

M.A.ENGLISH

2ND YEAR

PAPER-1

**MODERN LITERARY
THEORIES**

Unit 01

Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin: From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse

Contents

1.0 Objectives

- 1.1 Introduction to the Critic
- 1.2 Content of the Essay
 - 1.2.1 Structure of the Essay
 - 1.2.2 Novel not as a distinct genre
 - 1.2.3 Five Different Stylistic Approaches to Novelistic Discourse.
 - 1.2.4 Weaknesses of these Traditional Practices.
 - 1.2.5 Difference between the Novel and other Genres
 - 1.2.6 Dialogic Relationship
 - 1.2.7 Sociolinguistic Interest and Carnivalization
 - 1.2.8 Parody
 - 1.2.9 Special significance of Parodic forms
 - 1.2.10 Rise of Novelistic Discourse
 - 1.2.11 Novel as a Liberating Genre
 - 1.2.12 Latin and Greek Literature
 - 1.2.13 Decline of Greek Myths
 - 1.2.14 Rich forms of middle Ages
 - 1.2.15 Mosaic Type Texts
 - 1.2.16 Modern Novel
- 1.3 Various aspects from which the essay can be studied.
- 1.4 Summary of the Unit
- 1.5 Difficult words
- 1.6 Questions for self-evaluation
- 1.7 Bibliography

1.0 Objectives:

This unit will help you to -

- i) To know the contribution of Bakhtin to modern literary theories.

- ii) To evaluate Bakhtin's critique and his survey of linguistics and philosophy of language since the renaissance of his time.
- iii) To discuss the critical theory of Bakhtin on the basis of a particular standpoint - "Art and Answerability"
- iv) His emphasis on the novel as the true imitation of life in all its complexities and vulgarities.
- v) To study the different components of novel as discussed by Bakhtin.

1.1 Introduction to the Critic:

Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a multifaceted personality. He was a linguist, literary critic and a philosopher of language. Bakhtin's school of criticism had to face the attack of Marxist official line in the Soviet Union. The confrontation between the Marxist intellectuals and formalist in Russia had been discussed by Bakhtin in his works.

His Critical theory is based on a particular standpoint - "art and answerability". According to him otherness is the ground of human existence, and dialogue is the basic structure of a particular existence. The dialogue is the prime condition of existence which is essentially social in the sense that it is always a dyadic process. He does not propound a theory of literature but a theory of semiotics of which literature is its part and parcel. He calls it the theory of dialogic and dialogical communication. In this context Bakhtin has rejected the existing social theories of literature as irrelevant in understanding the true nature of sociology of literature and art-sociology of literature can be created by understanding and taking individual activity as ethical activity.

Bakhtin illustrates his points in his books *Freudianism* (1927), *Formalism* (1928) and *Marxism and the Philosophy of language* (1929). His posthumous fame comes in striking contrast to his obscurity during his life time. He has emerged as one of the major literary critics in the twentieth century. His contribution lies in the fields such as semiotics, literary theory, sociology, linguistics, psychology and anthropology.

1.2 Content of the Essay:

'Dialogic Imagination by Bakhtin is a collection of four essays which include - 1) *Epic and Novel* 2) *Forms of time and the Cronotope in the novel* 3) *Idea of Discourse in the novel*, and 4) *from the Pre-history of Novelistic Discourse-*

It contains his philosophy of language as base. Bakhtin's aesthetics has its basis in his philosophy of language. For him language is important because of its capacity to express values - i.e. no utterance is incomplete, likewise the meanings values and social functions of a work of art is always incomplete. Even after the analysis of an utterance, a residue of meaning may be left to it

that is somebody may extract meaning from it. This is called open ended semantics, which is based on dialogy, The Literary text are also utterances and never finally completed.

Bakhtin has raised certain issues regarding the origin of the form of novel, and development of the novel. In nineteenth century Ferdinand Brunetiere developed a typology of genres and explains in terms of evolution i.e. birth and death of genres. The genre theory has been at the center of critical focus from Aristotle to the present time. The emergence of the form novel, as a genre traced back to Defoe, Richardson and Fielding. Bakhtin's theory of novel provides a rare insight into the name and nature of novel. He traces out the ancestry of the novel to the platonic dialogues and adds another dimension to the discourse on the novel that is of philosophy of language, linguistics and semiotics.

In this essay Bakhtin introduces the concepts of heteroglossia,. He explains the generation of meaning through "Primacy of context over text", the hybrid nature of language (Polyglossia) and the relationship between utterances. Heteroglossia is "the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance. To make an utterance means to appropriate the works of others and populate them with one's own intention. The term heteroglossia refers to the qualities of a language that are extralinguistic, but common to all languages. These include qualities such as perspective, evaluation and ideological positioning.

1.2.1 Structure of the Essay:

Bakhtin's essay "**From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse**" is a study on the history and construction of modern language in novels. And it is composed of three parts, each offering a different component to his study of novelistic discourse.

The first part is an introduction to novelistic discourse; Bakhtin introduces five stylistic approaches to novelistic discourse and differentiates the novel from other forms of writing. The penultimate section of the essay focuses ancient Greek literature and stories, specifically parody sonnets, and acknowledge its impact on the current discourse in novels.

The second part of the essay incorporates the idea of polyglossia- the coexistence of multiple languages in the same area to illustrate the challenges of construction a common vernacular within literature.

The first part of the essay references the Middle Ages, Medieval texts, and works from the Bible to show the growth of novelistic discourse through time (in composition to the Greek texts)

1.2.2 Novel not as a Distinct Genre:

Bakhtin begins the essay by saying that, novel as a distinct Genre did not exist in the 17th and 18th centuries. The early theoreticians did not feel much concerned about the question of style. Even in the great 19th Century, when novel reached its highest peak by becoming the leading European genre, the sole aspects occupying critical attention were thematic and compositional. This shows that the era before the 20th century was more concerned with the Scio-cultural-religious issues and found in literature a hope of solution to the crisis. However, around the second decade of the 20th century, the radical change, and a surprising shift can be seen in focus toward style. A number of novels and novelists come to be studied stylistically. But Bakhtin feels that there is something vital that the theoreticians miss: “the stylistic specificum of the novel as a genre”.

1.2.3 Five different stylistic Approaches to Novelistic Discourse:

Bakhtin presents five different stylistic approaches to novelistic discourse which are as follow:

- A) In it the surface material of the author is analyzed various literary devices like metaphors, comparisons, registers etc. are isolated and put to careful study.
- B) Concentration is on the linguistic description of the novelist’s language.
- C) Study is also made of the particular literary tendency such as Romanticism, Naturalism, Impressionism, etc.
- D) Language is analyzed to determine the particular author’s stamp, so his language becomes the expression of his personality.
- E) The novel is viewed as a rhetorical genre, and its devices are analyzed from the point of view of their effectiveness as rhetoric.

1.2.4 Weaknesses of these Traditional Practices:

Bakhtin sees in these traditions practices of criticism very weak focus on the novel. These approaches study the novel by interest in either novelist’s personality or the particular age, or literary tendency which produced it. So the basic flow in these critical approaches, according to Bakhtin, is that language and style of a novel is neglected.

1.2.5 Difference between the Novel and Other genres:

According to Bakhtin, there is fundamental distinction between novel and other genres which come under ‘Poetry’. Any attempt to impose norms and techniques developed for poetic analysis on novel will, therefore fail. He points out that novel uses poetic imagery should not mislead us for it is of secondary

importance. The poetic images in the novel do not have any direct poetic significance. But poetic imagery is the fundamental aspect in poetry.

1.2.6 Dialogic Relationship:

Bakhtin was concerned with language or discourse as a social phenomenon-with 'words' as active, dynamic social signs, capable of taking on different meanings and connotations for different social classes in different social and historical situations. He tries to locate the novelistic discourse in the other ages. He recognizes the 'multivocal' power of language used in novel which makes possible an interactive display between the author, the reader and the characters.

Bakhtin was especially interested in the language as actually used in various conditions and contexts of life. As Susan Steward says "He consequently paid greater attention to the creolized language of the market place and street while he formed an image of language as mediating between conventionality and creativity."

Bakhtin says that the character's language in a novel is a "period-bound language associated with a particular world-view", means associated with a particular period, culture and view. This language is in dialogical relationship through it he (character) shows his agreement or disagreement, parodies and interrogates it (language). The Author converses with the reader with the help of this dialogic relationship. The languages of various characters are dialogized images representing the world-views and style. The interrelationship between the author and the hero is never an intimate relationship. It is out of these contradictory and collaborating positions that satire, parody and irony arise as forms depicting conflicting social value judgments.

1.2.7 Sociolinguistic interest and Carnivalization:

Bakhtin says that language in performance reveals its polyphonic potential. A character uses a voice-zone that has been formed by such diverse style forms as folk language of fairy tales and stories from everyday life, peasant songs, fortune telling and so forth. He says that these various voice-zones not only represent different social voices, but are associated with various literary schools and genres of the time. Bakhtin gives it a term 'carnivalization'. The whole novel thus reduces to the images connected to each other and the author in a 'dialogical relationship'. Pluralistic character of language is thus highlighted.

What is the role of the author in this polyphonic carnival? Bakhtin says that the author in the novel is left with almost no direct language of his own. He sees novel's languages as a 'system of languages' which are marked by quotation marks, intonational features, voices and various gaps in the novel.

Bakhtin says that, although novel is a recent form, the convention of employing other's language, other's work and other's statement is an old one-Bakhtin calls this "Indirect Discourse" emphasizing that "we encounter it in the earliest stages

of verbal culture” This verbal culture is made of diverse forms which allowed an unrestrained use of other’s language transmitting, mimicking and representing, wealth of images linguistic forces and languages of the direct genres. Long before novel mode its appearance, ground was being prepared in this manner. This phase he calls the “Pre-history of novelistic discourse”, going back centuries, even thousands of years. Its source was the people’s oral literature, possibly; the folklores and conversational folk language, which yet need to be properly understood.

1.2.9 Special significance of Parodic Forms:

Bakhtin discusses the literary works of the ancient period which produced remarkably rich literature of erudition in the form of works by Plutarch, Marcobius, and Athenaeus and so on. Their style, diction, manner of invocations, references and allusions were twisted and used profitably for evoking laughter. There grew a tradition and parodying literature. Bakhtin say that, there was not a single serious work that did not have its parodying double. A variety of forms of common popular entertainment prospered freely and luxuriantly such as jokes, riddles, anecdotes, comic parodic plays, parodies of the speeches of judges, scholars, and administrators form novelistic discourse.

1.2.10 Rise of Novelistic Discourse:

Bakhtin feels that there can be identified two prominent factors that created condition for the rise of novelistic discourse:

- i) Laughter as the unifying element,
- ii) language itself which in other genre is a direct word, in these extra-generic or inter-generic world, conglomerate to form a totality, where each figment (scenes from everyday life, bucolic humour, parodic dialogue) becomes a fragment of the whole. Novel thus emerges as an immense edifice, multi-layered, multi-voiced, multigeneric in the structure, mocking. It gives multiple voices to a culture and people.

1.1.11 Novel as a Liberating Genre:

Bakhtin sees the rise of the novel as a revolutionary change in the history of literature. It burst out of the accepted, conventional boundaries of the “dominant voice” which is the simple straight forward genre following the normative courses in its unchanging, predictable progression. It was not just a literature of the literacy language, but freeing of the consciousness also. It provided an opportunity for looking at language from another’s eye, for working with a new creative mode.

1.2.12 Latin and Greek Literature:

Bakhtin makes an extraordinary revelation here. He says that Latin literary consciousness was always dependent upon Greek word. It was through the Greek work that the Latin word grew in “quotation marks”. Roman Literature was trilingual of the beginning; three language-cultures rose and grew because users of three languages come to Rome from the border areas where these languages, namely, Greek, Oscan and Roman lived side by side.

According to Bakhtin the Oriental Literature presents as ideas, example of the multi-lingual playground where the interesting boundary lines of ancient cultures and languages were scattered all over Greek or Hellenic Literature. One such city was Samosata which saw the rise of Lucian (120-180 AD) the writer of 130 works Bakhtin considers the place playing significant role in the growth of European novel. The people spoke a form of Aramoic while the upper class people wrote in and spoke Greek. For administrative purpose Latin was used. Through the city passed traders and journey men who used languages of Mesopotamia, Persia and India. Lucian’s Samosata was thus the rich centre of the confluence of several languages, a truly heteroglossic place, where Lucian’s linguistic consciousness was born and shaped.

1.2.13 Decline of Greek Myths:

Bakhtin refers to Erwin Rohde who wrote the history of Greek novel suggesting that the decline of Greek notional myths and the epic, drama form, because of the spreading polyglassic culture-the base of monoglossia that sustained these forms had weakened considerably. For him the decline of the monoglossia was the reason of the birth of the Greek Novel. This Greek novel was a weak genre, containing within it several other genres, and forms-speech, travel accounts, dialogues, description of various countries and cities, lyrical songs, and so on.

1.2.14 Rich forms of middle Ages:

The variety and wealth of forms that crowded the folk-oral literature of the Middle Ages are unparalleled. Bakhtin compares it with the luxuriance of the Roman Period-Laughter and parodic forms abounded in the medieval times. He says that, it is remarkable how in the age of darkest days and rigid, closed-in-theological-social norms of life, laughter found space for itself and enlivened the lives of people, giving shape to various forms of entertainment,

1.2.15 Mosaic Type Texts:

One significant feature in middle Ages that Bakhtin picks out is the use of other’s texts. Quotations and extracts were used quite liberally and assimilated in the author’s work. The Practice was so rife that a new genre called ‘cento’, composed entirely of other’s lines, grew. The boundary lines between someone else’s speech and one’s own speech were flexible, ambiguous, often confused. Certain types of texts were constructed like Mosaic’s out of the text of others.

Authoritarian words of the Holy Bible, holy saints, priests and doctors of the church were freely used.

Something drastically happened to the language in all its multi-vocal usage as the Renaissance saw radical socio-political transformation.

Bakhtin says, “However, in the Middle Ages the role of parody was extremely important, it paved the way for a new literary and linguistic consciousness as well as for the great Renaissance novel.”

1.2.16 Modern Novel:

Modern Novel is thus erected on this medieval dialogic consciousness and diverse discourses picked out from both writing and oral speech. The Rise of the modern novel coincides with the rise of bourgeoisie which was forward looking, progressive; its ill-adjusted existence with the monologic authoritative structure of power found a new consciousness in novelistic form that used more than one voice and used the parodic style quite effectively.

1.3 Various Aspects from which the essay can be studied:

- 1) To study the essay from generic point of view.
- 2) To study novel as genre
- 3) To study the discourse in the novel.

1.4 Summary of the Unit:

“From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse” reveals Mikhail Bakhtin as a philosopher of language, a cultural historian and a major theoretician of the Novel. Bakhtin sees the category ‘novel’ in a highly characteristic way, claiming it vastly larger territory than has been traditionally accepted. For him, the novel is not so much a genre as it is a force, ‘novelness’ which he discusses in this essay. Two parts, ‘Epic and Novel’ and ‘Forms of Time and of the Chronotope’ in the novel, deal with literary history in Bakhtin’s own unorthodox way.

In the final part of the essay, he discusses literature and language in general, which he sees as stratified, constantly changing system of sub-genres, dialects and fragmented ‘languages’ in battle with one another.

1.5 Difficult words:

- 1) Polyglossia: The hybrid nature of language
- 2) Heteroglossia: Refers to many discourses that occur within a given language.
- 3) Carnivalization: The penetration or incorporation of carnival into everyday life and its shaping effect on language and literature.
- 4) Conglomerate: Come together
- 5) Rife: Widespread

6) Luxuriance: Rich growth

7) Chronotope : The medium relating to space and time which governs the base condition of all narratives.

1.6 Questions for Self-Evaluation:

1) Evaluate Bakhtin's idea that prose fiction does greater justice to the aspect of language and human behavior than the canonical genres of epic, lyric and tragedy.

2) "Laughter and Polyglossia had paved the way for the novelistic discourse of modern times." explain it in the light of Bakhtin's theory.

3) Discuss the role of Centuries-long struggle of culture and language in the emergence and development of novelistic discourse.

4) Bakhtin's idea of Onegin.

5) Discuss Bakhtin's views on the language and style of the novelistic discourse.

6) Comment on the decisive factors that were at work in the prehistory of novelistic discourse.

7) "It is only the novel that discourse can be reveal all its specific potential and achieve its true depth" Discuss in the light of Bakhtin's "from the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse.

8) Bakhtin's view on parodic travestying literature.

9) Dialogic relationship in the novelistic discourse.

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Unit -2

Terry Eagleton : Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism

Contents:

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction to the critic
- 2.2 Content of the Essay.
 - 2.2.1 Capitalism
 - 2.2.2 Postmodernism is both pastiche and parody
 - 2.2.3 Art is life: It reflects itself.
 - 2.2.4 Performativity Principle
 - 2.2.5 What is Modernity?
 - 2.2.6 Modernism is in a deadlock
 - 2.2.7 Fascination of Modernism
 - 2.2.8 A solutions to the Modernist Dilemma is postmodernism
 - 2.2.9 Postmodernism as a positivism
 - 2.2.10 Postmodernism and search of Truth
- 2.3 Various Aspects from which the essay can be studied.
- 2.4 Summary of the Unit
- 2.5 Difficult Words
- 2.6 Questions for self evaluation
- 2.7 Bibliography

2.0 Objectives:

This unit will help you to -

- i) To know the contribution of Terry Eagleton in Modern Literary Theories.
- ii) To study Terry Eagleton's concept Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism
- iii) To evaluate Eagleton's concept postmodernism is both Pastiche and Parody.
- iv) To find out how modernism is in a deadlock.

v) To understand solution given by Terry Eagleton to the modernist dilemma is postmodernism.

vi) To know Performativity Principle.

vii) To study Postmodernism as a Positivism.

2.1 Introduction to the Critic:

Terence Francis Eagleton (born on 22 Feb. 1943, Salford) is a British Literary Theorist widely regarded as Britain's most influential living literary critic. He has written more than forty books, including *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983), *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), and *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (1996). He is the leading British Marxist Critic. His Marxism is considerably more overt, and less equivocal, than other critics - Eagleton is of Catholic working-class origins, and in the 1960's was involved in a project to reconcile Marxism and Catholicism, for which a short-lived but interesting magazine called *Slant* provided a platform. The work for which he is best known is wholly secular in its underlying political philosophy, but exhibits considerable change and variety in style and method.

Eagleton very eagerly responded to the stimulus of European Structuralism and post-structuralist theory/especially the work of Louis Althusser and Pierre Macherey. His *Criticism and Ideology* (1976) and *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (1976) reflect his engagement with the debates within Marxist literary theory generated by these writers.

2.2 Content of the Essay:

'*Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism*' was originally published in *New Left Review* in 1985, as a response to Fredric Jameson's essay in the same journal 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural logic of Late Capitalism'. Jameson has raised a question in his essay about the authenticity of postmodernism. He asks- "Is Postmodernism in any sense a critique of contemporary society?"

Eagleton has tried to answer this question in negative way in this essay. The entire essay focuses on the surface glittering of the postmodernism and tries to locate how the postmodernism, is the part of Modernism.

2.2.1 Postmodernism is both Pastiche and Parody:

At the outset of the essay, Eagleton quotes the views of Jameson about postmodernism Jameson writes -“Postmodernism is the cultural logic of late Capitalism”

He calls it pastiche, because it is without any motive, any satiric impulse and any laughter or convention; it is just a dead language; it is the imitation of peculiar mask.

Eagleton seems to agree with Jameson’s views of postmodernism as a pastiche. In addition to Jameson’s views, Eagleton calls postmodernism as a parody. According to him, postmodernism is somehow parodied the revolutionary art of the 20th century that is Avant Garde”. He says that modernism was a movement to integrate “high art and society”, Postmodernism also seeks to place art in society but by doing so it appears to caricature the modernist vision.

2.2.3 Art is life: It reflects itself:

One of the basic assumptions of postmodernism is that “Art has not historical memory”. On Contrary modernism has been acutely conscious of the vast historical memory-Postmodernism disowns the existence of historical memory and frowns upon the art which claims to “depth of meaning”.

Eagleton writes, “The depthless, styleless, de-historized deattached surfaces of postmodernism “free from the guilt of alienation”

Then Eagleton refers to William Morris the Celebrated Victorian poet who dreamt that art might dissolve into social life and indeed he acted as if he were a prophet of late Capitalism. The distance between “Art” and “Life” is reduced.

Postmodernism seems to parody the revolutionary Avant-Gardes' belief in the concept of autonomy by asserting that, "Art doesn't reflect life because life itself doesn't have anything worth reflecting"

Reality is all a reflecting, a fiction. When we say art reflects life; it means art reflect itself, "It mirrors itself."

Postmodernism parodied the modernist ethic, philosophy, and fundamentals of art.

2.2.4 Performativity Principle:

Eagleton further dwells upon the remark of the postmodernism theorist Jean Francis Lyotard who pointed out, "----- in Late Capitalism Performativity Principle is all that matters"

The art has become the commodity in this postmodern culture and the performance factor has been taken into the consideration. If the art perform well in market economy then it is valued. Due to the decline of interest in classical thought and ideologies, the concept like 'truth' and 'reason' are replaced by the words like 'power' and 'performity'. However the logic of life Capitalism disowns the very concept of logic and denies theorizing the society. Thus postmodernism cannot be seem as the continuity of modernism as it values the performity principle.

2.2.5 What is Modernity?

Eagleton then tries to seek what is mean by 'Modernity' - According to Lyotard; there is similarity between modernism and postmodernism. Both attempts to liberate themselves from the past and to escape from history into the free air Eagleton observes, on the other hand that all that is modern either is apposed and destroyed or recognized and get imbibed into the system. So 'Modernism' neither a particular cultural practice not historical period. It is a kind of

permanent ontological possibility - a timeless state of being which cannot be bounded in categorization or periodization.

Eagleton says that, modernism never dies. As soon as modernism accepted, it becomes conventional. It is born again in near future and perform; its role of rebelling. In Eagleton's word, "History and Modernity moves in circles pursuing one another as in a cat-and -mouse game in and out time." Modernity denies history, opposes it and rebels against it.

Eagleton also gives the views of Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), the German Jewish cultural theorist who sees modernity in a different light. His theory is a ceaseless detotalization of a triumpholistic ruling class through which he opposes the grand narrative of the ruling class as it suppresses the truths about oppressed.

2.2.6 Modernism is in a deadlock:

Eagleton then takes the views of Paul de Man, the American deconstructionist into consideration-De man's views were anti-Marxist. He established the view that complete "Forgetting" or denial of history is not possible by the very act of 'erasing'. According to him, Literature is a continuous process of awakening from history but it is doomed to fold back upon itself. It wants to negotiate with reality without being mediated by history. Paul de Man says that, literature is constituted of tradition and modernism. "We are all simultaneously and inextricably modernists and traditionalist"

Thus, in literature, both resides history and modernism. For Paul de Man, all literature is a ruined and baffled modernism-Modernism knows that its experiments, practices and innovations are doomed to be institutionalized finally. This deadlock of modernism is what he underscores.

2.2.7 Fascination of Modernism:

According to Perry Anderson, Modernism is an elastic term which connotes “one’s particular historical conjecture” carrying in it seeds of crisis and change. It is a term that combines in it-two contradictory sense, a triumphal awareness of history’s capture and the escape from it and the denial of significance-Thus in modernism, the present is triumphantly received and the past is thrown into ashes. “Modernism is a break with time; it is a change in the quality of time and not a change in history.”

Eagleton proposes the same view like Anderson- According to him, modernism distances itself from everything that is historical. It establishes its own autonomy and tries to save itself from becoming a commodity in “the mass commodity culture”

Thus, this continuous struggle of modernism with history and mass commodity culture make it interesting and fascinating.

2.2.8 A solution to the Modernist Dilemma is Postmodernism:

Postmodernism is a solution to the modernist dilemma. Modernism denies becoming a market commodity, but post modernism accepts the consumerist value it possesses Eagleton emphasizes that in postmodernism art has become a commodity, hence, everyone should accept it. The struggle between the aesthetic side and the material side of art is resolved with the help of economic theory according to which the art can sit alongside with the market items like soup or toothpaste.

Thus, the basic difference between the modernism and postmodernism, according to Eagleton is modernism denies being a commodity whereas postmodernism neither affirms nor denounces the co modification of art but simply accept it as it is.

2.2.9 Postmodernism as Positivism:

The Postmodernist theorists see well in bad and advice to the people to stay where they are and grab the things that come in their way. It reminds us of Walter Pater. Thus they ask for indiscriminating and uncritical acceptance of things and the order as they are. Any search for meaning is denounced as 'Metaphysical Move', an unpardonable crime and Marxism is the worst crime.

Postmodernism has embraced the positivism, the word is just as it is and no other way to go. There is no rational discourse of ethical or political value, for values are different constructions illusion-and do not belong in the fact of being.

2.2.10 Postmodernism and Search of truth:

In the present time, traditional systems of thought use in crises but that does not mean that the search for truth is abandoned. Postmodernism makes a mistake by assuming that-By denouncing and discrediting certain traditional ideologies, it can spell the demise of truth.

Here postmodernism tends to attack bourgeois humanist perspective and produces an image of unified subject. Postmodernism ignores the fact that, there are many people who live at intersections between two contradictory roles.

2.2.11 Capitalism:

Capitalism is an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and operated for private profit decision regarding supply / demand, price, distribution and investments are made by private actors in the free market, profit is distributed to owners who invest in business and wages are paid to workers employed by businesses and companies.

Capitalism is a deliberate economic system, developed incrementally from the 16th century in Europe, although proto-capitalist organizations existed in the ancient world, and early aspects of merchant capitalism flourished during the Late Middle Ages. Capitalism becomes dominant in the Western world

following the demise of feudalism. Capitalism gradually spread throughout Europe, and in the 19th and 20th centuries, it provided the main means of industrialization throughout much of the world. Today the capitalism system is the world's most dominant form of economic model.

2.3 Various aspects from which the essay can be studied:

- 1) To study the essay in accordance with the use of pastiche and parody in the postmodernism literature.
- 2) To study the interplay of modernism and post-modernism in literature.

2.4 Summary of the unit:

The present essay presents Terry Eagleton's views about Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism. According to him, the major strength of Modernism lies in the contradiction. The continuous struggle of meaning makes modernism interesting and fascinating. While Postmodernism has taken quite a few things from Modernism like the fragmented self, bizarre experience and from Avant-Garde discussion of art into social life, rejection of tradition and opposition to high culture.

Thus Terry Eagleton has attempted to discuss both the strength and weakness of modernism and the postmodernism in the context with Capitalism in this essay.

2.5 Difficult Words:

- 1) Disowns: To refuse to recognize as one's own
- 2) Frowns: To look displeased or angry
- 3) Deadlock: A standstill
- 4) Fascination: A Strong attraction
- 5) Conjecture: Combination of Crisis/event, Critical State
- 6) Triumphal: Celebrating a victory.
- 7) Autonomy: Self Government
- 8) Denounces: To blame openly
- 9) Pastiche: A literary composition made up of bits from various source.

2.6 Questions for self learning:

- 1) “Modernism dramatizes in its very internal structure a crucial contradiction in the ideology of the subject” Discuss the Statement with reference to Eagleton’s essay.
- 2) Comment on Terry Eagleton’s concept of Post Modernism.
- 3) Eagleton’s concept of Modernism, Postmodernism
- 4) Postmodernism and performativity principle.
- 5) Point out the interplay between modernism and postmodernism with reference to Terry Eagleton’s essay.
- 6) write a note on Terry Eagleton’s, Essay ‘Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism.

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Unit - 03

Paul De Man: The Resistance to Theory

Contents

- 3.0 Objective
- 3.1 Introduction to the Critic
- 3.2 Content of the Essay
 - 3.2.1 Literary Theory
 - 3.2.2 The Relationship between Theory and Practice.
 - 3.2.3 Linguistically - Oriented Theories
 - 3.2.4 Semiotics
 - 3.2.5 Structuralism
 - 3.2.6 Literariness
 - 3.2.7 Resistance to theory as a built in constituent of its discourse
 - 3.2.8 Resistance to theory is a Resistance to the use of Language about Language
 - 3.2.9 Resistance to theory is itself a theory.
- 3.3 Various Aspects from which the Essay can be studied
- 3.4 Summary of the unit
- 3.5 Difficult Words
- 3.6 Questions for Self-evaluation
- 3.7 Bibliography

The Resistance to Theory

Paul de Man

This essay was not originally intended to address the question of teaching directly, although it was supposed to have a didactic and an educational function - which it failed to achieve. It was written at the request of the Committee on Research Activities of the Modern Language Association as a contribution to a collective volume entitled Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures. I was asked to write the section on literary

theory. Such essays are expected to follow a clearly determined program: they are supposed to provide the reader with a select but comprehensive list of the main trends and publications in the field, to synthesize and classify the main problematic areas and to lay out a critical and programmatic projection of the solutions which can be expected in the foreseeable future. All this with a keen awareness that, ten years later, someone will be asked to repeat the same exercise.

I found it difficult to live up, in minimal good faith, to the requirements of this program and could only try to explain, as concisely as possible, why the main theoretical interest of literary theory consists in the impossibility of its definition. The Committee rightly judged that this was an inauspicious way to achieve the pedagogical objectives of the volume and commissioned another article. I thought their decision altogether justified, as well as interesting in its implications for the teaching of literature.

I tell this for two reasons. First, to explain the traces in the article of the original assignment which account for the awkwardness of trying to be more retrospective and more general than one can legitimately hope to be. But, second, because the predicament also reveals a question of general interest: that of the relationship between the scholarship (the key word in the title of the MLA volume), the theory, and the teaching of literature.

Overfacile opinion notwithstanding, teaching is not primarily an intersubjective relationship between people but a cognitive process in which self and other are only tangentially and contiguously involved. The only teaching worthy of the name is scholarly, not personal; analogies between teaching and various aspects of show business or guidance counseling are more often than not excuses for having abdicated the task. Scholarship has, in principle, to be eminently teachable. In the case of literature, such scholarship involves at least

two complementary areas: historical and philological facts as the preparatory condition for understanding, and methods of reading or interpretation. The latter is admittedly an open discipline, which can, however, hope to evolve by rational means, despite internal crises, controversies and polemics. As a controlled reflection on the formation of method, theory rightly proves to be entirely compatible with teaching, and one can think of numerous important theoreticians who are or were also prominent scholars. A question arises only if a tension develops between methods of understanding and the knowledge which those methods allow one to reach. If there is indeed something about literature, as such, which allows for a discrepancy between truth and method, between *Wahrheit* and *Methode*, then scholarship and theory are no longer necessarily compatible; as a first casualty of this complication, the notion of "literature as such" as well as the clear distinction between history and interpretation can no longer be taken for granted. For a method that cannot be made to suit the "truth" of its object can only teach delusion. Various developments, not only in the contemporary scene but in the long and complicated history of literary and linguistic instruction, reveal symptoms that suggest that such a difficulty is an inherent focus of the discourse about literature. These uncertainties are manifest in the hostility directed at theory in the name of ethical and aesthetic values, as well as in the recuperative attempts of theoreticians to reassert their own subservience to these values. The most effective of these attacks will denounce theory as an obstacle to scholarship and, consequently, to teaching. It is worth examining whether, and why, this is the case. For if this is indeed so, then it is better to fail in teaching what should not be taught than to succeed in teaching what is not true.

A general statement about literary theory should not, in theory, start from pragmatic considerations. It should address such questions as the definition of literature (what is literature?) and discuss the distinction between literary and

non-literary uses of language, as well as between literary and non-verbal forms of art. It should then proceed to the descriptive taxonomy of the various aspects and species of the literary genus and to the normative rules that are bound to follow from such a classification. Or, if one rejects a scholastic for a phenomenological model, one should attempt a phenomenology of the literary activity as writing, reading or both, or of the literary work as the product, the correlate of such an activity. Whatever the approach taken (and several other theoretically justifiable starting-points can be imagined) it is certain that considerable difficulties will arise at once, difficulties that cut so deep that even the most elementary task of scholarship, the delimitation of the corpus and the *etat present* of the question, is bound to end in confusion, not necessarily because the bibliography is so large but because it is impossible to fix its borderlines. Such predictable difficulties have not prevented many writers on literature from proceeding along theoretical rather than pragmatic lines, often with considerable success. It can be shown however that, in all cases, this success depends on the power of a system (philosophical, religious or ideological) that may well remain implicit but that determines an *a priori* conception of what is "literary" by starting out from the premises of the system rather than from the literary thing itself - if such a "thing" indeed exists. This last qualification is of course a real question which in fact accounts for the predictability of the difficulties just alluded to: if the condition of existence of an entity is itself particularly critical, then the theory of this entity is bound to fall back into the pragmatic. The difficult and inconclusive history of literary theory indicates that this is indeed the case for literature in an even more manifest manner than for other verbalized occurrences such as jokes, for example, or even dreams. The attempt to treat literature theoretically may as well resign itself to the fact that it has to start out from empirical considerations.

Pragmatically speaking, then, we know that there has been, over the last fifteen to twenty years, a strong interest in something called literary theory and that, in the United States, this interest has at times coincided with the importation and reception of foreign, mostly but not always continental, influences. We also know that this wave of interest now seems to be receding as some satiation or disappointment sets in after the initial enthusiasm. Such an ebb and flow is natural enough, but it remains interesting, in this case, because it makes the depth of the resistance to literary theory so manifest. It is a recurrent strategy of any anxiety to defuse what it considers threatening by magnification or minimization, by attributing to it claims to power of which it is bound to fall short. If a cat is called a tiger it can easily be dismissed as a paper tiger; the question remains however why one was so scared of the cat in the first place. The same tactic works in reverse: calling the cat a mouse and then deriding it for its pretense to be mighty. Rather than being drawn into this polemical whirlpool, it might be better to try to call the cat a cat and to document, however briefly, the contemporary version of the resistance to theory in this country.

The predominant trends in North American literary criticism, before the nineteen sixties, were certainly not averse to theory, if by theory one understands the rooting of literary exegesis and of critical evaluation in a system of some conceptual generality. Even the most intuitive, empirical and theoretically low key writers on literature made use of a minimal set of concepts (tone, organic form, allusion, tradition, historical situation, etc.) of at least some general import. In several other cases, the interest in theory was publicly asserted and practiced. A broadly shared methodology, more or less overtly proclaimed, links together such influential text books of the era as *Understanding Poetry* (Brooks and Warren), *Theory of Literature* (Wellek and Warren) and *The Fields*

of Light (Reuben Brower) or such theoretically oriented works as *The Mirror and the Lamp*, *Language as Gesture* and *The Verbal Icon*.

Yet, with the possible exception of Kenneth Burke and, in some respects, Northrop Frye, none of these authors would have considered themselves theoreticians in the post-1960 sense of the term, nor did their work provoke as strong reactions, positive or negative, as that of later theoreticians. There were polemics, no doubt, and differences in approach that cover a wide spectrum of divergencies, yet the fundamental curriculum of literary studies as well as the talent and training expected for them were not being seriously challenged. New Critical approaches experienced no difficulty fitting into the academic establishments without their practitioners having to betray their literary sensibilities in any way; several of its representatives pursued successful parallel careers as poets or novelists next to their academic functions. Nor did they experience difficulties with regard to a national tradition which, though certainly less tyrannical than its European counterparts, is nevertheless far from powerless. The perfect embodiment of the New Criticism remains, in many respects, the personality and the ideology of T. S. Eliot, a combination of original talent, traditional learning, verbal wit and moral earnestness, an Anglo-American blend of intellectual gentility not so repressed as not to afford tantalizing glimpses of darker psychic and political depths, but without breaking the surface of an ambivalent decorum that has its own complacencies and seductions. The normative principles of such a literary ambiance are cultural and ideological rather than theoretical, oriented towards the integrity of a social and historical self rather than towards the impersonal consistency that theory requires. Culture allows for, indeed advocates, a degree of cosmopolitanism, and the literary spirit of the American Academy of the fifties was anything but provincial. It had no difficulty appreciating and assimilating outstanding products of a kindred spirit that originated in Europe: Curtius; Auerbach, Croce,

Spitzer, Alonso, Valery and also, with the exception of some of his works, J. P. Sartre. The inclusion of Sartre in this list is important, for it indicates that the dominant cultural code we are trying to evoke cannot simply be assimilated to a political polarity of the left and the right, of the academic and non-academic, of Greenwich Village and Gambier, Ohio. Politically oriented and predominantly non-academic journals, of which the *Partisan Review* of the fifties remains the best example, did not (after due allowance is made for all proper reservations and distinctions) stand in any genuine opposition to the New Critical approaches. The broad, though negative, consensus that brings these extremely diverse trends and individuals together is their shared resistance to theory. This diagnosis is borne out by the arguments and complicities that have since come to light in a more articulate opposition to the common opponent.

The interest of these considerations would be at most anecdotal (the historical impact of twentieth-century literary discussion being so slight) if it were not for the theoretical implications of the resistance to theory. The local manifestations of this resistance are themselves systematic enough to warrant one's interest.

What is it that is being threatened by the approaches to literature that developed during the sixties and that now, under a variety of designations, make up the ill-defined and somewhat chaotic field of literary theory? These approaches cannot be simply equated with any particular method or country. Structuralism was not the only trend to dominate the stage, not even in France, and structuralism as well as semiology are inseparable from prior tendencies in the Slavic domain. In Germany, the main impulses have come from other directions, from the Frankfurt school and more orthodox Marxists, from post-Husserlian phenomenology and post-Heideggerian hermeneutics, with only minor inroads made by structural analysis. All these trends have had their share of influence in the United States, in more or less productive combinations with nationally rooted concerns. Only a nationally or personally competitive view of

history would wish to hierarchize such hard-to-label movements. The possibility of doing literary theory, which is by no means to be taken for granted, has itself become a consciously reflected-upon question and those who have progressed furthest in this question are the most controversial but also the best sources of information. This certainly includes several of the names loosely connected with structuralism, broadly enough defined to include Saussure, Jakobson and Barthes as well as Greimas and Althusser, that is to say, so broadly defined as to be no longer of use as a meaningful historical term.

Literary theory can be said to come into being when the approach to literary texts is no longer based on non-linguistic, that is to say historical and aesthetic, considerations or, to put it somewhat less crudely, when the object of discussion is no longer the meaning or the value but the modalities of production and of reception of meaning and of value prior to their establishment- the implication being that this establishment is problematic enough to require an autonomous discipline of critical investigation to consider its possibility and its status. Literary history, even when considered at the furthest remove from the platitudes of positivistic historicism, is still the history of an understanding of which the possibility is taken for granted. The question of the relationship between aesthetics and meaning is more complex, since aesthetics apparently has to do with the *effect* of meaning rather than with its content *per se*. But aesthetics is in fact, ever since its development just before and with Kant, a phenomenism of a process of meaning and understanding, and it may be naive in that it postulates (as its name indicates) a phenomenology of art and of literature which may well be what is at issue. Aesthetics is part of a universal system of philosophy rather than a specific theory. In the nineteenth-century philosophical tradition, Nietzsche's challenge of the system erected by Kant, Hegel and their successors is a version of the general question of philosophy. Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics includes, or starts out from, the aesthetic,

and the same could be argued for Heidegger. The invocation of prestigious philosophical names does not intimate that the present-day development of literary theory is a by-product of larger philosophical speculations. In some rare cases, a direct link may exist between philosophy and literary theory. More frequently, however, contemporary literary theory is a relatively autonomous version of questions that also surface, in a different context, in philosophy, though not necessarily in a clearer and more rigorous form. Philosophy, in England as well as on the Continent, is less freed from traditional patterns than it sometimes pretends to believe and the prominent, though never dominant, place of aesthetics among the main components of the system is a constitutive part of this system. It is therefore not surprising that contemporary literary theory came into being from outside philosophy and sometimes in conscious rebellion against the weight of its tradition. Literary theory may now well have become a legitimate concern of philosophy but it cannot be assimilated to it, either factually or theoretically. It contains a necessarily pragmatic moment that certainly weakens it as theory but that adds a subversive element of unpredictability and makes it something of a wild card in the serious game of the theoretical disciplines.

The advent of theory, the break that is now so often being deplored and that sets it aside from literary history and from literary criticism, occurs with the introduction of linguistic terminology in the metalanguage about literature. By linguistic terminology is meant a terminology that designates reference prior to designating the referent and takes into account, in the consideration of the world, the referential function of language or, to be somewhat more specific, that considers reference as a function of language and not necessarily as an intuition. Intuition implies perception, consciousness, experience, and leads at once into the world of logic and of understanding with all its correlatives, among which aesthetics occupies a prominent place. The assumption that there

can be a science of language which is not necessarily a logic leads to the development of a terminology which is not necessarily aesthetic. Contemporary literary theory comes into its own in such events as the application of Saussurian linguistics to literary texts.

The affinity between structural linguistics and literary texts is not as obvious as, with the hindsight of history, it now may seem. Peirce, Saussure, Sapir and Bloomfield were not originally concerned with literature at all but with the scientific foundations of linguistics. But the interest of philologists such as Roman Jakobson or literary critics such as Roland Barthes in semiology reveals the natural attraction of literature to a theory of linguistic signs. By considering language as a system of signs and of signification rather than as an established pattern of meanings, one displaces or even suspends the traditional barriers between literary and presumably non-literary uses of language and liberates the corpus from the secular weight of textual canonization. The results of the encounter between semiology and literature went considerably further than those of many other theoretical models-philological, psychological or classically epistemological - which writers on literature in quest of such models had tried out before. The responsiveness of literary texts to semiotic analysis is visible in that, whereas other approaches were unable to reach beyond observations that could be paraphrased or translated in terms of common knowledge, these analyses revealed patterns that could only be described in terms of their own, specifically linguistic, aspects. The linguistics of semiology and of literature apparently have something in common that only their shared perspective can detect and that pertains distinctively to them. The definition of this something, often referred to as literariness, has become the object of literary theory.

Literariness, however, is often misunderstood in a way that has provoked much of the confusion which dominates today's polemics. It is frequently assumed, for instance, that literariness is another word for, or another mode of,

aesthetic response. The use, in conjunction with literariness, of such terms as style and stylistics, form or even "poetry" (as in "the poetry of grammar"), all of which carry strong aesthetic connotations, helps to foster this confusion, even among those who first put the term in circulation. Roland Barthes, for example, in an essay properly and revealingly dedicated to Roman Jakobson, speaks eloquently of the writer's quest for a perfect coincidence of the phonic properties of a word with its signifying function. "We would also wish to insist on the Cratylianism of the name (and of the sign) in Proust. ... Proust sees the relationship between signifier and signified as motivated, the one copying the other and representing in its material form the signified essence of the thing (and not the thing itself). . . . This realism (in the scholastic sense of the word), which conceives of names as the 'copy' of the ideas, has taken, in Proust, a radical form. But one may well ask whether it is not more or less consciously present in all writing and whether it is possible to be a writer without some sort of belief in the natural relationship between names and essences. The poetic function, in the widest sense of the word, would thus be defined by a Cratylan awareness of the sign, and the writer would be the conveyor of this secular myth which wants language to imitate the idea and which, contrary to the teachings of linguistic science, thinks of signs as motivated signs." To the extent that Cratylianism assumes a convergence of the phenomenal aspects of language, as sound, with its signifying function as referent, it is an aesthetically oriented conception; one could, in fact, without distortion, consider aesthetic theory, including its most systematic formulation in Hegel, as the complete unfolding of the model of which the Cratylan conception of language is a version. Hegel's somewhat cryptic reference to Plato, in the *Aesthetics*, may well be interpreted in this sense. Barthes and Jakobson often seem to invite a purely aesthetic reading, yet there is a part of their statement that moves in the opposite direction. For the convergence of sound and meaning celebrated by Barthes in Proust and, as Gerard Genette has decisively shown, 2 later dismantled by

Proust himself as a seductive temptation to mystified minds, is also considered here to be a mere *effect* which language can perfectly well achieve, but which bears no substantial relationship, by analogy or by ontologically grounded imitation, to anything beyond that particular effect. It is a rhetorical rather than an aesthetic function of language, an identifiable trope (paronomasis) that operates on the level of the signifier and contains no responsible pronouncement on the nature of the world - despite its powerful potential to create the opposite illusion. The phenomenality of the signifier, as sound, is unquestionably involved in the correspondence between the name and the thing named, but the link, the relationship between word and thing, is not phenomenal but conventional.

