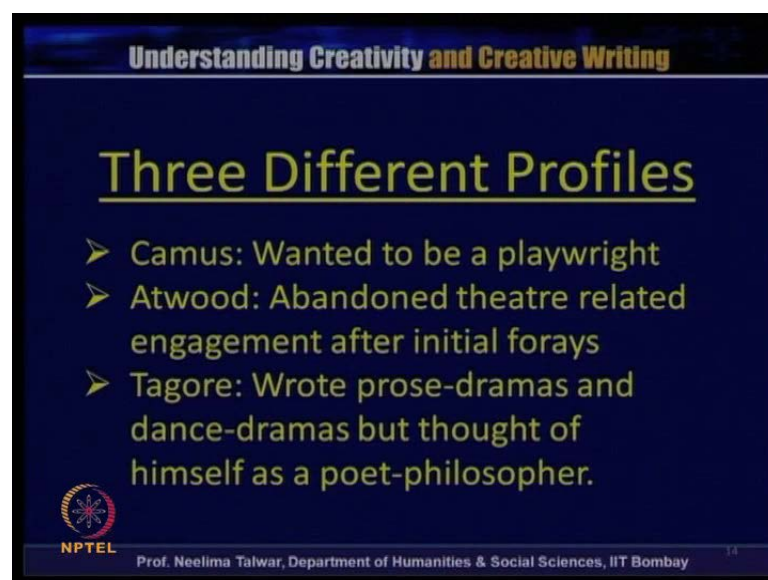


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But before we do that let us look at these three writers in order to see what their relationship to play writing was. These three provide very different profiles, because of course, they are very different writers, also they belongs to very, very different historical periods, nations and their own personal impulses are also the driving force behind their writing.

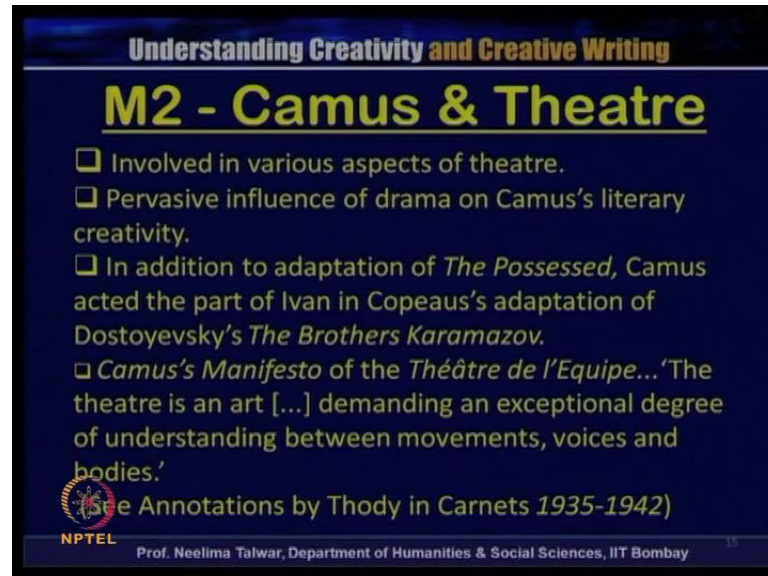
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Now Camus wanted to be a play right at would on the other hand abandoned theatre related engagement after initial forays. And Tagore wrote prose-dramas as well as dance-

dramas but thought of himself as a poet-philosopher. So, in some ways came was the most committed and passionate proponent of theatre as an art form.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

## **M2 - Camus & Theatre**

- ❑ Involved in various aspects of theatre.
- ❑ Pervasive influence of drama on Camus's literary creativity.
- ❑ In addition to adaptation of *The Possessed*, Camus acted the part of Ivan in Copeaus's adaptation of Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*.
- ❑ Camus's *Manifesto of the Théâtre de l'Equipe...* 'The theatre is an art [...] demanding an exceptional degree of understanding between movements, voices and bodies.'

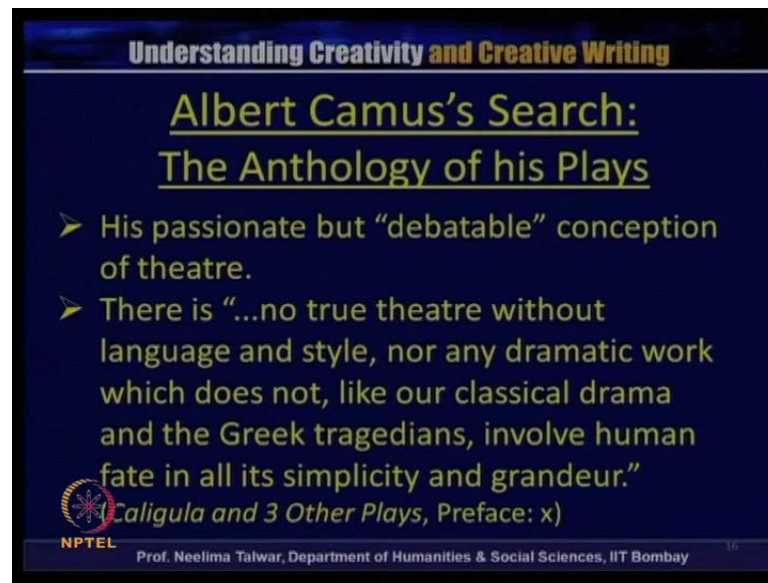
See Annotations by Thody in Carnets 1935-1942)

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We have already talked about this engagement of Camus with theatre in module two, in which he not only you know adapted some of the important work that he was examining specially Dostoyevsky, he also acted in some of the place that were you know adapted by other people. And he acknowledge the physicality of theatre by talking about its exceptional, you know sort of demands on understanding between movements, voices and bodies.




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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

**Albert Camus's Search:**  
**The Anthology of his Plays**

- His passionate but “debatable” conception of theatre.
- There is “...no true theatre without language and style, nor any dramatic work which does not, like our classical drama and the Greek tragedians, involve human fate in all its simplicity and grandeur.”

 *Caligula and 3 Other Plays, Preface: x)*

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It is interesting to note that he himself was aware of his relationship to theatre as a kind of debatable activity specially from the point of view of his original plays. He wrote many plays and one of the anthologies is sort was brought out it was title Caligula and three other plays; in which he very scandidly mentions a somewhat limited perceptions of how he wanted his theatre to be. Which is rather different from his own adventures as a novelist, there he was much more experimental; whereas in terms of theatre he felt that the Greek module of tragedy was the most dominant, the most powerful module that he wanted to emulate, because it involved a sense of human fate in all his simplicity and granger. Now of course, one can go in to these plays which right now we would not do, but this is just to point out that despite his passionate intensity.

He made a distingue difference between in his relationship to drama as a form; even the creative modules he chose are atavistic whereas in terms of fiction in terms of his philosophical ideas, he was much more inventive. No surprised their then that a plays such as Caligula and these are the three plays they did not really make a very deep impact on the audience and also Caligula you know although it raise question which bordered on existential angst sense of absurdity.

But Camuh refuse to except these as philosophical plays he said they are plays that dealt with human destiny in Caligula he was talking about the fact that men die and they are unhappy. So, in other words this relationship with different forms does not necessarily

lead to the writers acceptance by the readers for their contribution in that particular form in the what the writer may wanted sometimes.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

### Margaret Atwood's Negotiating with the Dead

- The first chapter is autobiographical and it deals with the writer's struggles for her voice with a mixture of postcolonial & postmodern concerns.
  - Postcolonial – related to colonization and its consequences on the thought processes of the colonized.
  - Postmodern – all the previous certainties and definitions are questioned. Form of writing is viewed ironically.

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There are lots of surprises that wait the writer also at would. On the other hand, if we look at would she write from the beginning, you know although she was involved in reading of plays watching plays participating in theatre work in Canada, but she had a very tenuous relationship with theatre and in negotiating with the dead she briefly talked about.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

### Negotiating with the Dead

- In the autobiographical chapter she refers to the dominance of eurocentric writers and playwrights.
- This interfered with her search for authentic voice. At the same time the iconic figures enabled the grasp of experimental possibilities.

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This by pointing out how the reading that they were expected to do was very Eurocentric and therefore, it interfered with her search for her own authentic voice. So, partly she felt quite you know in oh of these great writers, but at the same time she in they did provide great understanding of the possibilities of the form, but at the same time she needed to you know sort of transience that influence.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

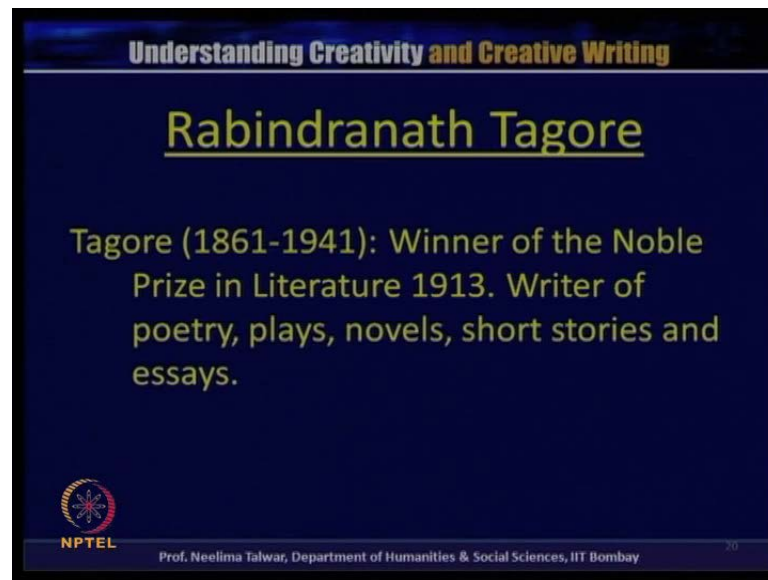
**Artistic Involvement with Theatre**

➤ “You were supposed to be familiar with...Tennessee Williams and Eugene O’Neil for the dramatically inclined...Kierkegaard, *Steppenwolf*, Samuel Beckett, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Franz Kafka, Ionesco, Brecht, Heinrich Böll, and Pirandello were the magic names.” (19)