This gives the language considerable freedom from referential restraint, but it makes it epistemologically highly suspect and volatile, since its use can no longer be said to be determined by considerations of truth and falsehood, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, or pleasure and pain. Whenever this autonomous potential of language can be revealed by analysis, we are dealing with literariness and, in fact, with literature as the place where this negative knowledge about the reliability of linguistic utterance is made available. The ensuing foregrounding of material, phenomenal aspects of the signifier creates a strong illusion of aesthetic seduction at the very moment when the actual aesthetic function has been, at the very least, suspended. It is inevitable that semiology or similarly oriented methods be considered formalistic, in the sense of being aesthetically rather than semantically valorized, but the inevitability of such an interpretation does not make it less aberrant. Literature involves the voiding, rather than the affirmation, of aesthetic categories. One of the consequences of this is that, whereas we have traditionally been accustomed to reading literature by analogy with the plastic arts and with music, we now have

to recognize the necessity of a non-perceptual, linguistic moment in painting and music, and learn to *read* pictures rather than to imagine meaning.

If literariness is not an aesthetic quality, it is also not primarily mimetic. Mimesis becomes one trope among others, language choosing to imitate a non-verbal entity just as paronomasis "imitates" a sound without any claim to identity (or reflection on difference) between the verbal and non-verbal elements. The most misleading representation of literariness, and also the most recurrent objection to contemporary literary theory, considers it as pure verbalism, as a denial of the reality principle in the name of absolute fictions, and for reasons that are said to be ethically and politically shameful. The attack reflects the anxiety of the aggressors rather than the guilt of the accused. By allowing for the necessity of a non-phenomenal linguistics, one frees the discourse on literature from naive oppositions between fiction and reality, which are themselves an offspring of an uncritically mimetic conception of art. In a genuine semiology as well as in other linguistically oriented theories, the referential function of language is not being denied - far from it; what is in question is its authority as a model for natural or phenomenal cognition. Literature is fiction not because it somehow refuses to acknowledge "reality," but because it is not *a priori* certain that language functions according to principles which are those, or which are *like* those, of the phenomenal world. It is therefore not *a priori* certain that literature is a reliable source of information about anything but its own language.

It would be unfortunate, for example, to confuse the materiality of the signifier with the materiality of what it signifies. This may seem obvious enough on the level of light and sound, but it is less so with regard to the more general phenomenality of space, time or especially of the self; no one in his right mind will try to grow grapes by the luminosity of the word "day," but it is very difficult not to conceive the pattern of one's past and future existence as in

accordance with temporal and spatial schemes that belong to fictional narratives and not to the world. This does not mean that fictional narratives are not part of the world and of reality; their impact upon the world may well be all too strong for comfort. What we call ideology is precisely the confusion of linguistic with natural reality, of reference with phenomenalism. It follows that, more than any other mode of inquiry, including economics, the linguistics of literariness is a powerful and indispensable tool in the unmasking of ideological aberrations, as well as a determining factor in accounting for their occurrence. Those who reproach literary theory for being oblivious to social and historical (that is to say ideological) reality are merely stating their fear at having their own ideological mystifications exposed by the tool they are trying to discredit. They are, in short, very poor readers of Marx's *German Ideology*.

In these all too summary evocations of arguments that have been much more extensively and convincingly made by others, we begin to perceive some of the answers to the initial question: what is it about literary theory that is so threatening that it provokes such strong resistances and attacks? It upsets rooted ideologies by revealing the mechanics of their workings; it goes against a powerful philosophical tradition of which aesthetics is a prominent part; it upsets the established canon of literary works and blurs the borderlines between literary and non-literary discourse. By implication, it may also reveal the links between ideologies and philosophy. All this is ample enough reason for suspicion, but not a satisfying answer to the question. For it makes the tension between contemporary literary theory and the tradition of literary studies appear as a mere historical conflict between two modes of thought that happen to hold the stage at the same time. If the conflict is merely historical, in the literal sense, it is of limited theoretical interest, a passing squall in the intellectual weather of the world. As a matter of fact, the arguments in favor of the legitimacy of literary theory are so compelling that it seems useless to concern oneself with

the conflict at all. Certainly, none of the objections to theory, presented again and again, always misinformed or based on crude misunderstandings of such terms as mimesis, fiction, reality, ideology, reference and, for that matter, relevance, can be said to be of genuine rhetorical interest.

It may well be, however, that the development of literary theory is itself overdetermined by complications inherent in its very project and unsettling with regard to its status as a scientific discipline. Resistance may be a built-in constituent of its discourse, in a manner that would be inconceivable in the natural sciences and unmentionable in the social sciences. It may well be, in other words, that the polemical opposition, the systematic non-understanding and misrepresentation, the unsubstantial but eternally recurrent objections, are the displaced symptoms of a resistance inherent in the theoretical enterprise itself. To claim that this would be sufficient reason not to envisage doing literary theory would be like rejecting anatomy because it has failed to cure mortality. The real debate of literary theory is not with its polemical opponents but rather with its own methodological assumptions and possibilities. Rather than asking why literary theory is threatening, we should perhaps ask why it has such difficulty going about its business and why it lapses so readily either into the language of self-justification and self-defense or else into the overcompensation of a programmatically euphoric utopianism. Such insecurity about its own project calls for selfanalysis, if one is to understand the frustrations that attend upon its practitioners, even when they seem to dwell in serene methodological self-assurance. And if these difficulties are indeed an integral part of the problem, then they will have to be, to some extent, a-historical in the temporal sense of the term. The way in which they are encountered on the present local literary scene as a resistance to the introduction of linguistic terminology in aesthetic and historical discourse about literature is only one particular version of a question that cannot be reduced to a specific historical situation and called

modern, post-modern, post-classical or romantic (not even in Hegel's sense of the term), although its compulsive way of forcing itself upon us in the guise of a system of historical periodization is certainly part of its problematic nature. Such difficulties can be read in the text of literary theory at all times, at whatever historical moment one wishes to select. One of the main achievements of the present theoretical trends is to have restored some awareness of this fact. Classical, medieval and Renaissance literary theory is now often being read in a way that knows enough about what it is doing not to wish to call itself "modern."

We return, then, to the original question in an attempt to broaden the discussion enough to inscribe the polemics inside the question rather than having them determine it. The resistance to theory is a resistance to the use of language about language. It is therefore a resistance to language itself or to the possibility that language contains factors or functions that cannot be reduced to intuition. But we seem to assume all too readily that, when we refer to something called "language," we know what it is we are talking about, although there is probably no word to be found in the language that is as overdetermined, self-evasive, disfigured and disfiguring as "language." Even if we choose to consider it at a safe remove from any theoretical model, in the pragmatic history of "language," not as a concept, but as a didactic assignment that no human being can bypass, we soon find ourselves confronted by theoretical enigmas. The most familiar and general of all linguistic models, the classical trivium, which considers the sciences of language as consisting of grammar, rhetoric, and logic (or dialectics), is in fact a set of unresolved tensions powerful enough to have generated an infinitely prolonged discourse of endless frustration of which contemporary literary theory, even at its most self-assured, is one more chapter. The difficulties extend to the internal articulations between the constituent parts as well as the articulation of the field of language with the

knowledge of the world in general, the link between the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, which covers the non-verbal sciences of number (arithmetic), of space (geometry), of motion (astronomy), and of time (music). In the history of philosophy, this link is traditionally, as well as substantially, accomplished by way of logic, the area where the rigor of the linguistic discourse about itself matches up with the rigor of the mathematical discourse about the world. Seventeenth-century epistemology, for instance, at the moment when the relationship between philosophy and mathematics is particularly close, holds up the language of what it calls geometry (*mos geometricus*), and which in fact includes the homogeneous concatenation between space, time and number, as the sole model of coherence and economy. Reasoning *more geometrico* is said to be "almost the only mode of reasoning that is infallible, because it is the only one to adhere to the true method, whereas all other ones are by natural necessity in a degree of confusion of which only geometrical minds can be aware." 3 This is a clear instance of the interconnection between a science of the phenomenal world and a science of language conceived as definitional logic, the precondition for a correct axiomatic-deductive, synthetic reasoning. The possibility of thus circulating freely between logic and mathematics has its own complex and problematic history as well as its contemporary equivalences with a different logic and a different mathematics. What matters for our present argument is that this articulation of the sciences of language with the mathematical sciences represents a particularly compelling version of a continuity between a theory of language, as logic, and the knowledge of the phenomenal world to which mathematics gives access. In such a system, the place of aesthetics is preordained and by no means alien, provided the priority of logic, in the model of the *trivium*, is not being questioned. For even if one assumes, for the sake of argument and against a great deal of historical evidence, that the link between logic and the natural sciences is secure, this leaves open the question, within the confines of the *trivium* itself, of the relationship between

grammar, rhetoric and logic. And this is the point at which literariness, the use of language that foregrounds the rhetorical over the grammatical and the logical function, intervenes as a decisive but unsettling element which, in a variety of modes and aspects, disrupts the inner balance of the model and, consequently, its outward extension to the nonverbal world as well.

Logic and grammar seem to have a natural enough affinity for each other and, in the tradition of Cartesian linguistics, the grammarians of Port-Royal experienced little difficulty at being logicians as well. The same claim persists today in very different methods and terminologies that nevertheless maintain the same orientation toward the universality that logic shares with science. Replying to those who oppose the singularity of specific texts to the scientific generality of the semiotic project, A. J. Greimas disputes the right to use the dignity of "grammar" to describe a reading that would not be committed to universality. Those who have doubts about the semiotic method, he writes, "postulate the necessity of constructing a grammar for each particular text. But the essence (*le propre*) of a grammar is its ability to account for a large number of texts, and the metaphorical use of the term . . . fails to hide the fact that one has, in fact, given up on the semiotic project."⁴ There is no doubt that what is here prudently called "a large number" implies the hope at least of a future model that would in fact be applicable to the generation of all texts. Again, it is not our present purpose to discuss the validity of this methodological optimism, but merely to offer it as an instance of the persistent symbiosis between grammar and logic. It is clear that, for Greimas as for the entire tradition to which he belongs, the grammatical and the logical functions of language are co-extensive. Grammar is an isotope of logic.

It follows that, as long as it remains grounded in grammar, any theory of language, including a literary one, does not threaten what we hold to be the underlying principle of all cognitive and aesthetic linguistic systems. Grammar

stands in the service of logic which, in turn, allows for the passage to the knowledge of the world. The study of grammar, the first of the *artes liberales*, is the necessary pre-condition for scientific and humanistic knowledge. As long as it leaves this principle intact, there is nothing threatening about literary theory. The continuity between theory and phenomenism is asserted and preserved by the system itself. Difficulties occur only when it is no longer possible to ignore the epistemological thrust of the rhetorical dimension of discourse, that is, when it is no longer possible to keep it in its place as a mere adjunct, a mere ornament within the semantic function.

The uncertain relationship between grammar and rhetoric (as opposed to that between grammar and logic) is apparent, in the history of the trivium, in the uncertain status of figures of speech or tropes, a component of language that straddles the disputed borderlines between the two areas. Tropes used to be part of the study of grammar but were also considered to be the semantic agent of the specific function (or effect) that rhetoric performs as persuasion as well as meaning. Tropes, unlike grammar, pertain primordially to language. They are text-producing functions that are not necessarily patterned on a non-verbal entity, whereas grammar is by definition capable of extra-linguistic generalization. The latent tension between rhetoric and grammar precipitates out in the problem of reading, the process that necessarily partakes of both. It turns out that the resistance to theory is in fact a resistance to reading, a resistance that is perhaps at its most effective, in contemporary studies, in the methodologies that call themselves theories of reading but nevertheless avoid the function they claim as their object.

What is meant when we assert that the study of literary texts is necessarily dependent on an act of reading, or when we claim that this act is being systematically avoided? Certainly more than the tautology that one has to have read at least some parts, however small, of a text (or read some part, however

small, of a text about this text) in order to be able to make a statement about it. Common as it may be, criticism by hearsay is only rarely held up as exemplary. To stress the by no means self-evident necessity of reading implies at least two things. First of all, it implies that literature is not a transparent message in which it can be taken for granted that the distinction between the message and the means of communication is clearly established. Second, and more problematically, it implies that the grammatical decoding of a text leaves a residue of indetermination that has to be, but cannot be, resolved by grammatical means, however extensively conceived. The extension of grammar to include para-figural dimensions is in fact the most remarkable and debatable strategy of contemporary semiology, especially in the study of syntagmatic and narrative structures. The codification of contextual elements well beyond the syntactical limits of the sentence leads to the systematic study of metaphrastic dimensions and has considerably refined and expanded the knowledge of textual codes. It is equally clear, however, that this extension is always strategically directed towards the replacement of rhetorical figures by grammatical codes. This tendency to replace a rhetorical by a grammatical terminology (to speak of hypotaxis, for instance, to designate anamorphic or metonymic tropes) is part of an explicit program, a program that is entirely admirable in its intent since it tends towards the mastering and the clarification of meaning. The replacement of a hermeneutic by a semiotic model, of interpretation by decoding, would represent, in view of the baffling historical instability of textual meanings (including, of course, those of canonical texts), a considerable progress. Much of the hesitation associated with "reading" could thus be dispelled.

The argument can be made, however, that no grammatical decoding, however refined, could claim to reach the determining figural dimensions of a text. There are elements in all texts that are by no means ungrammatical, but whose semantic function is not grammatically definable, neither in themselves nor in

context. Do we have to interpret the genitive in the title of Keats' unfinished epic *The Fall of Hyperion* as meaning "Hyperion's Fall," the case story of the defeat of an older by a newer power, the very recognizable story from which Keats indeed started out but from which he increasingly strayed away, or as "Hyperion Falling," the much less specific but more disquieting evocation of an actual process of falling, regardless of its beginning, its end or the identity of the entity to whom it befalls to be falling? This story is indeed told in the later fragment entitled *The Fall of Hyperion*, but it is told about a character who resembles Apollo rather than Hyperion, the same Apollo who, in the first version (called *Hyperion*), should definitely be triumphantly standing rather than falling if Keats had not been compelled to interrupt, for no apparent reason, the story of Apollo's triumph. Does the title tell us that Hyperion is fallen and that Apollo stands, or does it tell us that Hyperion and Apollo (and Keats, whom it is hard to distinguish, at times, from Apollo) are interchangeable in that all of them are necessarily and constantly falling? Both readings are grammatically correct, but it is impossible to decide from the context (the ensuing narrative) which version is the right one. The narrative context suits neither and both at the same time, and one is tempted to suggest that the fact that Keats was unable to complete either version manifests the impossibility, for him as for us, of reading his own title. One could then read the word "Hyperion" in the title *The Fall of Hyperion* figurally, or, if one wishes, intertextually, as referring not to the historical or mythological character but as referring to the title of Keats' own earlier text (*Hyperion*). But are we then telling the story of the failure of the first text as the success of the second, the Fall of *Hyperion* as the Triumph of *The Fall of Hyperion*? Manifestly, yes, but not quite, since the second text also fails to be concluded. Or are we telling the story of why all texts, as texts, can always be said to be falling Manifestly yes, but not quite, either, since the story of the fall of the first version, as told in the second, applies to the first version only and could not legitimately be read as meaning also the fall of *The Fall of Hyperion*.

The undecidability involves the figural or literal status of the proper name Hyperion as well as of the verb falling, and is thus a matter of figuration and not of grammar. In "Hyperion's Fall," the word "fall" is plainly figural, the representation of a figural fall, and we, as readers, read this fall standing up. But in "Hyperion Falling," this is not so clearly the case, for if Hyperion can be Apollo and Apollo can be Keats, then he can also be us and his figural (or symbolic) fall becomes his and our literal falling as well. The difference between the two readings is itself structured as a trope. And it matters a great deal how we read the title, as an exercise not only in semantics, but in what the text actually does to us. Faced with the ineluctable necessity to come to a decision, no grammatical or logical analysis can help us out. Just as Keats had to break off his narrative, the reader has to break off his understanding at the very moment when he is most directly engaged and summoned by the text. One could hardly expect to find solace in this "fearful symmetry" between the author's and reader's plight since, at this point, the symmetry is no longer a formal but an actual trap, and the question no longer "merely" theoretical.

This undoing of theory, this disturbance of the stable cognitive field that extends from grammar to logic to a general science of man and of the phenomenal world, can in its turn be made into a theoretical project of rhetorical analysis that will reveal the inadequacy of grammatical models of non-reading. Rhetoric, by its actively negative relationship to grammar and to logic, certainly undoes the claims of the trivium (and by extension, of language) to be an epistemologically stable construct. The resistance to theory is a resistance to the rhetorical or tropological dimension of language, a dimension which is perhaps more explicitly in the foreground in literature (broadly conceived) than in other verbal manifestations or - to be somewhat less vague - which can be revealed in any verbal event when it is read textually. Since grammar as well as figuration is an integral part of reading, it follows that reading will be a negative process in

which the grammatical cognition is undone, at all times, by its rhetorical displacement. The model of the *trivium* contains within itself the pseudo-dialectic of its own undoing and its history tells the story of this dialectic.

This conclusion allows for a somewhat more systematic description of the contemporary theoretical scene. This scene is dominated by an increased stress on reading as a theoretical problem or, as it is sometimes erroneously phrased, by an increased stress on the reception rather than on the production of texts. It is in this area that the most fruitful exchanges have come about between writers and journals of various countries and that the most interesting dialogue has developed between literary theory and other disciplines, in the arts as well as in linguistics, philosophy and the social sciences. A straightforward *report* on the present state of literary theory in the United States would have to stress the emphasis on reading, a direction which is already present, moreover, in the New Critical tradition of the forties and the fifties. The methods are now more technical, but the contemporary interest in a poetics of literature is clearly linked, traditionally enough, to the problems of reading. And since the models that are being used certainly are no longer *simply* intentional and centered on an identifiable self, nor *simply* hermeneutic in the postulation of a single originary, pre-figural and absolute text, it would appear that this concentration on reading would lead to the rediscovery of the theoretical difficulties associated with rhetoric. This is indeed the case, to some extent; but not quite. Perhaps the most instructive aspect of contemporary theory is the refinement of the techniques by which the threat inherent in rhetorical analysis is being avoided at the very moment when the efficacy of these techniques has progressed so far that the rhetorical obstacles to understanding can no longer be mistranslated in thematic and phenomenal commonplaces. The resistance to theory which, as we saw, is a resistance to reading, appears in its most rigorous and theoretically elaborated

form among the theoreticians of reading who dominate the contemporary theoretical scene.

It would be a relatively easy, though lengthy, process to show that this is so for theoreticians of reading who, like Greimas or, on a more refined level, Riffaterre or, in a very different mode, H. R. Jauss or Wolfgang Iser-all of whom have a definite, though sometimes occult, influence on literary theory in this country - are committed to the use of grammatical models or, in the case of *Rezeptionsästhetik*, to traditional hermeneutic models that do not allow for the problematization of the phenomenism of reading and therefore remain uncritically confined within a theory of literature rooted in aesthetics. Such an argument would be easy to make because, once a reader has become aware of the rhetorical dimensions of a text, he will not be amiss in finding textual instances that are irreducible to grammar or to historically determined meaning, provided only he is willing to acknowledge what he is bound to notice. The problem quickly becomes the more baffling one of having to account for the shared reluctance to acknowledge the obvious. But the argument would be lengthy because it has to involve a textual analysis that cannot avoid being somewhat elaborate; one can succinctly suggest the grammatical indetermination of a title such as *The Fall of Hyperion*, but to confront such an undecidable enigma with the critical reception and reading of Keats' text requires some space.

The demonstration is less easy (though perhaps less ponderous) in the case of the theoreticians of reading whose avoidance of rhetoric takes another turn. We have witnessed, in recent years, a strong interest in certain elements in language whose function is not only not dependent on any form of phenomenism but on any form of cognition as well, and which thus excludes, or postpones, the consideration of tropes, ideologies, etc., from a reading that would be primarily performative. In some cases, a link is reintroduced between performance,

grammar, logic, and stable referential meaning, and the resulting theories (as in the case of Ohmann) are not in essence distinct from those of avowed grammarians or semioticians. But the most astute practitioners of a speech act theory of reading avoid this relapse and rightly insist on the necessity to keep the actual performance of speech acts, which is conventional rather than cognitive, separate from its causes and effects - to keep, in their terminology, the illocutionary force separate from its perlocutionary function. Rhetoric, understood as persuasion, is forcefully banished (like Coriolanus) from the performative moment and exiled in the affective area of perlocution. Stanley Fish, in a masterful essay, convincingly makes this point. What awakens one's suspicion about this conclusion is that it relegates persuasion, which is indeed inseparable from rhetoric, to a purely affective and intentional realm and makes no allowance for modes of persuasion which are no less rhetorical and no less at work in literary texts, but which are of the order of persuasion by *proof* rather than persuasion by seduction. Thus to empty rhetoric of its epistemological impact is possible only because its tropological, figural functions are being bypassed. It is as if, to return for a moment to the model of the *trivium*, rhetoric could be isolated from the generality that grammar and logic have in common and considered as a mere correlative of an illocutionary power. The equation of rhetoric with psychology rather than with epistemology opens up dreary prospects of pragmatic banality, all the drearier if compared to the brilliance of the performative analysis. Speech act theories of reading in fact repeat, in a much more effective way, the grammatization of the *trivium* at the expense of rhetoric. For the characterization of the performative as sheer convention reduces it in effect to a grammatical code among others. The relationship between trope and performance is actually closer but more disruptive than what is here being proposed. Nor is this relationship properly captured by reference to a supposedly "creative" aspect of performance, a notion with which Fish rightly takes issue. The performative power of language can be called

positional, which differs considerably from conventional as well as from "creatively" (or, in the technical sense, intentionally) constitutive. Speech act oriented theories of reading read only to the extent that they prepare the way for the rhetorical reading they avoid.

But the same is still true even if a "truly" rhetorical reading that would stay clear of any undue phenomenalization or of any undue grammatical or performative codification of the text could be conceived - something which is not necessarily impossible and for which the aims and methods of literary theory should certainly strive. Such a reading would indeed appear as the methodical undoing of the grammatical construct and, in its systematic disarticulation of the trivium, will be theoretically sound as well as effective. Technically correct rhetorical readings may be boring, monotonous, predictable and unpleasant, but they are irrefutable. They are also totalizing (and potentially totalitarian) for since the structures and functions they expose do not lead to the knowledge of an entity (such as language) but are an unreliable process of knowledge production that prevents all entities, including linguistic entities, from coming into discourse as such, they are indeed universals, consistently defective models of language's impossibility to be a model language. They are, always in theory, the most elastic theoretical and dialectical model to end all models and they can rightly claim to contain within their own defective selves all the other defective models of reading-avoidance, referential, semiological, grammatical, performative, logical, or whatever. They are theory and not theory at the same time, the universal theory of the impossibility of theory. To the extent however that they are theory, that is to say teachable, generalizable and highly responsive to systematization, rhetorical readings, like the other kinds, still avoid and resist the reading they advocate. Nothing can overcome the resistance to theory since theory is itself this resistance. The loftier the aims and the better the methods of literary theory, the less possible it

becomes. Yet literary theory is not in danger of going under; it cannot help but flourish, and the more it is resisted, the more it flourishes, since the language it speaks is the language of self-resistance. What remains impossible to decide is whether this flourishing is a triumph or a fall.

3.0 Objectives:

- 1) To know the contribution of Paul De Man in Modern Literary Theories.
- 2) To study, Paul De Man's concept Resistance to theory as a built-in-constituent of its discourse
- 3) To find out Resistance to theory is a resistance to the use of language about language.
- 4) To discuss Resistance to theory is Resistance to reading
- 5) To evaluate Resistance to theory is itself a Theory.
- 6) To Study Paul De Man's concept of Literary Theory.

3.1 Introduction to the Critic:

Paul de Man (1919-83) was widely regarded as the most powerful and profound mind in the group of literary critics and theorists who, inspired in part by the work of Jacques Derrida, made Yale a centre of deconstruction in the 1970's. He wrote numerous newspaper articles sympathetic to Nazi ideology shocked and disillusioned many of his disciples and has undoubtedly diminished his posthumous reputation.

Paul de Man's work consists mostly of long essays on some of the fundamental texts and problems of the interdisciplinary mix of literature, philosophy and linguistics that has become known as theory. His work is difficult to summarize, dedicated as it is to showing that the effort to pin down truth in language is both inevitable and impassible. This double blind, which other deconstructionists take as a license to pursue meaning as far as their own hermeneutic ingenuity will carry them, is accepted by de. Man in a spirit of stoical irony. The spirit is very clearly manifested in '*The Resistance to Theory*'.

3.2 Content of the Essay:

The present Essay ‘The Resistance to Theory’ by Paul de Man was written at the request of the committee of the Research Activities of the Modern Language Association as a contribution to a collective volume entitled ‘*Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Language and Literatures*’. In the essay Paul de Man suggest why literary theory should not be taught as a scholarly subject and explores the tension between teaching and critical theory.

De Man starts by defining what is and what isn’t scholarly, and what the properties of scholarship are, For e.g.. Man says, “Scholarship has, in principle, to be eminently teachable”. He ends his discussion on scholarship with, “ it is better to fail in teaching what should not be taught then to succeed in teaching what is not true” suggesting the nature of his contentions with teaching and with literary theory. He then explores the history of literary theory, in an effort to show its vast breath of opinion and to prove that not one theory has reigned supreme over all the others. The reason literary theory often fails, he explains, is that critical theory often tries to analyze the grammatical and logical aspects of language, which by the nature of language, are undermined by rhetoric and figurate language. He phrases this problem by stating, “The resistance to theory is resistance to the use of language about language”. De Man then searches for truth within the study of Grammar, which he views as the logic in language. However, grammar too fosters tension and unease within the scholarly community, so he turns to reading, and then rhetorical reading, but even these cannot be object and true. De Man finishes with an interesting twist to his argument, by reminding the reader that literary theory “cannot help but flourish”.

3.2.1 Literary Theory:

De Man says that, there has been a strong interest in something called ‘Literary Theory’ over the last few decades. But this wave of interest now seems to be

receding. In the 1960's many approaches developed to literature, but they cannot be simply equated with any particular method. And this only added to the confusion in the field of literary theory.

What is the task of 'theory' in the most widely accepted understanding of that term? We differentiate a hypothesis from a theory by saying that while the former is an intelligent guess about some problem, a theory is more solid, more likely to yield (product) systematic knowledge. In science, a theory is a well-rounded belief that repeated experiments should be able to prove or disprove. Theory tends towards system-building; in literature, the theorist wants to establish grounds for making universally valid statements that will elucidate not just one or two texts, but very large number of them. But de man says that the critics focus is infarct on the most unstable, anti-systematic dimension of language-without a doubt, the rhetorical or figurative element of language, the "literariness" of literature is a foundation to construct a set of stable meanings for the text being read.

3.2.2 The Relationship between Theory and Practice:

The present essay deals with the relationship between theory and practice in literary studies ('Practice' in the multiple sense of criticism, Scholarship, teaching). As De Man say that, the literary theory can be said to come into being when the approach to literary texts is no longer based on non-linguistic, that is to say historical and aesthetic, considerations but the modalities of production and of reception of meaning. This means an autonomous discipline of Critical investigation is required to consider the possibility and status of literary theory. The question of the relationship between aesthetics and meaning is more complex, since aesthetics apparently has to do with the effect of meaning rather than with its content. The contemporary Literary Theory came into being from outside philosophy and sometimes in conscious rebellion against the weight of its tradition.

According to De Man literary theory may now well have become a legitimate concern of philosophy but it cannot be assimilated to it, either factually or theoretically. It contains a necessarily rhetoric (Pragmatic) moment that certainly weakens it as theory.

3.2.3 Linguistically - Oriented Theories:

The arrival of theory occurs with the introduction of linguistic terminology in the metalanguage about literature- By Linguistic terminology is meant a terminology that considers reference as a function of language and not necessarily as an institution. The assumption that there can be a science of language which is not necessarily logic leads to the development of a terminology which is not necessarily aesthetic. As De Man says that contemporary Literary Theory comes into its own in such event as the application of Saussurian Linguistics to literary texts.

3.2.4 Semiotics:

The affinity between structural linguistics and literary texts is not as obvious as, with the hindsight of history, it now may seem. Saussure, Sapir and Bloomfield were concerned with the scientific foundations of linguistics. But the interest of philologists such as Roman Jakobson or literary critics such as Roland Barthes in Semiology reveals the natural attraction of literature to a theory of linguistic signs. They consider language as a system of signs and of signification. The encounter between Semiology and literature went considerably further than those of many other theoretical models. The responsiveness of literary texts to semiotic analysis is visible in that. The linguistics of Semiology and of literature apparently has something in common that only their shared perspective can detect and that pertains distinctively to them. The definition of this something, often referred to as literariness, has become the object of literary theory.

3.2.5 Structuralism:

De Man says that, the arrival of Saussurean structural linguistics made literary theory feasible. It led critics away from the standard biographical, historical and new critical formalist path and towards investigation of the theoretical ground for performing literary analysis. The Critics like Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette also turned towards the application of Saussurean model of language while the analysis of a literary work. They propounded the theory stating relationship between sign, signifier and signified. They see the relationship between signifier and signified as motivated, the one copying the other and representing in its material from the signified essence of the thing (and not the thing itself). The signifier unquestionably involves in the correspondence between the name and the thing names, and the relationship between word and thing is conventions.

De Man further says that Semiology or other linguistic oriented methods or theories are thus inevitably to be considered formalistic and seeking relationship with aesthetics to some extent. He asks whether it is possible to be a writer without some sort of belief in the natural relationship between names and essences. He says that the writer is the conveyor of the myth which wants language to imitate the idea, thus the signs appear as motivated signs and this to De Man is resistance to the function of language itself.

3.2.6 Literariness:

Literariness is often misunderstood today because it is used as another word for aesthetic response. This misunderstanding is there because the word literariness has been used with such terms as style and stylistics, form or even poetry, all of which carry strong aesthetic connotations. The most misleading meaning of literariness and the objection to contemporary literary theory considers it as a denial of the reality principle in the name of absolute fiction. Literature is the fiction not because it refuses to acknowledge reality, but because it is not certain

that language functions according to principles, which are like those of the phenomenal world. It is therefore not certain that literature is a reliable source of information about anything but its own language.

De Man says that literariness is the rhetorical dimension or figurative element of language. It foregrounds the rhetorical over the grammatical and the logical function.

3.2.7 Resistance to Theory as a built-in-constituent of its discourse:

De Man says that, the development of literary theory is itself over determined by complications inherent in its very project. He states that, the resistance to theory may be “a built-in-constituent of its discourse”. It may well be, in other words, that the polemic opposition, the systematic non-understanding and misrepresentation, the unsubstantial about eternally recurrent objections, are the displaced symptoms of a resistance inherent in the theoretical enterprise itself. He says, “The real debate of literary theory is not with its polemical opponents but rather with its own methodological assumptions and possibilities”.

3.2.8 Resistance to theory is a Resistance to the use of Language about Language:

De Man states that, the most familiar and general linguistic model is the classical trivium which considers the science of language as consisting of grammar, rhetoric and logic (or dialectics) logic and grammar seem to have natural affinity for each other. The study of grammar is necessary for scientific and humanistic knowledge, but there is un-certain relationship between grammar and rhetoric. This is because of figurative language.

Figurative language no doubt, is a part of the study of grammar as well as semiotics and also that of rhetoric. Unlike grammar, Figurative language has text producing functions concerned with words; grammar on the other hand, is capable of extra-linguistic generalization. This tension between grammar and

rhetoric is because of reading. It is for this reason that the resistance to theory is a resistance to the use of language about language.

3.2.9 Resistance to theory is Resistance to reading:

The uncertain relationship between grammar and rhetoric is apparent. The tension between grammar and rhetoric is because of reading. The study of literary text is dependent on an act of reading. One has to have read at least some parts, however small of a text in order to be able to make a statement about it. Reading tries to make two things clear. First of all, that literature is not a message in which it can be taken for granted that the distinction between the message and the means of communication is clearly established. Second, grammatical decoding of text leaves much to be desired. Yet there is a move to replace rhetorical figures by grammatical codes, and this is done towards the mastering and the clarification of meaning.

De Man says that, no grammatical decoding could claim to reach the depth of a text. There are elements in all texts that are grammatical, but whose semantic function is not grammatically definable, neither in them nor in context. To make this point clear, he gives the example. He says that there is a problem how to interpret the case (genitive) in the title of Keats' unfinished epic "*The fall of Hyperion*" as meaning "*Hyperion's Fall*", the case story of the defeat of an older by a newer power. It is about a character that resembles Apollo rather than Hyperion the same Apollo who, in the first version (called 'Hyperion') should definitely be triumphantly standing rather than falling. Then the question arises Does the title tell us that, Hyperion is fallen and that Apollo stands, or does it tell us that Hyperion and Apollo (and Keats) are interchangeable in that all of them are necessarily and constantly falling? Both readings are grammatically correct, but it is impossible to decide from the context which version is right one. One could then read the word 'Hyperion' in the title figural, or, if one wishes, inter textually as referring to the title of Keats own earlier text

(Hyperion), but again meaning is not clear, since the story of the fall of the first version, as told in the second, applies to the first version only and could not legitimately be read as meaning also the fall of “*the Fall of Hyperion*”.

The undecidability is due to the figural or literal status of the proper name Hyperion as well as of the verb falling, and is thus it is a matter of figuration and not of grammar. In ‘Hyperion’s Fall, the word ‘fall’ is plainly figural, the representation of a figural fall, and we, as readers, read this fall standing up, But in ‘Hyperion falling’, this is not so clearly the case, for if Hyperion can be Apollo and Apollo can be Keats, then he can also be us and his figural (or symbolic) fall becomes his and our literal falling as well of reading.

It all depends on how we read the text. It should be read not only as an exercise in semantics, but in what it really does to us. If we face the question how to take decision, then no grammatical or logical analysis is going to help us; as rhetoric has a negative relationship with grammar and logic.

Thus, the resistance to theory is a resistance to reading.

3.2.10 Resistance to theory is itself a theory:

De Man says that nothing can overcome the resistance to theory since theory is itself this resistance. By resisting theory, he advocates a new theory. According to him the only way to oppose a theory, is to form own theory.

So he says that, Resistance to Theory is itself a Theory.

3.3 Various aspects from which the Essay can be studied:

1) To study the essay from the point of view of resistance to the use or language and reading.

3.4 Summary of the Unit:

Paul de Man’s Essay ‘*The Resistance to theory*’ explores the task and philosophical bases of literary theory. De Man uses the example of the Classical Tritium of grammar, rhetoric, and logic to argue that the use of linguistic

sciences in literary theory and criticism was able to harmonize the logical and grammatical dimension of literature but only at the expense of effacing to rhetorical elements of texts which presented the greatest interpretive demands.

He posits that, the resistance to theory is the resistance to reading thus the resistance to theory is theory itself- or the resistance to theory is what constitutes the possibility and existence of theory. Taking up the example of the title of Keats poem “the Fall of Hyperion”, De man draws out an irreducible interpretive undecidability which bears strong affinities to the same term in Derrida’s work and some similarities to the notion of in-commensurability, for this De Man says that, “Literary Theory is not in danger of going under, it cannot help but flourish and the more it is resisted the more it flourishes, since the language of Self-resistance.”

3.5 Difficult words:

- 1) Elucidate - Explain
- 2) Feasible - Possible
- 3) Connotations - meaning
- 4) Semantic - Related to meaning

3.6 Questions for self learning:

- 1) “The Resistance to theory is only a displacement of a much deeper resistance, or contradiction in theory itself” - Elucidate.
- 2) Explain Paul De Man’s The Resistance to Theory as undoing of theory.
- 3) “The more it is resisted, the more it flourishes, since the language it speaks is the language of self-resistance”. Evaluate
- 4) Paul De Man’s views on linguistically oriented theories.
- 5) Resistance as a built -in-constituent of literary theory.

6) Evaluate Paul De Man's argument," The Resistance to theory is in fact a resistance to reading".

7) Paul De Man's concept of a literary theory.

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Unit 4

M.H. Abrams -The Deconstructive Angel

4.0 Objectives:

- i) To acquaint the learners with the critics
 - (a) J. Hills Miller and (b) M.H. Abrams
- ii) To acquaint the learners with the theory of Deconstruction.
- iii) To study the following concepts:
 - (a) Post-structuralism (b) ecriture
 - (c) Trace (d) Deconstruction (e) Canny and uncanny critic
- iv) To study '*The Deconstructive Angel*' by M.H. Abrams

4.1 About the Author/Critic

M.H. Abrams (1912) Studied at Harvard and taught for many years at Cornell University. He belongs to the tradition of literary criticism which sees a work of literature in the light of the historical and humanistic values of the historical and humanistic values of the period of its birth. His study of the Romantic poetics *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953) is a classic of modern literary scholarship. His other publications include *A Glossary of Literary Term*' and *Natural Supernaturalism* The later book led indirectly to the writing of the paper *The Deconstructive Angel*.

4.2 About the Essay:

The essay *The Deconstructive Angel* was presented at a session of the Modern Language Association (MLA) in 1976 which was chaired by Sheldon Sacks. Wayne C. Booth and J. Hillis who were involved in a debate over Abram's book '*Natural Supernaturalism*' were also present at the session. The book is both a lucid exposition of the deconstructionist theory of discourse, and also an attack on it from the stand point of traditional humanist scholarship. The central

argument is that, in their own discursive practice, the deconstructionists rely on the communicative power of language which they theoretically deny. Abrams compares between the humanist critics and the post-structuralists and points out the serious drawbacks of the later school. There is a clash between two big theoretical traditions: humanistic and aggressively experimental (i.e. linguistic).

4.3 The Title of the Essay:

The title of the essay refers to William Blake's poem *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Here, the angel plays double game with Blake. The Angel tells Blake about the hell. But as soon the angel disappears, Blake finds himself on the bank of a beautiful river with moon in the sky. Blake then tells the angel that he could see it (the hell) because of the angel's metaphysics. Abram calls J. Hillis Miller, the Angel of Deconstruction. Like the angel of Blake, Miller also plays a double game i.e. his behavior is contradictory. He behaves like a deconstructionist when he is interpreting a text. But he speaks differently when he is on the platform.

4.4 Topic Explanation

4.4.1 M.H. Abrams defense of pluralism.

4.4.2 The premises of the traditional Historians which Abrams support.

4.4.3 Abrams views on Linguistic Interpretations

4.4.4 Linguistic premises of Jacques Derrida.

4.4.5 Linguistic premises of J. Hillis Miller.

4.4.6 J. Hillis Miller and the double role.

The Deconstructive Angel M. H. Abrams

Demogorgon. -If the Abyss Could vomit forth its secrets:-but a voice Is wanting ... -Shelley, Prometheus Unbound We have been instructed these days to be wary of words like "origin," "center," and "end," but I will venture to say that this session had its origin in the dialogue between Wayne Booth and myself which centered on the rationale of the historical procedures in my book, *Natural Supernaturalism*. Hillis Miller had, in all innocence, written a review of that book; he was cited and answered by Booth, then re-cited and re-answered by me, and so was sucked into the vortex of our exchange to make it now a dialogue of three. And given the demonstrated skill of our chairman in fomenting debates, who can predict how many others will be drawn into the vortex before it comes to an end? I shall take this occasion to explore the crucial issue that was raised by Hillis Miller in his challenging review. I agreed with Wayne Booth that pluralism-the bringing to bear on a subject of diverse points of view, with diverse results-is not only valid, but necessary to our understanding of literary and cultural history: in such pursuits the convergence of diverse points of view is the only way to achieve a vision in depth.

I also said, however, that Miller's radical statement, in his review, of the principles of what he calls deconstructive interpretation goes beyond the limits of pluralism, by making impossible anything that we would account as literary and cultural history.¹ The issue would hardly 1. "Rationality and Imagination in Cultural History: A Reply to Wayne Booth," *Critical Inquiry* 2 (Spring 1976): 456-60. 425 This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions 426 M. H. Abrams *The Deconstructive Angel* be worth pursuing on this public platform if it were only a question of the soundness of the historical claims in a single book. But Miller considered *Natural Supernaturalism* as an example "in the grand tradition of modern humanistic scholarship, the tradition of Curtius, Auerbach, Lovejoy, C. S. Lewis,"² and he made it clear that what is at stake is the validity of the premises and procedures of the entire body of traditional inquiries in the human sciences. And that is patently a matter important enough to warrant our discussion.

Let me put as curtly as I can the essential, though usually implicit, premises that I share with traditional historians of Western culture, which Miller puts in question and undertakes to subvert: 1. The basic materials of history are written texts; and the authors who wrote these texts (with some off-center exceptions) exploited the possibilities and norms of their inherited language to say something determinate, and assumed that competent readers, insofar as these shared their own linguistic skills, would be able to understand what they said. 2. The historian is indeed for the most part able to interpret not only what the passages that he cites might mean now, but also what their writers meant

when they wrote them. Typically, the historian puts his interpretation in language which is partly his author's and partly his own; if it is sound, this interpretation approximates, closely enough for the purpose at hand, what the author meant. 3. The historian presents his interpretation to the public in the expectation that the expert reader's interpretation of a passage will approximate his own and so confirm the "objectivity" of his interpretation. The worldly-wise author expects that some of his interpretations will turn out to be mistaken, but such errors, if limited in scope, will not seriously affect the soundness of his overall history.

If, however, the bulk of his interpretations are misreadings, his book is not to be accounted a history but an historical fiction. Notice that I am speaking here of linguistic interpretation, not of what is confusingly called "historical interpretation"-that is, the categories, topics, and conceptual and explanatory patterns that the historian brings to his investigation of texts, which serve to shape the story within which passages of texts, with their linguistic meanings, serve as instances and evidence. The differences among these organizing categories, topics, and patterns effect the diversity in the stories that different historians tell, and which a pluralist theory finds acceptable. Undeniably, the linguistic meanings of the passages cited are in some degree responsive to differences in the perspective that a historian 2. "Tradition and Difference," *Diacritics* 2 (Winter 1972): 6. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 427 brings to bear on them; but the linguistic meanings are also in considerable degree recalcitrant to alterations in perspective, and the historian's fidelity to these meanings, without his manipulating and twisting them to fit his preconceptions, serves as a prime criterion of the soundness of the story that he undertakes to tell.

One other preliminary matter: I don't claim that my interpretation of the passages I cite exhausts everything that these passages mean. In his review, Hillis Miller says that "a literary or philosophical text, for Abrams, has a single unequivocal meaning 'corresponding' to the various entities it 'represents' in a more or less straightforward mirroring." I don't know how I gave Miller the impression that my "theory of language is implicitly mimetic," a "straightforward mirror" of the reality it reflects,³ except on the assumption he seems to share with Derrida, and which seems to me obviously mistaken, that all views of language which are not in the deconstructive mode are mimetic views. My view of language, as it happens, is by and large functional and pragmatic: language, whether spoken or written, is the use of a great variety of speech-acts to accomplish a great diversity of human purposes; only one of these many purposes is to assert something about a state of affairs; and such a linguistic assertion does not mirror, but serves to direct attention to selected aspects of that state of affairs. At any rate, I think it is quite true that many of the passages I cite are equivocal and multiplex in meaning. All I claim-all that

any traditional historian needs to claim-is that, whatever else the author also meant, he meant, at a sufficient approximation, at least this, and that the "this" that I specify is sufficient to the story I undertake to tell. Other historians, having chosen to tell a different story, may in their interpretation identify different aspects of the meanings conveyed by the same passage. That brings me to the crux of my disagreement with Hillis Miller. His central contention is not simply that I am sometimes, or always, wrong in my interpretation, but instead that I-like other traditional historians-can never be right in my interpretation.