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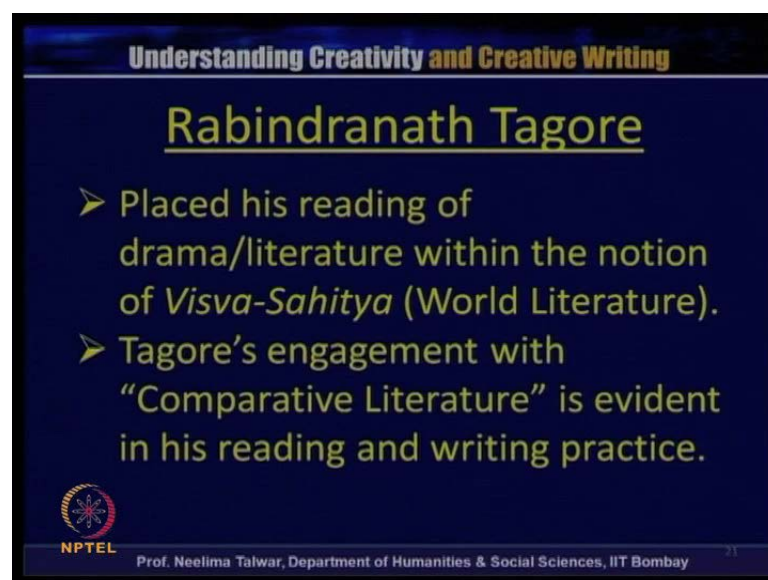
So, let us read what she had to say in this regard she says you were suppose to be familiar with Tennessee Williams and Eugene O’Neil she is talking about the dramatically inclined readers that also Kierkegaard Steppenwolf Samuel Backett Albert Camus Jeanpaul Sartre Franz Kafka Onesco Brecht Heinrich boll and Pirandello she says these work the magic names. So, then she read she tried her relationship with theatre, but instead of writing play she was part of the design team for theatre and then I think I do not notice much that is written or said about theatre even.

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The third writer and again what we are trying to do is to point out how we need to be very open minded about different forms of writing because they perform different kinds of functions. So far as the reader or the audience is concern now our own Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore as you know very well he wrote poetry plays novels short stories and essays.

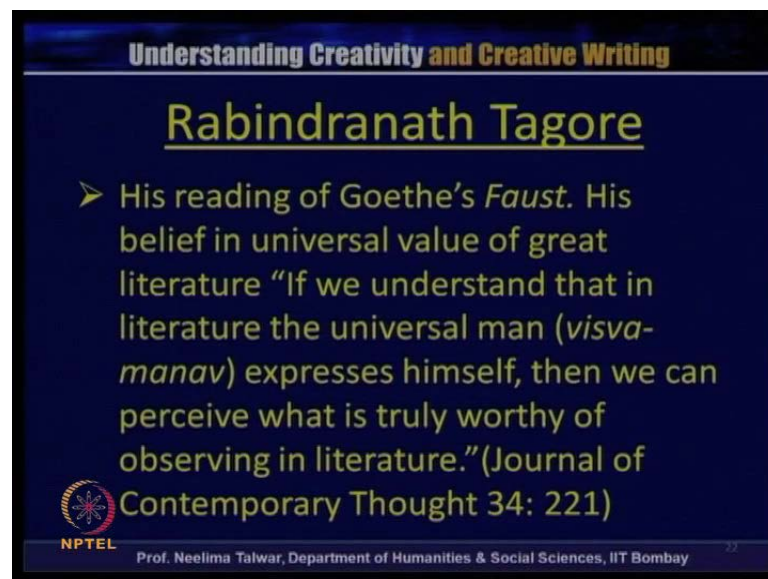
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And placed his reading of drama and literature within the notion of Visva Sahitya Tagores engagement with comparative literature is evident in his reading and writing

practice that term comparative. Literature refers to the fact that you know Tagore was reading Indian writing which of course, is very divorced, but he was also reading western literature or non Indian literature and there is a sense of comparison between these which is evident when you are located in such a comparative situation. So, this reading is very interesting in terms of drama as well because his reading of Goethe's Foust for example, is one example that is mentioned quite categorically in his autobiography and he points out how.

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The slide is titled "Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing" in a blue header. Below the header, the name "Rabindranath Tagore" is written in a large, bold, yellow font. A yellow arrow points to a quote in yellow text: "His reading of Goethe's *Faust*. His belief in universal value of great literature 'If we understand that in literature the universal man (*visva-manav*) expresses himself, then we can perceive what is truly worthy of observing in literature.'" (Journal of Contemporary Thought 34: 221). The NPTEL logo is in the bottom left corner, and the text "Prof. Neelima Talwar, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay" is in the bottom right corner.

His reading of Goethe's Foust. In fact, helped him understand the sense of certain universal quality's of literature because Foust for him was not just a western you know man or western humanistic figure, but Foust for him was a universal figure to quote a recent translation of his speech in this regard. He said that if we understand that in literature, the universal man that is Vishva Manav expresses himself then we can perceive what is truly were the of observing in literature. This is a very a thought provoking statement and we would like to actually problematic the reading of Foust in some of the sub sequent a session with you. But in any case in terms of his reading of western literature, Tagore was reading Foust, but so far as his own writing is concern he was writing prose place as well as.



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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

Tagore: “More Travel  
More Poetry, More Drama”


- Dance-dramas as a new avenue for highlighting social ills for example *Chandalika* (1933), dealt with untouchability.
- Written soon after the publication of his essay “Mahatmaji and the Depressed Humanity” in 1932.
- The public platform was fully explored for presenting issue-based plays.

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You know dance dramas his dance dramas are much talked about because they provided him sort of new avenue for highlighting social else. For example his play a Chandalika which was published in 1933 dealt with untouchability and what is really fascinating about these plays is the fact that they were written because of his deep engagement with the political discourse, the political nationalistic discourse in our country and it was. For example, this particular play was written soon after the publication of his essay titled Mahatmaji and the Depressed Humanity in 1932. So, may there is great acumen and his deep desire to communicate important ideas through his writing I think Tagore fully used and explore the public platform.



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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

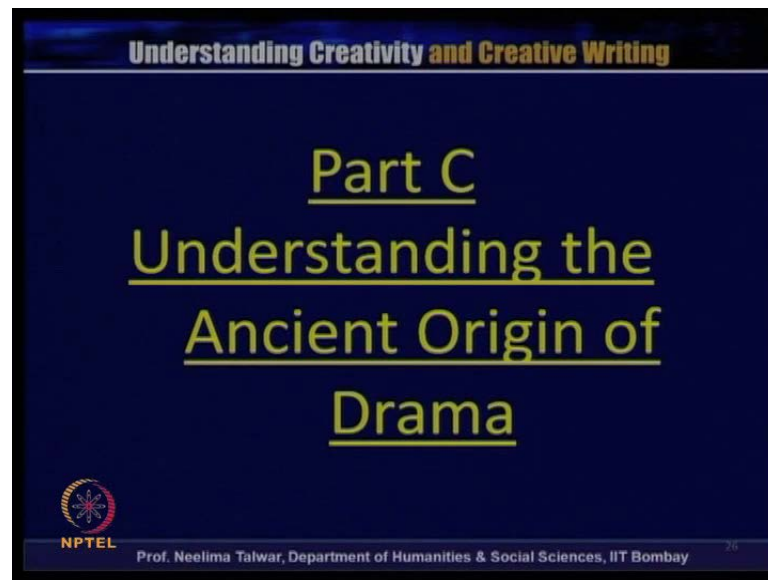
## Tagore: “More Travel More Poetry, More Drama”

- Staging of his dance dramas by students of Visva-Bharati to raise funds (279)
- But Tagore remained a poet at heart.
- His plays have not had a pan-Indian presence unlike his poetry.

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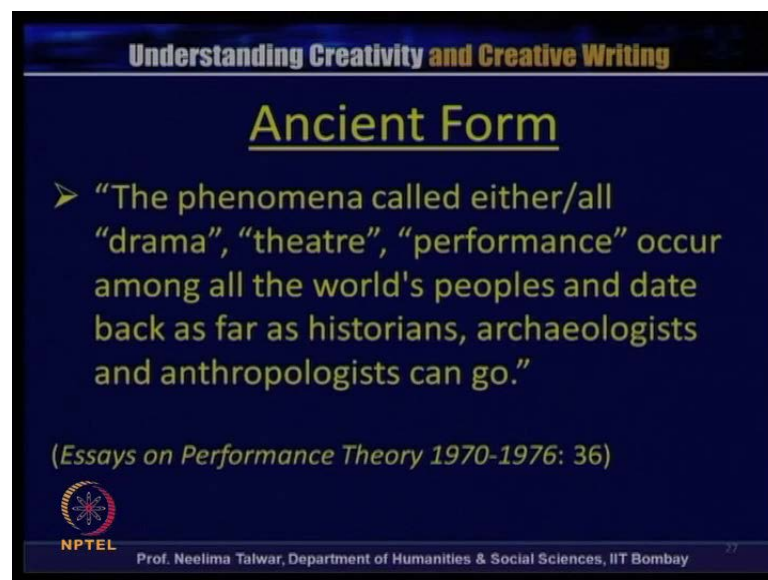
That these issue based plays and their performance provided his plays were staged by the student of Vishwa Bharati and they also use this opportunity to raise funds from Vishwa Bharati, but I think more or less Tagore remain a poet at heart and his plays unfortunately have not had a pan Indian presence unlike his poetry. So, these are the three profiles that we wanted you to sort of again think of because you already looked or studied some of the ideas about creative writing that at these great figures have provided us with and therefore, it is important to place them on going manner within our own understanding of literature and how it is shaped how it is written and what are the elements direct that go into decision making by creative writers now let us turn to drama and its very special qualities as I said these are sometimes not even touched upon.

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What we need to understand is of course, the ancient origin of drama in this regard some of the most important work had been done by Richard Shekhna.

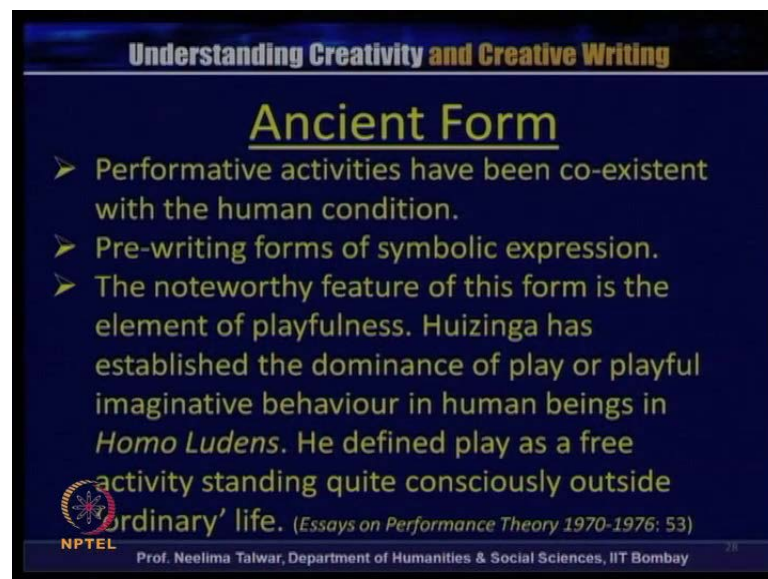
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Who in the seventies tried to establish you know within the frame work of the new notion of performance theory, the significance of per formative forms like drama. And according to him, the phenomena called either all drama theatre performance occur among all the world's peoples and date back as far as historians archaeologies and anthropologies can go now. This is definitely scientific insight and I use that term