For Miller assents to Nietzsche's challenge of "the concept of 'rightness' in interpretation," and to Nietzsche's assertion that "the same text authorizes innumerable interpretations (Auslegungen): there is no 'correct' interpretation."⁴ Nietzsche's views of interpretation, as Miller says, are relevant to the recent deconstructive theorists, including Jacques Derrida and himself, who have "reinterpreted Nietzsche" or have written "directly or indirectly under his aegis." He goes on to quote a number of statements from Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* to the effect, as Miller puts it, "that reading is never the objective identifying of a sense but the importation 3. Ibid., pp. 10-11. 4. Ibid., pp. 8, 12. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions 428 M. H. Abrams *The Deconstructive Angel* of meaning into a text which has no meaning 'in itself.' " For example: "Ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them." "In fact interpretation is itself a means of becoming master of something."⁵ On the face of it, such sweeping deconstructive claims might suggest those of Lewis Carroll's linguistic philosopher, who asserted that meaning is imported into a text by the interpreter's will to power: "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master-that's all." But of course I don't at all believe that such deconstructive claims are, in Humpty Dumpty fashion, simply dogmatic assertions.

Instead, they are conclusions which are derived from particular linguistic premises. I want, in the time remaining, to present what I make out to be the elected linguistic premises, first of Jacques Derrida, then of Hillis Miller, in the confidence that if I misinterpret these theories, my errors will soon be challenged and corrected. Let me eliminate suspense by saying at the beginning that I don't think that their radically skeptical conclusions from these premises are wrong. On the contrary, I believe that their conclusions are right-in fact, they are infallibly right, and that's where the trouble lies. 1 It is often said that Derrida and those who follow his lead subordinate all inquiries to a prior inquiry into language. This is true enough, but not specific enough, for it does not distinguish Derrida's work from what Richard Rorty calls "the linguistic turn" which characterizes modern Anglo-American philosophy and also a great part of Anglo-American literary criticism, including the "New Criticism," of the last half-century. What is distinctive about Derrida is first that, like other

French structuralists, he shifts his inquiry from language to &criture, the written or printed text; and second that he conceives a text in an ex-traordinarily limited fashion. Derrida's initial and decisive strategy is to disestablish the priority, in traditional views of language, of speech over writing. By priority I mean the use of oral discourse as the conceptual model from which to derive the semantic and other features of written language and of lan-guage in general. And Derrida's shift of elementary reference is to a 5. Ibid. 6. Richard Rorty, ed., *The Linguistic Turn* (Chicago and London, 1967). This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 429 written text which consists of what we find when we look at it-to "un texte dj a escrit, noir sur blanc."7 In the dazzling play of Derrida's exposi-tions, his ultimate recourse is to these black marks on white paper as the sole things that are actually present in reading, and so are not fictitious constructs, illusions, phantasms; the visual features of these black-on-blanks he expands in multiple dimensions of elaborately figurative significance, only to contract them again, at telling moments, to their elemental status.

The only things that are patently there when we look at a text are "marks" that are demarcated, and separated into groups, by "blanks"; there are also "spaces," "margins," and the "repetitions" and "differences" that we find when we compare individual marks and groups of marks. By his rhetorical mastery Derrida solicits us to follow him in his move to these new premises, and to allow ourselves to be locked into them. This move is from what he calls the closed "logocen-tric" model of all traditional or "classical" views of language (which, he maintains, is based on the illusion of a Platonic or Christian transcendent being or presence, serving as the origin and guarantor of meanings) to what I shall call his own graphocentric model, in which the sole pres-ences are marks-on-blanks. By this bold move Derrida puts out of play, before the game even begins, every source of norms, controls, or indicators which, in the ordi-nary use and experience of language, set a limit to what we can mean and what we can be understood to mean. Since the only givens are already-existing marks, "d~ej' acrit," we are denied recourse to a speak-ing or writing subject, or ego, or cogito, or consciousness, and so to any possible agency for the intention of meaning something ("vouloir dire"); all such agencies are relegated to the status of fictions generated by language, readily dissolved by deconstructive analysis. By this move he leaves us no place for referring to how we learn to speak, understand, or read language, and how, by interaction with more competent users and by our own developing experience with language, we come to recognize and correct our mistakes in speaking or understanding. The author is translated by Derrida (when he's not speaking in the momentary short-hand of traditional fictions) to a status as one more mark among other marks, placed at the head or the end of a text or set of texts, which are denominated as "bodies of work identified according to the 'proper name' of

a signature."⁸ Even syntax, the organization of words into a significant sentence, is given no role in determining the meanings of component words, for according to the graphocentric model, when we look at a page we see no organization but only a "chain" of grouped marks, a sequence of individual signs.

It is the notion of "the sign" that allows Derrida a limited opening- 7. Jacques Derrida, "La Double seance," in *La Dissimulation* (Paris, 1972), p. 203. 8. Derrida, "La Mythologie blanche: la metaphore dans le texte philosophique," in *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris, 1972), p. 304. Translations throughout are my own. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions 430 M. H. Abrams The Deconstructive Angel out of his premises. For he brings to a text the knowledge that the marks on a page are not random markings, but signs, and that a sign has a dual aspect as signifier and signified, signal and concept, or mark-with-meaning. But these meanings, when we look at a page, are not there, either as physical or mental presences. To account for significance, Derrida turns to a highly specialized and elaborated use of Saussure's notion that the identity either of the sound or of the signification of a sign does not consist in a positive attribute, but in a negative (or relational) attribute-that is, its "difference," or differentiability, from other sounds and other significations within a particular linguistic system.⁹ This notion of difference is readily available to Derrida, because inspection of the printed page shows that some marks and sets of marks repeat each other, but that others differ from each other. In Derrida's theory "difference"-not "the difference between a and b and c.. ." but simply "difference" in itself-supplements the static elements of a text with an essential operative term, and as such (somewhat in the fashion of the term "negativity" in the dialectic of Hegel) it performs prodigies.

For "difference" puts into motion the incessant play (*jeu*) of signification that goes on within the seeming immobility of the marks on the printed page. To account for what is distinctive in the signification of a sign, Derrida puts forward the term "trace," which he says is not a presence, though it functions as a kind of "simulacrum" of a signified presence. Any signification that difference has activated in a signifier in the past re-mains active as a "trace" in the present instance as it will in the future,¹⁰ and the "sedimentation" of traces which a signifier has accumulated constitutes the diversity in the play of its present significations. This trace is an elusive aspect of a text which is not, yet functions as though it were; it plays a role without being "present"; it "appears/disappears"; "in presenting itself it effaces itself."¹¹ Any attempt to define or interpret the significance of a sign or chain of signs consists in nothing more than the interpreter's putting in its place another sign or chain of signs, "sign-substitutions," whose self-effacing traces merely defer laterally, from substitution to substitution, the fixed and present meaning (or the signified "presence") we vainly pursue. The promise that the trace seems to offer of a

presence on which the play of signification can come to rest in a determinate reference is thus never realizable, but incessantly de-ferred, put off, delayed. Derrida coins what in French is the portmanteau term *différance* (spelled -ance, and fusing the notions of differing and deferring) to indicate the endless play of generated significances, in 9. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York, 1959), pp. 117-21. 10. Derrida, "La Différance," in *Marges de la philosophie*, pp. 12-14, 25. 11. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 431 which the reference is interminably postponed.¹² The conclusion, as Derrida puts it, is that "the central signified, the originating or transcen-dental signified" is revealed to be "never absolutely present outside a system of differences," and this "absence of an ultimate signified extends the domain and play of signification to infinity."¹³ What Derrida's conclusion comes to is that no sign or chain of signs can have a determinate meaning.

But it seems to me that Derrida reaches this conclusion by a process which, in its own way, is no less dependent on an origin, ground, and end, and which is no less remorse-lessly "teleological," than the most rigorous of the metaphysical systems that he uses his conclusions to deconstruct. His origin and ground are his graphocentric premises, the closed chamber of texts for which he invites us to abandon our ordinary realm of experience in speaking, hearing, reading, and understanding language. And from such a begin-ning we move to a foregone conclusion. For Derrida's chamber of texts is a sealed echo-chamber in which meanings are reduced to a ceaseless echolalia, a vertical and lateral reverberation from sign to sign of ghostly non-presences emanating from no voice, intended by no one, referring to nothing, bombinating in a void. For the mirage of traditional interpretation, which vainly under-takes to determine what an author meant, Derrida proposes the alterna-tive that we deliver ourselves over to a free participation in the infinite free-play of signification opened out by the signs in a text. And on this cheerless prospect of language and the cultural enterprise in ruins Der-rida bids us to try to gaze, not with a Rousseauistic nostalgia for a lost security as to meaning which we never in fact possessed, but instead with "a Nietzschean affirmation, the joyous affirmation of the play of the world and of the innocence of becoming, the affirmation of a world of signs without error [faute], without truth, without origin, which is offered to an active interpretation. And it plays without security. In absolute chance, affirmation also surrenders itself to genetic indeterminacy, to the seminal chanciness [aventure] of the trace."¹⁴ The graphocentric premises eventuate in what is patently a metaphysics, a world-view of the free and unceasing play of *différance* which (since we can only glimpse this world by striking free of language, which inescapably implicates the entire 12. In the traditional or "classical" theory of signs, as Derrida describes the view that he dismantles, the sign is taken to be "a deferred presence ... the circulation of

signs defers the moment in which we will be able to encounter the thing itself, to get hold of it, consume or expend it, touch it, see it, have a present intuition of it" (ibid., p. 9). See also "Hors livre" in *La Dissemination*, pp. 10-11. 13. Derrida, "La Structure, le signe et le jeu dans le discours des sciences humaines," in *L'Écriture et la différence* (Paris, 1967), p. 411. 14. Ibid., p. 427. Derrida adds that this "interpretation of interpretation," which "affirms free-play . . . tries to pass beyond man and humanism . . ." On the coming "monstrosity," see also *De la grammatologie* (Paris, 1967), p. 14.

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The Deconstructive Angel metaphysics of presence that this view replaces) we are not able even to name. Derrida's vision is thus, as he puts it, of an "as yet unnamable something which cannot announce itself except ... under the species of a non-species, under the formless form, mute, infant, and terrifying, of monstrosity."¹⁵ 2 Hillis Miller sets up an apt distinction between two classes of current structuralist critics, the "canny critics" and the "uncanny critics." The canny critics cling still to the possibility of "a structuralist-inspired criti-cism as a rational and rationalizable activity, with agreed-upon rules of procedure, given facts, and measurable results." The uncanny critics have renounced such a nostalgia for impossible certainties.¹⁶ And as himself an uncanny critic, Miller's persistent enterprise is to get us to share, in each of the diverse works that he criticizes, its self-deconstructive revelation that in default of any possible origin, ground, presence, or end, it is an interminable free-play of indeterminable mean-ings. Like Derrida, Miller sets up as his given the written text, "innocent black marks on a page"¹⁷ which are endowed with traces, or vestiges of meaning; he then employs a variety of strategies that maximize the number and diversity of the possible meanings while minimizing any factors that might limit their free-play. It is worthwhile to note briefly two of those strategies. For one thing Miller applies the terms "interpretation" and "mean-ing" in an extremely capacious way, so as to conflate linguistic utterance or writing with any metaphysical representation of theory or of "fact" about the physical world. These diverse realms are treated equivalently as "texts" which are "read" or "interpreted." He thus leaves no room for taking into account that language, unlike the physical world, is a cultural institution that developed expressly in order to mean something and to convey what is meant to members of a community who have learned how to use and interpret language. And within the realm of explicitly verbal texts, Miller allows for no distinction with regard to the kinds of norms that may obtain or may not obtain for the "interpretation" of the entire 15. Derrida, "La Structure, le signe," p. 428. "We possess no language ... which is alien to this history; we cannot express a single destructive proposition which will not already have slipped into the form, the logic, and the implicit postulates of that very thing that it seeks to oppose." "Each limited borrowing drags along with it all of metaphysics" (pp. 412-13).

16. J. Hillis Miller, "Stevens' Rock and Criticism as Cure, II," *The Georgia Review* 30 (Summer 1976): 335-36. 17. Miller, "Walter Pater: A Partial Portrait," *Daedalus* 105 (Winter 1976): 107. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 433 corpus of an individual author's writings, or of a single work in its totality, or of a particular passage, sentence, or word within that work.

As a critical pluralist, I would agree that there are a diversity of sound (though not equally adequate) interpretations of the play *King Lear*, yet I claim to know precisely what Lear meant when he said, "Pray you undo this button." A second strategy is related to Derrida's treatment of the "trace." Like Derrida, Miller excludes by his elected premises any control or limitation of signification by reference to the uses of a word or phrase that are current at the time an author writes, or to an author's intention, or to the verbal or generic context in which a word occurs. Any word within a given text-or at least any "key word," as he calls it, that he picks out for special scrutiny-can thus be claimed to signify any and all of the diverse things it has signified in the varied forms that the signifier has assumed through its recorded history; and not only in a particular language, such as English or French, but back through its etymology in Latin and Greek all the way to its postulated Indo-European root. Whenever and by whomever and in whatever context a printed word is used, therefore, the limits of what it can be said to mean in that use are set only by what the interpreter can find in historical and etymological dictionaries, supplemented by any further information that the interpreter's own erudition can provide. Hence Miller's persistent re-course to etymology-and even to the significance of the shapes of the printed letters in the altering form of a word-in expounding the texts to which he turns his critical attention.¹⁸ Endowed thus with the sedimented meanings accumulated over its total history, but stripped of any norms for selecting some of these and rejecting others, a key word-like the larger passage or total text of which the word is an element-becomes (in the phrase Miller cites from Mallarme) a *suspens vibratoire*,¹⁹ a vibratory suspension of equally likely meanings, and these are bound to include "incompatible" or "irreconcilable" or "contradictory" meanings. The conclusion from these views Miller formulates in a variety of ways: a key word, or a passage, or a text, since it is a ceaseless play of anomalous meanings, is "indeterminable," "undecipherable," "unreadable," "undecidable."²⁰ Or more bluntly: "All reading is misreading." "Any reading can be shown to be a misreading on evidence drawn from the text itself." But in misreading a text, the interpreter is merely repeating what the text itself has done before him, 18.

See, for example, his unfolding of the meanings of "cure" and "absurd" in "Stevens' Rock and Criticism as Cure," I, *The Georgia Review* 30 (Spring 1976): 6-11. For his analysis of significance in the altering shapes, through history, of the printed form of a word see his exposition of *abyme*, *ibid.*, p. 11;

also his exposition of the letter x in "Ariadne's Thread: Repetition and the Narrative Line," *Critical Inquiry* 3 (Autumn 1976): 75-76. 19. "Tradition and Difference," p. 12. 20. See, e.g., "Stevens' Rock," I, pp. 9-11; "Walter Pater," p. 111. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions 434 M. H. Abrams The Deconstructive Angel for "any literary text, with more or less explicitness or clarity, already reads or misreads itself."²¹ To say that this concept of interpretation cuts the ground out from under the kind of history I undertook to write is to take a very parochial view of what is involved; for what it comes to is that no text, in part or whole, can mean anything in particular, and that we can never say just what anyone means by anything he writes. But if all interpretation is misinterpretation, and if all criticism (like all history) of texts can engage only with a critic's own misconstruction, why bother to carry on the activities of interpretation and criticism? Hillis Miller poses this question more than once. He presents his answers in terms of his favorite analogues for the interpretive activity, which he explores with an unflagging resourcefulness. These analogues figure the text we read as a Cretan labyrinth, and also as the texture of a spider's web; the two figures, he points out, have been fused in earlier confluences in the myth of Ariadne's thread, by which Theseus retraces the windings of the labyrinth, and of Arachne's thread, with which she spins her web.²² Here is one of Miller's answers to the question, why pursue the critical enterprise? Pater's writings, like those of other major authors in the Occidental tradition, are at once open to interpretation and ultimately indecipherable, unreadable.

His texts lead the critic deeper and deeper into a labyrinth until he confronts a final aporia. This does not mean, however, that the reader must give up from the beginning the attempt to understand Pater. Only by going all the way into the labyrinth, following the thread of a given clue, can the critic reach the blind alley, vacant of any Minotaur, that impasse which is the end point of interpretation.²³ Now, I make bold to claim that I understand Miller's passage, and that what it says, in part, is that the deconstructive critic's act of interpretation has a beginning and an end; that it begins as an intentional, goal-oriented quest; and that this quest is to end in an impasse. The reaching of the interpretive aporia or impasse precipitates what Miller calls "the uncanny moment"-the moment in which the critic, thinking to deconstruct the text, finds that he has simply participated in the ceaseless play of the text as a self-deconstructive artefact. Here is another of Miller's statements, in which he describes both his own and Derrida's procedure: Deconstruction as a mode of interpretation works by a careful and circumspect entering of each textual labyrinth. . . . The deconstructive critic seeks to find, by this process of retracing, the ele- 21. "Walter Pater," p. 98; "Stevens' Rock, II," p. 333. 22. "Ariadne's Thread," p. 66. 23. "Walter Pater," p. 112. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to

JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 435 ment in the system studied which is alogical, the thread in the text in question which will unravel it all, or the loose stone which will pull down the whole building. The deconstruction, rather, annihilates the ground on which the building stands by showing that the text has already annihilated that ground, knowingly or unknowingly. Deconstruction is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself.²⁴ The uncanny moment in interpretation, as Miller phrases it elsewhere, is a sudden "mise en abyme" in which the bottom drops away and, in the endless regress of the self-baffling free-play of meanings in the very signs which both reveal an abyss and, by naming it, cover it over, we catch a glimpse of the abyss itself in a "vertigo of the underlying nothingness."²⁵ The "deconstructive critic," Miller has said, "seeks to find" the alogical element in a text, the thread which, when pulled, will unravel the whole texture. Given the game Miller has set up, with its graphocentric premises and freedom of interpretive maneuver, the infallible rule of the deconstructive quest is, "Seek and ye shall find." The deconstructive method works, because it can't help working; it is a can't-fail enterprise; there is no complex passage of verse or prose which could possibly serve as a counter-instance to test its validity or limits.

And the uncanny critic, whatever the variousness and distinctiveness of the texts to which he applies his strategies, is bound to find that they all reduce to one thing and one thing only. In Miller's own words: each deconstructive reading, "performed on any literary, philosophical, or critical text . . . reaches, in the particular way the given text allows it, the 'same' moment of an aporia. . . . The reading comes back again and again, with different texts, to the 'same' impasse."²⁶ It is of no avail to point out that such criticism has nothing whatever to do with our common experience of the uniqueness, the rich variety, and the passionate human concerns in works of literature, philosophy, or criticism—these are matters which are among the linguistic illusions that the criticism dismantles. There are, I want to emphasize, rich rewards in reading Miller, as in reading Derrida, which include a delight in his resourceful play of mind and language and the many and striking insights yielded by his wide reading and by his sharp eye for unsuspected congruities and differences in our heritage of literary and philosophical writings. But these rewards are yielded by the way, and that way is always to the ultimate experience of vertigo, the uncanny ²⁴. "Stevens' Rock, II," p. 341. See also "Walter Pater," p. 101, and "Ariadne's Thread," p. 74. ²⁵. "Stevens' Rock," I, pp. 11-12. The unnamable abyss which Miller glimpses has its parallel in the unnamable and terrifying monstrosity which Derrida glimpses; see above, p. 432. ²⁶. "Deconstructing the Deconstructors," *Diacritics* 5 (Summer 1975): 30. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions 436 M. H. Abrams *The Deconstructive Angel*

frisson at teetering with him on the brink of the abyss; and even the shock of this discovery is soon dulled by its expected and invariable recurrence.

I shall cite a final passage to exemplify the deft and inventive play of Miller's rhetoric, punning, and figuration, which give his formulations of the *mise en abyme* a charm that is hard to resist. In it he imposes his fused analogues of labyrinth and web and abyss on the black-on-blanks which constitute the elemental given of the deconstructive premises: Far from providing a benign escape from the maze, Ariadne's thread makes the labyrinth, is the labyrinth. The interpretation or solving of the puzzles of the textual web only adds more filaments to the web. One can never escape from the labyrinth because the activity of escaping makes more labyrinth, the thread of a linear narrative or story. Criticism is the production of more thread to embroider the texture or textile already there. This thread is like a filament of ink which flows from the pen of the writer, keeping him in the web but suspending him also over the chasm, the blank page that thin line hides.²⁷ To interpret: Hillis Miller, suspended by the labyrinthine lines of a textual web over the abyss that those black lines demarcate on the blank page, busies himself to unravel the web that keeps him from plunging into the blank-abyss, but finds he can do so only by an act of writing which spins a further web of lines, equally vulnerable to deconstruction, but only by another movement of the pen that will trace still another inky net over the ever-receding abyss.

As Miller remarks, I suppose ruefully, at the end of the passage I quoted, "In one version of Ariadne's story she is said to have hanged herself with her thread in despair after being abandoned by Theseus." ³ What is one to say in response to this abysmal vision of the textual world of literature, philosophy, and all the other achievements of man-kind in the medium of language? There is, I think, only one adequate response, and that is the one that William Blake made to the Angel in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. After they had groped their way down a "winding cavern," the Angel revealed to Blake a ghastly vision of hell as an "infinite Abyss"; in it was "the sun, black but shining," around which were "fiery tracks on which revolv'd vast spiders." But no sooner, says Blake, had "my friend the Angel" departed, "then this appearance was no more, but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river by moon light, hearing a harper who sung to a harp." The Angel, "sur- 27. "Stevens' Rock, II," p. 337. This content downloaded from 147.226.161.143 on Fri, 11 Oct 2013 10:23:47 AM All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions Critical Inquiry Spring 1977 437 prised asked me how I escaped? I answered: 'All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics.' " As a deconstructive Angel, Hillis Miller, I am happy to say, is not serious about deconstruction, in Hegel's sense of "serious"; that is, he does not entirely and consistently commit himself to the consequences of his premises.

He is in fact, fortunately for us, a double agent who plays the game of language by two very different sets of rules. One of the games he plays is that of

a deconstructive critic of literary texts. The other is the game he will play in a minute or two when he steps out of his graphocentric premises onto this platform and begins to talk to us. I shall hazard a prediction as to what Miller will do then. He will have determinate things to say and will masterfully exploit the resources of language to express these things clearly and forcibly, addressing him-self to us in the confidence that we, to the degree that we have mastered the constitutive norms of this kind of discourse, will approximate what he means. He will show no inordinate theoretical difficulties about beginning his discourse or conducting it through its middle to an end. What he says will manifest, by immediate inference, a thinking subject or ego and a distinctive and continuant ethos, so that those of you who, like myself, know and admire his recent writings will be surprised and delighted by particularities of what he says, but will correctly anticipate both its general tenor and its highly distinctive style and manner of proceeding.

What he says, furthermore, will manifest a feeling as well as thinking subject; and unless it possesses a superhuman forbearance, this subject will express some natural irritation that I, an old friend, should so obtusely have misinterpreted what he has said in print about his critical intentions. Before coming here, Miller worked his thoughts (which involved inner speech) into the form of writing. On this platform, he will proceed to convert this writing to speech; and it is safe to say—since our chair-man is himself a double agent, editor of a critical journal as well as organizer of this symposium—that soon his speech will be reconverted to writing and presented to the public. This substitution of *écriture* for *parole* will certainly make a difference, but not an absolute difference; what Miller says here, that is, will not jump an ontological gap to the printed page, shedding on the way all the features that made it intelligible as discourse. For each of his readers will be able to reconvert the black-on-blanks back into speech, which he will hear in his mind's ear; he will perceive the words not simply as marks nor as sounds, but as already invested with meaning; also, by immediate inference, he will be aware in his reading of an intelligent subject, very similar to the one we will infer while listening to him here, who organizes the well-formed and significant sentences and marshals the argument conveyed by the text.

There is no linguistic or any other law we can appeal to that will prevent a deconstructive critic from bringing his graphocentric proce-

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438 M. H. Abrams The Deconstructive Angel dures to bear on the printed version of Hillis Miller's discourse—or of mine, or of Wayne Booth's—and if he does, he will infallibly be able to translate the text into a vertiginous *mise en abyme*. But those of us who stubbornly refuse to substitute the rules of the

deconstructive enterprise for our ordinary skill and tact at language will find that we are able to understand this text very well. In many ways, in fact, we will understand it better than while hearing it in the mode of oral discourse, for the institution of print will render the fleeting words of his speech by a durable graphic correlate which will enable us to take our own and not the speaker's time in attending to it, as well as to re-read it, to collocate, and to ponder until we are satisfied that we have approximated the author's meaning. After Hillis Miller and I have pondered in this way over the text of the other's discourse, we will probably, as experience in such matters indicates, continue essentially to disagree. By this I mean that neither of us is apt to find the other's reasons so compelling as to get him to change his own interpretive premises and aims.

But in the process, each will have come to see more clearly what the other's reasons are for doing what he does, and no doubt come to discover that some of these reasons are indeed good reasons in that, however short of being compelling, they have a bearing on the issue in question. In brief, insofar as we set ourselves, in the old-fashioned way, to make out what the other means by what he says, I am confident that we shall come to a better mutual understanding. After all, without that confidence that we can use language to say what we mean and can interpret language so as to determine what was meant, there is no rationale for the dialogue in which we are now engaged.

4.4.1 M.H. Abrams Defense of Pluralism:

The essay begins with the review of J. Hillis Miller of Abrams' which contains historical procedures. In his reply to Miller, Abrams defends pluralism-bringing together of diverse points of view on a subject, with diverse results. The approach is not only valid but also necessary to the understanding of literary and cultural history. In the study of literature and culture, only pluralism can

help to achieve deep knowledge. According to Miller, the premises and procedures of traditional studies in the human sciences are at stake (in danger).

4.4.2 The premises of the Traditional Historians which Abrams Supports

4.4.2 i) The basic materials of history are written texts. The authors of the text used the rules of their language to say something determinate. They assumed that their readers would be able to understand what they have said in their text.

4.4.2 ii) The historian, as an interpreter of the author's statement tries to approximate the meanings intended by the author and aims to convey them to the readers. He puts his interpretation in sound if it approximates what the author meant.

4.4.2 iii) The historian presents his interpretation to the public in the expectation that the expert reader's interpretation of a passage will approximate his own and thus confirm the "objectivity" of his interpretation. The author knows that some of his interpretations will be taken as mistakes. If there are many errors, his book will not be accepted as history but as historical fiction.

4.4.3 M.H. Abrams' views on Linguistic Interpretation:

According to Abrams, the differences among the organizing categories, topics and patterns used by the historians affect the diversity in the stories told by different historians. The pluralist theory accepts the fact. The historian's faithfulness to the linguistic meanings reveals the soundness of the story.

Miller on his review of Abrams' book 'Natural Supernaturalism' says that for Abrams, 'a literary text has a single meaning'. Miller wants to suggest that Abrams' theory of language is mimetic and a straightforward 'mirror' of the reality it reflects.

Abrams does not agree with the charge. He comments that it is wrong to say that all views of language which are not in the deconstructive mode are mimetic views. His views are functional and pragmatic. Language is used to achieve a

great diversity of human purposes. One of these purposes is to assert something about a state of affair. Such an assertion does not mirror and so it is not mimetic. It serves to direct attention to select aspects of that state of affairs.

Abrams agrees that many passages quoted in *Natural Supernaturalism* have multiple meanings. He claims that whatever the author means is similar to the meaning taken by the reader and this is sufficient for the story he tells. The opinions of Abrams and Miller are different. Miller does not claim that Abrams is always wrong in his interpretation. But being a traditional historian, he can never be right in his interpretation. Miller agrees to Nietzsche's claim that there is no correct interpretation as the same text authorizes innumerable interpretations. Nietzsche's views of interpretation are relevant to the deconstructionist like Jacques Derrida. Miller accepts Nietzsche's opinion 'that reading is never the objective identifying of a sense but the importation of meaning into a text which has no meaning 'in it'. Interpretation helps us to get mastery over something. Miller and the deconstructionists agree to the view of the linguistic philosopher Lewis Carroll that meaning is imported into a text. For Abrams the trouble lies in the claim that the conclusions of deconstructivists are infallibly right. He opposes the views of deconstructionists.

4.4.4 Linguistic Premises of Jacques Derrida:

The first premise is his shift of study from spoken form of language to its written form. Like the French Structuralists, he shifts his inquiry from language to *écriture*. Earlier speech or *parole* is given primary importance but Derrida gives more importance to writing (*écriture*).

The Second premise is that a written text consists of black marks which are separated by blanks, spaces and margins. The reader allows himself to be locked into them. To Derrida, it is a move from the "logo centric model" to his "graphocentric model". The author is taken as an additional mark. Even the structural element of language, syntax, is not given any role in determining the

meanings of words; for according to graphocentric model, when we look at a page we see no organization but only a 'chain' of grouped marks, a sequence of individual signs. The black marks on white paper are the sole things that are actually present in reading. The marks on the page are not marks but signs. The author is also considered by Derrida as one more mark among other marks.

The marks on a page are not random markings, but they are signs. A sign has a dual aspect as signifier and signified, signal and concept, or mark with meaning. But these meanings (significations) consist not in a positive attribute, but in a negative (or relational) attribute - that is, its difference. Derrida used the portmanteau word "difference" which means both to be different and to defer. This difference puts into motion (brings out) the incessant (continuous) play of signification (meaning) that goes on within the seeming immobility of the marks on the printed page. In this way the absence of meaning extends its field.

Derrida uses the term 'trace' to show what is distinctive in the signification. It is an elusive aspect of a text. It is not there but functions as if it were there. It appears and disappears and the reader has to go in search of it. In presenting itself it effaces itself. Derrida's conclusion is that no sign or chain of signs can have a determinate meaning.

4.4.5 Linguistic Premises of J. Hillis Miller:

Miller distinguishes between two classes of structuralist critics, the 'canny critics' and the 'uncanny critics'. The canny critics follow the possibility of 'a structuralist inspired criticism as a rational and rationalisable activity, with agreed upon rules of procedures, given facts and measurable results'. The uncanny critics support impossible uncertainties. Miller is himself an uncanny critic. In his interpretation, there is an indeterminable free-play of indeterminable meanings.

Secondly, Miller accepts Derrida's view that a text is nothing but "innocent block marks on a page". The marks possess traces. Miller suggests a number of

ways of maximizing the number of the possible meanings of the marks. Two of these methods are worthy to be considered.

A) Miller uses the terms 'interpretation' and 'meaning' in a very capacious way.

b) The second method is related to Derrida's treatment of 'trace'. Like Derrida, he does not allow any control or limitations of signification. Words exclude meanings like a diamond irradiating rays of light. Words are picked-up from the text and contemplated in all the possibilities of meaning that they exhibit. They are claimed to signify "any and all the diverse things they have signified" in the entire course of their evolution (development) in the recorded history.

For Miller 'all reading is misreading'. A Key word-like the larger passage or total text-is a vibratory suspension of equally likely meanings. These are bound to include 'incompatible' or 'irreconcilable' or contradictory meanings. Such a word is called a suspense vibratoire. Miller concludes that such a key word is a ceaseless play of anomalous meanings; its meaning is 'indeterminable'. 'Undecidable', 'undecipherable', 'unreadable'. All reading is misreading and 'Any reading can be shown to be a misreading on evidence drawn from the text itself; But in misreading a text, the interpreter is merely repeating what the text itself has done before him, because 'any literary text, with more or less explicitness or clarity, already reads or misreads itself'. If this is true, why should one carry on the activity of interpretation or criticism? Miller provides the answer through his favorite analogies of a Cretan labyrinth and of a Spiders web. Miller asserts that the deconstructive critic's act of interpretation has a beginning and an end. It begins as an intentional, goal-oriented quest and ends in an impasse. (a dead-lock) Miller finds that he has simply participated in the ceaseless play of the text as a self-deconstructive artifact. The deconstructive critic seeks to find the alogical element in the text. The element would help him like a thread which unravels (opens) the texture. The deconstructive method works because it is a can't fail enterprise. No complex passage can test its

validity. The uncanny critic is bound to find that they (the threads) all reduce to one thing. Miller asserts that each deconstructive reading reaches the same moment of an aporia. The reading comes again and again to the same impass (i.e. aporia). Abrams comments that the type of criticism mentioned by Miller has nothing to do with the human concerns in literary and critical works. Miller's criticism, for Abrams, is pleasant but abstract like an abyss i.e. a deep valley.

4.4.6 J. Hillis Miller: The Deconstructive Angel

According to Abrams, Miller is happily, in double role-one being a deconstructive critic and the other (phonocentric) will commence as soon as he steps out of the podium. He will do all determinate and definite things and will exploit the resources of language to express the things clearly and forcefully. He will apparently have recourse to norms of thinking, his words will have reference to outer world, and he will be displaying normative behavior. He will be a feeling and thinking subject, showing all the ordinary degrees of responses and emotional-rational-logical reactions. In short, His preaching will not be manifested in his practices-his black-on-blanks, marks-on-the blanks will be perceived as if vested with meanings, not showing a free-play of meanings, but concrete interpretable, referable and understandable meanings. In the essay Abrams is strongly underlining the inseparability of signifier from the signified. The linguistic binaries cannot be isolated from the human context.

Explanation of Concepts:

4.5 Some Important Concepts:

4.5.1 ecriture- a kind of writing that includes speech as well as thought-characteristic of both.

4.5.2 Trace- The self-effacing and residual effect of all the non-present meanings whose differences are inserted in the production of the 'meaning' of what is 'present'-marks left by all 'tracks' left.

4.5.3 Difference - The term is used by Derrida to present the ever-elusive nature of language. The term echoes the idea of endless difference (a final meaning is constantly postponed) and also the idea of difference (the exact meaning is never possible because of subtle variations in meaning). The term means both to be different and to differ.

4.5.4 Aporia - in Greek means impassable path. It suggests the “gaps” or lacuna between what a text means to say and what it is constrained to mean. It is central to Derrida’s theory of difference.

4.5.5 Langue and Parole - The terms are introduced by Ferdinand-de-Saussure. Langue is all the elements of a language plus the rules for their combination (grammar/syntax and so forth). Parole is the use which individuals make of the resources of language (individual utterance). Language is abstract and parole is concrete.

4.6 Glossary:

- 1) Vortex- Whirlpool
- 2) to warrant- to make something appropriate or necessary.
- 3) Objectivity - impartiality 4) recalcitrant-difficult to control/unwilling to obey rules or follow instructions.
- 5) Mimetic - imitative
- 6) equivocal - not clear/understood in many ways.
- 7) crux- the most important part
- 8) assents - agrees/approves
- 9) Conceives - to imagine/to form an idea.
- 10) Black marks on white paper - writing
- 11) Phantasm - things seen in imagination.

- 12) Solicits- to try to get something or persuade somebody to do something.
- 13) prodigies-meanings/signification.
- 14) portmanteau term - a fusion of two or more existing words. 'Difference' is a portmanteau term.
- 15) foregone conclusion - a conclusion that is certain to happen.
- 16) mirage - illusion/unrealistic
- 17) renounced- refuse to recognize
- 18) to conflate - to combine
- 19) erudition - scholarship
- 20) anomalous-abnormal/irregular
- 21) impass-deadlock
- 22) annihilate – destroy
- 23) labyrinth - a complicated series of paths, in which it is difficult to find your way through.
- 24) abyss - bottomless depth.
- 25) abysmal - of a very low standard.
- 26) logocentric - centered on 'logos'. It includes both 'graphocentric' and 'phonocentric'.

4.7 Self-learning Questions-

- i) What are the premises of the traditional humanism supported by Abrams?
- ii) What are the linguistic premises of J. Hillis Miller discussed in the essay?
- iii) Discuss the linguistic premises of Jacques Derrida as mentioned in 'The Deconstructive Angel'.
- iv) Explain the concepts Canny Critic and Uncanny Critic.

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4.9 The Tenets of Liberal Humanism -

Liberal Humanism: Propositions

4.9.1 Good literature is of timeless significance. It speaks to what is constant in human nature and so transcends the limitations and peculiarities of the age it was written in.

4.9.2 A literary work contains its own meaning within itself. It does not require any context.

4.9.3 To understand the text well it must be detached from the contexts (i.e.socio-political, literary, historical, and autobiographical) and studied in isolation. The close verbal analysis of the text is needed for the understanding of a work.

4.9.4 The same passions, emotions and even situations are seen again and again throughout human history. So continuity is more important and significant than innovation. ‘What oft was thought but never so well expressed’.

4.9.5 Individuality is a unique essence. The individual is antecedent to , or transcends the forces of society, experience and language.

4.9.6 The purpose of literature is essentially the enhancement of life and the propagations of human values, but not in a programmatic way.

4.9.7 Form and content in literature must be fused in an organic way. The one should grow inevitably from the other.

4.9.8 Literature should value the 'silent' showing and demonstrating of something. There should be no explaining or saying. The ideas should be given the concrete embodiment of 'enactment'.

4.9.9 Sincerity which comprises truth-to-experience, honesty towards the self, the capacity for human empathy and compassion, resides within the language of literature. It is not a factor an intention behind the work and can be discovered within the text in such matters as the avoidance of cliché, over-inflated forms of expression.

4.9.10 the job of criticism is to interpret the text, to mediate between it and the reader. A theoretical account of reading or of literature in general is not useful in criticism. This attitude refers to the philosophy of John Lock who puts forward the view that ideas are formed when direct sense impressions from the world are imprinted on the mind.

Unit - 5

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak -Feminism and Critical Theory

5.0 Objectives:

- 1) To help the learners to study the essay *Feminism and Critical Theory* by Spivak.
- ii) To study the relationship among Feminism, Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Deconstruction.
- iii) To study the following relationships
 - a) Feminism and Marxism
 - b) Feminism and Psychoanalysis c) Feminism and Deconstruction

5.1 About the Critic/Author

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1942) was born in Calcutta and graduated from the Presidency College. She wrote her Ph.D. on William Butler Yeats under the direction of Paul-De-Man. She was suddenly propelled into the spotlight when she translated Derrida's *De la grammatologie* (1967) as *Of Grammatology* (1974). Her magnum opus is *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (1999) which contains her best-known work *Can the Subaltern Speak?* The essay offers a powerful meditation on and theorization of the practice of sati. She has also translated a series of works by Indian novelist Mahashweta Devi. Her work is diverse in its outlook but concentrates on postcolonial reason, particularly agency, identity, and subjectivity.

5.2 About the Essay:

In the first section of the essay Spivak deals with the version of a talk, which she gave several years ago; the second section deals with the reflection of that earlier work; the third section deals with an intermediate moment and the last section deals with the present.

In the first section she discusses Feminism and Marxism, Feminism and Psychoanalysis. In the second section there is discussion on the discourse of race. The third and the fourth sections discuss feminism in relation to psychoanalysis and deconstruction respectively.

5.3 Topic Explanation:

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak does not want to speak on feminism in general but only as a writer within the realms of literary criticism. The relationship among Feminism, Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Deconstruction has been the issue of interest to many people, and the configuration of these fields continues to change.

Her definition of woman rests on the word 'man' because no one rigorous definition of anything is ultimately possible. If one wants to, one could go on deconstructing the opposition between man and woman, and finally show that it is a binary opposition that displaces itself. She constructs the definition of woman in terms of words currently in use and 'man' is such a word in common usage. She does not construct the definition in terms of a woman's putative essence.

The literary discourse displays that the truth of a human situation is the itinerary of not being able to find it. In the literary discourse there is a playing out of the problem as the solution.

The problem of human discourse presents itself in the play of three 'concepts': language, world, and consciousness. The world is organized by language and consciousness is structured by language. The human being controls the production of language; therefore the figure that will serve us better is writing, where the producer and the receiver is taken for granted.

Karl Marx is read as a theorist of the world regarding the forces of labor, production, circulation and distribution. Sigmund Freud is read as the theorist of

the self and as a text of consciousness and the unconscious. Spivak does not speak about Marxist or psychoanalyst criticism as a reductive enterprise, which diagnoses the scenario in every book in terms of where it would fit into a Marxist or a psychoanalytical canon. The problems are solved in terms, perhaps, of unifying concepts like 'man', the universal contours of a sex-, race-, class-transcendent consciousness as the generating, generated, and, receiving consciousness of text. Both Marx and Freud seem to bring forth evidence from the world of man or man's self and prove kinds of truth about world and self. According to Spivak, their descriptions of world and self are based on inadequate evidence and fixes upon the idea of alienation in Marx and the idea of normality and health in Freud.

Marx stated the concepts of use-value, exchange-value and surplus value. The use-value refers to a thing that is directly consumed by agent. The exchange-value is assessed in terms of what it can be exchanged for. The 'more worth' given to the buyer of the labor is surplus-value. Spivak argues that a woman in the traditional social situation produces more than she is getting in terms of her subsistence, and therefore is a continual source of production, of surplus for the man who owns her. Such an analysis is paradoxical because the mode of production of housework is not capitalist. The contemporary woman, when she seeks financial compensation for housework, seeks the abstraction of use-value into exchange value. The situation of the domestic workplace is not 'pure exchange'. What is the use-value of unremunerated woman's work for husband or family? Is the willing insertion into the wage structure a curse or a blessing? How should women fight the idea, universally accepted by men that wages are the only mark of value-producing work? These are the important questions but they do not necessarily broaden Marxist theory from a feminist point of view. If the woman's womb is a piece of production, then the woman can be seen as an agent of production. But this fundamental relationship is not taken into account.

In patriarchal and matriarchal societies, it is the man who is the owner of the child as he produces the child. On the contrary the woman nurtures the child in the womb. Marx's own writing on women and children seek to alleviate their condition in terms of desexualized labor force.

In 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' Freud defined pain as the deferment of pleasure. Pain does not operate in the same way in men and in women.

Freud determined femininity in terms of penis envy. The little girl is a little boy before she discovers sex. In Freud, the genital stage is preeminently phallic, not clitoral or vaginal. In expounding his theory Freud does not take the womb into account. The writer's task in rewriting the text of Freud is not so much to declare the idea of penis envy rejectable, but to make available the idea of a womb envy as something that interacts with the idea of penis envy to determine human sexuality and the production of society.

Criticism must remain resolutely neuter and practical. Part of the feminist enterprise might well be to provide evidence so that these great male texts do not become great adversaries, or models from whom we take our ideas and then revise or reassess them. These texts must be rewritten so that there is a new material for consciousness and society. The people who produce literature male or female, are also moved by general ideas of the world and conscious to which they cannot give a name.

A common feature in America and also in third world countries is race related problem. She prefers a reading method that is sensitive to gender, race and class. Her attitude towards Freud involves an analysis of Freud's masculinism, and in pursuance of this she proposed an analysis of 'the discourse of the clitoris.' The reactions to the proposal have been interesting. One of the responses to this discourse received from American lesbian feminists was that the clitoris should be called the phallic and the uterus the reproductive extension

of the phallus. Her advice to lesbians is that they should not take pride in being heterosexual.

There is antagonism between Marxism and feminism. Marxism has spoken about the struggle of women, but has never given women their due. According to it, the labor struggle has mostly been male oriented, and women played very little part in it. The two Marxist categories of use-value and surplus-value could be put into question; if the woman as a producer of children is seen in this mode that she is a communist in the use-value mode, and a capitalist in the surplus-value mode. Firstly, the child although not a commodity, is also not produced for immediate and adequate consumption or direct exchange. Secondly, the premise that the difference between subsistence-wage and labor-power's potential of production is the origin of original accumulation can only be advanced if reproduction is seen as identical with subsistence; these insights take the critique of wage-labor in unexpected directions.

Spivak speaks about the relationship between domestic and political economies in order to establish the subversive power of woman's work. With psychoanalytic feminism, an invocation of history and politics leads us back to the place of psychoanalysis in colonialism. And with Marxist feminism, an invocation of the economic text foregrounds the operations of the New Imperialism. The discourse of race has come to claim its importance in this way in her work.

She is moved by the reversal-displacement morphology of deconstruction. The view resists her from freezing the concepts of gender, race, and class. This aspect cannot establish a homogenic 'global theory' of feminism. Over the last few years Spivak has seen that instead of deconstruction opening the way for feminists, the figure and discourse of women opened the way for Derrida as well.

Re-reading of 'the Waterfall'

5.3.3 Spivak's views on Psychoanalysis

Spivak started thinking of race and class in 1979-80. She uses Margaret Drabble's 'The Waterfall' that shows the presence of the concerns of race and class. Her suggestion is to use literature, with a feminist perspective, as a 'non expository' theory of practice. She re-reads 'The Waterfall' with thoughts about sex, race, and class.

Like many woman writers, Drabble creates an extreme situation, to answer the question 'why does love happen?' She places her central character Jan, in the most inaccessible privacy-at the moment of birthing, alone by choice. Lucy, her cousin, and James, Lucy's husband, take turns watching over her in the empty house as she regains her strength. The novel is the story of Jane's love affair with James. Drabble relates James to Jane through the birthing of another man's child. Jane looks and smells dreadful and yet love happens. Is it possible that Drabble is taking up the challenge of feminine passivity and making it the tool of analytical strength?

Lucy was Jane's cousin and Jane had fallen in love with her cousin's husband. In Drabble trying to make women rivals in terms of the man who possesses them? There is a peculiar agreement between Lucy and Jane when the affair begins. Lucy wonders why people marry to which Jane cannot provide any answer. The only conclusion is that women are in love with the same man. It is possible to think that Drabble has expressed her feeling through the character of Jane. The cry of the baby broke up the conversation and afterwards Jane reflected how nice it was to see that the man she loved hold her baby. The two women are not jealous of each other because of the natural bonding between them.

There is further probe into the story and Drabble's fingers rest on the problem of class. The account of Jane's family's class prejudice is incisively told. Her

father is a headmaster of a public school who is very class conscious and Jane has to share her parent's prejudice. Drabble manipulates her to examine the condition of production and determination of micro structural heterosexual attitude with her chosen enclosure.

5.3.4 Spivak's views on Deconstruction

Spivak begins her arguments by relating an incident that happened in South Korea in March 1982. The 237 women workers in a factory went on a strike demanding a wage raise. Six union leaders were dismissed and imprisoned. In July, the women took hostage two visiting U.S. vice presidents. The factory office was willing to release the women; but the Korean government was reluctant. On July 16, the Korean male workers at the factory beat up the female workers at the factory beat up the female workers and ended the dispute. Many women workers were injured and two suffered miscarriages.

In the early stages of industrial capitalism, the colonies provided the raw materials so that the colonizing countries could develop their manufacturing industrial base. Indigenous production was thus crippled destroyed. The railways, postal services and a uniformly graded system of education were prepared to minimize circulation period. Slowly the labor movements in the First World made it necessary that manufacturing itself be carried out on the soil of the Third World, where labour was less likely to make demands and the governments were mortgaged.

Spivak has mentioned this because this is not uncommon in the multinational arena. Today women want freedom to work outside their homes. It should be taken for granted that women workers are a surplus force. If women demand a wage rise even their men will not support them. They are not in favor of equal wages for they do not want the women to draw the same salary like them. It is a face saving for them if the woman is earning less than them.

5.4 Glossary:

- 1) Itinerary - route/plan of travel, action
- 2) Surrogate - substitute/used instead of
- 3) inscribed - engraved/affected
- 4) Putative - assumed
- 5) a playing out - no longer useful
- 6) Broached - to begin discussion of a topic.
- 7) Contours - outline
- 8) Dodged - to move quickly
- 9) Subsistence - livelihood/wage
- 10) Exigency - pressing need
- 11) Capitulation - surrender (on agreed condition)
- 12) Dissimulated - disguised/hidden
- 13) Determinant - a thing that determines or decides
- 14) Hegemonic - superior
- 15) Suffrage - vote
- 16) Clitoris - a sensitive female sex organ
- 17) Solipsistic - having knowledge of self
- 18) Pulp - poor quality
- 19) Approbation - approval/consent
- 20) Meritocratic - people of high achievement
- 21) Pores - the tiny openings in the surface of the skin, through which moisture can pass.

5.5 Important concept

1) **Discourse** - usually a learned discussion, spoken or written, on a philosophical, political, literary or religious topic. It is closely related to a treatise and a dissertation. In critical theory Michal Foucault did the most to develop this concept.

2) Critical Theory - The term is coined by Max Horkheimer in 1937 to describe the work of the Frankfurt School. It holds the view that theory is historical, subjective, and a part of society. It is also a highly reflexive enterprise as it is. Never satisfied with asking what something means or how it works, but what is at stake in asking such questions.

5.6 Self learning questions:

- i) Spivak's views on Deconstructions.
- ii) Spivak's views on Psychoanalysis
- iii) Discuss the relationship between Marxism and Feminism
- iv) Discuss the relationship between Psychoanalysis and Feminism.

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Unit- 6

Juliet Mitchell- Femininity, Narrative and Psychoanalysis

6.0 Objectives:

- i) To help the learner study Mitchell's 'Faminity, narrative and psychoanalysis'.
- ii) To study how Mitchell is different from the contemporary feminists.
- iii) The acquaint the learners with the following concepts: psychoanalysis

6.1 About the Critic/Author:

Juliet Mitchell (1940) is best known for her book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: Freud, Reich, Laing and Women* (1974) in which she tried to reconcile psychoanalysis and feminism. She insists on the utility of Freud (particularly in a Lacanian reading) for feminism. In the present essay, she reflects on the two major influences on the twentieth century thought: feminism and psychoanalysis.

6.2 About the essay:

The essay 'Feminity, narrative and psychoanalysis' is short precise and straight to the point. It is the transcript of a lecture delivered to a conference on Narrative held in Australia in 1972. It brings together the four primary interests of Mitchell: English Literature, politics, psychoanalysis and feminism. The essay has four parts: (i) narrative in psychoanalytical practice (ii) women in the early history of novel, (iii) psychoanalytical theory, and (iv) the illustration of these concerns with reference to Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*.

6.3: Topic explanation-

6.3.1 Narrative in psychoanalytical practice:

Psychoanalysis is a talking cure. A psychoanalyst is one who hears and tells stories. The patient comes with a story of his or her own life. The analyst listens. She asks a question from a new perspective, and the history starts all

over again. This is related to questions about the role of carnival, about the role of disruption.

6.3.2 Women in the early history of the novel:

In the present essay, Mitchell briefly wants to look at the literary narrative, the novel. The essay starts with autobiographies written by women in the seventeenth century. The vast majority of early novels were written by large number of women. They were trying to establish through their writing, what it was to feel to be a woman (the 'subject in process'). What they were trying to do was to create a history from a state of flux and they wrote novels to describe this flux. They tried to tell the world that they were women, and what their lives were made of? Who they really were in a male environment? They were in the process of discovering what it was to be a woman under capitalism. The novels were of course not homogeneous and there were points of disruption and autocriticism. *Wuthering Height* by Emily Bronte is an example of autocriticism from within the novel.

As society changes its social structure we find in the novel how women try to create themselves as social subjects under a capitalist structure. The novel remains a bourgeois form even though there are working class novels. What we have to look for here is where women are, why women wrote novels, especially the story of their own lives, or stories of their seclusion within the home and the possibilities and impossibilities provided by that.

Mitchell believes that the woman novelist must be an hysteric. Hysteria is the woman's simultaneous acceptance and refused of the organization of sexuality under patriarchal capitalism. It is simultaneously what a woman can do both to be feminine and to refuse femininity, within patriarchal discourse. The writer thinks that there is no such thing as female writing, a woman's voice. There is the hysteric's voice which is the woman's masculine language talking about feminine experience. It is both simultaneously the woman novelist's refusal of

the woman's world and her construction from within a masculine world of that woman's world. It touches the importance of bisexuality.

6.3.3 The Psychoanalytical Theory:

There is much interest in re-reading Freud in terms of the moment at which sexual division is produced within society. The two sexes are psychologically created as the masculine and the not-masculine. At the point in which the phallus is found to be missing in the mother, masculinity is set up as the norm, and femininity is set up as what masculinity is not. What is not there provides the context for language. In Lacanian term, it is called the moment of the symbolic. The symbolic is the point of organization, the point where sexuality is created as masculine and non-masculine: feminine. Mitchell asks why Kristeva and her colleagues choose exclusively masculine texts and quite often proto-fascist writing as well. The problem for her is that disruption is contained within the patriarchal symbolic.

6.3.4 The Illustration of the concerns with reference to *Wuthering Heights*:

(A) To begin with who is telling the story? The fact is that Emily Bronte's manuscript was stolen from her and presented to a publisher by her sister, Charlotte. It was published under a male pseudonym (false name), Ellis Bell. The author is a woman writing a private novel and it is published by a man and acquires fame. She uses two narrators- a man, Lockwood, and a woman, Nelly Dean. The whole novel is constructed through these two narrators. Lockwood is a caricature of the romantic male lover. He is set up as foppish (a fashionable and proud man) gentleman from the town who thinks he loves all the things the romantic gentleman is supposed to love things, as loneliness or a heart of gold under a fierce exterior. These things are criticized from within the novel, particularly through the character of Isabella who thinks that Heathcliff is dark, a romantic Gothic hero who will prove to be the true gentleman beneath all his cruelty.

(B) The story of Catherine and Heathcliff is a story of bisexuality, the story of the hysteric. Catherine's father had promised he would bring her a whip from his visit to Liverpool. But instead he brought her an abandoned child who never had or will have a father's name. He is given just one name Heathcliff; the name of a brother of Catherine's who had died in infancy. So, instead of a whip, Catherine gets a brother/lover.

Catherine wants Heathcliff all her life, but she makes the conventional feminine choice and marries Edgar Linton, with whom she cannot be fully united. Edgar provides only an illusion that they complement each other, though they have a child, but they are worlds apart. The person with whom Catherine wants to be one is Heathcliff. Breaking the incest taboo she says 'I am Heathcliff; has more myself than I am'. Heathcliff says the same to Catherine. Each is the bisexual possibility of the other one, invoking an idea of oneness which can come only with death. When Catherine dies in childbirth, she haunts Heathcliff for twenty years, which is the date when the novel begins with Lockwood who is given Heathcliff's dream, thinking that he can also get oneness. Heathcliff also waits the whole stretch of the novel to have his own dream, which is to get back to Catherine.

Mitchell opines that the novel arose as a form in which women had to construct themselves as women within new social structures.

6.4 Glossary:

- 1) Flux - Continual change
- 2) Carnavalesque - a literary mode that subverts (overthrows) and liberates the assumptions of the dominant style.
- 3) Hysteria - uncontrollable emotion or excitement.
- 4) Bourgeois - of or relating to the property-owning middle class.

- 5) Phallogentric - the privilege of the masculine in understanding meaning or social relations.
- 6) Capitalism - economic system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit.
- 7) Patriarchal - the rule of the father/male in society.
- 8) Bisexuality - sexually attracted to both men and women.

6.5 Questions for self-Learning -

- 1) What is the contribution of the seventeenth century women writers to feminism? Were they hysteric? Answer with reference to *Wuthering Heights*?
- 2) How does Mitchell read 'Wuthering Height' in the light of feminist perspectives?

6.6 Some Important Concepts and Persons:

- i) Jacques Lacan - A psychoanalyst who claimed that the unconscious is structured like language. Lacan focuses on the language of the text, whereas Freud focuses on the author and/or the character in the literary work.
- ii) Julia Kristeva - is a French theorist.
- iii) Psychoanalysis - A means of investigating the unconscious dimension of the human mind established by Sigmund Freud.
- iv) Narrative - spoken or written account of events; story.

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Unit 7

Wolfgang Iser -The Reading Process: a phenomenological approach

7.0 Objectives -

i) To help the learners to study the essay *The Reading Process: a phenomenological approach* by Wolfgang Iser.

ii) To acquaint the learners with the following concepts : (a)Phenomenology (b) hermeneutics, (c) defamiliarisation, (d) reception theory and reception aesthetics

The Reading Process :A Phenomenological ApproachWolfgang Iser This art lays full stress on the idea that, in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual text but also, and in equal measure,the actions involved in responding to that text. Thus Roman Ingarden confronts the structure of the literary text with the ways in which it can be *konkretisiert* (realized) .' The text as such offers different "schematized views" through which the subject matter of the work can come to light, but the actual bringing to light is an action of *Konkretisation*.

If this is so, then the literary work has two poles, which we might call the artistic and the aesthetic: the artistic refers to the text created by the author, and the aesthetic to the realization accomplished by the reader. From this polarity it follows that the literary work cannot be completely identical with the text, or with the realization of the text,but in fact must lie halfway between the two. The work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and furthermore the realization is by no means independent of the individual disposition of the reader-though this in turn is acted upon by the different patterns of the text. The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual, as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader.

I Cf. Roman Ingarden, Vom *Erkennen des literarisehen Kunstwerks* (Tubingen,19681, PP. 49 ff.2 For a detailed discussion of this term see Roman Ingarden, *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (Tubingen, rg60), pp. 270 ff.280 NEW LITERARY HISTORY It is the virtuality of the work that gives rise to its dynamic nature,and this in turn is the precondition for the effects that the work calls forth. As the reader uses the various perspectives offered him by the text in order to relate the patterns and the "schematised views" to one another, he sets the work in motion, and this very process results ultimately in the awakening of

responses within himself. Thus, reading causes the literary work to unfold its inherently dynamic character. That this is no new discovery is apparent from references made even in the early days of the novel. Laurence Sterne remarks in *Tristram Shandy*: ". . . no author, who understands the just boundaries of decorum and good-breeding, would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding, is to halve this matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself. For my own part, I am eternally paying him compliments of this kind, and do all that lies in my power to keep his imagination as busy as my own."³ Sterne's conception of a literary text is that it is something like an arena in which reader and author participate in a game of the imagination. If the reader were given the whole story, and there were nothing left for him to do, then his imagination would never enter the field, the result would be the boredom which inevitably arises when everything is laid out cut and dried before us. A literary text must therefore be conceived in such a way that it will engage the reader's imagination in the task of working things out for himself, for reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative. In this process of creativity, the text may either not go far enough, or may go too far, so we may say that boredom and overstrain form the boundaries beyond which the reader will leave the field of play. The extent to which the "unwritten" part of a text stimulates the reader's creative participation is brought out by an observation of Virginia Woolf's in her study of Jane Austen: "Jane Austen is thus a mistress of much deeper emotion than appears upon the surface. She stimulates us to supply what is not there. What she offers is, apparently, a trifle, yet is composed of something that expands in the reader's mind and endows with the most enduring form of life scenes which are outwardly trivial. Always the stress is laid upon character. . . . The turns and twists of the dialogue keep us on the tenterhooks of suspense. Our attention is half upon the present moment, half upon the future. . . . Here, indeed, in this unfinished and in the main inferior story, are all the elements of Jane Austen's greatness"⁴ The unwritten aspects of apparently trivial scenes, and the unspoken dialogue

³ Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (London, 1956), 11, chap. I I, 79. ⁴ Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader*, First Series (London, 1957), p. 174. THE READING PROCESS : A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH 281 within the "turns and twists," not only draw the reader into the action, but also lead him to shade in the many outlines suggested by the given situations, so that these take on a reality of their own. But as the reader's

imagination animates these "outlines," they in turn will influence the effect of the written part of the text. Thus begins a whole dynamic process: the written text imposes certain limits on its unwritten implications in order to prevent these from becoming too blurred and hazy, but at the same time these implications, worked out by the reader's imagination, set the given situation against a background which endows it with far greater significance than it might have seemed to possess on its own. In this way, trivial scenes suddenly take on the shape of an "enduring form of life." What constitutes this form is never named, let alone explained, in the text, although in fact it is the end product of the interaction between text and reader. The question now arises as to how far such a process can be adequately described. For this purpose a phenomenological analysis recommends itself, especially since the somewhat sparse observations hitherto made of the psychology of reading tend mainly to be psychoanalytical, and so are restricted to the illustration of predetermined ideas concerning the unconscious. We shall, however, take a closer look later at some worthwhile psychological observations. As a starting point for a phenomenological analysis we might examine the way in which sequent sentences act upon one another. This is of especial importance in literary texts in view of the fact that they do not correspond to any objective reality outside themselves. The world presented by literary texts is constructed out of what Ingarden has called *intentionale Satzkorrelate* (intentional sentence correlatives): Sentences link up in different ways to form more complex units of meaning that reveal a very varied structure giving rise to such entities as a short story, a novel, a dialogue, a drama, a scientific theory. . . . In the final analysis, there arises a particular world, with component parts determined in this way or that, and with all the variations that may occur within these parts—all this as a purely intentional correlative of a complex of sentences. If this complex finally forms a literary work, I call the whole sum of sequent intentional sentence correlatives the 'world presented' in the work.⁵

This world, however, does not pass before the reader's eyes like a film. The sentences are "component parts" insofar as they make statements, claims, or observations, or convey information, and so establish various perspectives in the text. But they remain only "component parts"—they are not the sum total of the text itself. For the intentional correlatives disclose subtle connections which individually are less concrete than the statements, claims, and observations, even though these only take on their real meaningfulness through the interaction

of their correlatives. How is one to conceive the connection between the correlatives? It marks those points at which the reader is able to "climb aboard" the text. He has to accept certain given perspectives, but in doing so he inevitably causes them to interact. When Ingarden speaks of intentional sentence correlatives in literature, the statements made, or information conveyed in the sentence are already in a certain sense qualified: the sentence does not consist solely of a statement-which, after all, would be absurd, as one can only make statements about things that exist-but aims at something beyond what it actually says. This is true of all sentences in literary works, and it is through the interaction of these sentences that their common aim is fulfilled. This is what gives them their own special quality in literary texts. In their capacity as statements, observations, purveyors of information, etc., they are always indications of something that is to come, the structure of which is foreshadowed by their specific content. They set in motion a process out of which emerges the actual content of the text itself. In describing man's inner consciousness of time, Husserl once remarked: "Every originally constructive process is inspired by pre-intentions, which construct and collect the seed of what is to come, as such, and bring it to fruition." For this bringing to fruition, the literary text needs the reader's imagination, which gives shape to the interaction of correlatives foreshadowed in structure by the sequence of the sentences. Husserl's observation draws our attention to a point that plays a not insignificant part in the process of reading. The individual sentences not only work together to shade in what is to come; they also form an expectation in this regard. Husserl calls this expectation "pre-intentions." As this structure is characteristic of all sentence correlatives, the interaction of these correlatives will not be a fulfilment of the expectation so much as a continual modification of it.

For this reason, expectations are scarcely ever fulfilled in truly literary texts. If they were, then such texts would be confined to the individualization of a given expectation, and one would inevitably ask what such an intention was supposed to achieve. Strangely enough, we feel that any confirmative effect-such as we implicitly demand of expository texts, as we refer to the objects they are meant to present is a defect in a literary text. For the more a text individualizes or confirms an expectation it has initially aroused, the more aware we become of its didactic purpose, so that at best we can only accept or reject the thesis forced upon us. More often than not, the very clarity of such texts will make us want to free ourselves from their clutches. But generally the sentence correlatives of

literary texts do not develop in this rigid way, for the expectations they evoke tend to encroach on one another in such a manner that they are continually modified as one reads. One might simplify by saying that each intentional sentence correlative opens up a particular horizon, which is modified, if not completely changed, by succeeding sentences. While these expectations arouse interest in what is to come, the subsequent modification of them will also have a retrospective effect on what has already been read. This may now take on a different significance from that which it had at the moment of reading. Whatever we have read sinks into our memory and is foreshortened. It may later be evoked again and set against a different background with the result that the reader is enabled to develop hitherto unforeseeable connections. The memory evoked, however, can never reassume its original shape, for this would mean that memory and perception were identical, which is manifestly not so. The new background brings to light new aspects of what we had committed to memory; conversely these, in turn, shed their light on the new background, thus arousing more complex anticipations. Thus, the reader, in establishing these interrelations between past, present and future, actually causes the text to reveal its potential multiplicity of connections. These connections are the product of the reader's mind working on the raw material of the text, though they are not the text itself— for this consists just of sentences, statements, information, etc. This is why the reader often feels involved in events which, at the time of reading, seem real to him, even though in fact they are very far from his own reality. The fact that completely different readers can be differently affected by the "reality" of a particular text is ample evidence of the degree to which literary texts transform reading into a creative process that is far above mere perception of what is written.

284 NEW LITERARY HISTORY

The literary text activates our own faculties, enabling us to recreate the world it presents. The product of this creative activity is what we might call the virtual dimension of the text, which endows it with its reality. This virtual dimension is not the text itself, nor is it the imagination of the reader: it is the coming together of text and imagination. As we have seen, the activity of reading can be characterized as a sort of kaleidoscope of perspectives, preintentions, recollections. Every sentence contains a preview of the next and forms a kind of viewfinder for what is to come; and this in turn changes the "preview" and so becomes a "viewfinder" for what has been read. This whole process represents the fulfilment of the potential, unexpressed reality of the text, but it is to be seen

only as a framework for a great variety of means by which the virtual dimension may be brought into being. The process of anticipation and retrospection itself does not by any means develop in a smooth flow. Ingarden has already drawn attention to this fact, and ascribes a quite remarkable significance to it: Once we are immersed in the flow of Satzdenken (sentence-thought), we are ready, after completing the thought of one sentence, to think out the 'continuation,' also in the form of a sentence—and that is, in the form of a sentence that connects up with the sentence we have just thought through. In this way the process of reading goes effortlessly forward. But if by chance the following sentence has no tangible connection whatever with the sentence we have just thought through, there then comes a blockage in the stream of thought. This hiatus is linked with a more or less active surprise, or with indignation. This blockage must be overcome if the reading is to flow once more.⁷ The hiatus that blocks the flow of sentences is, in Ingarden's eyes, the product of chance, and is to be regarded as a flaw; this is typical of his adherence to the classical idea of art. If one regards the sentence sequence as a continual flow, this implies that the anticipation aroused by one sentence will generally be realized by the next, and the frustration of one's expectations will arouse feelings of exasperation.

And yet literary texts are full of unexpected twists and turns, and frustration of expectations. Even in the simplest story there is bound to be some kind of blockage, if only for the fact that no tale can ever be told in its entirety. Indeed, it is only through inevitable omissions that a story will gain its dynamism. Thus whenever the flow is interrupted and we are led off in unexpected directions, the opportunity is given to us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections—for filling in the gaps left by the text itself. These gaps have a different effect on the process of anticipation and retrospection, and thus on the "gestalt" of the virtual dimension, for they may be filled in different ways. For this reason, one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities; as he reads, he will make his own decision as to how the gap is to be filled. In this very act the dynamics of reading are revealed. By making his decision he implicitly acknowledges the inexhaustibility of the text; at the same time it is this very inexhaustibility that forces him to make his decision. With "traditional" texts this process was more or less unconscious, but modern texts frequently exploit it quite deliberately. They are often so fragmentary that one's attention is almost exclusively occupied with the search

for connections between the fragments; the object of this is not to complicate the "spectrum" of connections, so much as to make us aware of the nature of our own capacity for providing links. In such cases, the text refers back directly to our own preconceptions-which are revealed by the act of interpretation that is a basic element of the reading process. With all literary texts, then, we may say that the reading process is selective, and the potential text is infinitely richer than any of its individual realizations. This is borne out by the fact that a second reading of a piece of literature often produces a different impression from the first.

The reasons for this may lie in the reader's own change of circumstances, still, the text must be such as to allow this variation. On a second reading familiar occurrences now tend to appear in a new light and seem to be at times corrected, at times enriched. In every text there is a potential time-sequence which the reader must inevitably realize, as it is impossible to absorb even a short text in a single moment. Thus the reading process always involves viewing the text through a perspective that is continually on the move, linking up the different phases, and so constructing what we have called the virtual dimension. This dimension, of course, varies all the time we are reading. However, when we have finished the text, and read it again, clearly our extra knowledge will result in a different time-sequence; we shall tend to establish connections by referring to our awareness of what is to come, and so certain aspects of the text will assume a significance we did not attach to them on a first reading, while others will recede into the background. It is a common enough experience for a person to say that on a second reading he noticed things he had missed when he read the book for the first time, but this is scarcely surprising in view of the fact that the second time he is looking at the text through a different perspective. The time-sequence that he realized on his first reading cannot possibly be repeated on a second reading and this unrepeatability is bound to result in modifications of his reading experience. This is not to say that the second reading is "truer" than the first-they are, quite simply, different: the reader establishes the virtual dimension of the text by realizing a new time-sequence. Thus even on repeated viewings a text allows and, indeed, induces innovative reading. In whatever way, and under whatever circumstances, the reader may link the different phases of the text together, it will always be the process of anticipation and retrospection that leads to the formation of the virtual dimension, which in turn transforms the text into an experience for the

reader. The way in which this experience comes about through a process of continual modification is closely akin to the way in which we gather experience in life.

And thus the "reality" of the reading experience can illuminate basic patterns of real experience :We have the experience of a world, not understood as a system of relations which wholly determine each event, but as an open totality the synthesis of which is inexhaustible. . . . From the moment that experience-that is, the opening on to our de facto world-is recognized as the beginning of knowledge, there is no longer any way of distinguishing a level of a priori truths and one of factual ones, what the world must necessarily be and what it actually is?The manner in which the reader experiences the text will reflect his own disposition, and in this respect the literary text acts as a kind of mirror; but at the same time, the reality which this process helps to create is one that will be *different* from his own (since, normally, we tend to be bored by texts that present us with things we already know perfectly well ourselves). Thus we have the apparently paradoxical situation in which the reader is forced to reveal aspects of himself in order to experience a reality which is different from his own. The impact this reality makes on him will depend largely on the extent to which he himself actively provides the unwritten part of the text, and yet in supplying all the missing links, he must think in terms of experiences different from his own; indeed, it is only by leaving behind the familiar world of his own experience that the reader can truly participate in the adventure the literary text offers him.

We have seen that, during the process of reading, there is an active interweaving of anticipation and retrospection, which on a second reading may turn into a kind of advance retrospection. The impressions that arise as a result of this process will vary from individual to individual, but only within the limits imposed by the written as opposed to the unwritten text. In the same way, two people gazing at the night sky may both be looking at the same collection of stars, but one will see the image of a plough, and the other will make out a dipper. The "stars" in a literary text are fixed; the lines that join them are variable. The author of the text may, of course, exert plenty of influence on the reader's imagination-he has the whole panoply of narrative techniques at his disposal-but no author worth his salt will ever attempt to set the *whole* picture before his reader's eyes. If he does, he will very quickly lose his reader, for it is only by activating the reader's imagination that the author can hope to involve him and so realize the intentions of his text.

Gilbert Ryle, in his analysis of imagination, asks: "How can a person fancy that he sees something, without realizing that he is not seeing it?" He answers as follows: Seeing Helvellyn (the name of a mountain) in one's mind's eye does not entail, what seeing Helvellyn and seeing snapshots of Helvellyn entail, the having of visual sensations. It does involve the thought of having a view of Helvellyn and it is therefore a more sophisticated operation than that of having a view of Helvellyn. It is one utilization among others of the knowledge of how Helvellyn should look, or, in one sense of the verb, it is thinking how it should look. The expectations which are fulfilled in the recognition at sight of Helvellyn are not indeed fulfilled in picturing it, but the picturing of it is something like a rehearsal of getting them fulfilled. So far from picturing involving the having of faint sensations, or wraiths of sensations, it involves missing just what one would be due to get, if one were seeing the mountain.¹⁰ If one sees the mountain, then of course one can no longer imagine it, and so the act of picturing the mountain presupposes its absence. Similarly, with a literary text we can only picture things which are not there; the written part of the text gives us the knowledge, but it is the unwritten part that gives us the opportunity to picture things; indeed without the elements of indeterminacy, the gaps in the text, we should not be able to use our imagination. "The truth of this observation is borne out by the experience many people have on seeing, for instance, the film of a novel. While reading Tom Jones, they may never have had a clear conception of what the hero actually looks like, but on seeing the film, some may say, "That's not how I imagined him." The point here is that the reader of Tom Jones is able to visualize the hero virtually for himself, and so his imagination senses the vast number of possibilities; the moment these possibilities are narrowed down to one complete and immutable picture, the imagination is put out of action, and we feel we have somehow been cheated. This may perhaps be an oversimplification of the process, but it does illustrate plainly the vital richness of potential that arises out of the fact that the hero in the novel must be pictured and cannot be seen.

With the novel the reader must use his imagination to synthesize the information given him, and so his perception is simultaneously richer and more private; with the film he is confined merely to physical perception, and so whatever he remembers of the world he had pictured is brutally cancelled out. The "picturing" that is done by our imagination is only one of the activities through which we form the "gestalt" of a literary text. We have already discussed the process of anticipation and retrospection, and to this we must add

the process of grouping together all the different aspects of a text to form the consistency that the reader will always be in search of. While expectations may be continually modified, and images continually expanded, the reader will still strive, even if unconsciously, to fit everything together in a consistent pattern. "In the reading of images, as in the hearing of speech, it is always hard to distinguish what is given to us from what we supplement in the process of projection which is triggered off by recognition . . . it is the guess of the beholder that tests the medley of forms and colours for coherent meaning, crystallizing it into shape when a consistent interpretation has been found."* By grouping together the written parts of the text, we enable them to interact, we observe the direction in which they are leading us, and we project onto them the consistency which we, as readers, require. This "gestalt" must inevitably be colored by our own characteristic selection process. For it is not given by the text itself; it arises from the meeting between the written text and the individual mind of the reader with its own particular history of experience, its own consciousness, its own outlook. The "gestalt" is not the true meaning of the text; at best it is a configurative meaning; ". . . comprehension is an individual act of seeing-things-together, and only that."¹³ With a literary text such comprehension is inseparable from the reader's expectations, and where we have expectations, there too we have one of the most potent weapons in the writer's armory-illusion. Whenever "consistent reading suggests itself . . . illusion takes over."¹⁴ Illusion, says Northrop Frye, is "fixed or definable, and reality is at best understood as its negation."¹⁵ The "gestalt" of a text normally takes on (or, rather, is given) this fixed or definable outline, as this is essential to our own understanding, but on the other hand, if reading were to consist of nothing but an uninterrupted building up of illusions, it would be a suspect, if not downright dangerous, process: instead of bringing us into contact with reality, it would wean us away from realities. Of course, there is an element of "escapism" in all literature, resulting from this very creation of illusion, but there are some texts which offer nothing but a harmonious world, purified of all contradiction and deliberately excluding anything that might disturb the illusion once established, and these are the texts that we generally do not like to classify as literary. Women's magazines and the brasher forms of detective story might be cited as examples. However, even if an overdose of illusion may lead to triviality, this does not mean that the process of illusion-building should ideally be dispensed with altogether. On the contrary, even in texts that appear to resist the formation of illusion, thus drawing our attention to the cause of this

resistance, we still need the abiding illusion that the resistance itself is the consistent pattern underlying the text.

This is especially true of modern texts, in which it is the very precision of the written details which increases the proportion of indeterminacy; one detail appears to contradict another, and so simultaneously stimulates and frustrates our desire to "picture," thus continually causing our imposed "gestalt" of the text to disintegrate. Without the formation of illusions, the unfamiliar world of the text would remain unfamiliar; through the illusions, the experience offered by the text becomes accessible to us, for it is only the illusion, on its different levels of consistency, that makes the experience "readable." If we cannot find (or impose) this consistency, sooner or later we will put the text down. The process is virtually hermeneutic. The text provokes certain expectations which in turn we project onto the text in such a way that we reduce the polysemantic possibilities to a single interpretation in keeping with the expectations aroused, thus extracting an individual, configurative meaning. The polysemantic nature of the text and the illusion-making of the reader are opposed factors. If the illusion were complete, the polysemantic nature would vanish; if the polysemantic nature were all-powerful, the illusion would be totally destroyed. Both extremes are conceivable, but in the individual literary text we always find some form of balance between the two conflicting tendencies. The formation of illusions, therefore, can never be total, but it is this very incompleteness that in fact gives it its productive value.

With regard to the experience of reading, Walter Pater once observed: "For to the grave reader words too are grave; and the ornamental word, the figure, the accessory form or colour or reference, is rarely content to die to thought precisely at the right moment, but will inevitably linger awhile, stirring a long 'brainwave' behind it of perhaps quite alien associations." Even while the reader is seeking a consistent pattern in the text, he is also uncovering other impulses which cannot be immediately integrated or will even resist final integration. Thus the semantic possibilities of the text will always remain far richer than any configurative meaning formed while reading. But this impression is, of course, only to be gained through reading the text. Thus the configurative meaning can be nothing but a *pars pro toto* fulfilment of the text, and yet this fulfilment gives rise to the very richness which it seeks to restrict, and indeed in some modern texts, our awareness of this richness takes precedence over any configurative meaning. This fact has several consequences which, for the purpose of analysis, may be dealt with separately, though in the

reading process they will all be working together. As we have seen, a consistent, configurative meaning is essential for the apprehension of an unfamiliar experience, which through the process of illusion-building we can incorporate in our own imaginative world. At the same time, this consistency conflicts with the many other possibilities of fulfillment it seeks to exclude, with the result that the configurative meaning is always accompanied by "alien associations" that do not fit in with the illusions formed. The first consequence, then, is the fact that in forming our illusions, we also produce at the same time a latent disturbance of these illusions. Strangely enough, this also applies to texts in which our expectations are actually fulfilled—though one would have thought that the fulfillment of expectations would help to complete the illusion. "Illusion wears off once the expectation is stepped up; we take it for granted and want more." **17** The experiments in "gestalt" psychology referred to by Gombrich in *Art and Illusion* make one thing clear: ". . . though we may be intellectually aware of the fact that any given experience must be an illusion, we cannot, strictly speaking, watch ourselves having an illusion.

" **18** Now, if illusion were not a transitory state, this would mean that we could be, as it were, permanently caught up in it. And if reading were exclusively a matter of producing illusion—necessary though this is for the understanding of an unfamiliar experience—we should run the risk of falling victim to a gross deception. But it is precisely during our reading that the transitory nature of the illusion is revealed to the full. As the formation of illusions is constantly accompanied by "alien associations" which cannot be made consistent with the illusions, the reader constantly has to lift the restrictions he places on the "meaning" of the text. Since it is he who builds the illusions, he oscillates between involvement in and observation of those illusions; he opens himself to the unfamiliar world without being imprisoned in it. Through this process the reader moves into the presence of the fictional world and so experiences the realities of the text as they happen. In the oscillation between consistency and "alien associations," between involvement in and observation of the illusion, the reader is bound to conduct his own balancing operation, and it is this that forms the aesthetic experience offered by the literary text. However, if the reader were to achieve a balance, obviously he would then no longer be engaged in the process of establishing and disrupting consistency. And since it is this very process that gives rise to the balancing operation, we may say that the inherent non-achievement of balance is a prerequisite for the very dynamism of the operation. In seeking the balance we

inevitably have to start out with certain expectations, the shattering of which is integral to the aesthetic experience. Furthermore, to say merely that "our expectations are satisfied" is to be guilty of another serious ambiguity. At first sight such a statement seems to deny the obvious fact that much of our enjoyment is derived from surprises, from betrayals of our expectations. The solution of this paradox is to find some ground for a distinction between "surprise" and "frustration." Roughly, the distinction can be made in terms of the effects which the two kinds of experiences have upon us. Frustration blocks or checks activity.

It necessitates new orientation for our activity, if we are to escape the *cul de sac*. Consequently, we abandon the frustrating object and return to blind impulsive activity. On the other hand, surprise merely causes a temporary cessation of the exploratory phase of the experience, and a recourse to intense contemplation and scrutiny. In the latter phase the surprising elements are seen in their connection with what has gone before, with the whole drift of the experience, and the enjoyment of these values is then extremely intense. Finally, it appears that there must always be some degree of novelty or surprise in all these values if there is a progressive specification of the direction of the total act . . . and any aesthetic experience tends to exhibit a continuous interplay between "deductive" and "inductive" operation. It is this interplay between "deduction" and "induction" that gives rise to the configurative meaning of the text, and not the individual expectations, surprises, or frustrations arising from the different perspectives. Since this interplay obviously does not take place in the text itself, but can only come into being through the process of reading, we may conclude that this process formulates something that is unformulated in the text, and yet represents its "intention." Thus, by reading, we uncover the unformulated part of the text, and this very indeterminacy is the force that drives us to work out a configurative meaning while at the same time giving us the necessary degree of freedom to do so.

As we work out a consistent pattern in the text, we will find our "interpretation" threatened, as it were, by the presence of other possibilities of "interpretation," and so there arise new areas of indeterminacy (though we may only be dimly aware of them, if at all, as we are continually making "decisions" which will exclude them). In the course of a novel, for instance, we sometimes find that characters, events, and backgrounds seem to change their significance; what really happens is that the other "possibilities" begin to emerge more strongly, so that we become more directly aware of them. Indeed, it is this very

shifting of perspectives that makes us feel a novel is that much more "true-to-life." Since it is we ourselves who establish the levels of interpretation and switch from one to another as we conduct our balancing operation, we ourselves impart to the text the dynamic lifelikeness which, in turn, enables us to absorb an unfamiliar experience into our personal world.

As we read, we oscillate to a greater or lesser degree between the building and the breaking of illusions. In a process of trial and error, we organize and reorganize the various data offered us by the text. These are the given factors, the fixed points on which we base our interpretation, "trying to fit them together in the way we think the author meant them to be fitted. "For to perceive, a beholder must create his own experience. And his creation must include relations comparable to those which the original producer underwent. They are not the same in any literal sense. But with the perceiver, as with the artist, there must be an ordering of the elements of the whole that is in form, although not in details, the same as the process of organization the creator of the work consciously experienced. Without an act of recreation the object is not perceived as a work of art."The act of recreation is not a smooth or continuous process, but one which, in its essence, relies on *interruptions* of the flow to render it efficacious. We look forward, we look back, we decide, we change our decisions, we form expectations, we are shocked by their nonfulfilment, we question, we muse, we accept, we reject; this is the dynamic process of recreation. This process is steered by two main structural components within the text: first, a repertoire of familiar literary patterns and recurrent literary themes, together with allusions to familiar social and historical contexts; second, techniques or strategies used to set the familiar against the unfamiliar. Elements of the repertoire are continually backgrounded or foregrounded with a resultant strategic overmagnification, trivialization, or even annihilation of the allusion. This defamiliarization of what the reader thought he recognized is bound to create a tension that will intensify his expectations as well as his distrust of those expectations. Similarly, we may be confronted by narrative techniques that establish links between things we find difficult to connect, so that we are forced to reconsider data we at first held to be perfectly straightforward. One need only mention the very simple trick, so often employed by novelists, whereby the author himself takes part in the narrative, thus establishing perspectives which would not have arisen out of the mere narration of the events described. Wayne Booth once called this the technique of the "unreliable narrator," to show the extent to which a literary device can counter

expectations arising out of the literary text. The figure of the narrator may act in permanent opposition to the impressions we might otherwise form. The question then arises as to whether this strategy, opposing the formation of illusions, may be integrated into a consistent pattern, lying, as it were, a level deeper than our original impressions. We may find that our narrator, by opposing us, in fact turns us against him and thereby strengthens the illusion he appears to be out to destroy; alternatively, we may be so much in doubt that we begin to question all the processes that lead us to make interpretative decisions.

Whatever the cause may be, we will find ourselves subjected to this same interplay of illusion-forming and illusion-breaking that makes reading essentially a recreative process. We might take, as a simple illustration of this complex process, the incident in Joyce's *Ulysses* in which Bloom's cigar alludes to Ulysses's spear. The context (Bloom's cigar) summons up a particular element of the repertoire (Ulysses's spear); the narrative technique relates them to one another as if they were identical. How are we to "organize" these divergent elements, which, through the very fact that they are put together, separate one element so clearly from the other? What are the prospects here for a consistent pattern? We might say that it is ironic—at least that is how many renowned Joyce readers have understood it.²² In this case, irony would be the form of organization that integrates the material. But if this is so, what is the object of the irony? Ulysses's spear, or Bloom's cigar? The uncertainty surrounding this simple question already puts a strain on the consistency we have established, and indeed begins to puncture it, especially when other problems make themselves felt as regards the remarkable conjunction of spear and cigar. Various alternatives come to mind, but the variety alone is sufficient to leave one with the impression that the consistent pattern has been shattered. And even if, after all, one can still believe that irony holds the key to the mystery, this irony must be of a very strange nature; for the formulated text does not merely mean the opposite of what has been formulated. It may even mean something that cannot be formulated at all. The moment we try to impose a consistent pattern on the text, discrepancies are bound to arise. These are, as it were, the reverse side of the interpretative coin, an involuntary product of the process that creates discrepancies by trying to avoid them. And it is their very presence that draws us into the text, compelling us to conduct a creative examination not only of the text, but also of ourselves.

This entanglement of the reader is, of course, vital to any kind of text, but in the literary text we have the strange situation that the reader cannot know

what his participation actually entails. We know that we share in certain experiences, but we do not know what happens to us in the course of this process. This is why, when we have been particularly impressed by a book, we feel the need to talk about it; we do not want to get away from it by talking about it—we simply want to understand more clearly what it is that we have been entangled in. We have undergone an experience, and now we want to know consciously *what* we have experienced. Perhaps this is the prime usefulness of literary criticism—it helps to make conscious those aspects of the text which would otherwise remain concealed in the subconscious; it satisfies (or helps to satisfy) our desire to talk about what we have read. The efficacy of a literary text is brought about by the apparent evocation and subsequent negation of the familiar. What at first seemed to be an affirmation of our assumptions leads to our own rejection of them, thus tending to prepare us for a re-orientation. And it is only when we have outstripped our preconceptions and left the shelter of the familiar that we are in a position to gather new experiences.

As the literary text involves the reader in the formation of illusion and the simultaneous formation of the means whereby the illusion is punctured, reading reflects the process by which we gain experience. Once the reader is entangled, his own preconceptions are continually overtaken, so that the text becomes his "present" whilst his own ideas fade into the "past;" as soon as this happens he is open to the immediate experience of the text, which was impossible so long as his preconceptions were his "present."**296 NEW LITERARY HISTORY** In our analysis of the reading process so far, we have observed three important aspects that form the basis of the relationship between reader and text: the process of anticipation and retrospection, the consequent unfolding of the text as a living event, and the resultant impression of lifelikeness. Any "living event" must, to a greater or lesser degree, remain open. In reading, this obliges the reader to seek continually for consistency, because only then can he close up situations and comprehend the unfamiliar. But consistency-building is itself a living process, in which one is constantly forced to make selective decisions—and these decisions in their turn give a reality to the possibilities which they exclude, insofar as they may take effect as a latent disturbance of the consistency established. This is what causes the reader to be entangled in the text "gestalt" that he himself has produced. Through this entanglement the reader is bound to open himself up to the workings of the text, and so leave behind his own preconceptions. This gives him the chance to have an experience in the way George Bernard Shaw once described it: "You have learnt something."

That always feels at first as if you had lost something."~Reading reflects the structure of experience to the extent that we must suspend the ideas and attitudes that shape our own personality before we can experience the unfamiliar world of the literary text. But during this process, something happens to us. This "something" needs to be looked at in detail, especially as the incorporation of the unfamiliar into our own range of experience has been to a certain extent obscured by an idea very common in literary discussion: namely, that the process of absorbing the unfamiliar is labelled *as* the *identification* of the reader with what he reads. Often the term "identification" is used as if it were an explanation, whereas in actual fact it is nothing more than a description. What is normally meant by "identification" is the establishment of affinities between oneself and someone outside oneself—a familiar ground on which we are able to experience the unfamiliar. The author's aim, though, is to convey the experience and, above all, an attitude towards that experience. Consequently, "identification" is not an end in itself, but a stratagem by means of which the author stimulates attitudes in the reader. This of course is not to deny that there does arise a form of participation as one reads; one is certainly drawn into the text in such a way that one has the feeling that there is no distance between oneself and the events described. This involvement is well summed up by the reaction of a critic to reading Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: "We took up *Jane Eyre* one winter's evening, somewhat piqued at the extravagant commendations we had heard, and sternly resolved to be as critical as Croker. But as we read on we forgot both commendations and criticism, identified ourselves with Jane in all her troubles, and finally married Mr. Rochester about four in the morning." 24 The question is how and why did the critic identify himself with Jane?