deliberately because Schechner has actually evoke number of you know examples where historians archaeologies and anthropologies are in total agreement in terms of how far back this performative evidence of performative activities goes back in history. Now apart from the scientific veracity of this insight what to me seems very exciting is the possibility of looking at this dept and also the pervasiveness of this insight in terms of almost every kind of human formation. So, let me go on with two three strands of this essay that Schechner wrote in the seventies his gone on to write many studies.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

### Ancient Form

- Performative activities have been co-existent with the human condition.
- Pre-writing forms of symbolic expression.
- The noteworthy feature of this form is the element of playfulness. Huizinga has established the dominance of play or playful imaginative behaviour in human beings in *Homo Ludens*. He defined play as a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life. (*Essays on Performance Theory 1970-1976: 53*)

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On performance theory it has almost become an institutionalize idea, but at the time he wrote this essay this was a very fluid field and I feel this particular essay has a charge which you should really borrow some energy from. So, let us see what Schechner has said in this particular essay. He pointed out that performative activities have been co existent with the human condition. And I think for you and me, it is very important to understand that what this actually refers to is the you know existence of performative activity by way of pre writing forms of symbolic expression.

Now of course, it does make sense to really imagine that past where language or literacy had not really develop and at the same time human beings wanted to ex you know communicate with each other. But what is note were the about this position is the manner in which Schechner has also brought the study of titled *Homo Ludens* in which has also establish the coexistence of play full behavior in terms of the human condition. And if

you want I can read you know from in order to point out what that consist of in his opinion he define play as a free activity standing quite consciously outside ordinary life.

So, I think this layering of performance playful behavior which is separated from ordinary life, and also the repeated nature of this performative activity right in the earliest known stages of human history that provides an exciting entry point into the understanding a performative forms for us today. And what is also very important to understand is that write from the earlier stages, these spaces for performance per also many times separated from you know spaces that were use for daily day to day activities.

There was seen as either secrete or mysteries or special spaces where the participants came together and performed imaginative activities in order to either celebrate their experience or to invoke the spirits that they you know if for their survival and their different kinds of things that may have happen. Although there is evidence to suggest that certain acts of hunting, you know word repeatedly undertaken in order to show the victory against antagonistic forces.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

## Imagining Ancient Performance

- Imagine the deepest recesses of the past and the performative needs of human beings.
- Evidence from Stone age: footprints of performers in secluded caves and drawings of hunting.
- Think of the reasons for repeated and regulated gatherings for this display behaviour.

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But all in all I think what we really need to imagine today is this sense of the ancient nature of this performance and by implication the pervasiveness of performative behavior in human beings in every kind of social formation even today. So, I think what I would like you to do is to imagine the deepest recesses of the past and the performative needs of human beings. If you want you can read this essay by Schechner from the book

you need not read the whole book, you can read this essay where he is also given evidence from stone age where the foot prints of performers in caves were found and the drawing of hunting and the dangers the antagonistic forces that were faced by human beings at that pointed history.

The enactment of these is sort of indicated by way of these paintings, but there are foot prints that show that they have these were performed. You can think of this the reasons for repeated and regulated gatherings for this display behavior. So, you can let your imagination. You know play out the past you know within you in order to understand how innate and how vigorous this form is how much it is a part of us in terms of this desire to also celebrate critic and in that sense enjoy the experiences of our own life.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

## Imagining Ancient Performance

- Was performance a means of celebrating the victory over antagonistic forces?
- Or, was performance meant to show the threats and survival strategies to the younger members of the community for their future education?

Huizinga: Play – “in-itselfness”  
Schechner: Play – survival value of (53)

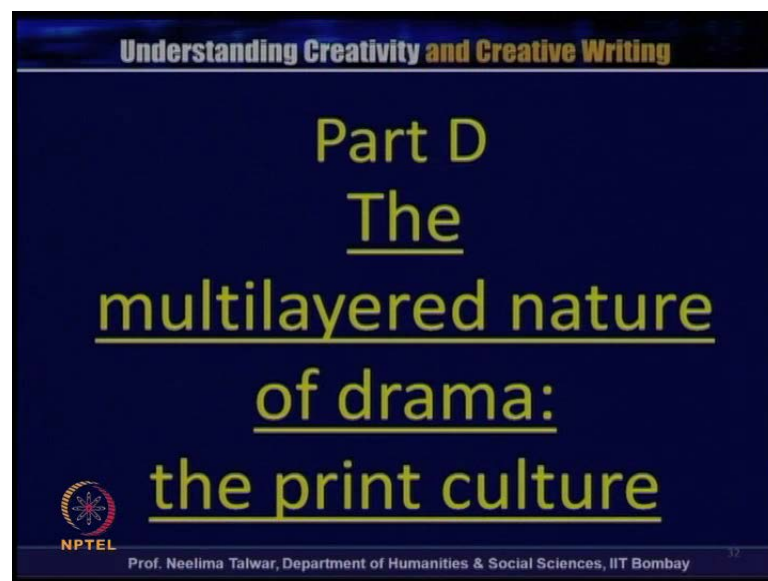
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So, then I think some more questions can be added to this exercise. And I hope if you are in a group you would undertake this activity with a group was this ancient performance a means of celebrating the victory over antagonistic is that the only in impulse or was performance meant to show the threats in survival strategies to the younger members of the community for their future education. And again I am sort of embedding my questions in the essay by Richard where he also expresses his disagreement with Sinha who actually theorized his the theory is a lot more complicated, I have sort of simplified it for our purpose, but who Sinha sort of actually emphasize his play and