In order to understand this "experience," it is well worth considering Georges Poulet's observations on the reading process. He says that books only take on their full existence in the reader.²⁵ It is true that they consist of ideas thought out by someone else, but in reading the reader becomes the subject that does the thinking. Thus there disappears the subject-object division that otherwise is a prerequisite for all knowledge and all observation, and the removal of this division puts reading in an apparently unique position as regards the possible absorption of new experiences. This may well be the reason why relations with the world of the literary text have so often been misinterpreted as identification. From the idea that in reading we must think the thoughts of someone else, Poulet draws the following conclusion: "Whatever I think is a part of my mental world. And yet here I am thinking a thought which manifestly

belongs to another mental world, which is being thought in me just as though I did not exist. Already the notion is inconceivable and seems even more so if I reflect that, since every thought must have a subject to think it, this *thought* which is alien to me and yet in me, must also have in me a subject which is alien to me. . . . Whenever I read, I mentally pronounce an I, and yet the I which I pronounce is not myself."²⁶ But for Poulet this idea is only part of the story. The strange subject that thinks the strange thought in the reader indicates the potential presence of the author, whose ideas can be "internalized" by the reader: "Such is the characteristic condition of every work which I summon back into existence by placing my consciousness at its disposal. I give it not only existence, but awareness of existence." *' This would mean that consciousness forms the point at which author and reader converge, and at the same time it would result in the cessation of the temporary self-alienation that occurs to the reader when his consciousness brings to life the ideas formulated by the author. This process gives rise to a form of communication which, however, according to Poulet, is dependent on two conditions: the life-story of the author must be shut out of the work, and the individual disposition of the reader must be shut out of the act of reading. Only then can the thoughts of the author take place subjectively in the reader, who thinks what he is not. It follows that the work itself must be thought of as a consciousness, because only in this way is there an adequate basis for the author-reader relationship—a relationship that can only come about through the negation of the author's own life-story and the reader's own disposition. This conclusion is actually drawn by Poulet when he describes the work as the self-presentation or materialization of consciousness: "And so I ought not to hesitate to recognize that so long as it is animated by this vital inbreathing inspired by the act of reading, a work of literature becomes (at the expense of the reader whose own life it suspends) a sort of human being, that it is a mind conscious of itself and constituting itself in me as the subject of its own objects."²⁸ Even though it is difficult to follow such a substantialist conception of the consciousness that constitutes itself in the literary work, there are, nevertheless, certain points in Poulet's argument that are worth holding onto. But they should be developed along somewhat different lines.

If reading removes the subject-object division that constitutes all perception, it follows that the reader will be "occupied" by the thoughts of the author, and these in their turn will cause the drawing of new "boundaries." Text and reader no longer confront each other as object and subject, but instead the "division" takes place within the reader himself. In thinking the thoughts of

another, his own individuality temporarily recedes into the background since it is supplanted by these alien thoughts, which now become the theme on which his attention is focussed. As we read, there occurs an artificial division of our personality because we take as a theme for ourselves something that we are not. Consequently when reading we operate on different levels. For although we may be thinking the thoughts of someone else, what we are will not disappear completely-it will merely remain a more or less powerful virtual force. Thus, in reading there are these two levels the alien "me" and the real, virtual "me"-which are never completely cut off from each other. Indeed, we can only make someone else's thoughts into an absorbing theme for ourselves, provided the virtual background of our own personality can adapt to it. Every text we read draws a different boundary within our personality, so that the virtual background (the real "me") will take on a different form, according to the theme of the text concerned. This is inevitable, if only for the fact that the relationship between alien theme and virtual background is what makes it possible for the unfamiliar to be understood. In this context there is a revealing remark made by D. W. Harding, arguing against the idea of identification with what is read: "What is sometimes called wish-fulfilment in novels and plays can . . . more plausibly be described as wish-formulation or the definition of desires. The cultural levels at which it works may vary widely; the process is the same. . . . It seems nearer the truth . . . to say that fictions contribute to defining the reader's or spectator's values, and perhaps stimulating his desires, rather than to suppose that they gratify desire by some mechanism of vicarious experience." In the act of reading, having to think something that we have not yet experienced does not mean only being in a position to conceive or even understand it; it also means that such acts of conception are possible and successful to the degree that they lead to something being formulated in us. For someone else's thoughts can only take a form in our consciousness if, in the process, our unformulated faculty for deciphering those thoughts is brought into play-a faculty which, in the act of deciphering, also formulates itself. Now since this formulation is carried out on terms set by someone else, whose thoughts are the theme of our reading, it follows that the formulation of our faculty for deciphering cannot be along our own lines of orientation. Herein lies the dialectical structure of reading. The need to decipher gives us the chance to formulate our own deciphering capacity-i.e., we bring to the fore an element of our being of which we are not directly conscious. The production of the meaning of literary texts which we discussed in connection with forming the "gestalt" of the text-

does not merely entail the discovery of the unformulated, which can then be taken over by the active imagination of the reader; it also entails the possibility that we may formulate ourselves and so discover what had previously seemed to elude our consciousness. These are the ways in which reading literature gives us the chance to formulate the unformulated.

7.1 About the Critic/Author:

Wolfgang Iser (1926-2007) is German literary Scholar who wrote his Ph. D. Dissertation on the work of the 18th century English novelist, Henry fielding. His most significant books are *The Implied Reader : Patterns of Prose Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (translated in English in 1974), *The Act of Reading* (trans. 1978) and *How to Do Theory* (2006). Iser and his colleague Hans Robert Jauss founded the Konstanz School of reception aesthetics which significantly influenced Anglo-American reader-response criticism. Iser's notion of reading is a "gap filling" which is effected by the reader's movement through the text. In his view, reading is a dynamic tension between the reader's expectations and the schematic instruction of the text for meaning production. It gives us the chance to formulate the unformulated. He makes distinction between an 'implied' reader and an 'actual' reader. The implied reader is both sympathetic and receptive to the text's message. S/he has no ideological 'baggage' that might interfere with the text's schemes. The concept owes a debt to Wayne C. Booth's concept of the 'implied author'. Such a reader is a 'model' or 'role' and is active as well as passive; the text structures his or her response, but S/he also produces meaning and has the task of 'consistency building'. The actual reader, by contrast, receives mental images while reading; but these images are modified by the experience and knowledge (and thus other images) which the reader brings to the text.

7.2 About the Essay:

In the present essay, Iser discusses the process of reading. He discusses the three important aspects that form the basis of the relationship between reader and text: (i) the process of anticipation and retrospection (ii) the unfolding of the text as a living event, and (iii) the resultant impression of life likeness

7.3 Topic explanation:

Iser argues that in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual text but also the actions involved in responding to that text. The text only takes on life when it is realized. The literary work has two poles: the artistic and the esthetic. The artistic refers to the text created by the author. The aesthetic refers to the realization accomplished by the reader. The literary work lies between the two poles. The literary work cannot be completely identical with the text. The work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and also the realization is by no means independent of the individual dispositions of the reader. Thus, the conversion of the text and reader brings the literary works into existence. These conversions cannot be precisely pinpointed and always remain virtual. The work is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader, The virtuality of the work makes the work dynamic in nature and this is the precondition for the effects that the work calls forth; Lawrence Stern in *Tristram Shandy*, remarks. “For my own part, I am externally paying him (the reader) compliments of this kind, and do all that lies in my power to keep his imagination as reading is a pleasure when it is active and creative. The unwritten part of a text stimulates the reader’s creative participation. And such a writer ‘Stimulates us to supply what is not there’.

7.3.1 The Process of Reading: Anticipation and Retrospection -

Iser recommends a phenomenological analysis to describe the dynamic process of reading. The first step is to examine the way in which sequent sentences act

upon one another. They establish various perspectives in the text and have their own special quality. In their capacity as statements, observations, purveyors of information etc., they are always indications of something that is to come. The individual sentences not only work together to shade in what is to come; but also form an expectation. Each sentence correlative opens up a particular horizon, which is modified, if not completely changed, by succeeding sentences. While these expectations arouse interest in what is to come, the subsequent modification of them will also have a retrospective effect on what has already been read. This may now take on a different significance from that which it had at the moment of reading. Every sentence contains a preview of the next and forms a kind of viewfinder for what is to come. Thus there is anticipation and retrospection in the process of reading. Roman Ingarden calls the sentences the 'world presented' in the work. While Husserl calls them 'preintentions'. They are important in literary texts as they do not correspond to any objective reality outside themselves.

Sometimes there may arise a hiatus or blockage in the process. Whenever the process of reading is interrupted we get the opportunity to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections (of anticipation and retrospection). Here, the reader fills in the gaps left by the text itself. The gaps may be filled in different ways. For this reason one text is capable of several different realizations, and no reading can bring out the full potential, as each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way. He will make his own decision as to how the gap is to be filled. And in this very act, the dynamics of reading are revealed. With all literary texts, the reading process is selective, and the potential text is infinitely richer than any of its individual realization. This is proved by the fact that a second reading of a piece of literature often produces a different impression from the first. On a second reading familiar occurrences tend to appear in a new light and seem to be at times corrected, at times enriched.

Every text has a potential time-sequence which the reader must realize, as it is impossible to absorb even a short text in a single moment. The reading process always involves viewing the text through a perspective that is continually on the move, linking up the different phases, and so constructing the virtual dimension. This dimension varies all the time we read and when we have finished the text, and read it again, our extra knowledge will result in a different time-sequence. It is a common experience in reading that on a second reading a person noticed things he had missed, when he read the book for the first time. The time sequence that the reader realized on his first reading cannot possibly be repeated on a second reading and this unpredictability is bound to result in modifications of his reading experience. This does not mean that the second reading is 'truer' than the first, but they are quite simply different.

The reading process is akin to the way in which we gather experience of life. By leaving behind the familiar world of his own experience the reader can truly participate in the adventure, the literary text offers him. The impressions that arise as a result of the process of anticipation and retrospection will vary from individual to individual, but only within the limits imposed by the written text. Iser gives analogy of two people gazing at the sky. Both may be looking at the same collection of stars, but one may see the image of a plough, and the other may make out a dipper. Iser says, "The star's in a literary text are fixed; the lines that join them are variable." The author can realize the intentions of his text by activating the reader's imagination. And thus he can hope to involve his readers.

7.3.2 The Unfolding of the Text: Role of Illusion

The artist can picture things which are absent. The written part of the text gives us the knowledge, but it is the unwritten part (gap?) that gives the reader the opportunity to picture things. Without the gaps in the text, the reader would not be able to use his imagination.

The Second process is the grouping together of all the different aspects of a text. Illusion is one of the potent weapons of the author. Without it, the unfamiliar world of the text would remain unfamiliar. The illusion makes the experience 'readable'. The incompleteness of illusion gives the text its productive value. The polysemantic nature of the text and the illusion making of the reader are opposed factors. If the illusion were complete, the polysemantic nature would vanish; if the polysemantic nature were all powerful, the illusion would be totally destroyed. Both the extremes are conceivable, but in the individual literary text there is always a balance between the two conflicting tendencies. This balancing between two extremes forms the aesthetic experience of the literary text.

7.3.3 The Impression of Lifelikeness:

The process of recreation is made possible by two main structural components within the text :(i) a repertoire of familiar literary patterns and recurrent literary themes, together with allusions to familiar social and historical contexts, (ii) techniques or strategies used to set the familiar against the unfamiliar. The reader has to subject himself to the interplay of illusion-forming and illusion breaking which make reading a recreative process. To illustrate the point Iser gives example of the incident in Joyce's 'Ulysses' in which Bloom's cigar alludes to Ulysses' spear. (See page no. 200, second paragraph) There is apparent evocation and subsequent negation of the familiar.

Reading reflects the structure of experience. So, the reader must suspend the ideas and attitudes that shape his personality before he can experience the unfamiliar world of the literary text. During the process, there should be the identification of the reader with what he reads. The identification is a stratagem by means of which the author stimulates attitude in the reader. The communication between the author and the reader depends on two conditions: the life story of the author must be shutout of the work, and the individual

disposition of the reader must be shut out of the act of reading. Only then can the thoughts of the author take place subjectivity in the reader. The point of convergence for the author and the reader is consciousness. According to Georges Poulet, the work is the self-presentation or materialization of consciousness. The reader is not occupied by the thoughts of the author. In thinking the thought of another, the reader's own personality temporarily recedes into the background. The division takes place within the reader himself. In reading there are two levels-the alien 'me' (reader) and the real, virtual 'me' (reader). These are never completely cut off from each other.

The Structure of reading is dialectical. The production of meaning of literary texts does not merely entail the discovery of the unformulated, but also entails the possibility that we may formulate ourselves and so discover what had previously seemed to elude our consciousness.

7.6 Glossary:

- 1) Convergence - bringing together
- 2) Tenterhooks - anxiety
- 3) Sequent - in sequence
- 4) Sparse - thinly scattered
- 5) Fruition - realization
- 6) Exasperation - excitement
- 7) Hiatus - blockage/obstruction
- 8) Dipper (n) - a cup shaped vessel with a long handle.
- 9) Panoply - a full suit of armour
- 10) Wraiths - ghosts
- 11) Brasher - showy

- 12) Entanglement - trapping
- 13) piqued - angered / irritated
- 14) polysemantic - combination of several meanings.
- 15) Repertoire - all the available means.
- 16) to allude - avoid/to escape the memory and understanding of somebody.

7.5 Some Important Concepts:

(i) Phenomenology - A philosophical movement based on the investigation of phenomena (things as perceived by the consciousness) rather than on the existence of anything outside consciousness. It lays stress on the perceiver's vital and central role in determining meaning; the term 'phenomenological criticism' is applied to the theory and practice of the Geneva School of Critics.

(ii) Hermeneutics (Greek = an interpreter)

It is the study of the theory and the practice of interpreting texts. In literature it is concerned with the way textual meaning is communicated. It has influenced phenomenology.

(iii) Reception Theory - Wolfgang Iser's term for his theory of the reader's construction of texts. The theory is interested in trying to understand the actual process of reading itself. The key assumption is that the text exists only in the moment of reading; it does not properly exist until it is read.

(iv) Defamiliarization - The term is used by Viktor Shklovsky, an important member of the Russian School of Formalism. It is a literary device whereby language is used in a way that ordinary and familiar objects are made to look different. In this process language asserts its power to affect our perceptions.

7.6 Bibliography:

- 1) Buchanan Ian (2010) Oxford Dictionary of Critical Theory. Oxford : OUP
- 2) Lodge, David (ed) (2005). Modern Criticism and Theory : A Reader. New Delhi : Pearson
- 3) Bertens, Hans (2003). Literary Theory: The Basics.

7.7 Questions for self-learning -

- i) What is the process of anticipation and retrospection in reading as started by Iser?
- ii) How does the text unfold it as a living agent?
- iii) How does the literary work create the impression of lifelikeness?
- iv) Discuss in detail the progress of reading as stated by Wolfgang Iser in *The Reading Process: a phenomenological approach*.

M.A.ENGLISH

2ND YEAR

PAPER-2

**PERIOD STUDIES
THROUGH LITERARY
GENRES : FICTION**

Unit-1

Daniel Defoe-Robinson Crusoe

Contents

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introductions
- 1.2 'Robinson Crusoe'
 - 1.2.1 Introduction to the Novelist
 - 1.2.2 Introduction to the Novel
 - 1.2.3 Characters
 - 1.2.4 setting
 - 1.2.5 Summary
 - 1.2.6 Plot Structure
 - 1.2.7 Themes
 - 1.2.8 'Robinson Crusoe' as an Allegory (Symbolical Elements)
 - 1.2.9 Narrative Technique and Point of View
- 1.3 Questions for Self-Evaluation
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 Assignments
- 1.6 Bibliography

1.0 Objectives

This unit will help you to:

- 1) Introduce Daniel Defoe as a novelist.
- 2) Study the novel 'Robinson Crusoe'.
- 3) Understand the artistic merits of the novel.
- 4) Know the major features of Daniel Defoe's novel.

1.1 Introduction

Students, the discussions given below will help you to understand the novel 'Robinson Crusoe' better. Remember, it is better to read the original novel; however, this unit will give you some insights and clues to understand the novel. 'Robinson Crusoe' is one of the greatest and most popular novels. It is a novel of adventure.

1.2 'Robinson Crusoe'

1.2.1 Introduction to the Novelist:

Daniel Defoe is not a novelist in strict sense of terms (at least in modern terms). He is more a writer of adventure stories and moral parables than of novels. Defoe links the tradition of earlier essayists of seventeenth century and the novelists of Eighteenth Century. He is the first novelist who discarded the

conventions of romance and brought it near to reality. He did not write as his creativity permitted but what his readers wanted to read. Another noteworthy thing of Defoe is, he created humour and pathos in his novels. His novels are removed from normal life and character and have picaresque element .He prepared the ground for the origin of genuine English novel.

He was born in 1659 at Giles' Cripplegate in London. He was educated in a Dissenting College, Stoke- Newington. His father Foe was a butcher. At the age about fifty Daniel assumed "De" to his father's name and he was called "Defoe".After getting educated, Daniel took to trade. He could not get success in business. In the early seventeenth century he visited to foreign countries. At the same time, he took to the profession of pamphlet journalism. Through the pamphlet 'Shortest Way with the Dissenters', published in 1702, he attacked the Church of England. As a result, he was prosecuted, fined, pilloried and imprisoned. During this period his wife and children starved but he remained undaunted. After getting liberated from prison, he began to write for 'Review' during 1704 to 1713. However, Defoe wrote his best of literary works in the later period of his life. To list a few major works- 'A General History of Trade'(1713), 'An Appeal to Honour and Justice tho' It be his Worst Enemies' (1715), 'Robinson Crusoe' (1719), 'Captain Singleton' (1720), 'Moll Flanders' (1722), 'Journal of the Plague Year' (1722), 'Rexona' or 'Fortunate Mistress' (1724). Daniel Defoe died at Moorfields, in concealment and distress in 1731.

1.2.2 Introduction to the Novel:

The novel 'Robinson Crusoe' is a novel in loose sense. It is similar to the popular novels as of Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress' and Swift's Gulliver's Travel. Robinson Crusoe is a novel of sensational voyages and hair-raising adventures of Robinson, the picaro. It was first published in 1719. The novel has a story of the hero, Robinson, who lived alone for more than twenty-eight years and led adventurous life. Defoe has drawn his story from Captain Edward Cook's book 'New Voyage Round the World'. The book describes the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, who was cast at an uninhabited island Juan Fernandez for five years. He selected the episodes from the book to suit the taste of his audience. He wrote mainly for the middle-class puritan public.

The plot of the novel is loose and picaresque but has thematic unity. The greatness of the novel lies in its adventurous zeal and spiritual serenity. The novel does not have organic plot, rather it is episodic and picaresque. The novel is also called as an allegory but it is more than that. The novel does not work on two levels only (as in allegory) but at several levels. The adventures of Robinson are described in simple, racy and lively language.

1.2.3 Characters:

i)**Robin's Father:** Robinson's father, a German, grave and serious man, settles at Hull and then at New York.

- ii) **Robinson's Mother:** The mother of Robinson who persuades and entreats Robinson not to leave her and not to go to the sea.
- iii) **Robinson's Companion:** Met Robinson at Hull encourages for sea faring, later gives lift to him in his father's ship.
- iv) **The English Captain:** The captain of the ship who takes Robinson with him for Guinea. He also teaches Robinson the art of navigation and other needed skills.
- v) **The Widow:** She is the widow of the English Captain. She is the principle guide and councillor of Robinson who always helps and supports him.
- vi) **The Turkish Rover Captain:** He is the Turkish Rover Captain of the ship of Sallee. He enslaves Robinson.
- vii) **Xury:** He is simple, innocent Muslim boy who accompanies Robinson. Later Robinson sells him to Portuguese Captain.
- viii) **The Portuguese Captain:** Kind and generous Captain of the ship, who takes Robinson to Brazil and always helps him.
- ix) **Wells:** Neighbour of Robinson in Brazil. He is a Portuguese of Lisbon, born of English parents.
- x) **The Good Honest Man:** He is honest and kind like Portuguese Captain. Robinson learns the art of plantation from this man.
- xi) **Friday:** He is one of the savages, a Cannibal whom Robinson saves on his island from the Cannibals.
- xii) **Friday's Father:** He is old savage and the father of Friday. He is also saved by Robinson.
- xiii) **The Spaniard:** One of the three persons whom the savages have brought on the island to kill and eat. Robinson and Spaniard rescue him for which he is grateful to Robinson.
- xiv) **Passenger:** He along with the Captain of the ship and the Mate are deserted by the mutineers.
- xv) **The Captain of the Ship in Mutiny:** A commander of a ship saved and sheltered by Robinson.
- xvi) **Mate:** The Mate is one of the three persons deserted by the mutineers. He helps Robinson in the fight against the mutineers.
- xvii) **Boastwain:** One of the mutineers, principle rogue and ring leader of the mutineers. Captain kills him.
- xviii) **Tom Smith:** One of the main mutineers yields to Robinson.
- xix) **Will Frye:** One of the main mutineers, he also yields to Robinson.
- xx) **Will Atkins:** He is one of the roguish mutineers.
- xxi) **The Rebel Captain:** The real ring leader of the mutiny who takes over the charge of the captain.
- xxii) **The Prior of St. Augustine:** Honest person has received the profits of Robinson's plantation and returns it to him.
- xxiii) **The Partner:** The Partner of Robinson in plantation, becomes happy to see him alive.

xxiv) **Two Sisters:** Robinson finds his two sisters and two children of two brothers alive.

xxv) **The Guide:** The four gentlemen introduce Robinson and his troop to the guide. He takes them through mountains.

xxvi) **The Eldest Nephew:** Son of one of Robinson's brothers, Robinson helps him.

xxvii) **The Younger Nephew:** Robinson makes him a Captain of a ship. He successfully voyages to Spain.

xxviii) **Robinson Crusoe:** The hero of the novel. He undertakes many voyages and suffers from sea-fever and wander-thirst.

1.2.4 Settings (Places):

- i) **York:** A city in England. It is the place where Robinson was born and his parents lived.
- ii) **Hull:** A seaport on the river Humber, the place where his father first settled after migration from Germany. From here Robinson sailed for London (without informing the parents.)
- iii) **Bermen:** A place in Germany, the place from where Robinson's father migrated.
- iv) **Yarmouth:** It is also called Great Yarmouth. It is near this place the ship sinks and Robinson along with other sailors walk to the place.
- v) **Guinea:** A region in South Africa, the English Captain voyages to the place successfully. Robinson also attempts to visit but the ship is captured near Canary Islands.
- vi) **Coast of Spain:** During the voyage had the wind blown southerly, Robinson would have reached the place.
- vii) **The Canary Island:** The place where the ship of Robinson is attacked and captured.
- viii) **Bay of Cadiz:** During the voyage had the wind blown south wards, Robinson would have reached the place.
- ix) **Sallee:** A place in Morocco. At this place Robinson is kept slave for two years by the rover Captain.
- x) **Pico of Teneriffe:** Robinson reaches to this place when flees from Sallee.
- xi) **Gambia (Senegal):** A river from where ships pass for Guinea.
- xii) **Cape Verde:** A Cape near the river Gambia, from where Robinson hopes to get a ship.
- xiii) **Brazil:** The Portuguese Captain takes Robinson to the place. Here Robinson starts plantation.
- xiv) **All Saints' Bay:** Before going to Brazil the Portuguese Captain takes Robinson to the place.

- xv) **Lisbon:** The Portuguese Captain belongs to the place. Robinson visits the place to know the status of his plantation, after coming from the island.
- xvi) **San Salvador:** A port in Brazil, Robinson makes friendship with the fellow planters at this place.
- xvii) **Trinidad:** An island where Robinson lived, which is situated on the south-east of West Indies.
- xviii) **Navarre:** A province of Spain. Robinson and his troop reach here from Madrid.
- xix) **Pampeluna:** A district city of Navarre. Robinson's party returns to the place when they see snow on French coast.
- xx) **Languedoc:** The guide takes Robinson and his troop takes to the place which is pleasant and fruitful.
- xxi) **Toulouse:** A city in France. Robinson and his troop reach to the place which is pleasant and fruitful.
- xxii) **Calais:** The place in France to which Robinson comes from Paris.
- xxiii) **Dover:** From Calais Robinson comes to Dover.
- xxiv) **East Indies:** They are islands between Asia and Australia. The younger nephew of Robinson persuades to sail for the place.
- xxv) Robinson and his troop take to the place which is pleasant and fruitful.

1.2.5 Summary of the Novel:

Chapter I — I Go to Sea

A man named Robinson Crusoe records his own life story, beginning with his birth in 1632 in the English city of York, in the words, "I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner. . . ." Crusoe's father was a German, originally named Kreutznaer. Crusoe is the youngest of three brothers, the eldest being a soldier and the second one having vanished mysteriously. As the youngest son in the family, Crusoe is expected to inherit little, and, as a result, his father encourages him to take up the law. But Crusoe's inclination is to go to sea. He asks his mother to seek the permission from the father as he wants see the whole world.

His family strongly opposes this idea, and his father gives him a stern lecture on the value of accepting a middle way in life. Crusoe resolves to follow his father's advice. But when one of his friends embarks for London, Crusoe succumbs to temptation and boards the ship on September 1, 1651 without taking the permission of his parents. Initially he enjoyed the voyage but then a storm develops. Near Yarmouth the weather is so bad that Crusoe fears for his life and prays to God for deliverance. The ship nearly founders, but all are saved. They all are saved and reach to Yarmouth. Crusoe sees this ordeal as a

sign of fate that he should give up sea travel, and his friend's father warns him against setting foot on a ship again, echoing his own father's warning.

Chapter II — I Am Captured by Pirates

Crusoe parts with his friend and proceeds to London by land. He was ashamed to go to back to home as the neighbours would laugh. He decides to go to Guinea. He meets a Captain who proposes that Crusoe accompany him on an upcoming merchant voyage, without any coast. Writing to his family for investment money, Crusoe spends forty pounds in buy in trinkets and toys to sell abroad. Crusoe makes a net income of 260 pounds from this trip, and considers it a great success. The Captain teaches him the art of navigation. The Captain died soon after. Taking one hundred pounds with him and leaving the remaining 200 pounds with a widow whom he trusts, Crusoe sets off on another merchant expedition. When the ship reached near Cavary Island, it was attacked by Turkish pirate. His ship is overtaken, and Crusoe is enslaved and taken to a port belonging to the moors. He was the only British among his Moorish master's slaves. Crusoe is assigned the task of fishing because of his natural skill. One day the master's fishing vessel gets lost in fog, and the master installs a compass on board. The master also stores some gunpowder on board in preparation for a shooting party, but the guests come at his home. The Rover Captain, master of Robin sends him for fishing with a man and a boy.

Chapter III — I Escape from the Sallee Rover

Robinson sets off on a fishing expedition with two other slaves, a man named Ismael (male) and a boy named Xury. He persuades Ismael to in farther in the sea. Sneaking up behind Ismael, Robinson tosses him into the water. Ismael swims alongside the boat and begs to be taken in. Robinson pulls a gun on him and tells him to return to shore or else be killed. Crusoe then asks Xury whether he will accompany him and serve him faithfully o which Xuryreadily agrees. By evening, Crusoe calculates they have sailed 150 miles South of Sallee. They see wild creatures onshore that Crusoe recognizes as lions. Crusoe shoots one dead, and he and Xury skin it. They proceed southward toward what Crusoe believes are the Cape Verde or Canary Islands. They see naked black people onshore, and they fear them until the natives offer them food. When the Africans witness Crusoe shooting a leopard, they are impressed, and they offer the skin to Robinson. Unsure where to head, Crusoe is surprised to see a Portuguese ship at a distance. The ship picks up Xury and Crusoe, and its kind Portuguese captain offers to take them to Brazil. The captain buys Crusoe's boat as well as Xury. Robinson was not willing to sell Xury but the Captain promised him to make free after ten years if he turns to be Christian.

Chapter IV — I Become a Brazilian Planter

After a voyage of twenty-two days, Crusoe lands in Brazil, accepting many farewell gifts from the Portuguese captain. After meeting his Anglo-Brazilian neighbour, he conceives a plan to become a tobacco planter. For two years Crusoe earns only enough on which to subsist, but in the third year he begins to do well and, in retrospect, misses the labour potential of the slave boy Xury whom he sold. Having told the Portuguese captain of his 200 pounds left in England, the captain arranges to have one hundred pounds sent to Crusoe in Brazil, along with many gifts besides. He earns a good profit from the goods sent by the Captain. After receiving what the captain sent, Crusoe feels quite well off. Eager for slave labour to extend his business further, he agrees to an acquaintance's plan to sail to Guinea for black slaves, in exchange for his own share of the slaves.

Chapter V — I Go on Board in an Evil Hour

Before leaving for the voyage, Robinson took two promises from the fellow planters. First, to take care of his plants and second to act according to his will if he dies. Robinson wrote a will according to which left half of his possessions to the Portuguese captain and half to be shifted to England. Crusoe sets sail for Guinea on September 1, 1659 with a cargo of trinkets with which to buy slaves. It was the same day nine years ago when he sailed for London against the advice of his father. Sailing up the South American coast, the ship encounters a storm, and two men are lost. Crusoe fears for his life. They changed their plan and decide to go to English islands. Reaching the Caribbean Sea, the ship is shaken by yet another storm that drives the ship onto the sand, breaking the rudder. The ship is clearly doomed, and the crew climbs into boats to make for shore. Crusoe loses sight of his mates when all are swept away by an immense wave. Finally Crusoe makes it to shore, where he immediately prays to God in gratitude. He never sees a sign of another living crewmember. He has nothing with him left except a knife, a tobacco pipe and some tobacco. After drinking some fresh water and finding a tree to sleep, Crusoe spends his first night on the island.

Chapter VI — I Furnish Myself with Many Things

Awakening the next morning refreshed, Crusoe goes down to the shore to explore the remains of the ship. Swimming around it, he finds it impossible to climb aboard until he finds a chain hanging, by which he pulls himself up. Crusoe conceives the idea of building a raft out of broken lumber, on which he loads provisions of bread, rice, goat meat, cheese, and other foods. He also finds clothes, arms, and fresh water. He sails his cargo-laden raft into a small cove, where he unloads it. He notices that the land has wildfowl but no other humans. Crusoe returns to the ship twelve times over the following thirteen days and

brings every time the things, arms food or the material needed in future. On one of the later trips he finds thirty-six pounds, and he sadly meditates on how worthless the money is to him. After a strong wind that night, he awakens to find the ship's remains gone the next morning.

Chapter VII - I Build My Fortress

Wary of savages, Crusoe decides he must build a dwelling or "fortress," as he calls it. He chooses a spot with a view of the sea, protected from animals and the heat of the sun and near fresh water. He drives wooden stakes into the ground, using them as a frame for walls. Crusoe sleeps securely in the shelter that night. The next day he hauls all of his provisions and supplies inside, and hangs a hammock on which to sleep. He also builds a cellar. During a thunderstorm he suddenly worries about his gunpowder supply, which he separates from the other supplies and stores in the cellar. Crusoe discovers wild goats on the island. He kills one and then sees that it had a kid, which he then kills too. On about his twelfth day on the island, he erects a large cross that he inscribes with the date of his arrival, September 30, 1659. He resolves to cut a notch on the cross to mark every passing day. He also begins a journal in which he records the good and evil aspects of his experience, until he runs out of ink. He prepares a chair and a table. He makes his living comfortable by labour, application and contrivance. He keeps watch for passing ships and is disappointed to find not a single.

Chapter VIII — The Journal

Crusoe makes us privy to the journal that he keeps for a while, beginning with an entry dated "September 30, 1659," that inaugurates his account of life on the "Island of Despair," as he calls it. He proceeds to narrate events that have already been narrated: his discovery of the ship's remains his salvaging of provisions, the storm that destroys the ship entirely, the construction of his house, the earth quakes there, his illness, prayers to God, reading of Bible and so on. He notes that he has lost track of which day is Sunday, and he is thus unable to keep the Sabbath religiously. He records the building of various pieces of furniture and tools. In a sense it becomes his diary, a record of his stay on the island.

Summary: Chapter IX — I Sow My Grain

Continuing his journal, Crusoe records his failed attempt to tame pigeons and his manufacture of candles from goat grease. He tells of his semi miraculous discovery of barley: having tossed out a few husks of corn in a shady area, he is astonished to find healthy barley plants growing there later. He carefully saves the harvest to plant again and thus is able eventually to supply himself with bread. He also discovers that there are two harvests. He prepares

some pots and baskets to hold the harvest. On April 16, an earthquake nearly kills him as he is standing in the entrance to his cellar. After two aftershocks, he is relieved to feel it end with no damage to his life or property.

Summary: Chapter X — I Travel Quite Across the Island

Robinson decides to travel to another part of the island. This part is visited by savages. Robinson understands, his life would have been miserable if he had landed here. He brings one parrot with him. He teaches to call him by his name. He comes down to a valley, which is so dark that he could not exactly judge the place of the sun in day time. The weather turns bad for three-four days hence he could not move further. Sometimes, he finds himself depressed but soon recovers by reading the Bible.

Chapter XI — I Am Very Seldom Idle

Robinson utilises his time to perform various duties. His daily routine includes reading of scriptures, hunting, working in the farm, preparing something or the other and cooking. He begins farming with a plan and cleverness. The parrot, which he has caught and taught to call his name, has become his part-time companion. He collects his harvest but needs pots and vessels to store and to cook. Then an idea struck to his mind- to prepare a boat.

Chapter XII — I Take a Survey of the Island

Robinson is pleased with the idea of making a Canoe. He selects a vast tree for the purpose. At the same time he begins to reflect about his condition. He thanks God because he has God's plenty to survive. He is the lord of the island. He learns to look least on the dark side and more upon the bright side. He repents for not having listened to the advice of his parents. He leaves totally on the will of God. As he contemplates he comes to know the coincidence of 30th in his life. On 30th he goes to Hull, was born on the same day, was made prisoner on the same date at Sallee, escapes from there on the same day and reaches to the island on the same day.

The weather is hot. His clothes begin to decay. He cannot live naked as it is very hot. Now, he begins with tailoring, to make a cap and a waistcoat. He also makes an umbrella. At last, he finishes with his canoe. He takes a little voyage in the sea but never goes far. On the 6th November, in the sixth year of his captivity on the island, he sets out on the voyage. He goes in the deep sea but the weather does not favour him. He realises the danger of starvation and getting lost. He recalls the days on the island. He now calls the island as his beloved island. To his surprise the wind begins to blow and he reaches the island again on the island. But this time, to other part of the island. He reaches to his place with great difficulty as he is tired.

Chapter XIII — I Improve Myself in the Mechanical Exercises

Robinson feels sad for two reasons- first he cannot go back to his boat, secondly, unsuccessful venture of escape through canoe. Then he leads a retired life for a year. He improves upon his mechanical skills. He has become a good carpenter and potter, an expert in making baskets. He begins to keep goats and looks after them. Now he gets milk along with flesh. He time and again praises God and Nature. He is pleased at his “absolute command” over all the subjects of his island kingdom and enjoys dining like a king surrounded by his parrot, his senile dog, and his two cats. Now he wants human society.

Chapter XIV — I Find the Print of a Man’s Naked Foot

Crusoe is astonished one day to discover the single print of a man’s naked foot in the sand. Crusoe is terrified and retreats to his “castle,” where he entertains thoughts that the devil has visited the island. His conclusion that it is not the devil’s but a real man’s footprint is equally terrifying, and Crusoe meditates on the irony of being starved for human contact and then frightened of a man. Driven wild by fear, Crusoe fortifies his home and raises guns around it, keeping watch whenever possible. Concerned about his goats, he contrives to dig an underground cave in which to herd them every night and creates another smaller pasture far away to keep a second flock. Crusoe spends two years living in fear.

Chapter XV — I See the Shore Spread with Bones

Coming down to a far part of the shore, Crusoe finds the beach spread with the carnage of humans. Eventually realizing that he is in no danger of being found by the cannibals, Crusoe’s thoughts turn to killing them as perpetrators of wicked deeds and thereby saving their intended victims. Waiting every day on a hillside fully armed, Crusoe eventually changes his mind, thinking that he has no divine authority to judge humans or to kill. He resolves not to interfere in their personal and national wrangling. He decides to leave them to the justice of God. He also realizes that killing them might entail a full-scale invasion by the other savages.

Chapter XVI — I Seldom Go from My Cell

Crusoe describes the measures he takes to avoid being spotted by the cannibals. He rarely burns fires, removes all traces of his activities when leaving a place, and even devises a way to cook underground. While descending into a large cave he has discovered, he is shocked to see eyes staring at him. Crusoe is frightened and returns with a firebrand, only to find it is an old he-goat. Crusoe is pleased with this new cave and considers moving into it. Mounting to his lookout spot later, Crusoe spots nine naked savages on the beach, lingering among the remains of their cannibal feast. He proceeds toward them with his

gun, but when he arrives they are already out to sea again. Crusoe inspects the human carnage with disgust. He determines to kill them when they are next seen.

Chapter XVII— I See the Wreck of a Ship

On May 16, Crusoe is reading the Bible when he is surprised by a distant gunshot followed closely by another. He senses the shots are coming from a ship and builds a fire to notify the seamen of his presence. By daylight he perceives that the shots have come from the wreck of a ship whose men are now either gone or dead. Once again he thanks Providence for his own survival. Going down to the shore, where he discovers a drowned boy, he prepares to paddle out to the ship in his canoe. He finds the ship is Spanish and contains wine, clothing, and a great treasure in gold bars and doubloons, all of which he hauls back to his dwelling.

Chapter XVIII— I Hear the First Sound of a Man’s Voice

Crusoe reflects on the “original sin” of disobeying his father, recounting the foolish decisions he has made throughout his life. One night he dreams that eleven cannibals arrive on his island to kill a victim who escapes and runs to Crusoe for protection. About a year and a half afterward, Crusoe finds five canoes on the island and thirty cannibals on the beach preparing two victims for slaughter. After the first is killed, the second breaks away and runs toward Crusoe’s hiding place. He is pursued by two cannibals but is faster than they are. Crusoe attacks both pursuers and persuades the frightened victim to approach. Finding Crusoe friendly, the native vows devotion to his liberator. He speaks in a strange language which Robinson cannot understand. After burying the remains of the two pursuers, so as not to be tracked later, Crusoe and the native return to his camp, where the native sleeps.

Chapter XIX— I Call Him Friday

Crusoe names the native Friday to commemorate the day on which Crusoe saves the native’s life. Friday again asserts his subservience to Crusoe. Crusoe teaches him simple English words and clothes him. Returning together to the slaughter scene, Crusoe has Friday clean up the bones and skulls and tries to convey to his servant the horror of cannibalism. Crusoe is delighted with his new companion and teaches him to eat goat meat instead of human flesh. He realizes he must expand his grain cultivation, which Friday helps him to do. Robinson makes additional arrangements for his companion. He also takes precaution that Friday will not enter his sleeping place all of a sudden.

Chapter XX — We Make another Canoe

Crusoe begins to love Friday and, in the course of rudimentary conversations with him, learns that the cannibals periodically visit the island. Crusoe also acquires enough geographical information to locate himself near Trinidad. Crusoe finds out that Friday is aware of mainland Spaniards who kill many men. Crusoe attempts to educate Friday in religious matters and finds that his servant easily understands the notion of God, to whom Friday draws similarities with his own deity Benamuckee. Friday has more difficulty understanding the devil, not grasping why God does not rid the world of this evil being permanently, and Crusoe has trouble answering this question. Crusoe admits that he lacks the religious knowledge necessary for instructing Friday in all the aspects of God and the devil. Friday reports that the cannibals have saved the men from the shipwreck discovered by Crusoe before Friday's liberation and that those men are living safely among the natives now. When Friday expresses a yearning to return to his country, Crusoe fears losing him, and when Crusoe considers trying to join the shipwreck survivors, Friday becomes upset and begs Crusoe not to leave him. Together, the two build a boat in which they plan to sail to Friday's land in November or December.

Chapter XXI — We March Out Against the Cannibals

Before Crusoe and Friday have a chance for their voyage to the cannibals' land, the cannibals visit Crusoe's island. Twenty-one natives come in three canoes to carry out another cannibalistic attack on three prisoners. Hesitant on moral grounds to kill so many, Crusoe reasons that since Friday belongs to an enemy nation, the situation can be construed as a state of war in which killing is permissible. Approaching the shore, Crusoe observes that one of the prisoners is a European. Crusoe and Friday fall upon the cannibals and quickly overcome them with their superior weapons, allowing only four to escape. Friday is overjoyed to find that another of the prisoners is his father. Crusoe and Friday feed the dazed prisoners and carry them back to Crusoe's dwelling, where a tent is erected for them. Crusoe reflects contentedly on the peopling of his kingdom with loyal subjects.

Chapter XXII — We Plan a Voyage to the Colonies of America

After conversing with his "two new subjects," Friday's father and the Spaniard, Crusoe revisits his earlier dream of returning to the mainland. Crusoe asks the Spaniard whether he can count on the support of the remaining men held on the cannibals' territory. The Spaniard says yes, but reminds Crusoe that food production would have to be expanded to accommodate so many extra men. With the help of his new workers, Crusoe increases his agricultural capacity. He gives each of the new men a gun.

Chapter XXIII — We Quell a Mutiny

One day Friday comes running to Crusoe with news that a boat is approaching the island, and Crusoe, with his spyglass, discovers it to be English. Crusoe is suspicious. Near the shore, Crusoe and Friday discover that the boat contains eleven men, three of whom are bound as prisoners. Friday suspects that the captors are preparing for cannibalism. When the eight free men wander around the island, Crusoe approaches the prisoners, who mistake him for an angel. One prisoner explains that he is the captain of the ship and that the sailors have mutinied. Crusoe proposes that in exchange for liberating him and the other two, he and Friday should be granted free passage to England. The captain agrees and Crusoe gives him a gun. Crusoe realizes that the other seamen may notice something wrong and send more men onshore to overpower Crusoe's men. They disable the boat to prevent the additional men from escaping.

Sure enough, ten seamen come in from the ship to discover the boat destroyed. Leaving three in the second boat as watchmen, the other seven come ashore. Crusoe then sends Friday and another to shout at the men from various directions, and Crusoe succeeds in confusing and tiring them so that they are finally separated. The men in the boat eventually come inland and are overwhelmed by Crusoe's stratagems. On behalf of Crusoe, the captain, finally addressing the remaining men, offers to spare everybody's life except that of the ringleader if they surrender now. All the mutineers surrender. The captain makes up a story that the island is a royal colony and that the governor is preparing to execute the ringleader the next day.

Chapter XXIV — We Seize the Ship

Having defeated the mutineers, Crusoe decides that it is time to seize the ship, and he tells the captain of his plans. The captain agrees. Crusoe and the captain intimidate the captive mutineers with a fictitious report that the island's governor intends to execute them all but would pardon most of them if they help seize the ship. To guarantee the men's promises, Crusoe keeps five hostages. The plan works: the rebel captain on the ship is killed, and the ship is reclaimed. When Crusoe glimpses the ship, he nearly faints from shock. In gratitude, the captain presents Crusoe with gifts of wine, food, and clothing. The mutineers are offered the chance to remain on the island in order to avoid certain execution for mutiny in England. Gratefully, they accept. On December 19, 1686, Crusoe boards the ship with his money and a few possessions and sets sail for England after twenty-eight years on the island. He arrives in England on 11th June 1687. Back in England, Crusoe discovers that the widow who has been guarding his money is alive but not prosperous. Crusoe's family is dead, except for two sisters and two children of his brother. Crusoe decides to go to Lisbon to

seek information about his plantations in Brazil. He reaches there in the following April along with Friday.

Chapter XXV — I Find My Wealth All about Me

Arriving in Lisbon, Crusoe looks up his old friend and benefactor, the Portuguese Captain who first took him to Brazil. The Portuguese Captain tells Crusoe that his Brazilian lands have been placed in trust and have been very profitable. The Captain is indebted to Crusoe for a large sum that he partially repays on the spot. Crusoe, moved by the Captain's honesty, returns a portion of the money. Obtaining a notarized letter, Crusoe is able to transfer his Brazilian investments back into his own name. He finds himself in possession of a large fortune. Crusoe sends gifts of money to his widow friend and to his two sisters. Tempted to move to Brazil, Crusoe decides against the idea because he is reluctant to become Catholic. He resolves to return to England, but he is averse to travelling by sea, removing his baggage from three different ships at the last moment. He later learns that two of those ships are either taken by pirates or foundered. Crusoe decides to proceed on land, assembling a travelling group of Europeans and their servants.

Chapter XXVI — We Cross the Mountains

Crusoe and his group set out from Lisbon and reach the Spanish town of Pampeluna (Pamplona) in late autumn, and Crusoe finds the cold almost unbearable. The snow is excessive, forcing the group to stay several weeks in Pamplona. On November 15 they finally set out toward France, despite inclement weather. They encounter three wolves and a bear in the woods. Friday kills a wolf and drives away the others. Friday also amuses the group by teasing the bear before killing it. Proceeding onward, the group encounters a frightened horse without a rider, and then finds the remains of two men who have been devoured by wolves. Three hundred wolves soon surround Crusoe's group. The group shoots the wolves and frightens them with an explosion of gunpowder, finally driving them away. Their guide is ill to his ranking wounds. So they take another guide for Toulouse. Arriving at last in Toulouse, France, Crusoe learns that his group's escape from the wolves was virtually miraculous.

Chapter XXVII — I Revisit My Island

Crusoe travels from Toulouse to Paris to Calais and lands safely at Dover, England, on January 14. He deposits his personal effects with his widow friend, who cares for him well. Crusoe contemplates returning to Lisbon and going from there to Brazil, but he is once again dissuaded by religious concerns. He cannot settle in Brazil unless he embraces Roman Catholic religion. So he decides to stay in England, giving orders to sell his investments in Brazil. This sale earns Crusoe the large fortune of 33,000 pieces of eight. Since Crusoe is

unattached to any family members and is used to a wandering life, he again thinks about leaving England, though the widow does all she can to dissuade him for seven years. He brings up his elder nephew as a gentleman and helps him financially. He makes his younger nephew a captain of a ship. After five years finding him bold sends to sea. Crusoe marries, has three children, two sons and a daughter. His nephew had a successful voyage to Spain. His nephew requests him to sail with him. He decides to head for the East Indies as a private trader in 1694. On this voyage he revisits his island. Crusoe finds that the Spaniards who have remained there have subjugated the mutineers, treating them kindly. He also notices that the number of people on the island has increased. Crusoe provides them with gifts of cattle, supplies, and even women. The colony has survived a cannibal invasion and is now prospering. He reaches Brazil. From there he sends women, cows and material for plantation to the island.

1.2.6 Plot Structure:

‘Robinson Crusoe’ is a popular novel like John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrims Progress* and Jonathon Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*. The novel ‘Robinson Crusoe’ is an account of sensational voyages and adventures of Robinson. The novel is an allegory, which conveys along with Robinson’s adventures implies religious meaning. It can be read at various levels like- an adventure story, biography of a picaro, a moral story, a religious theology, as a spiritual revelation, colonial expansion, as a Biblical parable etc. In this sense the novel is more than an allegory.

Robinson Crusoe is the youngest son of a merchant of German origin. Crusoe expresses his wish to go to sea instead. His family is against Crusoe’s decision. Initially, Robinson eventually succumbs to temptation and embarks on a ship bound for London with a friend. When a storm threatens them of death to Crusoe and his friend, the friend is dissuaded from sea travel, but Crusoe still goes on to set himself up as a merchant on a ship leaving London. This trip is financially successful, and Crusoe plans another, leaving his early profits in the care of a friendly widow. The second voyage does not prove as fortunate: the ship is seized by Moorish pirates, and Crusoe is enslaved to a potentate in the North African town of Sallee. While on a fishing expedition, he and a slave boy break free and sail down the African coast. A kind Portuguese captain picks them up, buys the slave boy Xury from Crusoe, and takes Crusoe to Brazil. In Brazil, Crusoe establishes himself as a plantation owner and soon becomes successful. Eager for slaves and labour to work on farms, he embarks on a slave-gathering expedition to West Africa but ends up shipwrecked off of the coast of Trinidad.

Crusoe soon learns he is the sole survivor of the expedition. He manages to survive on the island. He erects a cross that he inscribes with the date of his arrival, September 1, 1659, and makes a notch every day in order never to lose track of time. Crusoe experiences a religious illumination and realizes that God has delivered him from his earlier sins. He cuts down an enormous cedar tree and builds a huge canoe from its trunk, but he discovers that he cannot move it to the sea. After building a smaller boat, he rows around the island but nearly perishes when swept away by a powerful current. He spends several years in peace.

Soon Crusoe discovers that the shore has been strewn with human carnage, apparently the remains of a cannibal feast. Crusoe protects a victim, killing one of the pursuers and injuring the other, whom the victim finally kills. The victim vows total submission to Crusoe in gratitude for his liberation. Crusoe names him Friday, to commemorate the day on which his life was saved, and takes him as his servant. Friday informs Crusoe Spaniards, are living nearby. Crusoe then entertains the idea of making contact with the Spaniards. The two build a boat to visit the cannibals' land together. Friday and Crusoe kill most of the cannibals and release the European, a Spaniard.

On December 19, 1686, Crusoe boards the ship to return to England. There, he finds his family is deceased except for two sisters. His widow friend has kept Crusoe's money safe, and after travelling to Lisbon, Crusoe learns from the Portuguese captain that his plantations in Brazil have been highly profitable. He arranges to sell his Brazilian lands. Wary of sea travel, Crusoe attempts to return to England by land but is threatened by bad weather and wild animals in northern Spain. Finally arriving back in England, Crusoe receives word that the sale of his plantations has been completed and that he has made a considerable fortune. After donating a portion to the widow and his sisters, Crusoe is restless and considers returning to Brazil, but he is dissuaded by the thought that he would have to become Catholic. He marries, and his wife dies. Crusoe finally departs for the East Indies as a trader in 1694. He revisits his island, finding that the Spaniards are governing it well and that it has become a prosperous colony.

The plot structure of Robinson Crusoe is loosely constructed. It is picaresque, episodic and different threads of events can be strongly marked. There are diversions in the main story. Some episodes are not integrated to the story and do not give the sense of organic wholeness. A few episodes can be eliminated without providing any harm to the main story. The events in the story move as the hero Robinson wanders. However, the plot of the novel succeeds in holding the interest and curiosity of the readers.

1.2.7 Themes:

The novel 'Robinson Crusoe' is an account of sensational voyages and adventures of Robinson. The novel is an allegory, which conveys along with Robinson's adventures implies religious meaning. It can be read at various levels like- an adventure story, biography of a picaro, a moral story, a religious theology, as a spiritual revelation, colonial expansion, as a Biblical parable etc. The plot structure of 'Robinson Crusoe' is loosely constructed. It is picaresque, episodic and different threads of events can be strongly marked. The themes in the novel are one of the key features of the novel. The informative spirit, the ideological contents and the unity of themes mark the novel different from travel books and biographies. No doubt, the various themes in the novel occur along the travel of Robinson. Some major themes in the novel are discussed below.

- i) **Religious theme:** The novel is an allegory, which conveys along with Robinson's adventures implies religious meaning. Outwardly it is worldly journey of Robinson but at the same time it is his spiritual journey. Initially Robinson did not believe in God. But whenever he is found into difficulties, he remembers and prays for God. He does so on his voyage to England, when lands on uninhabited island, sees the footprint, sees cannibals. However, he complains to God every now and then. At the same time, he thanks God for saving his life, for bringing out of trouble, when green barely grew, for not being on the sore at the time of the arrival of cannibals, for many blessings showered on him. He begins to read the Bible regularly. He also praises God for giving an opportunity to pray for Him. He regards the persons who saved through dangers as angels sent by God. As a result, all his pride is mixed into dust and he accepts the supremacy of God. Thus, along Robinson's worldly journey we notice his affirmation of faith in the supremacy of God. It is because of this faith his life on the island becomes tolerable.
- ii) **Love for Money:** Love for money and material pleasures is another theme of the novel. Robinson leaves home and sails initially to quench the wander-thirst but later understands that he can earn good money out of that. The voyages of Robinson are motivated with the desire to earn money. His first voyage to Guinea gives profit out of the toys and trifles. He understands such trade can give a lot profit; hence, he plans for the next expedition. After succeeded in getting relieved from the clutches of Moorish Captain, he sells Xury, a loyal companion for the sake of money, he reaches to Brazil, turns to be a planter. There he has a strong desire to earn more money and plans for the expansion. Before leaving for slave hunting expedition he makes a will and makes arrangement of his money. Moreover, when he reaches to the island, money is of no use there but he preserves his money and brings it from another wrecked ship as well. He collects all material things with the

hope of deliverance. On his safe return to England, he inquires about the prosperity at Brazil and sells all the property and earns good money.

- iii) **The Life of the Prodigal Son:** The novel can also be read as a parable based on the story of Prodigal Son, mentioned in the Bible. The story of the Prodigal Son is similar to the story of Robinson. The story of the Prodigal Son occurs in St. Luke XV, 11-32, in the Bible. Like Robinson, he also disobeys his father's advice and runs away from the home. Then starves and experiences adventurous life and finally returns to the family. In the beginning of the novel the reference is made to this allusion. However, the whole novel is not a parable; it can be applied to certain extent. Defoe has taken the clues from the other sources as well. The other books are- Captain Cook's travel book- 'Dampier New Voyage Round the World'.
- iv) **A Moral Allegory:** Critics refer to 'Robinson Crusoe' as a moral allegory. Apparently it seems to be an adventure story of Robinson, the protagonist. But it is pregnant with the moral vein. Every incident, mishap, accident or an action provides Robinson an opportunity to reflect and contemplate. On the island he contemplates over his past actions and life and finds himself guilty. At times he repents as well. It is out of this conscience he begins to read the Bible and thanks God for having given him an opportunity to live the life as all his companions are drowned. During his existence on the island he at times thanks God for many reasons. It is from this contemplation he learns a lesson "Today we love what tomorrow we hate, today we seek what tomorrow we shun; today we desire what tomorrow we fear; nay, even tremble at the apprehensions of" (P.228). These moral lessons apply not only to Robinson but to everyone.
- v) **The Capitalistic Spirit:** From the beginning of the novel two desires, thoughts are dominant. The first is the desire to rule over and the desire to exploit other (may be living or non-living). Robinson primarily sets to sail to quench his desire for wander. But his first voyage to Guinea brings him good profit and then onwards he sees it as a source to earn money in short period. His accidental voyage to Brazil and his plantation there is an example of it. His relations with Xury are purely of master and slave kind. Moreover, despite the loyalty and faithfulness of Xury, he sells him to the captain for money. On the island Friday is another slave for him. Robinson regards himself as the king of the island. His last visits to the island indicate his urge to rule over. He visits the island as a master and claims half of the island as his property. During his isolated stay on island he exploits both Nature and animal world, symbolically capitalistic attitude. He also keeps a parrot with him which calls him by name. The pride of being a European, Christian and British is clearly seen in the episode of cannibals visit to the island for the second time. Initially, Robinson was reluctant to save the victim and thought in religious terms. But when he sees that the slave is European and a Christian he suddenly runs to save him.

Apart from the above discussed themes, there are other themes like sin, punishment and repentance. It can also be read as a biography of a picaro. The novel is also presents a clash between Man and Nature.

1.2.8 'Robinson Crusoe' as an Allegory (Symbolical Elements):

'Robinson Crusoe' is considered as one of finest allegories. An allegory is a work of art which has at least two implications run on parallel lines. It is a voyage of human soul from paganism to spiritual assertion. There are certain autobiographical elements as well in the novel. Symbolically the life of Robinson is parallel to the life of Defoe. Defoe had lived miserable and struggling life as Robinson had lived. He was imprisoned for political reasons. In the same way Robinson is imprisoned on the island. The imprisonment was a punishment for both.

The voyage in the novel can be taken as a symbol for life. The strong desire of Robinson to live the life is like his wander-thirst. The character of Robinson develops in the course of novel. He undergoes spiritual development and salvation. Robinson commits the sin of disobedience of his father-the God. He also commits the sin of pride, greed, rising faster than nature of things allows and the sin of running away from imprisonment. Then Robinson suffered, tortured, humiliated and punished with slavery, fear and the imprisonment on the island. As a result, later he repents and asks for the salvation. He totally believes in the power of the God.

Another symbolical interpretation of the novel is philosophical. Human being is born alone and has to suffer isolated. Life is only an illusion, a Maya. The island and the solitary life symbolises this universal truth. Robinson's efforts for the emancipation are the symbolical efforts of humans for salvation. The island allegorically stands for the alienation. The isolated living of Robinson on the island represents the alienated life of humans.

The novel symbolically represents the spirit of colonization. It is also about the love for material things. As there are more than two possible interpretations of the novel, better we call them the symbolical implications than the allegory.

1.2.9 Style in Robinson Crusoe:

Style and language of 'Robinson Crusoe' is one of the centres of attraction for the readers. It is simple, plain, straightforward, homely, lucid, colloquy, and almost Biblical. Defoe uses easy and familiar language in the novel. The sentences in the novel are long but simple to understand. In the beginning of the novel Defoe uses long-winded and difficult sentences. But as the action proceeds the language becomes simple. Defoe avoids the extreme sentences and uses balanced language. There are many allusions are used, most of which are from the Bible. To emphasize on a particular idea, thought or to convey a special meaning he uses the words like, 'ney' or interrogative sentences. Sometimes figures come to his help. The picturesque and dramatic quality is another feature of Defoe. He succeeds in conveying

and depicting an idea or an image, in fewest possible words. He provides every minute detail of things. At times there are unnecessary descriptions and divert the main story.

The novel is narrated in the first person 'I'. The picaro and the protagonist, Robinson is the narrator. It is a story of adventures and experiences of the protagonist. Defoe narrates the story so fast and swiftly that the readers hardly find time to think and contemplate. Critics have praised the novel for its narrative style- simple but impressive. The narration is rich with emotion, picturesque, zest and liveliness. Defoe's style of storytelling is warm, vibrating and animating. There are many incidents in the novel full of anxiety, curiosity, suspense and sensational thrill.

1.3. Questions for Self-Evaluation

- i) Describe the early life of Robinson.
- ii) How was Robinson's life as a slave?
- iii) Comment on the relations of Xury and Robinson.
- iv) Did Robinson enjoy the life on the island? How he had managed to survive there?
- v) What was the reaction of Robinson to see the foot print on the shore of the island?
- vi) Describe Robinson's life at Brazil.
- vii) Discuss the themes in the novel.

1.4 . Summary

The novel 'Robinson Crusoe' was first published in 1719. The novel has a story of the hero, Robinson, who lived alone for more than twenty-eight years and led adventurous life. There are certain autobiographical elements as well in the novel. Symbolically the life of Robinson is parallel to the life of Defoe. The plot of the novel is loose and picaresque but has thematic unity. The greatness of the novel lies in its adventurous zeal and spiritual serenity. The novel does not have organic plot, rather it is episodic and picaresque.

The novel is also called as an allegory but it is more than that. It can be read at various levels like- an adventure story, biography of a picaro, a moral story, a religious theology, as a spiritual revelation, colonial expansion, as a Biblical parable etc. The novel does not work on two levels only (as in allegory) but at several levels. As there are more than two possible interpretations of the novel, better we call them the symbolical implications than the allegory. The novel is narrated in the first person 'I'. The picaro and the protagonist, Robinson is the narrator. The adventures of Robinson are described in simple, racy and lively language.

1.5 Assignments

- i) Narrate the story of Robinson as of yours to your friend.
- ii) Try to find a novel with the similar story in your mother tongue.

1.6 Bibliography

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Unit: 2

Oliver Goldsmith-The Vicar of Wakefield

2.0 Objectives:

1. To make the students familiar with origin of novel form
2. To acquaint the students with the novel, 'The Vicar of Wakefield'
3. To introduce the students with the contribution of Oliver Goldsmith to the field of English Novel.

2.1 Introduction:

At the end of the 17th century English theatre came to close and that gave space to the rise of new form of literature i.e. novel. Daniel Defoe, Fielding, Richardson, Stern are the towering personalities in the field of English novel. The earlier development of novel records the types of novel as – picaresque novel, social novel, novel of adventure, novel of caricature and broad humour. Majority novelists of this age i.e. 18th century described the life in London city. With the rise and development of novel in this age, 18th century is rightly called as the age of novel.

2.2 Oliver Goldsmith as a novelists:

Oliver Goldsmith was born on 10th Nov. 1728 at the Pallas in the country of Longford in Ireland. His father, Rev. Charles Goldsmith, was the minister of the Church of England. He stood distinct because of his lively talent and humour. He was not a regular novelist. He was a journalist by profession and an essayist and biographer also. He turned to be a novelist by chance. The novel 'The Vicar of Wakefield' records the theories, philosophy and personal experiences of Oliver Goldsmith. This is one and only novel by Goldsmith but he has made remarkable contribution to English novel through 'The Vicar of Wakefield'.

2.1.1 Features of the novel 'The Vicar of Wakefield'

Domestic novel:

Goldsmith has introduced domestic subject in this novel. Richardson, Fielding, Stern and Smollett wrote novels on various subjects but Oliver Goldsmith shows greater interest in the domestic life. The novel tells a simple and happy life of the Primrose family. The Vicar's family is a happy company of innocent souls. Goldsmith has pictured the virtuous characters who present example of the ideal family.

Description of countryside:

The contemporary novelists of Goldsmith were indulged in the description of urban life. In 'The Vicar of Wakefield' Goldsmith pictures the simple life of countryside along with the beautiful description of nature. He elaborately explains the routine in villages and the praxis of villages.

Sentiments in the novel:

The novel is a spectrum of various sentiments like pathos and bathos. The novel is a record of the chain of calamities in the life of Primrose family. Goldsmith while depicting the pathos maintains its level and does not allow degenerating into melodrama. Goldsmith also displays his finest sense of humour in the novel. The humour here is innocent and fresh. The element of the humour in the novel adds to its popularity. The humour is sometimes extended to satire. The character of Dr. Primrose reflects the sense of humour and device of satire through his comments.

Social / Moral Novel:

In this novel Goldsmith presents his social and moral stand clearly. Goldsmith gives emphasis on the reformation of society. In this novel the

Vicar comments on the contemporary ills in social institutions like law society etc. This novel can be interpreted as social novel, domestic novel, and didactic novel. The novel contains variety of elements like religion, law, humour, pathos bathos, autobiography, morality etc.

Dear students, let's try to understand the story of the novel.

2.3 Summary

The Vicar of Wakefield is divided into 32 chapters of irregular length.

Chapter 1 to 10

The Vicar, Dr. Charles Primrose is happily leading his life with his wife Deborah Primrose and their children- two daughters and Olivia and Sophia and four sons George, Moses, Dick and Bill. They are all simple, innocent and truly christen family. The vicar and his family extend their hospitality to every visitor. Dr. Primrose and Deborah are truly proud of their children for their handsome character and looks. They are having sufficient financial assets and thus leading very happy life. But the Vicar is very keen on inculcating Christen Values in his children and at the same making them aware of the vanity of fashion. His eldest son George's marriage is settled with Arabella Wilmot, daughter of another Vicar Mr. Wilmot. The routine of Primrose family is very disciplined and full of respect for each other. One day primrose is discussing with Mr. Wilmot on the issue of marriage. He himself advocates monogamy and strongly puts forth that at least a priest should not follow polygamy. Mr. Wilmot objects his views because he favours polygamy and is himself going to marry fourth time. There is a heated dispute on the issue between them and that ends with the breaking of marriage between George and Arabella. Moreover the vicar receives another blow. He receives the news

that whatever financial asserts he has invested, he has lost them and has become bankrupt.

The Vicar gets new opportunity to work in the nearer village. To overcome the state of bankruptcy the Primrose family pays back the debts from their saving and with very little money move to new village. Meanwhile George is sent to London to complete his education. On their way to new village, they learn the information about their new landlord is famous for merry making and strong fascination for women. They also happen to meet a stranger named Mr.Burchell who joins their journey to the village. The Vicar likes Mr.Burchell for his simplicity and charity. Though Mr.Burchell is poor, the Vicar offers him his friendship. The Primroses are enthusiastically received in the new villages. Their neighbours are farmers and happy go lucky people. Their new home is small but is situated in beautiful company of nature. Their routine in the new house is equally happy. On the occasion of their first mass prayer on Sunday in the Church, Deborah, Olivia and Sophia prepare themselves with splendour. The Vicar expresses his dislike for such vanities. All the family members respond to his comments positively. Through such incidents the Vicar inculcates in his children Christian values. Though the Primrose family is living life in poverty and small house, they are living together happily. Meanwhile they are visited by their landlord Squire Thornhill. The Squire shows hearty response to Primrose girls. The Primroses are also visited by their friend Mr.Burchell who loves children and often brings for them small gifts like gingerbread. Mr.Burchell stays that night at the house of Primrose and happily joins their work next morning. The Vicar observes that he is showing more interest in helping Sophia in her work. They receive a message about a Squire's visit to their house. Mr.Burchell hints the Primroses that the Squire is planning to

marry Arabella Wilmot. But when asked so the squire plainly denies and says that he does not find Arabella beautiful. During their conversation the Squire cuts jokes upon Moses. The Vicar does not like it and observes that the Squire is more interested in Olivia. During his discussion with his wife, the Vicar disapproves the Squire as free thinker. But Deborah objects it saying that she has seen many free thinkers made good husbands. Again Primroses are visited by Mr.Burchell. The Vicar seems to be displeased by the frequency of his return. The family discusses about poems. Sophia reads a ballad. When they are enjoying the poem, they are disturbed the sound of gun. The man is the Squire's chaplain and offers the Primroses the bird hunt by him. He has come with the message by the Squire, that he has arranged a ball dance in the front yard of Primrose's house. The Chaplain expresses his wish to dance with Sophia, but she fits it proper to dance with Mr.Burchell who has helped her in her work. But Mr.Burchell denies being there for the dance party and leaves the place. Sophia consents to dance with the Chaplain. The Squire arrives with two young dressed ladies for the dance party. Flammborough's, the neighbour of the Vicar, daughter also participate the dance. The Squire dances with Olivia. The two ladies from the town feel affection for Primrose daughters and want to take them home. The Vicar disapproves the idea but Deborah is influenced by the idea. She is very much concerned about the beauty of her daughters. In spite of the Vicar's comments the women in the family indulge in pickings and patching. The girls approach a fortune telling gypsy for knowing their future. They are told by the gypsy that Olivia will marry a Squire within the period of the year and Sophia will also marry a lord. The Vicar makes fun saying that in return of two shillings they should have been promised a Prince and a Nabob. A rumour is spread in the Parish that the Squire is in love with Olivia. Deborah sees suggestive dreams beckoning at the approaching

marriage. The girls have their own omens. The town ladies are visiting the place again. To display their status Deborah needs good horses. She proposes to sell their horse. The Vicar dismisses the idea. Consequently the Primrose women fail to reach Church in time because of the old horses.

Chapter 11 to 20:

Two ladies from the town are lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs. They visit the Vicar's house and there is a lot of discussion on the topic of character. Once again Deborah and the Vicar discuss the issue of sending their girls to town with the ladies. When they are visited by Mr. Burchell, he rejects the idea of sending the girls to town. Deborah expresses her resentment for the reaction by Mr. Burchell. Meanwhile Moses, who has been sent to sell the horse, comes back. Moses informs them about the deal. He sold the horse for three pounds, five shilling and two pence, but instead of bringing the money to his parents he invested it in a bargain. In return of that money he purchased a grocer of green spectacles with silver rims and shagreen cases. He is told by the seller that by selling those spectacles he can earn double amount. Looking at the spectacles, the Vicar informs that the spectacle rims are not silver but copper and cannot be sold even at half price. This episode shows that Moses and Flamborough have been cheated in the fair by a rogue. Once again there is a dispute between Deborah and Mr. Burchell on the issue of sending the girls to town. Deborah answers him with harsh words. Therefore he leaves their home saying that he will visit them only one more time to say good bye. The Vicar rebukes her for treating their guest in insulting manner. The journey of the daughters to town is decided. The Primrose are in the need of money. They decide to sell the remaining horse also. This time the Vicar himself goes. In the fair he does

not find a buyer. An acquaintance of him takes him for a glance of drink at public house. An old gentleman approaches him admiring him as a great monogamist. He offers him his friendship and the Vicar readily accepts it. They discuss several issues and the Vicar is impressed by his knowledge. The Vicar informs him that he is there to sell his horse and gentleman informs that he is there to buy a horse. The deal is settled. The gentleman offers him a thirty pound note but the Vicar does not have change. To return the remaining amount, his servant asks for change to other people but does not get it. So the gentleman signs a draught in the name of Flamborough and asks the Vicar to collect the money from him. When he leaves with the horse and his servant, the Vicar feels to follow him and take the horse but by that time the man disappears. When the Vicar reaches to Flamborough, he is informed that the old man whose real name is Ephraim Jenkinson and he has received Moses and Flamborough. The Vicar is stunned by the blow and finds it difficult to face his family members. But when he reaches to his home, he finds his wife and daughters in tears because someone has written a letter to the town ladies deny to take the girls with them. The Vicar wants to know the name behind this mean act. That evening one of the younger Primroses brings a letter case to the Vicar which he finds outside their house. The letter case of Mr. Burchell. When they open the letter case, they find the copy of a letter sent to the town ladies defaming Primrose girls. Deborah curses Mr. Burchell and Olivia and Sophia are also surprised by his meanness. At the same the children report arrival of Mr. Burchell. The Primrose decides to welcome him with usual familiarity and then expose him to his villainy. Accordingly they welcome him and cheat with him when asked whose letter case it is, Mr. Burchell accepts that it is his letter case and he also accepts that he wrote the letter of defamation. The Vicar angrily asks him to leave his house. He tells his children the allegory of

guilt and shame. The visits of the Squire grow more frequently. The Primroses decide to get their painting drawn in different characters such as Deborah as Venus, Dick and Bill as Cupids, Olivia as Amazon, Sophia as Shepherdess, Moses with hat and feather, Vicar in his Church dress and Squire as Alexander the great. The picture becomes too large in size to fit it in the hall. So the picture is fitted on the wall of kitchen. The picture becomes the cause of laughter for all the neighbours. Deborah wants to know the real feelings of the Squire for Olivia. She asks suggestive questions to the squire such as who could be suitable match for Olivia? The Squire answers that Olivia is an angel it is difficult to suitable match for her. Deborah further informs him that they are thinking of marrying Olivia to farmer Williams will be injustice but he does not declare his proposal for Olivia. The Primroses decide to prosecute the scheme of farmer Williams. One day farmer Williams and the Squire come face to face to look at each other angrily. Olivia's pretension of her care for Williams and her love for the Squire put her in dilemma. The Vicar discusses the issue of marriage and allows her to take as much time as she wants to have the consent for marriage from the Squire and if she cannot not get his consent, she will have to marry Williams. Olivia agrees. Four days before the marriage Olivia is reported to run away from home. This blow stuns the Vicar and his family. Deborah curses her daughter for defaming the honour of the family. The Vicar decides to go in search of Olivia. Next day he reaches to the castle of Squire making enquiry about Olivia. The Squire shows total unawareness about the happening. When the Vicar happens to meet the Stranger, he informs the Vicar that he saw Olivia in the region of Wales, some thirty miles away and he describes the companion with her who resembles with Mr.Burchell. The Vicar travel in the given direction but he does not find her. Due to his old age and the journey he falls ill and has to stay in an

inn for three weeks. He decides to go back home. After recovering from illness he starts his journey back. He happens to meet a company of comedians. He continues journey with them. When they reach to a village, the Vicar enters an Ale house and meets a gentleman. Both of them discuss over several issues. The gentleman invites the Vicar and the comedians for dinner at his mansion. When he goes to his mansion, the gentleman welcomes and provides them nice supper. Again they discuss the topic of politics. The discussion turns very heated and the host asks the Vicar to leave his house at once. When he is about to leave the house the real owner of the mansion arrives. Mr. Arnold is the real owner of the house and he is the uncle of Arabella Wilmot. Arabella is happy to see the Vicar. The Vicar narrates his miseries to her. Mr. Arnold treats him very politely. The Vicar, Mr. Arnold and his family members are invited by the comedians to watch their performance. When they go to watch the performance, the Vicar is surprised to see his eldest son George as one of the performers. Mr. Arnold invites George and the Vicar to his home. George, after reaching to Mr. Arnold's house, narrates his miserable condition. Actually George was sent to London for having high academic career but he suffer there by apathy of the people. He was gradually losing his money and had to work hard for earning bread. He kept on changing one job after another. He happened to meet the Squire who offered him a trivial job of attending him. When the Squire returned to his place he recommended George to his uncle for the job. But the Uncle Sir William Thornhill rebuked him for being close to the Squire. Again George had to search for a job. In search of job he moves from country. He loses his possessions gradually and becomes poor and has to join the group of comedians.

Chapter 21 to 32:

The Vicar is sad to listen to his son's miserable life. The butler of Mr. Arnold's family informs the Vicar that Squire and Arabella's match is approved by Mr. Arnold. The Squire arrives to Mr. Arnold's home. The Squire asks the Vicar to keep the secret of Olivia's elopement from Arabella and George. The Squire buys a commission for George in army regiment that is going to West- Indies. Next day George joins his new job and the Vicar starts his journey back home. For the night he stays at a little public house. He enjoys a glass of drink with the owner of the public house who tells him that people hate the Squire but love his uncle. The owner's wife gets angry with him for his laziness and also tells him that there is woman who may not pay money for her lodging. The wife quarrels with that woman. When the woman replies, the Vicar at once recognises the voice of Olivia. He at once calls his daughter. Olivia is happy to see her father but at the same time feels ashamed of her because she has brought dishonour to her family. The Vicar wants to know who is responsible for her present condition and he blames Mr.Burchell for this condition of Olivia. Olivia then tells him the truth that it is not Mr.Burchell but the Squire is responsible for this condition of her. Rather Mr.Burchell tried to give her many hints against the Squire but she did not paid attention to it. Mr.Burchell intentionally writes the letter of defaming Primrose girls to the town ladies because those ladies were appointed by the Squire to bring Primrose daughters to London so that he could easily seduce them. As far as the condition is concerned, she eloped with Squire who arranged fake marriage with her and seduced her. Thereafter Olivia exposes the villainy of the Squire to her father that he has already married to girls and then abandoned them. Moreover the Squire gave her an oath of keeping it secret. He introduced her to two

more women abandoned by him whom he made prostitutes. He wanted Olivia to be a prostitute like them. But Olivia rebuked him and left him. She speaks out her grief that her sorrow is mixed with guilt and infamy. Therefore, hereafter she cannot live happily. The Vicar tries to console her saying that her family will forgive her only if she repents. Next day they start their journey back home. When they are five miles away from home, the Vicar keeps Olivia in an inn and decides to go home alone. So that he can convince his family to forgive Olivia and welcome her back. When he reaches to home by midnight he finds his house is set on fire. He finds the elder once out on the road but the younger ones are still in fire. The Vicar reaches into the fire and saves Dick and Bill because of which his hand gets burnt. The possessions of the Primrose family turn into ashes. Their neighbours provide them help and erect a thatched hut for them. Next day Olivia and Moses are sent to bring back Olivia. On her arrival Deborah reproaches her but the Vicar interferes and suggests staying together harmoniously, so that they can still live contented life. Even after so many blows, the Primrose family starts enjoying serenity. Olivia cannot come out of her sorrow. The Vicar tries to console her by reading books. When Olivia learns the news the Squire is going to marry Arabella, she suffers more. The Vicar tries to warn Mr. Wilmot but he could not contact him. After some days, the Squire unexpectedly visits house of the Vicar. Olivia goes into house because he does not want to talk him. The Squire offers a shameless deal to the Vicar, that he will arrange Olivia's marriage; she can maintain her relations with the Squire. The Vicar expresses his strong resentment and says that had his son been there, he would have taught a lesson to the Squire. The Squire gets angry and threatens that his attorney will treat him very hard because the Vicar has not paid rent to the Squire. He once again asks the Vicar to grant permission for the marriage between Arabella and the Squire. The Squire

goes away but next day his servant arrives asking for the rent which the Vicar is unable to pay. His family members ask him to agree with the Squire and save himself from the further calamities. But the Vicar strongly replies that he will not agree with what is not right. He emphasises that whatever may be the consequences he will cling to what is right. Next day two officers of the justice arrive and inform him that he will be taken to the gaol because of the non-payment of the rent. The Vicar asks his family members to accompany him to the gaol and stay in some rented house near the gaol. When the Vicar is being taken to the gaol, the Parishioners protest that they would not allow taking the Vicar to the prison. The Vicar interferes and convinces the parishioners that they should not interfere the working of law and should follow his preaching. The parishioners melt into tears and bid farewell to the Vicar. When the Vicar is taken to the jail, he is given a separate cell. Moses searches for a rented houses and gets one room. It is decided that the woman will stay in the rented house and boy will stay with the Vicar in his cell. The children happily accept it. Meanwhile a prisoner named Jenkinson comes to the Vicar's help and offers him a part of his bed cloths to make his bed. When the Vicar takes the round of the prison, he is surprised to see all the prisoners shouting and laughing happily. Jenkinson tells the Vicar that he is in the prison because he cheated Flamborough. The Vicar reminds Jenkinson that he is the same man whom Jenkinson also cheated. Who took his horse and did not pay him money. Jenkinson expresses his apologies for cheating the Vicar and even Moses and feels ashamed that his tricks have brought him to jail. The Vicar assures him that he will ask Flamborough not to give evidence against Jenkinson. The Vicar asks him that he looked quite aged when he first met him, now he looks quite young. Jenkinson answers that he is expert in disguising himself. Next morning the Vicar is awakened by his

family. They all are sad. The Vicar allots them their duties. Sophia will take care of Olivia, Deborah will take care of the Vicar, Dick and Bill will be with the Vicar. Moses will earn money to feed the family. The Vicar then takes round of the prison and finds the prisoners idling and indulging in brutal activities. The Vicar then resolves to reform the prisoners by preaching them. He communicates his wish to the prisoners through Jenkinson. They all receive this proposal humorously because that will provide them new entertainment. When the Vicar reads them a portion of service, they practice a number of pranks such as whispering, groaning, winking, coughing and laughing. After the preaching, some criminals speak out their desire for the Vicar's acquaintance. Jenkinson offers his food for the Vicar and his family. He feels sorry for the Primrose family and asks for forgiveness of Moses. Jenkinson tells the story of his life as a character and wants to know what has brought the Vicar in Jail. The Vicar narrates him the story of his calamities. After hearing the story, Jenkinson slaps his forehead and says he would try what could be done. Next morning the Vicar informs his wife about his scheme of reforming the prisoners. When his wife denies the idea, the Vicar speaks out his belief in the basic goodness of human beings. When he engages his second preaching, the prisoners play different tricks upon the Vicar. One turns his wig awry, the other one spits through his teeth that showers upon the Vicar's book. The third one cries Amen in such a way that others laugh. The fourth one takes away the Vicar's spectacles. The fifth one replaces Vicar's book with jest book. But the Vicar does not take notice of these pranks and continuous with his preaching seriously. As a result, in the period of six days the criminals attend his preaching seriously. Then the Vicar provides them an employment of cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers. They buy the raw material by collection and subscription and earn profit by selling the product. Thus their energy

is involved in constructive work. The Vicar also declares punishment for immorality and rewards for peculiar industry. The Vicar then reflects over the contemporary law situation.

Olivia comes to visit the Vicar. She is sad because she holds herself responsible for the imprisonment of the Vicar and requests the Vicar to accept the conditions of the Squire and submit to him. But the Vicar replies that he will not allow his daughter to be acknowledged as a prostitute. He will not allow the Squire to marry another woman. Jenkinson also suggests the Vicar to surrender to the Squire. But the Vicar is adamant on his decision and declares that as a father and as a Vicar he would not allow adultery. Jenkinson then suggests another solution that the Vicar should write a letter to Sir William Thornhill, uncle of the Squire, explaining him the villainy of the Squire. Jenkinson says that he will receive answer in three days. Accordingly the Vicar writes a letter to Sir William Thornhill. Moses is sent to handover the letter to Mr.Thornhill. But there is no reply. Meanwhile the health of the Vicar deteriorates. He suffers more because of Olivia's deteriorating health. He is stunned by the news of Olivia's death. Dick and Bill try to console him. Now Jenkinson suggests the Vicar to send his letter of submission to the Squire and permit him to marry Arabella. Jenkinson requests him to do this for the sake of his health and family. Moses carries the letter of submission to the Squire. But the Squire rejects the letter saying that it is too late now and he has also learnt about the letter sent to his uncle. Another blow stuns the Vicar that Sophia is kidnapped. The Vicar cries that the sum of his miseries is made up and no other agony can be given by him. Moses comforts the Vicar telling him that though they all are suffering; there is a news that will give him some satisfaction. There is a letter from Vicar's eldest son George who is living

happily, his colonel is happy with him and promised him promotion as lieutenant. Deborah wants to make sure whether George is really happy because she has already sent a letter to George informing him the miseries of the family and asked him to avenge the injustice done to his father and sister. It seems that George has not received her letter. The Vicar rebukes Deborah for writing that letter to George. Moses reads out the letter by George. The Vicar expresses his satisfaction that at least George is away from miseries. But the next moment he finds the Jailor bringing an enchained and wounded man to the Vicar's cell. To the horror of the Vicar that man is George. The Vicar is once again stunned to see the situation. George, after receiving his mother's letter, determined to punish the Squire and went to his place to challenge him for fight but the Squire sent his four servants to attack him. George fought with one and wounded him. The Squire got the reason to put George in hands of law. Now he is in the prison punished with capital punishment. George consoles his father and requests to have fortitude. The Vicar also declares that he is above all the sorrows now and broken his ties from the earthly life. He is ready to die with his son. He goes to deliver sermon to the prisoners. In his sermon he tells the prisoners function of religion in the life of human beings. The Jailor kindly allows the Vicar to visit his son every morning. One day he is informed by Jenkinson that Sophia is rescued. Moses informs him that Sophia is rescued by Mr. Burchell and she is coming with him to visit the Vicar. The Vicar is very much pleased to listen to this news and Deborah sheds the tears of happiness. When Mr. Burchell arrives with Sophia, the Vicar says that he is very poor and cannot provide him the usual hospitality. Moreover, he asks for the forgiveness of Mr. Burchell for blaming him in the matter of defaming letter. Mr. Burchell declares that he is not angry with him at all. The Vicar then wants to know the kidnapping and rescuing of Olivia. When she was

coming with her mother to the prison to meet her father, a villain carried her out in a coach. Sophia cried for help but the ruffian flattered her, threatened her not to shout. He also promised that if she kept mum, he would not harm her. In the meantime, Sophia broke the canvas and shouted for help. She happened to see Mr. Burchell and cried out his name. He atones started running to catch coach. When he reached to the running coach he threw the coachman out the ruffian raised a sword. Mr. Burchell fought against him and ruffian ran away. The Vicar happy at this account, offers Mr. Burchell the hand of Sophia. Mr. Burchell replies that he is too poor to offer her a happy life but the Vicar finds him a worthy man. But Mr. Burchell does not reply. He orders for best food and wine from the next inn. George and Jenkinson are also invited for dinner. When George arrives there he is astonished to look at Mr. Burchell. Meanwhile the servant in prison informs Mr. Burchell about the arrival of a rich man who wants to see him. Mr. Burchell, then, discloses his true identity that he is Sir William Thornhill. Deborah asks for his forgiveness. Sir William Thornhill is there in response to the letter of complaint against the Squire by the Vicar. Meanwhile Jenkinson takes the responsibility of searching the ruffian responsible for Sophia's kidnapping. Sir William also prescribes medicine for the painful burnt hand of the Vicar. When they are about to start their dinner, the Squire arrives to indicate his innocence. His uncle rebukes him for his intrigues. The Squire tries to defend himself. Meanwhile Jenkinson brings the ruffian responsible for Sophia's kidnapping. The Squire is startled to look at his acquaintances. All his villainy is exposed to Sir William Thornhill. The Squire's servants also witness in favour of George. Jenkinson proves that the marriage between Olivia and the Squire was true. Arabella and her father happen to visit the jail when they learn about the imprisonment of the Vicar. Squire's villainy is exposed to Arabella by William

Thornhill. George is set free from accuses. But the Squire is succeeded in encroaching the fortune of Arabella. George accepts to marry Arabella without fortune but Jenkinson exposes true marriage of Squire with Olivia, so he cannot enjoy the fortune of Arabella. Another surprise is opened that Olivia is alive. Jenkinson intentionally spread the news of her death so that the Vicar will allow the marriage between the Squire and Arabella and will set the Vicar free from Jail. The Squire, then, asks for the forgiveness of his uncle. As a result of the Squire's vices, crimes and ingratitude William Thornhill gives Olivia, the third part of his fortune. So that she can use the same for her after her marriage with Squire. Jenkinson is rewarded with 500 pounds and Sophia's marriage with him. But Sophia denies her match with Jenkinson. Then Sir William Thornhill proposes her and she happily accepts it. Sir William distributes forty pounds among the prisoners. The Vicar is set free from the prison. In the concluding chapter the Vicar receives the news that he has regained his lost financial assets. His happiness is added with the settlement of marriages between the elder daughter of Flammborough with Jenkinson and younger one with Moses. Thus the novel ends on happy note.

2.4 Characters in the novel:

1. Dr. Charles Primrose: An aged man about 70, A Vicar by profession and head of Primrose family.
2. Deborah Primrose: wife of Dr. Primrose
3. George: Eldest son of Primrose
4. Olivia and Sophia: Young daughters of Primrose
5. Moses, Dick & Bill: Younger sons of Primrose
6. Sir William Thornhill: Baronet of land and influential man in the King's Court.

7. Squire Thornhill: Nephew of Sir William Thornhill and the villain in the novel.
8. Ephraim Jenkinson: An acquaintance of the Squire and a rogue. Later on turns into good man in the company of the Vicar.
9. Flamborough; Good neighbour of the Vicar, by profession a farmer.
10. Arabella Wilmot: Fiancée of George
11. Mr. Wilmot: Father of Arabella and a Vicar by profession
12. Baxter: A rogue, an acquaintance of Squire

2.5. a. Male Characters in the novel –

The novel is divided into clear-cut good and bad male characters. Out of them, the Vicar's character is round and fully developed character.

Dr. Charles Primrose-

Dr. Charles Primrose is the Vicar of Wakefield. The events in the novel move around him and he also works as the mouthpiece of Oliver Goldsmith. Thus he is a thorough religious man not only by profession but also practices the same in his personal life. He also inculcates the same Christian values like hospitality, charity, goodness, and sacrifice in his children. He advocates monogamy and strongly criticizes fashion. Being a proud father of his handsome children, he is very much concerned about the honour of his children as well as his family. He is portrayed as an old man about 70. Therefore he cannot be called a hero in the strict sense of the term but he does possess heroic qualities like solidarity of resolution, inner strength, love for truth and fortitude which make him more a hero than the hero himself. We are introduced with the character of the Vicar in four capacities- as a Vicar, as a father, as a husband and as a human being and

we find hi, a balanced character in all these capacities. As a Vicar, he is well aware of his church duties and practices Christian values in church, society and family equally. He loves his poor neighbours and parishioners and wants his family not to display the splendour that crates gap between them and their neighbours. He appreciates and rewards his children for their good acts but also rebukes them for their pretension. As a Vicar, he strongly disagrees with the unjust demands of the Squire and is ready to face every calamity, misery for the sake of his principles. Even when he is imprisoned, he keeps aside his sufferings and resolute to reform the prisoners as worthy human beings who have been spending life in prison like animals. Through him Oliver Goldsmith comments on the 18th Century law system. He thinks that the penal law is not only responsible for transforming simple criminals into hard-core criminals but also for increasing the number of criminals. Whatever is the crime, minor or major, capital punishment is the punishment given by law. The Vicar finds here the law system at fault. The Vicar preaches the prisoners but by offering them employment he channelizes their power to constructive work. This is how he sets an example of social reformation. Being an old man he performs the brave act of saving his younger children from fire. As a father he blames the ruffian with whom Olivia elopes. As a father he interacts with Olivia on the issue of her marriage with the Squire. Being a man of experience, he rightly evaluates the Squire as free thinker and therefore unsuitable match for Olivia. Being old and ill, he travels a lot in search of Olivia and when he finds her in miserable condition and repenting over her mistake, he not only forgives her but also inspires her to forget her painful past and live life happily. Being powerless and poor, he dares to answer the Squire openly and denies obeying his demands. Thus the Vicar proves himself an ideal father. As a husband, he is very loving and caring. He loves his wife despite of her weaknesses but also rebukes her for her misbehaviour to the guests. He appreciates her managerial skills and the efforts she takes for the family. As a human being he is simple to the extent of

foolish and is easily deceived by the rouse like Jenkinson. The same simplicity he practices in life and inculcates in his children. Oliver Goldsmith has made this character memorable because of his queer humour. The Vicar's comments on various issues introduce us with his fine sense of humour. For example while introducing us to his wife he remarks 'she can read any book without much spellings'. It is because of this sense of humour, he can handle peculiar guests easily. As a Christian, he extends warm hospitality to every visitor but to get rid of troublesome guests he would lend them something and the guests never visit his house again so that they need not to return the thing. The character of Vicar can be well compared with the character of Parson Adams from Joseph Andrews.