in its selfness of the play. He feels that that was an end in itself that whole esthetic impulse, the also luminal impulse or the ludic impulse that is an end in itself. As a post to that Schechner feels that if we add the survival value of play to this reckoning or this understanding of this you know level of human behavior or this aspect of human behavior then we get better insight. Now you can explore the essay to see how Schechner has developed his own point of view. But I think basically it is sufficient at this point to talk about the ancient origin of this form and also the pervasiveness of this form in every culture, every human formation even today.

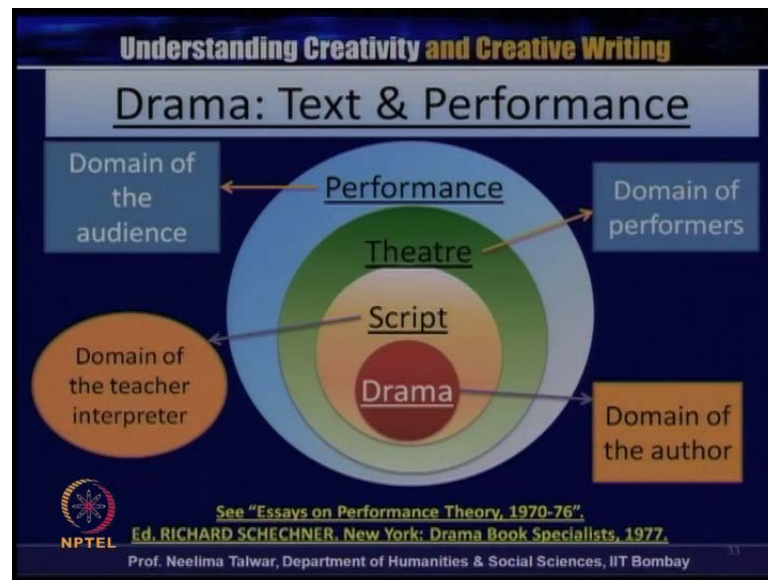
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The next idea that we need to talk about before starting our sessions on drama is the understanding of the multilayered nature of drama specially within the print culture. Within the print culture, there are more dimensions that I added. Now in the same essay Schechner has provided us with a diagram of source; although that diagram goes into the early performative behavior links it to Amagad of nineteen I think sixties or so specially western Amagad American Amagad, but I mean I am not really going into those interconnections. I am only trying to understand and help you understand that when we talk about drama as an art form that we need to explore in order to gain deeper insights about writing process also. What we need to understand is the multilayered nature of drama within the print culture. So, I am not getting into any other insight from that essay.



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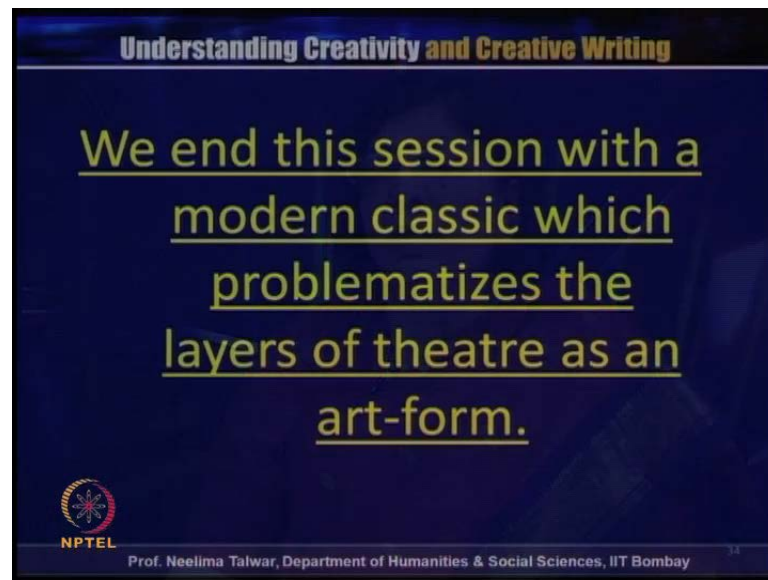


So, for layers have been identify by Schechner. According to him drama, is the domain of the author, script is the domain of the teacher or interpreter. So, the drama is written by the play right, and this it needs to be interpreted for performance and therefore, you need interpreter of the drama usually in fiction the reader is the interpreter. But here, you need an interpreter who interred would symbolically and through artistic combinations fulfill the sense of this script. And therefore, the third layer then is an equally vital layer in the you know in terms of this form which is the domain of performers.