Mr.Burchell alias Sir William Thornhill –

Mr.Burchell is actually Sir William Thornhill who is one of the good characters in the novel. He is uncle of the Squire. He is the Baronet in the King's court and very influential man. The Vicar and his family happen to meet Mr.Burchell when they are moving to nearer village .He seems very poor and peculiar type of man. Mr.Burchell is very popular in the locality and visits every family in the parish. He is very much fond of small children and often brings sweets or pieces of gingerbread for them. The Vicar likes him because of charity and simplicity. Mr.Burchell frequently visits the Vicar's house because he likes to help Sophia in her work. Deborah, wife of the Vicar has a particular dislike for this man because of his poverty. Because Mr.Burchell is a well-wisher of the Primrose family he opposes the idea of sending the Primrose girls with the Ladies of the Squire's acquaintance to London. But Deborah is insistent upon sending the girls. But her plan fails because the ladies deny taking the girls with them because they have received a letter that the girls do not bear good character. It is also exposed that Mr.Burchell has written that letter. Deborah expresses her strong resentment and the Vicar rebukes him. Thereafter his visits to the Vicar's

family stop. Later on he appears on the scene in the concluding part of the novel when he rescues Sophia. Meanwhile we learn about his goodness from Olivia. The Vicar finds out Olivia is very miserable condition when she is abandoned by the Squire. He blames Mr.Burchell for this condition of Olivia. Then Olivia makes it clear to the Vicar that Mr.Burchell is innocent and he always warned Olivia about the ill designs of the Squire. Mr.Burchell intentionally wrote the letter of defamation because it was the Squire's intrigue to bring the Primrose girls to London with the help of the ladies and seduce them. When Mr.Burchell rescues Sophia, he brings her to Prison to meet the Vicar There his true identity is disclosed and we learn that he is Sir William and he is actually there in response to the letter of complaint about the Squire by the Vicar. When the Squire tries to vindicate his innocence, Sir William rebukes him and whips him with words. He sets everything right in the life of the Vicar and his family and accepts to marry with Sophia.

The Squire-

The Squire is the only bad character in the novel and is directly responsible for the miserable life of the Primrose family. The Vicar is the tenant of the Squire. He is informed about the vices of the Squire that he has seduced many girls. When the Squire learns about two beautiful daughters of the Vicar, he starts visiting his home, arranges party and makes show off his riches. He succeeds in catching the attention of Olivia. A rumour is spread that he is in love with Olivia and will marry her. The Squire shows great interest in Olivia but does not propose her openly. Deborah tries her best to make him speak out his desire for Olivia but he keeps mum even when Olivia's marriage is decided with farmer Williams. Before four days of her marriage he takes Olivia away with him, marries her, seduces her and compels her to be a prostitute. After marriage Olivia learns the true nature of the Squire that he has already married six or eight girls and have abandoned them. The Squire is not only a womanizer but a

liar and shameless man. When the Vicar visits him asking him about Olivia, he pretends that he knows nothing about Olivia and asks the Vicar not to make it public. After betraying Olivia, he turns his attention towards Arabella, ex fiancée of George. For the sake of her rich fortune, he wants to marry her. When Olivia exposes his villainy to her father, the Vicar decided to fight any calamity for the honour of his daughter. The Squire shamelessly visits his house and suggests that he will arrange Olivia's marriage with another man and will continue to be her lover. He also compels the Vicar to permit the marriage between him and Arabella but the Vicar strongly denies surrendering to his pressure. As a result the Squire sends his servant to ask for the rent which the Vicar fails to pay and therefore is imprisoned. The Squire pretends to be friend of George, the eldest son of the Vicar and buys for him commission. Apparently this seems an act of generosity on his part but actually he does so to keep George away from Arabella. At the end of the novel he is rebuked by his uncle for all his intrigues. His marriage with Olivia is proved true. Sir William Thornhill assigns third part of his fortune to Olivia so that the Squire will be controlled by her. The Squire is presented as a total black side of human nature. He is assisted by Jenkinson and Baxter. But at the end of the novel both of them turn their side and help the Vicar.

Jenkinson –

Is a rogue, cheater who changes in the course of novel and becomes a good human being. As he himself reports his story to the Vicar that he had been thought by the people as cunning person therefore nobody trusted him. He is also expert in disguising himself. His brain is expert at scheming to deceive people but his heart is afraid of being detected. Jenkinson would laugh at the simplicity of the Vicar and Flamborough and cheated them easily. He believes that honest people grow rich because of their virtues but he, even being cheater and cunning remains poor. He accepts that it is who cheated Moses and

Flamborough and it is because of Flamborough's complaint he is in the prison. When the Vicar promises to help him, he becomes his friend. From there onwards, the character of Jenkinson shows change. A rouse and cheater changes into a friend. He shares with him the bed cloth. When Jenkinson learns about the miserable condition of the Vicar, he helps him at every stage. It is he who suggests him to write a letter of complaint against the Squire to Sir William Thornhill. It is he who helps to find out the ruffian who kidnapped Sophia. It is because of him true marriage between Sophia and the Squire was performed. As a reward of his goodness he is given the reward of 500 pounds by Sir William Thornhill. His marriage is also settled with Flamborough's eldest daughter.

Other Male characters-

Along with these major male characters, there are also the characters like George, Moses, Dick and Bill, Flamborough. George is the eldest son of the Vicar. Irrespective of his weak financial status, the Vicar send him to London for completing his education. The character of George disappears after 3rd chapter and we meet him again at the end of chapter 19. The Vicar happens to meet him accidentally in a group of comedian. He narrates his miserable journey from place to place for the sake of job. This accident also brings him face to face with his ex-fiancée Arabella. The Squire buys him a commission in army. George joins his new job in chapter 21. Meanwhile in chapter his letter of happiness brings a breeze of satisfaction to the Vicar who is imprisoned and is badly tortured by the miseries. But the moment of satisfaction immediately turns into a big blow when the next moment the Vicar finds George being brought to his cell in wounded and enchained manner. This is the result of Deborah's letter return to George. She has asked him to avenge injustice and dishonour done to his sister and father. George visits place of the Squire and challenges him for duel. The Squire sends his servants. George fights

and injures one servant. The Squire hands him over to the officers of Justice and he is given capital punishment for injuring servant. George is saved by Sir William Thornhill. He also gets back Arabella. Dick and Bill are portrayed as sweet and obedient children. They have internalized the Christian valued properly. Therefore they are admired by the Vicar. Moses is portrayed as a simple and hardworking son of the Vicar. He is easily cheated by Jenkinson when he goes to sell horse in the fair. It is he who takes responsibility to feed his family when the Vicar is in prison. It is he who consoles his father when Sophia is kidnapped. Flamborough represents the simple and happy go lucky farmers and neighbours in country side.

2.5.b Women characters in the novel.-

No woman character is fully developed in the novel. Deborah Primrose, Olivia, Sophia and Arabella are some important women characters in the novel.

Deborah Primrose

Is the wife of Dr. Charles Primrose and also mother of six children. She is very proud of her children. She is expert at the managerial skills and looks after her house very well. She has strong fascination for pinking, patching and fashion and is also fond of show off. She has great concern for the beauty of her daughters. She cannot equal the philosophical pursuits of the Vicar. So he comments on the intellectual side of his wife that she can read any book without many spellings. Deborah is superstitious and discriminates people on the basis of their financial status. That's why she shows dislike for Mr.Burchell and favours the Squire irrespective of his vices. Deborah should be hold responsible for Olivia's deception by the Squire. It is she who tries her best to trap the Squire as her son-in-law. It is she who arranges the plan of Olivia's marriage to farmer Williams so that the Squire will speak out her desire

for Olivia but the plan proves a boomerang. She is so much fond of fashionable life that she is ready to send her daughter with the ladies from London so that they can learn some mannerisms and fashions to trap a good husband. When her plan fails because of Mr. Burchell's letter, she expresses strong resentment. She does not spare Olivia from reproaches when she comes back home. Goldsmith has portrayed the character of Deborah as the representative woman of 18th century but she is presented as devoted wife to her husband.

Olivia

Is the elder daughter of the Vicar. She is very beautiful. The Vicar has great affinity for his daughter. Like the young girls of her age, Olivia also aspires to have a young and rich husband. Therefore easily gets attracted towards the Squire. She loves him truly but feels disturbed because the squire is not proposing her openly. It is her love for him that compels her to run away with the Squire before four days of her marriage. After her marriage with the Squire she learns true nature of the Squire. Still she tries to cope up with him but when he suggests her to be a prostitute she strongly denies and leaves him. There onwards the miserable phase of her life begins. The Vicar finds her in a public house in very miserable condition. Olivia realizes her mistake that she has not only brought dishonour to her family but her guilt and shame has thrown her in perennial sorrow. It is because of Olivia, the Squire pours on the Primrose family an unending chain of calamities. The Vicar is ready to face any calamity for the sake of his daughter's respect. Her health declines and in chapter 28 we learn the news of her death. But this news is intentionally spread so that the Vicar will grant permission for the marriage between the Squire and Arabella. The Squire will set him free from Jail. At the end of the novel, Olivia is shown alive and the interference of Sir William

brings her and the Squire together. She gets the possession of the one third share of his future.

Sophia

Is another daughter of the Vicar. She is more sensible than Olivia. She proves herself a true supporter to her father. Her silent beauty attracts Mr. Burchell to her. Goldsmith has not given much importance to the character of Sophia. When the Primrose family is continuously being affected by the blows of calamities, Sophia's kidnapping is one more blow. But he is soon rescued by Mr. Burchell. When the true identity of Mr. Burchell is disclosed, Sophia feels little depressed because the social and financial status of Sir William has increased the distance between him and her. The Vicar offers her to Sir William but he suggests the marriage between Sophia and Jenkinson. Sophia rejects his idea then Sir William accepts Sophia.

Apart from these women characters, we happen to meet women characters like Arabella, the ex-fiancée of George and the two ladies from London

Dear Students, the novel is enriched by various elements like element of humour, pathos, law, religion and autobiography.

2.6 Element of humour-

'The Vicar of Wakefield', is very much well-known for the element of humour. Goldsmith himself was a gifted humourist and his writing reflects his sense of humour. The element of humour in the novel is of two types. Humour of character and situational humour. It is through the character of Vicar Goldsmith has employed rich humour. The Vicar is portrayed as a simple man who is easily cheated by Jenkinson. His comments on his wife and the splendour of his wife and daughter are the best example of humour. Deborah also displays her humour but her

humour is biting and pungent. Goldsmith has used droll type of humour in the novel.

As far as situational humour is concerned, Goldsmith has arranged various comic situations one after another. The event in which Moses sells the horse in the fair and in return brings back silver spectacles is the remarkable one. Another event is the attempt of the Vicar to change the views of Mr. Wilmot about polygamy when Mr. Wilmot is courting with his fourth wife. The Vicar is cheated by disguised Jenkinson when he goes to sell his horse in the fair also creates smile. The picture of the Vicar's family portrayed by the painter invites laughter. Goldsmith describes a humorous scene in the Jail also. When the Vicar declares his resolution that he wishes to preach the prisoners, the prisoners take it a means of entertainment. When the Vicar preaches them they start coughing, winking which excites laughter. Dr. Primrose is portrayed as comic figure. The description of vanity and pretensions is also the cause of humour in the novels. The women from Primrose family try to ride the horses to reach to church, is a comic event. . Goldsmith reflects his liking for queer and droll in the novel.

2.7 Element of Pathos.

The Vicar of Wakefield is steeped with element of pathos. The depiction of pathos in the novel makes the readers pensive mood. From Chapter 4 to chapter 30 the span of novel is covered by the element of pathos. The long chain of calamities befallen on Primrose gradually spread the atmosphere of pathos in the novel. Loss of financial assets and braking of George's marriage mark the beginning of calamities. The Vicar's family shifts to another village and the acquaintance of the family with their landlord the Squire accelerate the miseries. The Squire gets attracted towards Olivia and her further elopement with him increases the severity

of the miseries. This incident brings dishonour to the family. Olivia's return to family in most declined condition adds to the sorrow. Still the Vicar and the other family members try to maintain serenity. The unethical demand of the Squire to arrange Olivia's marriage with another man and to continue relationship with her is rejected by the Vicar. The denial infuriates the Squire who gets a chance to ask for the rent of his land which the Vicar fails to pay. Consequently he is imprisoned. Sophia's kidnapping and George's imprisonment and the capital punishment sentenced to him set the climax of the miseries. The Vicar's fortitude is put at stake. George's imprisonment diminishes his last hope and he feels that he must break his ties with the world now and he is ready to leave this world with his son. These events in the novel introduce the readers with Goldsmith's skill of stirring the emotions of readers with the element of pathos.

2.8 Goldsmith's views on law system and prison life in 18th century England.

Though the novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* is a domestic novel it also contains Goldsmith's views on social systems like law and prison. It is through the character of the Vicar, Goldsmith presents his comments on the contemporary law system and prison life in England. In chapter 27 Dr. Primrose is put into prison for not paying the rent of his house, owned by the Squire. The Vicar is pathetic to see the condition of the prison. Though the criminals in the prison are punished they are found spending their life in merrymaking and indulging in violent acts. The Vicar also finds that instead of getting reformed by the punishment the criminals are becoming expert in the art of felony. Through the Vicar, Goldsmith voices out the plea for abolition of capital punishment. The penal law system charges capital punishment even for minor crime and thus

encourages the criminal to commit major crime than minor crime. The men in the jail spend their time in playing cards or quarrelling. In order to reform these criminals the vicar decides to preach them. His idea is welcomed in humorous manner. Initially the prisoners cut jokes and treat the Vicar in ridiculing manner but later on they begin to listen him carefully. The Vicar also attempts to channelize their energy into constructive work. He provides them employment in the prison that serves two purpose. First, the prisoners spend their time in good work and second they earn money. Thus Goldsmith suggests that prison must be a place of repentance than punishment.

2.9 Plot of The Vicar of Wakefield –

This novel is Goldsmith's one and only novel. Since this novel belongs to the initial phase of novel form, it is not strictly in the form of novel. The plot of the novel is loose. Its structure is episodic. The story of the novel is based on the story of Job from Old Testament of Bible.

Job was a devotee of God. On the command of Satan tried Job. He conferred on him many calamities. He took away his wealth and children. Still Job did not lose his faith in God and faced all the miseries with great fortitude. At the end God rewarded him for his faith and bestowed on him his past glory.

Goldsmith has selected a good man named Dr. Charles Primrose. He too has to face many miseries but he stands to all calamities with great fortitude but does not give up his faith in God. At the end of the novel he is also bestowed with all his children and wealth. The plot is steeped in improbabilities and inconsistencies. The events do not take place in logical manner. Some improbabilities in the novel affect the plot of the novel. Such as Sir William Thornhill appears in disguised manner with the name Mr. Burchell in the area owned by him but surprisingly nobody

identifies him with his real name. Squire Thronhill and his uncle Sir William Thornhill are shown more or less of the same age. Being good friend of the Vicar and well aware of his nephew's nature, Sri William does stop the Squire from his ill designs and comes to the help of the Vicar very late. There are number of unlikely coincidences in the novel such as the Vicar who is in jail is buffeted by the news that Sophia is kidnapped but feels relieved because of the letter by George that he is happy. But the very next moment he finds George brought to jail in enchained manner, wounded and charged with capital punishment. Apart from these weak threads in the novel, Goldsmith has skilfully used various devices like humour, pathos, irony, paradox. The beginning chapters draw the happy picture of Vicar's family. But the second half of the novel is full of pathetic events. Goldsmith must be appreciated for his skill that does not allow to turn the pathos into melodrama. His simple style adds to the beauty of the novels. There are numberless characters in the novel.

2.10 Theme of the novel-

The Vicar of Wakefield contains various themes like human relationships, faith in God, conflict.

The theme of relationship can be handled at two levels – domestic and social relations. Domestic relations can be understood in context of relations among the Primrose family members- Such as relations between husband and wife, Parents and Children. All these relations are drawn in ideal manner. Dr. Primrose and Deborah represent ideal parents whereas their children represent ideal, obedient children. Social relations in the novel are very few such as relation between neighbour and neighbour that is represented by the Vicar family and Flamborough family. Characters

like Jenkinson, the Squire, and Baxter represent the dark side of social relations.

The theme of faith in God is developed by the character of the Vicar. He undergoes many ordeals but does not lose his faith in God. Goldsmith has sketched his story on the story of Job from Old Testament of Bible. His goodness is the evidence of his strong faith in God. Goldsmith has described all possible miseries that could be allotted to a human being. The Vicar, throughout, sticks to his moral and good nature.

The theme of conflict is inherent in every piece of literature. This novel also records conflict between good and evil. The side of evil is strong in the form of the Squire and the side of good is weak in the form of the Vicar. But the ultimate victory of the Vicar proves the poetic justice. Besides that the Vicar's sincere attempt of reformation in the prison brings transformation in a rogue like Jenkinson which is evident of the strength of goodness.

2.11 Self-evaluation Questions-

- a. Discuss the plot structure of The Vicar of Wakefield.
- b. Comment on the themes of The Vicar of Wakefield.
- c. Write a note on the male characters in The Vicar of Wakefield.
- d. Examine Goldsmith's views on law, religion and society as reflected in The Vicar of Wakefield.

2.12 Summary-

The novel The Vicar of Wakefield is divided into 32 chapters. It is the story of A Vicar named Dr. Charles Primrose and his family. The Vicar is very simple transparent and a man of principles. He is very proud of his children and is leading happy life with his family. He loses his financial assets and the unexpected financial calamity changes his life. He has to move to other place and stay in a small house. His eldest son is sent to London to complete his education. In their journey they happened to meet

a person Mr. Burchell who becomes their family friend. The Vicar, his wife, his two young daughters and two younger sons move to a place owned by a Squire. The Squire wants to trap his elder daughter Sophia. Though he is notorious for his womanizing nature, Sophia falls in love with him and runs away with him before four days of her marriage. This event starts a chain of miseries in the Vicar's family. The Vicar goes in search of Sophia and finds her in very painful condition. The Squire marries Sophia and then compels her to work as prostitute. Sophia also learns after marriage that the Squire has already cheated some girls and have made them prostitute. Meanwhile the Vicar's house is also set on fire. The Vicar loses his remaining possessions also but still the family maintains serenity. When she is brought back home, the Squire shamelessly comes to the Vicar proposing him that he will arrange Sophia's marriage with another man and he will continue his relation with her even after marriage. He also asks the Vicar to grant him permission to marry Miss. Arabella, ex fiancée of The Vicar's son George. When the Vicar denies accepting his condition, the Squire send him to prison because the Vicar fails to pay the rent of his place. In the prison the old Vicar forgetting his miseries tries to reform the prisoners and succeeds in his efforts. The rouge criminal in the prison, Jenkinson who has already cheated the Vicar twice, becomes his friend because of his goodness. The Vicar writes a letter to Sir William Thronhill, uncle of the Squire complaining about the villainy of the Squire. The Vicar is stunned by the news of Sophia's death. His health deteriorates. On Jenkinson and family members' request he decides to permit marriage between the Squire and Miss. Arabella because Sophia is dead. But the Squire denies to compromise. The miseries of the family increase with Olivia's, the Vicar's younger daughter, kidnapping. It seems that all his hopes of life have to an end. The only ray of hope is that his George,

working a lieutenant in army, is happy. George has communicated his happiness and progress through his letter. But the moment the Vicar completes reading of his letter, he finds George brought to prison wounded and enchained and sentenced with capital punishment. The Vicar stands this last blow with fortitude. In the concluding part of the novel, the Vicar receives the news that Olivia is rescued and is brought back by Mr. Burchell who is none else but Sir William Thronhill disguised. At the end, Sophia is accepted by the Squire and she also gets third portion of his fortune. Olivia's marriage is settled with Sir William Thronhill, Flammborough's and Moses's marriages are settled with the daughters of Flammborough. George's marriage is settled with Miss Arabella. Above all the Vicar gets back his financial assets. The novel ends on happy note.

2.13 Assignments-

- a. Find out information on Goldsmith's biography
- b. Collect information about 17th and 18th century novels and development of various types of novels.

2.14 Glossary-

Domestic- of family

Spectrum- wide range of (here emotions)

Bathos- humour

Didactic-informative

Monogamy-practice of marrying one person

Polygamy- practice of having more than one husband or wife.

Bankrupt- person without money

Splendour- magnificence

Frequency- commonness of occurrence

Ballad- a type of poem
Consent- permission
Resentment- anger
Rims- frames
Rebuke- sharp disapproval
Allegory- story with double meaning
Prosecute- bring an action against
Resemble- similar
Elope- run away
Gaol- prison
Ruffian- rogue

2.15 Bibliography-

1. Goodman W.H. – History of English Literature
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Unit –3

Charlotte Bronte- Jane Eyre

Contents

- 3.0. Objectives
- 3 Introduction
- 3.1. Jane Eyre
- 3.2 Introduction to the Novelist
- 3.32Introduction to the Novel
- 3.4 Characters
- 3.5 Setting
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 Plot Structure
- 3.8 Themes and Motifs
- 3.9 Symbolism
- 3.10 Narrative Technique and Point of View
- 3.11Questions for Self-Evaluation
- 3.12 Summary
- 5. Assignments
- 6. Bibliography

3.0 Objectives:

This unit aims to:

- 1) Introduce Charlotte Bronte as a novelist.
- 2) Study the novel Jane Eyre.
- 3) Understand the artistic merits of the novel.
- 4) Know the major features of Charlotte Bronte’s novel.

3 Introduction:

The novel ‘Jane Eyre’ was written in 1847, the Victorian Period. Soon it became a bestseller. It is one of the first novels to present a child’s experiences as the child saw and felt. It records a child’s development into adulthood. The novel is also termed as Gothic, as it has certain Gothic characteristics. Students, this novel stands apart from the other novel prescribed in your syllabus. Let us study the novel in more details.

3.1 Introduction to the Novelist:

Charlotte Bronte, a British novelist was born in Yorkshire, England on April 21, 1816 to Maria Branwell and Patrick Bronte. She was the third of six children of her parents. Her father was a clergyman. Charlotte's mother died of cancer on 15 September 1821, when she was five years old. In 1824 Charlotte and three of her sisters—Maria, Elizabeth, and Emily—were sent to Cowan Bridge, a school for clergymen's daughters. Maria and Elizabeth died of tuberculosis and Charlotte and Emily were brought home back. During the years 1831 to 1832, Charlotte returned to the school Roe Head, in England. Here she met her lifelong friends, Ellen Nussey and Mary Taylor. In 1833 she wrote a novella *The Green Dwarf* under the name of Wellesley. She became a teacher at the school in 1835. Later she decided to become a private governess. She was hired to live with and tutor the children of the wealthy Sidgewick family in 1839. The job was a misery to her and she soon left it. Charlotte wanted to start her own school, which was not immediately possible. She returned to working as a governess for a different family. This time too she was disappointed with governess work. Charlotte asked her sisters to join her in more serious preparation for the establishment of a school.

At a young age, the Bronte sisters created a fictional world they named Angria. Charlotte, Anne, and Emily collaboratively wrote and published a book of poems in May 1846. The three sisters published it under male pseudonyms: Charlotte's was Currer, while Emily and Anne wrote as Ellis and Acton Bell, respectively. The book did not received public notice still the sisters decided to continue with writing. They decided to work on separate novels but retained the same pseudonyms. Anne and Emily produced their masterpieces in 1847, but Charlotte's first book, *The Professor*, never found a publisher during her lifetime. Charlotte's brother, Branwell died of chronic bronchitis and of heavy drinking in September 1848. The two sisters Emily and Anne died of tuberculosis in December 1848 and May 1849, respectively. After the success of 'Jane Eyre', she revealed her identity as a writer and began to mix in the social groups.

In June 1854, she married Arthur Bell Nicholls and soon was pregnant. Her health declined rapidly during this time and she could not recover. On March 31, 1855, she and her unborn child died. Her biography was posthumously first published by a fellow novelist Elizabeth Gaskell.

3.2 Introduction to the Novel:

The novel 'Jane Eyre' is the most famous and celebrated novel of Charlotte Bronte published in October 1847. The autobiographical elements are recognizable throughout the novel. Charlotte took revenge upon the school that treated her so poorly by using it as the basis for the fictional Lowood. Jane's friend Helen Burns's tragic death from tuberculosis recalls the deaths of two of Charlotte's sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, who succumbed to the same disease during their time at Cowan Bridge. Additionally, John Reed's decline into alcoholism and dissolution is most likely modelled upon the life of Charlotte Bronte's brother Branwell, who slid into opium and alcohol addictions in the years preceding his death. Finally, like Charlotte, Jane becomes a governess—a neutral vantage point from which to observe and describe the oppressive social ideas and practices of nineteenth-century Victorian society.

The plot of Jane Eyre follows the form of a Bildungsroman, which is a novel that tells the story of a child's maturation and focuses on the emotions and experiences that accompany and incite his or her growth to adulthood. In Jane Eyre, there are five distinct stages of development, each linked to a particular place: Jane's childhood at Gateshead, her education at the Lowood School, her time as Adele's governess at Thornfield, her time with the Rivers family at Morton and at Marsh End (also called Moor House), and her reunion with and marriage to Rochester at Ferndean. From these experiences, Jane becomes the mature woman who narrates the novel retrospectively.

But the Bildungsroman plot of Jane Eyre, and the book's element of social criticism, are filtered through a third literary tradition—that of the Gothic horror story. Like the Bildungsroman, the Gothic genre originated in Germany. It became popular in England in the late eighteenth century, and it generally describes supernatural experiences, remote landscapes, and mysterious occurrences, all of which are intended to create an atmosphere of suspense and fear. Jane's encounters with ghosts, dark secrets, and sinister plots add a potent and lingering sense of fantasy and mystery to the novel.

After the success of Jane Eyre, Charlotte revealed her identity to her publisher and went on to write several other novels, most notably Shirley in 1849. In the years that followed, she became a respected member of London's literary set

3.3 Characters in the Novel:

Jane Eyre - The protagonist and narrator of the novel. Jane is an intelligent, honest, plain-featured young girl forced to contend with oppression, inequality,

and hardship. She meets with a series of individuals who threaten her autonomy; Jane repeatedly succeeds at asserting herself and maintains her principles of justice, human dignity, and morality. She also values intellectual and emotional fulfillment.

Edward Rochester - Jane's employer and the master of Thornfield. Rochester is a wealthy, passionate man with a dark secret that provides much of the novel's suspense. Rochester is unconventional, ready to set aside polite manners, propriety, and consideration of social class in order to interact with Jane frankly and directly. He is rash and impetuous and has spent much of his adult life roaming about Europe in an attempt to avoid the consequences of his youthful indiscretions.

St. John Rivers - Along with his sisters, Mary and Diana, St. John (pronounced "Sinjin") serves as Jane's benefactor after she runs away from Thornfield, giving her food and shelter. The minister at Morton, St. John is cold, reserved, and often controlling in his interactions with others. As he is entirely alienated from his feelings and devoted solely to an austere ambition, St. John serves as a foil to Edward Rochester.

Mrs. Reed - Mrs. Reed is Jane's cruel aunt, who raises her at Gateshead Hall until Jane is sent away to school at age ten. Later in her life, Jane attempts reconciliation with her aunt, but the old woman continues to resent her because her husband had always loved Jane more than his own children.

Bessie Lee - The maid at Gateshead, Bessie is the only figure in Jane's childhood who regularly treats her kindly, telling her stories and singing her songs. Bessie later marries Robert Leaven, the Reeds' coachman.

Mr. Lloyd - Mr. Lloyd is the Reeds' apothecary, who suggests that Jane be sent away to school. Always kind to Jane, Mr. Lloyd writes a letter to Miss Temple confirming Jane's story about her childhood and clearing Jane of Mrs. Reed's charge that she is a liar.

Georgiana Reed - Georgiana Reed is Jane's cousin and one of Mrs. Reed's two daughters. The beautiful Georgiana treats Jane cruelly when they are children, but later in their lives she befriends her cousin and confides in her. Georgiana attempts to elope with a man named Lord Edwin Vere, but her sister, Eliza, alerts Mrs. Reed of the arrangement and sabotages the plan. After Mrs. Reed dies, Georgiana marries a wealthy man.

Eliza Reed - Eliza Reed is Jane's cousin and one of Mrs. Reed's two daughters (along with her sister, Georgiana). Not as beautiful as her sister, Eliza devotes

herself somewhat self-righteously to the church and eventually goes to a convent in France where she becomes the Mother Superior.

John Reed - John Reed is Jane's cousin, Mrs. Reed's son, and brother to Eliza and Georgiana. John treats Jane with appalling cruelty during their childhood and later falls into a life of drinking and gambling. John commits suicide midway through the novel when his mother ceases to pay his debts for him.

Helen Burns - Helen Burns is Jane's close friend at Lowood School. She endures her miserable life there with a passive dignity that Jane cannot understand. Helen dies of consumption in Jane's arms.

Mr. Brocklehurst - The cruel, hypocritical master of the Lowood School, Mr. Brocklehurst preaches a doctrine of privation, while stealing from the school to support his luxurious lifestyle. After a typhus epidemic sweeps Lowood, Brocklehurst's shifty and dishonest practices are brought to light and he is publicly discredited.

Maria Temple - Maria Temple is a kind teacher at Lowood, who treats Jane and Helen with respect and compassion. Along with Bessie Lee, she serves as one of Jane's first positive female role models. Miss Temple helps clear Jane of Mrs. Reed's accusations against her.

Miss Scatcherd- Jane's sour and vicious teacher at Lowood, Miss Scatcherd behaves with particular cruelty toward Helen.

Alice Fairfax - Alice Fairfax is the housekeeper at Thornfield Hall. She is the first to tell Jane that the mysterious laughter often heard echoing through the halls is, in fact, the laughter of Grace Poole—a lie that Rochester himself often repeats.

Bertha Mason - Rochester's clandestine wife, Bertha Mason is a formerly beautiful and wealthy Creole woman who has become insane, violent, and bestial. She lives locked in a secret room on the third story of Thornfield and is guarded by Grace Poole, whose occasional bouts of inebriation sometimes enable Bertha to escape. Bertha eventually burns down Thornfield, plunging to her death in the flames.

Grace Poole - Grace Poole is Bertha Mason's keeper at Thornfield, whose drunken carelessness frequently allows Bertha to escape. When Jane first arrives at Thornfield, Mrs. Fairfax attributes to Grace all evidence of Bertha's misdeeds.

Adele Varens- Jane's pupil at Thornfield, Adele Varens is a lively though somewhat spoiled child from France. Rochester brought her to Thornfield after

her mother, Celine, abandoned her. Although Celine was once Rochester's mistress, he does not believe himself to be Adele's father.

Celine Varens- Celine Varens is a French opera dancer with whom Rochester once had an affair. Although Rochester does not believe Celine's claims that he fathered her daughter Adele, he nonetheless brought the girl to England when Celine abandoned her. Rochester had broken off his relationship with Celine after learning that Celine was unfaithful to him and interested only in his money.

Sophie - Sophie is Adele's French nurse at Thornfield.

Richard Mason - Richard Mason is Bertha's brother. During a visit to Thornfield, he is injured by his mad sister. After learning of Rochester's intent to marry Jane, Mason arrives with the solicitor Briggs in order to thwart the wedding and reveal the truth of Rochester's prior marriage.

Mr. Briggs - John Eyre's attorney, Mr. Briggs helps Richard Mason prevent Jane's wedding to Rochester when he learns of the existence of Bertha Mason, Rochester's wife. After John Eyre's death, Briggs searches for Jane in order to give her inheritance.

Blanche Ingram - Blanche Ingram is a beautiful socialite who despises Jane and hopes to marry Rochester for his money.

Diana Rivers - Diana Rivers is Jane's cousin, and the sister of St. John and Mary. Diana is a kind and intelligent person, and she urges Jane not to go to India with St. John. She serves as a model for Jane of an intellectually gifted and independent woman.

Mary Rivers - Mary Rivers is Jane's cousin, the sister of St. John and Diana. Mary is a kind and intelligent young woman who is forced to work as a governess after her father loses his fortune. Like her sister, she serves as a model for Jane of an independent woman who is also able to maintain close relationships with others and a sense of meaning in her life.

Rosamond Oliver - Rosamond is the beautiful daughter of Mr. Oliver, Morton's wealthiest inhabitant. Rosamond gives money to the school in Morton where Jane works. Although she is in love with St. John, she becomes engaged to the wealthy Mr. Granby.

John Eyre- John Eyre is Jane's uncle, who leaves her his vast fortune of 20,000 pounds.

Uncle Reed - Uncle Reed is Mrs. Reed's late husband. In her childhood, Jane believes that she feels the presence of his ghost. Because he was always fond of

Jane and her mother (his sister), Uncle Reed made his wife promise that she would raise Jane as her own child. It is a promise that Mrs. Reed does not keep.

3.4 Setting

The time depicted in the novel is of early decades of the nineteenth century. The novel is structured around five separate locations, all supposedly in northern England: the Reed family's home at Gateshead, the wretched Lowood School, Rochester's manor house Thornfield, the Rivers family's home at Moor House, and Rochester's rural retreat at Ferndean.

3.5 Chapterwise Summary:

Chapter 1

The novel opens on a dreary November afternoon at Gateshead, the home of the wealthy Reed family. A young girl named Jane Eyre sits in the drawing room reading Bewick's *History of British Birds*. Jane's aunt, Mrs. Reed, has forbidden her niece to play with her cousins Eliza, Georgiana, and the bullying John. John chides Jane for being a lowly orphan who is only permitted to live with the Reeds because of his mother's charity. John then hurls a book at the young girl, pushing her to the end of her patience. Jane finally erupts, and the two cousins fight. Mrs. Reed holds Jane responsible for the scuffle and sends her to the "red-room"—the frightening chamber in which her Uncle Reed died—as punishment.

Chapter 2

Two servants, Miss Abbott and Bessie Lee, escort Jane to the red-room, and Jane resists them with all of her might. Once locked in the room, Jane catches a glimpse of her ghastly figure in the mirror, and, shocked by her meagre presence, she begins to reflect on the events that have led her to such a state. She remembers her kind Uncle Reed bringing her to Gateshead after her parents' death, and she recalls his dying command that his wife promise to raise Jane as one of her own. Suddenly, Jane is struck with the impression that her Uncle Reed's ghost is in the room, and she imagines that he has come to take revenge on his wife for breaking her promise. Jane cries out in terror, but her aunt believes that she is just trying to escape her punishment, and she ignores her pleas. Jane faints in exhaustion and fear.

Chapter 3

When she wakes, Jane finds herself in her own bedroom, in the care of Mr. Lloyd, the family's kind apothecary. Bessie is also present, and she expresses disapproval of her mistress's treatment of Jane. Jane remains in bed the following day, and Bessie sings her a song. Mr. Lloyd speaks with Jane about her life at Gateshead, and he suggests to Jane's aunt that the girl be sent away to school, where she might find happiness. Jane is cautiously excited at the possibility of leaving Gateshead.

Soon after her own reflections on the past in the red-room, Jane learns more of her history when she overhears a conversation between Bessie and Miss Abbott. Jane's mother was a member of the wealthy Reed family, which strongly disapproved of Jane's father, an impoverished clergyman. When they married, Jane's wealthy maternal grandfather wrote his daughter out of his will. Not long after Jane was born, Jane's parents died from typhus, which Jane's father contracted while caring for the poor.

Chapter 4

About two months have passed, and Jane has been enduring even crueller treatment from her aunt and cousins while anxiously waiting for the arrangements to be made for her schooling. Now Jane is finally told she may attend the girls' school Lowood, and she is introduced to Mr. Brocklehurst, the stern-faced man who runs the school. Mr. Brocklehurst abrasively questions Jane about religion, and he reacts with indignation when she declares that she finds the psalms uninteresting. Jane's aunt warns Mr. Brocklehurst that the girl also has a propensity for lying, a piece of information that Mr. Brocklehurst says he intends to publicize to Jane's teachers upon her arrival. When Mr. Brocklehurst leaves, Jane is so hurt by her aunt's accusation that she cannot stop herself from defending herself to her aunt. Mrs. Reed, for once, seems to concede defeat. Shortly thereafter, Bessie tells Jane that she prefers her to the Reed children. Before Jane leaves for school, Bessie tells her stories and sings her lovely songs.

Chapter 5

Four days after meeting Mr. Brocklehurst, Jane boards the 6 a.m. coach and travels alone to Lowood. When she arrives at the school, the day is dark and rainy, and she is led through a grim building that will be her new home. The following day, Jane is introduced to her classmates and learns the daily routine, which keeps the girls occupied from before dawn until dinner. Miss Temple, the superintendent of the school, is very kind, while one of Jane's teachers, Miss

Scatcherd, is unpleasant, particularly in her harsh treatment of a young student named Helen Burns. Jane and Helen befriend one another, and Jane learns from Helen that Lowood is a charity school maintained for female orphans, which means that the Reeds have paid nothing to put her there. She also learns that Mr. Brocklehurst oversees every aspect of its operation: even Miss Temple must answer to him.

Chapter 6

On Jane's second morning at Lowood, the girls are unable to wash, as the water in their pitchers is frozen. Jane quickly learns that life at the school is harsh. The girls are underfed, overworked, and forced to sit still during seemingly endless sermons. Still, she takes comfort in her new friendship with Helen, who impresses Jane with her expansive knowledge and her ability to patiently endure even the cruellest treatment from Miss Scatcherd. Helen tells Jane that she practices a doctrine of Christian endurance, which means loving her enemies and accepting her privation. Jane disagrees strongly with such meek tolerance of injustice, but Helen takes no heed of Jane's arguments. Helen is self-critical only because she sometimes fails to live up to her ascetic standards: she believes that she is a poor student and chastises herself for daydreaming about her home and family when she should be concentrating on her studies.

Chapter 7

For most of Jane's first month at Lowood, Mr. Brocklehurst spends his time away from the school. When he returns, Jane becomes quite nervous because she remembers his promise to her aunt, Mrs. Reed, to warn the school about Jane's supposed habit of lying. When Jane inadvertently drops her slate in Mr. Brocklehurst's presence, he is furious and tells her she is careless. He orders Jane to stand on a stool while he tells the school that she is a liar, and he forbids the other students to speak to her for the rest of the day. Helen makes Jane's day of humiliation endurable by providing her friend with silent consolation—she covertly smiles at Jane every time she passes by.

Chapter 8

Finally, at five o'clock, the students disperse, and Jane collapses to the floor. Deeply ashamed, she is certain that her reputation at Lowood has been ruined, but Helen assures her that most of the girls felt more pity for Jane than revulsion at her alleged deceitfulness. Jane tells Miss Temple that she is not a liar, and relates the story of her tormented childhood at Gateshead. Miss Temple seems to believe Jane and writes to Mr. Lloyd requesting confirmation of Jane's

account of events. Miss Temple offers Jane and Helen tea and seed cake, endearing herself even further to Jane. When Mr. Lloyd's letter arrives and corroborates Jane's story, Miss Temple publicly declares Jane to be innocent. Relieved and contented, Jane devotes herself to her studies. She excels at drawing and makes progress in French.

Chapter 9

In the spring, life at Lowood briefly seems happier, but the damp forest dell in which the school resides is a breeding-ground for typhus, and in the warm temperatures more than half the girls fall ill with the disease. Jane remains healthy and spends her time playing outdoors with a new friend, Mary Ann Wilson. Helen is sick, but not with typhus—Jane learns the horrific news that her friend is dying of consumption. One evening, Jane sneaks into Miss Temple's room to see Helen one last time. Helen promises Jane that she feels little pain and is happy to be leaving the world's suffering behind. Jane takes Helen into her arms, and the girls fall asleep. During the night, Helen dies. Her grave is originally unmarked, but fifteen years after her death, a gray marble tablet is placed over the spot (presumably by Jane), bearing the single word *Resurgam*, Latin for "I shall rise again."

Chapter 10

After Mr. Brocklehurst's negligent treatment of the girls at Lowood is found to be one of the causes of the typhus epidemic, a new group of overseers is brought in to run the school. Conditions improve dramatically for the young girls, and Jane excels in her studies for the next six years. After spending two more years at Lowood as a teacher, Jane decides she is ready for a change, partly because Miss Temple gets married and leaves the school. She advertises in search of a post as a governess and accepts a position at a manor called Thornfield.

Before leaving, Jane receives a visit from Bessie, who tells her what has happened at Gateshead since Jane departed for Lowood. Georgiana attempted to run away in secret with a man named Lord Edwin Vere, but Eliza foiled the plan by revealing it to Mrs. Reed. John has fallen into a life of debauchery and dissolution. Bessie also tells Jane that her father's brother, John Eyre, appeared at Gateshead seven years ago, looking for Jane. He did not have the time to travel to Lowood and went away to Madeira (a Portuguese island west of Morocco) in search of wealth. Jane and Bessie part ways, Bessie returning to Gateshead, and Jane leaving for her new life at Thornfield.

Chapter 11

Jane's driver is late picking her up from the station at Millcote. When she finally arrives at Thornfield it is night time. Although she cannot distinguish much of the house's facade from among the shadows, she finds the interior "cosy and agreeable." Mrs. Fairfax, a prim, elderly woman, is waiting for Jane. It turns out that Mrs. Fairfax is not, as Jane had assumed from their correspondence, the owner of Thornfield, but rather the housekeeper. Thornfield's owner, Mr. Rochester, travels regularly and leaves much of the manor's management to Mrs. Fairfax. Jane learns that she will be tutoring Adèle, an eight-year-old French girl whose mother was a singer and dancer. Mrs. Fairfax also tells Jane about Rochester, saying that he is an eccentric man whose family has a history of extreme and violent behaviour. Suddenly, Jane hears a peal of strange, eerie laughter echoing through the house, and Mrs. Fairfax summons someone named Grace, whom she orders to make less noise and to "remember directions." When Grace leaves, Mrs. Fairfax explains that she is a rather unbalanced and unpredictable seamstress who works in the house.

Chapter 12

It is in vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity: they must have action; and they will make it if they cannot find it. Millions are condemned to a stiller doom than mine, and millions are in silent revolt against their lot.

Jane finds life at Thornfield pleasant and comfortable. Adèle proves to be exuberant and intelligent, though spoiled and at times a bit petulant. Nonetheless, Jane is frequently restless and collects her thoughts while pacing Thornfield's top-story passageway. One evening a few months after her arrival at Thornfield, Jane is alone watching the moon rise when she perceives a horse approaching. It calls to her mind the story Bessie once told her of a spirit called a Gytrash, which disguises itself as a mule, dog, or horse to frighten "belated travellers." Oddly enough, a dog then appears as well. Once she realizes that the horse has a rider, the uncanny moment ceases. Just after the horse passes her, it slips on a patch of ice, and its rider tumbles to the ground. Jane helps the man rise to his feet and introduces herself to him. She observes that he has a dark face, stern features, and a heavy brow. He is not quite middle-aged. Upon re-entering Thornfield, Jane goes to Mrs. Fairfax's room and sees the same dog—Pilot—resting on the rug. A servant answers Jane's queries, explaining that the

dog belongs to Mr. Rochester, who has just returned home with a sprained ankle, having fallen from his horse.

Chapter 13

The day following his arrival, Mr. Rochester invites Jane and Adèle to have tea with him. He is abrupt and rather cold toward both of them, although he seems charmed by Jane's drawings, which he asks to see. When Jane mentions to Mrs. Fairfax that she finds Rochester "changeful and abrupt," Mrs. Fairfax suggests that his mannerisms are the result of a difficult personal history. Rochester was something of a family outcast, and when his father died, his older brother inherited Thornfield. Rochester has been Thornfield's proprietor for nine years, since the death of his brother.