So, even if you are a play right, and you writing a play you would really have to keep this layers in mind. So, theater is the domain of performers and finally, performance is the domain of the audience. And of course, he is pointed out very rightly that there is a lot of blurring of lines between everyday life and the space that performance provides and that is a highly ill defined area of how people come to performances with their own back age.

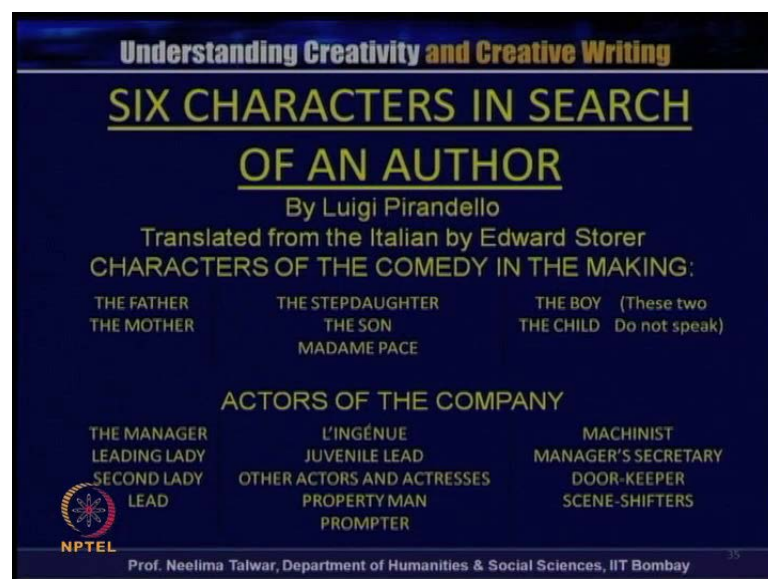
And then they see plays and then they are transform through that experience, but basically even if you are a person who wants to write plays and not necessarily produce them or you know direct them for theatre. But the fact is that automatically the form involves a kind of envisioning of the performative physicality of whatever you have to say. So, most writers have chosen to write plays, because they feel intensely about this public platform that theatre provides or drama provides.

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So, I think this interconnection is what I would like you to understand and it is really not a very simple interconnection. And therefore, we would like to end this session with the modern classic which has problematize the layers of theatre as an art-form. These layers can be redefined in different ways, you can also sort of show the limitation of one over the other, but I think basically these layers can be separated, but they also need to be looked at very carefully in terms of how this needs to be understood by you.

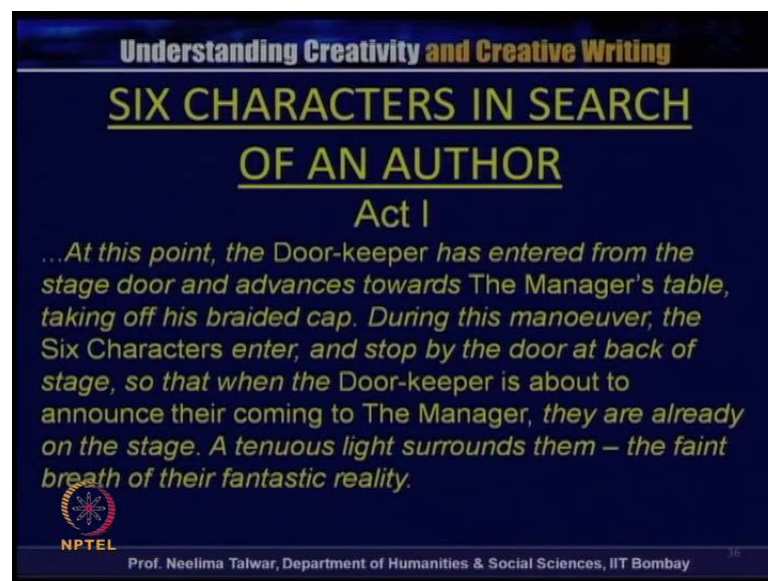
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So, let us end this session with the modern classic which has problematize these layers and it is the problematisation that I would like to emphasize and not the imitation of any given model. So, this is what this except is all about, this is written by Luigi Pirandello. The title of the play is Six Characters in Search of an Author. If you see look at the list of performers, you have actors of the company; the manager leading lady, second lady to mechanist.

The doorkeepers, sceneshifters, prompter, property man a whole lot of people who are involved in theatre this they are represented on stage. So, this is a play within a play and in this play this particular theatre company is rehearsing a play which is already been written. So, it is a finished product that they are interpreting and then six characters of the comedy in the making enter the stage. So, this is also a stage within a stage and the characters are the father, the mother, the step daughter, the son, (( )) the boy and the child these two do not speak, and they are on stage.

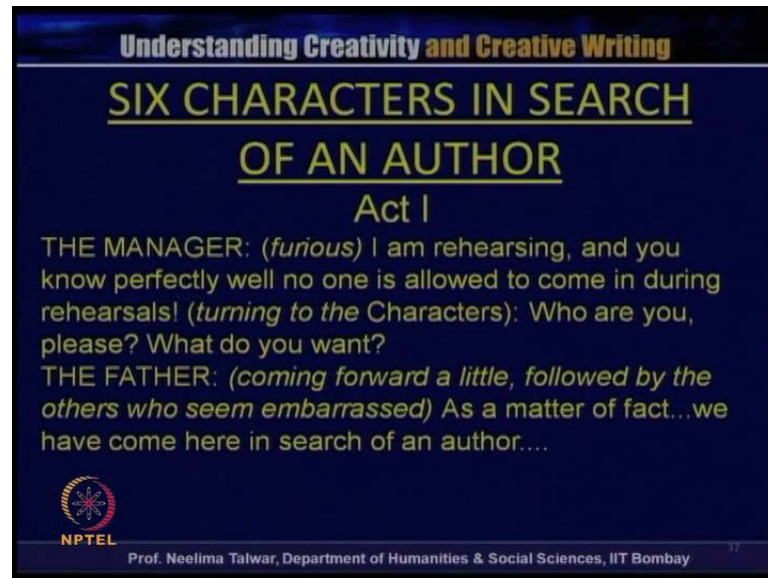
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And let us see what happens very briefly. At this point, the door keeper has entered from the stage door and advances towards the manager's table taking off his braided cap. During this maneuver, the Six Characters enter, and stop by the door read back of stage, so that when the Door-keeper is about to announce they coming to The Manager, They are already on the stage. As I said stage within a stage, tenuous light surrounds them I love this description here. A tenuous light surrounds them, the faint breadth of their

fantastic reality, now you can read these lines in your own way, but they almost suggest as if they have come right from the imagination of yours you know unknown or unnamed author, but they are in search of an author.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

**SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR**

**Act I**

THE MANAGER: (*furious*) I am rehearsing, and you know perfectly well no one is allowed to come in during rehearsals! (*turning to the Characters*): Who are you, please? What do you want?

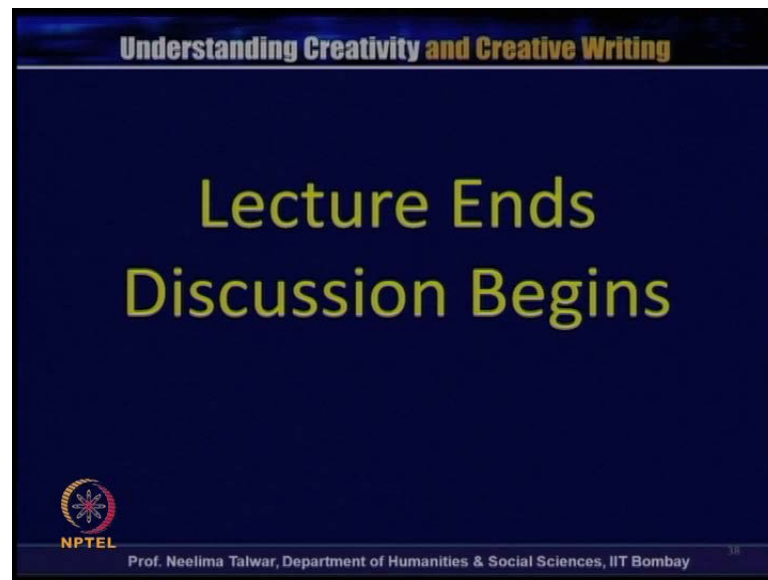
THE FATHER: (*coming forward a little, followed by the others who seem embarrassed*) As a matter of fact...we have come here in search of an author....

 NPTEL

Prof. Neelima Talwar, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay

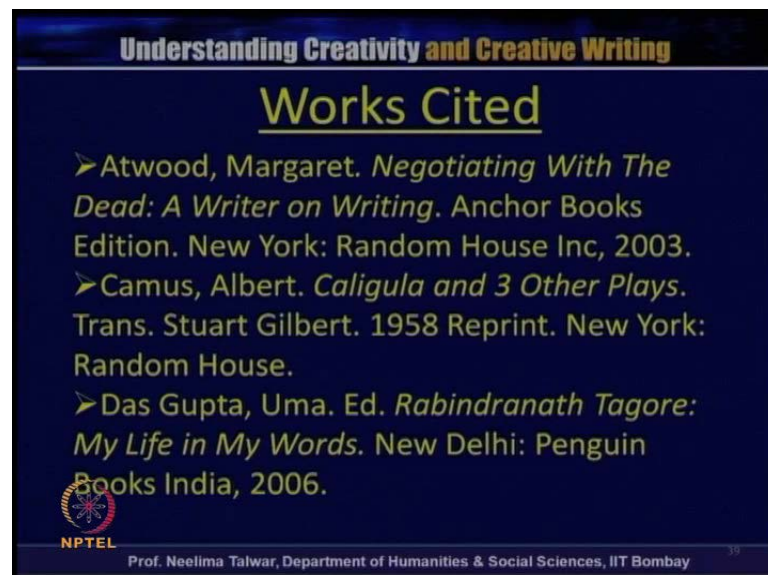
And let us see how they describe their own Dilemma. The manager is furious of course, because he is involved in the rehearsal process. I am rehearsing, he says and you would know perfectly well no one is allow to come in during rehearsals. Turning to the characters: Who are you, please? What you want? And the father coming forward a little, followed by the others who seem embarrassed he says as a matter of fact... we have come here in search of an author...

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So, now the lecture ends and the discussion begins of course, you would need to read the script a fully, its one of the one of the greatest plays of our times. So, do read it carefully, but in any case the multilayered nature of drama, I think possess and we need problematize it.

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Let us have a look at the Work Cited list.

Thank you for this session.