Chapter 14

Jane sees little of Rochester during his first days at Thornfield. One night, however, in his "after-dinner mood," Rochester sends for Jane and Adèle. He gives Adèle the present she has been anxiously awaiting, and while Adèle plays, Rochester is uncharacteristically chatty with Jane. When Rochester asks Jane whether she thinks him handsome, she answers "no" without thinking, and from Rochester's voluble reaction Jane concludes that he is slightly drunk. Rochester's command that she converse with him makes Jane feel awkward, especially because he goes on to argue that her relationship to him is not one of servitude. Their conversation turns to the concepts of sin, forgiveness, and redemption. When Adèle mentions her mother, Jane is intrigued, and Rochester promises to explain more about the situation on a future occasion.

Chapter 15

After some time, Rochester fulfils his promise to Jane to tell her about his and Adele's pasts. He had a long affair with Adele's mother, the French singer and dancer named Celine Varens. When he discovered that Celine was engaged in relations with another man, Rochester ended the relationship. Rochester has always denied Celine's claim that Adele is his daughter, noting that the child looks utterly unlike him. Even so, when Celine abandoned her daughter, Rochester brought Adele to England so that she would be properly cared for.

Jane lies awake brooding about the strange insights she has gained into her employer's past. She hears what sound like fingers brushing against the walls, and an eerie laugh soon emanates from the hallway. She hears a door opening and hurries out of her room to see smoke coming from Rochester's

door. Jane dashes into his room and finds his bed curtains ablaze. She douses the bed with water, saving Rochester's life. Strangely, Rochester's reaction is to visit the third floor of the house. When he returns, he says mysteriously, "I have found it all out; it is just as I thought." He inquires whether Jane has ever heard the laughter before, and she answers that she has heard Grace Poole laugh in the same way. Rochester confirms. He thanks Jane for saving his life and cautions her to tell no one about the details of the night's events. He sleeps on the library sofa for the remainder of the night.

Chapter 16

The next morning, Jane is shocked to learn that the near tragedy of the night before has caused no scandal. The servants believe Rochester to have fallen asleep with a lit candle by his bed, and even Grace Poole shows no sign of guilt or remorse. Jane cannot imagine why an attempted murderer is allowed to continue working at Thornfield. She realizes that she is beginning to have feelings for Rochester and is disappointed that he will be away from Thornfield for several days. He has left to attend a party where he will be in the company of Blanche Ingram, a beautiful lady. Jane scolds herself for being disappointed by the news, and she resolves to restrain her flights of imaginative fancy by comparing her own portrait to one she has drawn of Blanche Ingram, noting how much plainer she is than the beautiful Blanche.

Chapter 17

Rochester has been gone for a week, and Jane is dismayed to learn that he may choose to depart for continental Europe without returning to Thornfield—according to Mrs. Fairfax, he could be gone for more than a year. A week later, however, Mrs. Fairfax receives word that Rochester will arrive in three days with a large group of guests. While she waits, Jane continues to be amazed by the apparently normal relations the strange, self-isolated Grace Poole enjoys with the rest of the staff. Jane also overhears a conversation in which a few of the servants discuss Grace's high pay, and Jane is certain that she doesn't know the entire truth about Grace Poole's role at Thornfield.

Rochester arrives at last, accompanied by a party of elegant and aristocratic guests. Jane is forced to join the group but spends the evening watching them from a window seat. Blanche Ingram and her mother are among the party's members, and they treat Jane with disdain and cruelty. Jane tries to leave the party, but Rochester stops her. He grudgingly allows her to go when he sees the tears brimming in her eyes. He informs her that she must come into the drawing room every evening during his guests' stay at Thornfield. As they

part, Rochester nearly lets slip more than he intends. “Good-night, my—” he says, before biting his lip.

Chapter 18

The guests stay at Thornfield for several days. Rochester and Blanche compete as a team at charades. From watching their interaction, Jane believes that they will be married soon though they do not seem to love one another. Blanche would be marrying Rochester for his wealth, and he for her beauty and her social position. One day, a strange man named Mr. Mason arrives at Thornfield. Jane dislikes him at once because of his vacant eyes and his slowness, but she learns from him that Rochester once lived in the West Indies, as he himself has done. One evening, a gypsy woman comes to Thornfield to tell the guests’ fortunes. Blanche Ingram goes first, and when she returns from her talk with the gypsy woman she looks keenly disappointed.

Chapter 19

Jane goes in to the library to have her fortune read, and after overcoming her scepticism, she finds herself entranced by the old woman’s speech. The gypsy woman seems to know a great deal about Jane and tells her that she is very close to happiness. She also says that she told Blanche Ingram that Rochester was not as wealthy as he seemed, thereby accounting for Blanche’s sullen mood. As the woman reads Jane’s fortune, her voice slowly deepens, and Jane realizes that the gypsy is Rochester in disguise. Jane reproaches Rochester for tricking her and remembers thinking that Grace Poole might have been the gypsy. When Rochester learns that Mr. Mason has arrived, he looks troubled.

Chapter 20

The same night, Jane is startled by a sudden cry for help. She hurries into the hallway, where Rochester assures everyone that a servant has merely had a nightmare. After everyone returns to bed, Rochester knocks on Jane’s door. He tells her that he can use her help and asks whether she is afraid of blood. He leads her to the third story of the house and shows her Mr. Mason, who has been stabbed in the arm. Rochester asks Jane to stanch the wound and then leaves, ordering Mason and Jane not to speak to one another. In the silence, Jane gazes at the image of the apostles and Christ’s crucifixion that is painted on the cabinet across from her. Rochester returns with a surgeon, and as the men tend to Mason’s wounds, Rochester sends Jane to find a potion downstairs. He gives some of it to Mason, saying that it will give him heart for an hour. Once Mason is gone, Jane and Rochester stroll in the orchard, and Rochester tells Jane a hypothetical story about a young man who commits a “capital error” in a

foreign country and proceeds to lead a life of dissipation in an effort to “obtain relief.” The young man then hopes to redeem himself and live morally with a wife, but convention prevents him from doing so. He asks whether the young man would be justified in “overleaping an obstacle of custom.” Jane’s reply is that such a man should look to God for his redemption, not to another person. Rochester, who obviously has been describing his own situation, asks Jane to reassure him that marrying Blanche would bring him salvation. He then hurries away before she has a chance to answer.

Chapter 21

Jane has heard that it is a bad omen to dream of children, and now she has dreams on seven consecutive nights involving babies. She learns that her cousin John Reed has committed suicide, and that her aunt, Mrs. Reed, has suffered a stroke and is nearing death. Jane goes to Gateshead, where she is reunited with Bessie. She also sees her cousins Eliza and Georgiana. Eliza is plain and plans to enter a convent, while Georgiana is as beautiful as ever. Ever since Eliza ruined Georgiana’s hopes of eloping with a young man, the two sisters have not gotten along. Jane tries to patch things up with Mrs. Reed, but the old woman is still full of hostility toward her late husband’s favourite. One day, Mrs. Reed gives Jane a letter from her father’s brother, John Eyre. He declares that he wishes to adopt Jane and bequeath her his fortune. The letter is three years old; out of malice, Mrs. Reed did not forward it to Jane when she received it. In spite of her aunt’s behaviour, Jane tries once more to smooth relations with the dying woman. But Mrs. Reed refuses, and, at midnight, she dies.

Chapter 22

Jane remains at Gateshead for a month because Georgiana dreads being left alone with Eliza, with whom she does not get along. Eventually, Georgiana goes to London to live with her uncle, and Eliza joins a convent in France. Jane tells us that Eliza eventually becomes the Mother Superior of her convent, while Georgiana marries a wealthy man. At Gateshead, Jane receives a letter from Mrs. Fairfax, which says that Rochester’s guests have departed and that Rochester has gone to London to buy a new carriage—a sure sign of his intention to marry Blanche. As Jane travels toward Thornfield, she anxiously anticipates seeing Rochester again, and yet she worries about what will become of her after his marriage. To her surprise, as she walks from the station at Millcote, Jane encounters Rochester. When he asks her why she has stayed away from Thornfield so long, she replies, still a bit bewildered, “I have been with my aunt, sir, who is dead.” Rochester asks Jane whether she has heard

about his new carriage, and he tells her: “You must see the carriage, Jane, and tell me if you don’t think it will suit Mrs. Rochester exactly.” After a few more words together, Jane surprises herself by expressing the happiness she feels in Rochester’s presence: “I am strangely glad to get back again to you; and wherever you are my home—my only home.” Back at the manor, Mrs. Fairfax, Adele, and the servants greet Jane warmly.

Chapter 23

After a blissful two weeks, Jane encounters Rochester in the gardens. He invites her to walk with him, and Jane, caught off guard, accepts. Rochester confides that he has finally decided to marry Blanche Ingram and tells Jane that he knows of an available governess position in Ireland that she could take. Jane expresses her distress at the great distance that separates Ireland from Thornfield. The two seat themselves on a bench at the foot of the chestnut tree, and Rochester says: “we will sit there in peace to-night, though we should never more be destined to sit there together.” He tells Jane that he feels as though they are connected by a “cord of communion.” Jane sobs—“for I could repress what I endured no longer,” she tells us, “I was obliged to yield.” Jane confesses her love for Rochester, and to her surprise, he asks her to be his wife. She suspects that he is teasing her, but he convinces her otherwise by admitting that he only brought up marrying Blanche in order to arouse Jane’s jealousy. Convinced and elated, Jane accepts his proposal. A storm breaks, and the newly engaged couple hurries indoors through the rain. Rochester helps Jane out of her wet coat, and he seizes the opportunity to kiss her. Jane looks up to see Mrs. Fairfax watching, astonished. That night, a bolt of lightning splits the same chestnut tree under which Rochester and Jane had been sitting that evening.

Chapter 24

Preparations for Jane and Rochester’s wedding do not run smoothly. Mrs. Fairfax treats Jane coldly because she doesn’t realize that Jane was already engaged to Rochester when she allowed him to kiss her. But even after she learns the truth, Mrs. Fairfax maintains her disapproval of the marriage. Jane feels unsettled, almost fearful, when Rochester calls her by what will soon be her name, Jane Rochester. Jane explains that everything feels impossibly ideal, like a fairy-tale or a daydream. Rochester certainly tries to turn Jane into a Cinderella-like figure: he tells her he will dress her in jewels and in finery befitting her new social station, at which point Jane becomes terrified and self-protective. She has a premonitory feeling that the wedding will not happen, and she decides to write her uncle, John Eyre, who is in Madeira. Jane reasons that

if John Eyre were to make her his heir, her inheritance might put her on more equal footing with Rochester, which would make her feel less uncomfortable about the marriage.

Chapter 25

The night before her wedding, Jane waits for Rochester, who has left Thornfield for the evening. She grows restless and takes a walk in the orchard, where she sees the now-split chestnut tree. When Rochester arrives, Jane tells him about strange events that have occurred in his absence. The preceding evening, Jane's wedding dress arrived, and underneath it was an expensive veil—Rochester's wedding gift to Jane. In the night, Jane had a strange dream, in which a little child cried in her arms as Jane tried to make her way toward Rochester on a long, winding road. Rochester dismisses the dream as insignificant, but then she tells him about a second dream. This time, Jane loses her balance and the child falls from her knee. The dream was so disturbing that it roused Jane from her sleep, and she perceived "a form" rustling in her closet. It turned out to be a strange, savage-looking woman, who took Jane's veil and tore it in two. Rochester tells her that the woman must have been Grace Poole and that what she experienced was really "half-dream, half-reality." He tells her that he will give her a full explanation of events after they have been married for one year and one day. Jane sleeps with Adele for the evening and cries because she will soon have to leave the sleeping girl.

Chapter 26

Sophie helps Jane dress for the wedding, and Rochester and Jane walk to the church. Jane notes a pair of strangers reading the headstones in the churchyard cemetery. When Jane and Rochester enter the church, the two strangers are also present. When the priest asks if anyone objects to the ceremony, one of the strangers answers: "The marriage cannot go on: I declare the existence of an impediment." Rochester attempts to proceed with the ceremony, but the stranger explains that Rochester is already married—his wife is a Creole woman whom Rochester wed fifteen years earlier in Jamaica. The speaker explains that he is a solicitor from London, and he introduces himself as Mr. Briggs. He produces a signed letter from Richard Mason affirming that Rochester is married to Mason's sister, Bertha. Mr. Mason himself then steps forward to corroborate the story. After a moment of inarticulate fury, Rochester admits that his wife is alive and that in marrying Jane he would have been knowingly taking a second wife. No one in the community knows of his wife

because she is mad, and Rochester keeps her locked away under the care of Grace Poole. But, he promises them all, Jane is completely ignorant of Bertha's existence. He orders the crowd to come to Thornfield to see her, so that they may understand what impelled him to his present course of action. At Thornfield, the group climbs to the third story. Rochester points out the room where Bertha bit and stabbed her brother, and then he lifts a tapestry to uncover a second door. Inside the hidden room is Bertha Mason, under the care of Grace Poole.

Bertha attempts to strangle Rochester, who reminds his audience Jane leaves the room with Mason and Briggs, who tells her that he learned of her intent to marry Jane via a letter from Jane's uncle, John Eyre, to Mason. It turns out that the two men are acquaintances, and Mason had stopped in Madeira on his way back to Jamaica when John received Jane's letter. Approaching death, John asked Mason to hurry to England to save his niece. After the wedding crowd disperses, Jane locks herself in her room and plunges into an inexpressible grief. She thinks about the almost calm manner in which the morning's events unfolded and how it seems disproportionate to the immense effect, those events will have on her life. She prays to God to be with her.

Chapter 27

After falling asleep for a short while, Jane awakes to the realization that she must leave Thornfield. When she steps out of her room, she finds Rochester waiting in a chair on the threshold. To Rochester's assurances that he never meant to wound her, and to his pleas of forgiveness, Jane is silent, although she confides to the reader that she forgave him on the spot. Jane suddenly feels faint, and Rochester carries her to the library to revive her. He then offers her a new proposal—to leave England with him for the South of France, where they will live together as husband and wife. Jane refuses, explaining that no matter how Rochester chooses to view the situation, she will never be more than a mistress to him while Bertha is alive. Rochester realizes that he must explain why he does not consider himself married, and he launches into the story of his past.

Unwilling to divide his property, Rochester's father left his entire estate to his other son, Rowland, and sent Rochester to Jamaica to marry Bertha, who was to inherit a massive fortune—30,000 pounds. Bertha was beautiful, and although she and Rochester spent hardly any time alone, the stimulated, dazzled, and ignorant youth believed himself to be in love and agreed to the marriage. Shortly after the wedding, Rochester learned that Bertha's mother was

not, as he had been led to believe, dead, but mad and living in an insane asylum. Bertha's younger brother was a mute idiot. Rochester's father and brother had known about the family's unpromising genetic legacy, but they had promoted the marriage for the sake of the money. Bertha soon revealed herself to be coarse, perverse, and prone to violent outbreaks of temper and unhealthy indulgences. These excesses only hastened the approach of what had been lurking on her horizon already: absolute madness. By this time, Rochester's father and brother had died, so Rochester found himself all alone with a maniacal wife and a huge fortune. He considered killing himself but returned to England instead. He resolved to place Bertha at Thornfield Hall. Rochester then drifted around the continent from one city to the next, always in search of a woman to love. When he was met with disappointment, he sank into debauchery. He was always disappointed with his mistresses, because they were, as he puts it, "the next worse thing to buying a slave." Then he met Jane. Rochester retells the story of their introduction from his point of view, telling her that she enchanted him from the start.

Jane feels torn. She doesn't want to condemn Rochester to further misery, and a voice within her asks, "Who in the world cares for you?" Jane wonders how she could ever find another man who values her, the way Rochester does, and whether, after a life of loneliness and neglect, she should leave the first man who has ever loved her. Yet her conscience tells her that she will respect herself all the more if she bears her suffering alone and does what she believes to be right. She tells Rochester that she must go, but she kisses his cheek and prays aloud for God to bless him as she departs. That night, Jane has a dream in which her mother tells her to flee temptation. She grabs her purse, sneaks down the stairs, and leaves Thornfield.

Chapter 28

Riding in a coach, Jane quickly exhausts her meagre money supply and is forced to sleep outdoors. She spends much of the night in prayer, and the following day she begs for food or a job in the nearby town. No one helps her, except for one farmer who is willing to give her a slice of bread. After another day, Jane sees a light shining from across the moors. Following it, she comes to a house. Through the window, Jane sees two young women studying German while their servant knits. From their conversation Jane learns that the servant is named Hannah and that the graceful young women are Diana and Mary. The three women are waiting for someone named St. John (pronounced "Sinjin"). Jane knocks on the door, but Hannah refuses to let her in. Collapsing on the

doorstep in anguish and weakness, Jane cries, “I can but die, and I believe in God. Let me try to wait His will in silence.” A voice answers, “All men must die, but all are not condemned to meet a lingering and premature doom, such as yours would be if you perished here of want.” The voice belongs to “St. John,” who brings Jane into the house. He is the brother of Diana and Mary, and the three siblings give Jane food and shelter. They ask her some questions, and she gives them a false name: “Jane Elliott.”

Chapter 29

After she is taken in by the Rivers siblings, Jane spends three days recuperating in bed. On the fourth day, she feels well again and follows the smell of baking bread into the kitchen, where she finds Hannah. Jane criticizes Hannah for judging her unfairly when she asked for help, and Hannah apologizes. Hannah tells the story of Mr. Rivers, the siblings’ father, who lost most of the family fortune in a bad business deal. In turn, Diana and Mary were forced to work as governesses—they are only at Marsh End (or Moor House) now because their father died three weeks ago. Jane then relates some of her own story and admits that Jane Elliott is not her real name. St. John promises to find her a job.

Chapter 30

Jane befriends Diana and Mary, who admire her drawings and give her books to read. St. John, on the other hand, remains distant and cold, although he is never unkind. After a month, Diana and Mary must return to their posts as governesses. St. John has found a position for Jane, running a charity school for girls in the town of Morton. Jane accepts, but St. John presumes that she will soon leave the school out of restlessness, perhaps because he himself is quite restless. His sisters suspect he will soon leave England for a missionary post overseas. St. John tells his sisters that their Uncle John has died and left them nothing, because all his money went to another, unknown, relative. Jane learns that it was Uncle John who led Mr. Rivers into his disastrous business deal.

Chapter 31

At Morton, the wealthy heiress Rosamond Oliver provides Jane with a cottage in which to live. Jane begins teaching, but to her own regret, she finds the work degrading and disappointing. While on a visit to Jane, St. John reveals that he, too, used to feel that he had made the wrong career choice, until one day he heard God’s call. Now he plans to become a missionary. The beautiful Rosamond Oliver then appears, interrupting St. John and Jane’s conversation. From their interaction, Jane believes that Rosamond and St. John are in love.

Chapter 32

Jane's students become more familiar and endeared to her, and Jane becomes quite popular among them. At night, though, she has troubling nightmares that involve Rochester. Jane continues to pay attention to the relationship between St. John and Rosamond, who often visits the school when she knows St. John will be there. Rosamond asks Jane to draw her portrait, and as she is working on it one day, St. John pays her a visit. He gives her a new book of poetry (Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion*) and looks at the drawing. She offers to draw him a duplicate, and then boldly declares that he ought to marry Rosamond. St. John admits that he loves her and is tempted by her beauty, but he explains that he refuses to allow worldly affection to interfere with his holy duties. The flirtatious, silly, and shallow Rosamond would make a terrible wife for a missionary. Suddenly, St. John notices something on the edge of Jane's paper and tears off a tiny piece—Jane is not certain why. With a peculiar look on his face, he hurries from the room.

Chapter 33

One snowy night, St. John appears at the door Jane is reading *Marmion*, Appearing troubled, he tells Jane the story of an orphan girl who became the governess at Thornfield Hall, then disappeared after nearly marrying Edward Rochester: this runaway governess's name is Jane Eyre. Until this point, Jane has been cautious not to reveal her past and has given the Rivers a false name. Thus although it is clear that St. John suspects her of being the woman about whom he speaks, she does not immediately identify herself to him. He says that he has received a letter from a solicitor named Mr. Briggs intimating that it is extremely important that this Jane Eyre be found. Jane is only interested in whether Mr. Briggs has sent news of Rochester, but St. John says that Rochester's well-being is not at issue: Jane Eyre must be found because her uncle, John Eyre, has died, leaving her the vast fortune of 20,000 pounds.

Jane reveals herself to be Jane Eyre, knowing that St. John has guessed already. She asks him how he knew. He shows her the scrap of paper he tore from her drawing the previous day: it is her signature. She then asks why Mr. Briggs would have sent him a letter about her at all. St. John explains that though he did not realize it before, he is her cousin: her Uncle John was his Uncle John, and his name is St. John Eyre Rivers. Jane is overjoyed to have found a family at long last, and she decides to divide her inheritance between her cousins and herself evenly, so that they each will inherit 5,000 pounds.

Chapter 34

Jane closes her school for Christmas and spends a happy time with her newfound cousins at Moor House. Diana and Mary are delighted with the improvements Jane has made at the school, but St. John seems colder and more distant than ever. He tells Jane that Rosamond is engaged to a rich man named Mr. Granby. One day, he asks Jane to give up her study of German and instead to learn “Hindustani” with him—the language he is learning to prepare for missionary work in India. As time goes by, St. John exerts a greater and greater influence on Jane; his power over her is almost uncanny. This leaves Jane feeling empty, cold, and sad, but she follows his wishes. At last, he asks her to go to India with him to be a missionary—and to be his wife. She agrees to go to India as a missionary but says that she will not be his wife because they are not in love. St. John harshly insists that she marry him, declaring that to refuse his proposal is the same as to deny the Christian faith. He abruptly leaves the room.

Chapter 35

But as his wife—at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked—forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital—this would be unendurable.

During the following week, St. John continues to pressure Jane to marry him. She resists as kindly as she can, but her kindness only makes him insist more bitterly and unyieldingly that she accompany him to India as his wife. Diana tells Jane that she would be a fool to go to India with St. John, who considers her merely a tool to aid his great cause. After dinner, St. John prays for Jane, and she is overcome with awe at his powers of speech and his influence. She almost feels compelled to marry him, but at that moment she hears what she thinks is Rochester’s voice, calling her name as if from a great distance. Jane believes that something fateful has occurred, and St. John’s spell over her is broken.

Chapter 36

Jane contemplates her supernatural experience of the previous night, wondering whether it was really Rochester’s voice that she heard calling to her and whether Rochester might actually be in trouble. She finds a note from St. John urging her to resist temptation, but nevertheless she boards a coach to Thornfield. She travels to the manor, anxious to see Rochester and reflecting on the ways in which her life has changed in the single year since she left. Once hopeless, alone, and impoverished, Jane now has friends, family, and a fortune.

She hurries to the house after her coach arrives and is shocked to find Thornfield a charred ruin. She goes to an inn called the Rochester Arms to learn what has happened. Here, she learns that Bertha Mason set the house ablaze several months earlier. Rochester saved his servants and tried to save his wife, but she flung herself from the roof as the fire raged around her. In the fire, Rochester lost a hand and went blind. He has taken up residence in a house called Ferndean, located deep in the forest, with John and Mary, two elderly servants.

Chapter 37

Jane goes to Ferndean. From a distance, she sees Rochester reach a hand out of the door, testing for rain. His body looks the same, but his face is desperate and disconsolate. Rochester returns inside, and Jane approaches the house. She knocks, and Mary answers the door. Inside, Jane carries a tray to Rochester, who is unable to see her. When he realizes that Jane is in the room with him, he thinks she must be a ghost or spirit speaking to him. When he catches her hand, he takes her in his arms, and she promises never to leave him. The next morning they walk through the woods, and Jane tells Rochester about her experiences the previous year. She has to assure him that she is not in love with St. John. He asks her again to marry him, and she says yes—they are now free from the specter of Bertha Mason. Rochester tells Jane that a few nights earlier, in a moment of desperation, he called out her name and thought he heard her answer. She does not wish to upset him or excite him in his fragile condition, and so she does not tell him about hearing his voice at Moor House.

Chapter 38

Jane and Rochester marry with no witnesses other than the parson and the church clerk. Jane writes to her cousins with the news. St. John never acknowledges what has happened, but Mary and Diana write back with their good wishes. Jane visits Adèle at her school, and finds her unhappy. Remembering her own childhood experience, Jane moves Adèle to a more congenial school, and Adèle grows up to be a very pleasant and mild-mannered young woman.

Jane writes that she is narrating her story after ten years of marriage to Rochester, which she describes as inexpressibly blissful. They live as equals, and she helps him to cope with his blindness. After two years, Rochester begins to regain his vision in one eye, and when their first child—a boy—is born, Rochester is able to see the baby. Jane writes that Diana and Mary have both found husbands and that St. John went to India as he had planned. She notes

that in his last letter, St. John claimed to have had a premonition of his own approaching death. She does not believe that she will hear from St. John again, but she does not grieve for him, saying that he has fulfilled his promise and done God's work. She closes her book with a quote from his letter, in which he begs the Lord Jesus to come for him quickly.

3.6 Plot Structure

The plot of *Jane Eyre* follows the form of a *Bildungsroman*, which is a novel that tells the story of a child's maturation and focuses on the emotions and experiences that accompany and incite his or her growth to adulthood. In *Jane Eyre*, there are five distinct stages of development, each linked to a particular place: Jane's childhood at Gateshead, her education at the Lowood School, her time as Adele's governess at Thornfield, her time with the Rivers family at Morton and at Marsh End (also called Moor House), and her reunion with and marriage to Rochester at Ferndean. From these experiences, Jane becomes the mature woman who narrates the novel retrospectively

Jane meets with a series of forces that threaten her liberty, integrity, and happiness. Characters embodying these forces are: Aunt Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst, Bertha Mason, Mr. Rochester (in that he urges Jane to ignore her conscience and surrender to passion), and St. John Rivers (in his urging of the opposite extreme). The three men also represent the notion of an oppressive patriarchy. Blanche Ingram, who initially stands in the way of Jane's relations with Rochester, also embodies the notion of a rigid class system—another force keeping Jane from fulfilling her hopes.

Jane Eyre is a young orphan being raised by Mrs. Reed, her cruel, wealthy aunt. A servant named Bessie provides Jane with some of the few kindnesses she receives, telling her stories and singing songs to her. One day, as punishment for fighting with her bullying cousin John Reed, Jane's aunt imprisons Jane in the red-room, the room in which Jane's Uncle Reed died. While locked in, Jane, believing that she sees her uncle's ghost, screams and faints. She wakes to find herself in the care of Bessie and the kindly apothecary Mr. Lloyd, who suggests to Mrs. Reed that Jane be sent away to school. To Jane's delight, Mrs. Reed concurs.

Once at the Lowood School, Jane finds that her life is far from idyllic. The school's headmaster is Mr. Brocklehurst, a cruel, hypocritical, and abusive man. Brocklehurst preaches a doctrine of poverty and privation to his students while using the school's funds to provide a wealthy and opulent lifestyle for his own family. At Lowood, Jane befriends a young girl named Helen Burns,

whose strong, martyr like attitude toward the school's miseries is both helpful and displeasing to Jane. A massive typhus epidemic sweeps Lowood, and Helen dies of consumption. The epidemic also results in the departure of Mr. Brocklehurst by attracting attention to the insalubrious conditions at Lowood. After a group of more sympathetic gentlemen takes Brocklehurst's place, Jane's life improves dramatically. She spends eight more years at Lowood, six as a student and two as a teacher.

After teaching for two years, Jane yearns for new experiences. She accepts a governess position at a manor called Thornfield, where she teaches a lively French girl named Adèle. The distinguished housekeeper Mrs. Fairfax presides over the estate. Jane's employer at Thornfield is a dark, impassioned man named Rochester, with whom Jane finds herself falling secretly in love. She saves Rochester from a fire one night, which he claims was started by a drunken servant named Grace Poole. But because Grace Poole continues to work at Thornfield, Jane concludes that she has not been told the entire story. Jane sinks into despondency when Rochester brings home a beautiful but vicious woman named Blanche Ingram. Jane expects Rochester to propose to Blanche. But Rochester instead proposes to Jane, who accepts almost disbelievingly.

The wedding day arrives, and as Jane and Mr. Rochester prepare to exchange their vows, the voice of Mr. Mason cries out that Rochester already has a wife. Mason introduces himself as the brother of that wife—a woman named Bertha. Mr. Mason testifies that Bertha, whom Rochester married when he was a young man in Jamaica, is still alive. Rochester does not deny Mason's claims, but he explains that Bertha has gone mad. He takes the wedding party back to Thornfield, where they witness the insane Bertha Mason scurrying around on all fours and growling like an animal. Rochester keeps Bertha hidden on the third story of Thornfield and pays Grace Poole to keep his wife under control. Bertha was the real cause of the mysterious fire earlier in the story. Knowing that it is impossible for her to be with Rochester, Jane flees Thornfield.

Penniless and hungry, Jane is forced to sleep outdoors and beg for food. At last, three siblings who live in a manor alternatively called Marsh End and Moor House take her in. Their names are Mary, Diana, and St. John (pronounced "Sinjin") Rivers, and Jane quickly becomes friends with them. St. John is a clergyman, and he finds Jane a job teaching at a charity school in Morton. He surprises her one day by declaring that her uncle, John Eyre, has

died and left her a large fortune: 20,000 pounds. When Jane asks how he received this news, he shocks her further by declaring that her uncle was also his uncle: Jane and the Riverses are cousins. Jane immediately decides to share her inheritance equally with her three newfound relatives.

St. John decides to travel to India as a missionary, and he urges Jane to accompany him—as his wife. Jane agrees to go to India but refuses to marry her cousin because she does not love him. St. John pressures her to reconsider, and she nearly gives in. However, she realizes that she cannot abandon forever the man she truly loves when one night she hears Rochester’s voice calling her name over the moors. Jane immediately hurries back to Thornfield and finds that it has been burned to the ground by Bertha Mason, who lost her life in the fire. Rochester saved the servants but lost his eyesight and one of his hands. Jane travels on to Rochester’s new residence, Ferndean, where he lives with two servants named John and Mary.

At Ferndean, Rochester and Jane rebuild their relationship and soon marry. At the end of her story, Jane writes that she has been married for ten blissful years and that she and Rochester enjoy perfect equality in their life together. She says that after two years of blindness, Rochester regained sight in one eye and was able to behold their first son at his birth.

Jane Eyre’s tone is both Gothic and romantic, often conjuring an atmosphere of mystery, secrecy, or even horror. Despite these Gothic elements, Jane’s personality is friendly and the tone is also affectionate and confessional. Her unflagging spirit and opinionated nature further infuse the book with high energy and add a philosophical and political flavour.

Jane meets with a series of forces that threaten her liberty, integrity, and happiness. Characters embodying these forces are: Aunt Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst, Bertha Mason, Mr. Rochester (in that he urges Jane to ignore her conscience and surrender to passion), and St. John Rivers (in his urging of the opposite extreme). The three men also represent the notion of an oppressive patriarchy. Blanche Ingram, who initially stands in the way of Jane’s relations with Rochester, also embodies the notion of a rigid class system—another force keeping Jane from fulfilling her hopes.

3.7 Themes and Motifs

A) Themes

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. Following themes are of major concern in the novel.

i) Love Versus Autonomy

Jane Eyre is very much the story of a quest to be loved. Jane searches, not just for romantic love, but also for a sense of being valued, of belonging. Thus Jane says to Helen Burns: “to gain some real affection from you, or Miss Temple, or any other whom I truly love, I would willingly submit to have the bone of my arm broken, or to let a bull toss me, or to stand behind a kicking horse, and let it dash its hoof at my chest” (Chapter 8). Yet, over the course of the book, Jane must learn how to gain love without sacrificing and harming herself in the process.

Her fear of losing her autonomy motivates her refusal of Rochester’s marriage proposal. Jane believes that “marrying” Rochester while he remains legally tied to Bertha would mean rendering herself a mistress and sacrificing her own integrity for the sake of emotional gratification. On the other hand, her life at Moor House tests her in the opposite manner. There, she enjoys economic independence and engages in worthwhile and useful work, teaching the poor; yet she lacks emotional sustenance. Although St. John proposes marriage, offering her a partnership built around a common purpose, Jane knows their marriage would remain loveless.

Nonetheless, the events of Jane’s stay at Moor House are necessary tests of Jane’s autonomy. Only after proving her self-sufficiency to herself can she marry Rochester and not be asymmetrically dependent upon him as her “master.” The marriage can be one between equals.

ii) Religion

Throughout the novel, Jane struggles to find the right balance between moral duty and earthly pleasure, between obligation to her spirit and attention to her body. She encounters three main religious figures: Mr. Brocklehurst, Helen Burns, and St. John Rivers. Each represents a model of religion that Jane ultimately rejects as she forms her own ideas about faith and principle, and their practical consequences.

Mr. Brocklehurst illustrates the dangers and hypocrisies that Charlotte Bronte perceived in the nineteenth-century Evangelical movement. Mr. Brocklehurst adopts the rhetoric of Evangelicalism when he claims to be purging his students of pride, but his method of subjecting them to various privations and humiliations, like when he orders that the naturally curly hair of one of Jane’s classmates be cut so as to lie straight, is entirely un-Christian. Of

course, Brocklehurst's proscriptions are difficult to follow, and his hypocritical support of his own luxuriously wealthy family at the expense of the Lowood students shows Bronte's wariness of the Evangelical movement. Helen Burns's meek and forbearing mode of Christianity, on the other hand, is too passive for Jane to adopt as her own, although she loves and admires Helen for it.

Many chapters later, St. John Rivers provides another model of Christian behaviour. His is a Christianity of ambition, glory, and extreme self-importance. St. John urges Jane to sacrifice her emotional needs for the fulfilment of her moral duty, offering her a way of life that would require her to be disloyal to her own self.

Although Jane ends up rejecting all three models of religion, she does not abandon morality, spiritualism, or a belief in a Christian God. When her wedding is interrupted, she prays to God for solace. As she wanders the heath, poor and starving, she puts her survival in the hands of God. She strongly objects to Rochester's lustful immorality, and she refuses to consider living with him while church and state still deem him married to another woman. Even so, Jane can barely bring herself to leave the only love she has ever known. She credits God with helping her to escape what she knows would have been an immoral life.

Jane ultimately finds a comfortable middle ground. Her spiritual understanding is not hateful and oppressive like Brocklehurst's, nor does it require retreat from the everyday world as Helen's and St. John's religions do. For Jane, religion helps curb immoderate passions, and it spurs one on to worldly efforts and achievements. These achievements include full self-knowledge and complete faith in God.

iii) Social Class

Jane Eyre is critical of Victorian England's strict social hierarchy. Bronte's exploration of the complicated social position of governesses is perhaps the novel's most important treatment of this theme. Like Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*, Jane is a figure of ambiguous class standing and, consequently, a source of extreme tension for the characters around her. Jane's manners, sophistication, and education are those of an aristocrat, because Victorian governesses, who tutored children in etiquette as well as academics, were expected to possess the "culture" of the aristocracy. Yet, as paid employees, they were more or less treated as servants; thus, Jane remains penniless and powerless while at Thornfield. Jane's understanding of the double standard crystallizes when she becomes aware of her feelings for Rochester; she

is his intellectual, but not his social, equal. Even before the crisis surrounding Bertha Mason, Jane is hesitant to marry Rochester because she senses that she would feel indebted to him for “condescending” to marry her. Jane’s distress, which appears most strongly in Chapter 17, seems to be Bronte’s critique of Victorian class attitudes.

Jane herself speaks out against class prejudice at certain moments in the book. For example, in Chapter 23 she chastises Rochester: “Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!—I have as much soul as you—and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you.” However, it is also important to note that nowhere in *Jane Eyre* are society’s boundaries bent. Ultimately, Jane is only able to marry Rochester as his equal because she has almost magically come into her own inheritance from her uncle.

iv) Gender Relations

Jane struggles continually to achieve equality and to overcome oppression. In addition to class hierarchy, she must fight against patriarchal domination—against those who believe women to be inferior to men and try to treat them as such. Three central male figures threaten her desire for equality and dignity: Mr. Brocklehurst, Edward Rochester, and St. John Rivers. All three are misogynistic on some level. Each tries to keep Jane in a submissive position, where she is unable to express her own thoughts and feelings. In her quest for independence and self-knowledge, Jane must escape Brocklehurst, reject St. John, and come to Rochester only after ensuring that they may marry as equals. This last condition is met once Jane proves herself able to function, through the time she spends at Moor House, in a community and in a family. She will not depend solely on Rochester for love and she can be financially independent. Furthermore, Rochester is blind at the novel’s end and thus dependent upon Jane to be his “prop and guide.”

B) Motifs

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, and literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.

i) Fire and Ice

One of the most recurring motifs in the novel is fire and ice. The former represents Jane’s passions, anger, and spirit, while the latter symbolizes the oppressive forces trying to extinguish Jane’s vitality. Fire is also a metaphor for

Jane, as the narrative repeatedly associates her with images of fire, brightness, and warmth. In Chapter 4, she likens her mind to “a ridge of lighted heath, alive, glancing, and devouring.” We can recognize Jane’s kindred spirits by their similar links to fire; thus we read of Rochester’s “flaming and flashing” eyes. After he has been blinded, his face is compared to “a lamp quenched, waiting to be relit”.

Images of ice and cold, often appearing in association with barren landscapes or seascapes, symbolize emotional desolation, loneliness, or even death. The “death-white realms” of the arctic that Bewick describes in his *History of British Birds* parallel Jane’s physical and spiritual isolation at Gateshead. Lowood’s freezing temperatures—for example, the frozen pitchers of water that greet the girls each morning—mirror Jane’s sense of psychological exile.

ii) Substitute Mothers

Poet and critic Adrienne Rich has noted that Jane encounters a series of nurturing and strong women on whom she can model herself, or to whom she can look for comfort and guidance: these women serve as mother-figures to the orphaned Jane.

The first such figure that Jane encounters is the servant Bessie, who soothes Jane after her trauma in the red-room and teaches her to find comfort in stories and songs. At Lowood, Jane meets Miss Temple, who has no power in the world at large, but possesses great spiritual strength and charm. Not only does she shelter Jane from pain, she also encourages her intellectual development. Of Miss Temple, Jane writes: “she had stood by me in the stead of mother, governess, and latterly, companion”. Jane also finds a comforting model in Helen Burns, whose lessons in stamina teach Jane about self-worth and the power of faith.

After Jane and Rochester’s wedding is cancelled, Jane finds comfort in the moon, which appears to her in a dream as a symbol of the matriarchal spirit. Jane sees the moon as “a white human form” shining in the sky, “inclining a glorious brow earthward.” She tells us: “It spoke to my spirit: immeasurably distant was the tone, yet so near, it whispered in my heart—“My daughter, flee temptation.” Jane answers, “Mother, I will”. Waking from the dream, Jane leaves Thornfield.

Jane finds two additional mother-figures in the characters of Diana and Mary Rivers. Rich points out that the sisters bear the names of the pagan and Christian versions of “the Great Goddess”: Diana, the Virgin huntress, and

Mary, the Virgin Mother. Unmarried and independent, the Rivers sisters love learning and reciting poetry and live as intellectual equals with their brother St. John.

3.8 Symbolism

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colours used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. The major symbol used in the novel are discussed follow. Students, remember, these are not the only symbols in the novel. You can find some more in your reading of the novel.

i) Bertha Mason

Bertha Mason is a complex presence in Jane Eyre. She impedes Jane's happiness, but she also catalyses the growth of Jane's self-understanding. The mystery surrounding Bertha establishes suspense and terror to the plot and the atmosphere. Further, Bertha serves as a remnant and reminder of Rochester's youthful libertinism.

Yet Bertha can also be interpreted as a symbol. Some critics have read her as a statement about the way Britain feared and psychologically "locked away" the other cultures it encountered at the height of its imperialism. Others have seen her as a symbolic representation of the "trapped" Victorian wife, who is expected never to travel or work outside the house and becomes ever more frenzied as she finds no outlet for her frustration and anxiety. Within the story, then, Bertha's insanity could serve as a warning to Jane of what complete surrender to Rochester could bring about.

One could also see Bertha as a manifestation of Jane's subconscious feelings—specifically, of her rage against oppressive social and gender norms. Jane declares her love for Rochester, but she also secretly fears marriage to him and feels the need to rage against the imprisonment it could become for her. Jane never manifests this fear or anger, but Bertha does. Thus Bertha tears up the bridal veil, and it is Bertha's existence that indeed stops the wedding from going forth. And, when Thornfield comes to represent a state of servitude and submission for Jane, Bertha burns it to the ground. Throughout the novel, Jane describes her inner spirit as fiery, her inner landscape as a "ridge of lighted heath". Bertha seems to be the outward manifestation of Jane's interior fire. Bertha expresses the feelings that Jane must keep in check.

ii) The Red-Room

Another symbol in the novel is red-room. The red-room can be viewed as a symbol of what Jane must overcome in her struggles to find freedom,

happiness, and a sense of belonging. In the red-room, Jane's position of exile and imprisonment first becomes clear. Although Jane is eventually freed from the room, she continues to be socially ostracized, financially trapped, and excluded from love; her sense of independence and her freedom of self-expression are constantly threatened.

The importance of red-room as a symbol continues throughout the novel. It reappears as a memory whenever Jane makes a connection between her current situation and that first feeling of being ridiculed. Thus, she recalls the room when she is humiliated at Lowood. She also thinks of the room on the night that she decides to leave Thornfield after Rochester has tried to convince her to become an undignified mistress. Her destitute condition upon her departure from Thornfield also threatens emotional and intellectual imprisonment, as does St. John's marriage proposal. Only after Jane has asserted herself, gained financial independence, and found a spiritual family—which turns out to be her real family—can she wed Rochester

3.9 Narrative Technique and Point of View

In the novel 'Jane Eyre' the protagonist, Jane Eyre is written from the first person point of view. Jane Eyre narrates the whole story. Sometimes she narrates the events as she experienced them at the time, while at other times she focuses on her retrospective understanding of the events. In a sense it is an autobiography of Jane Eyre. When the novel was first published, it was subtitled 'An Autobiography'. Currer Bell was considered as editor and not as author. In the later editions the sub-title was dropped.

In the first person narration the narrator is one of the characters hence the eye witness of the incidents. The incidents are narrated in logical and consistent way; as a result, give an authority and credibility to the narrative. In the novel Jane narrates the incidents she had faced or understood. However, this kind of narration has its own limitations. The narration tends to be subjective as the narrator tells the things he/she saw or understood or heard.

The plot of Jane Eyre follows the form of a Bildungsroman, which is a novel that tells the story of a child's maturation and focuses on the emotions and experiences that accompany and incite his or her growth to adulthood. In Jane Eyre, there are five distinct stages of development, each linked to a particular place: Jane's childhood at Gateshead, her education at the Lowood School, her time as Adele's governess at Thornfield, her time with the Rivers family at Morton and at Marsh End (also called Moor House), and her reunion with and

marriage to Rochester at Ferndean. From these experiences, Jane becomes the mature woman who narrates the novel retrospectively.

The development of Jane Eyre's character is central to the novel. From the beginning, Jane possesses a sense of her self-worth and dignity, a commitment to justice and principle, a trust in God, and a passionate disposition. Her integrity is continually tested over the course of the novel, and Jane must learn to balance the frequently conflicting aspects of herself so as to find contentment.

An orphan since early childhood, Jane feels exiled and ostracized at the beginning of the novel, and the cruel treatment she receives from her Aunt Reed and her cousins only exacerbates her feeling of alienation. Afraid that she will never find a true sense of home or community, Jane feels the need to belong somewhere, to find "kin," or at least "kindred spirits." This desire tempers her equally intense need for autonomy and freedom.

In her search for freedom, Jane also struggles with the question of what type of freedom she wants. While Rochester initially offers Jane a chance to liberate her passions, Jane comes to realize that such freedom could also mean enslavement—by living as Rochester's mistress, she would be sacrificing her dignity and integrity for the sake of her feelings. St. John Rivers offers Jane another kind of freedom: the freedom to act unreservedly on her principles. He opens to Jane the possibility of exercising her talents fully by working and living with him in India. Jane eventually realizes, though, that this freedom would also constitute a form of imprisonment, because she would be forced to keep her true feelings and her true passions always in check.

Charlotte Brontë may have created the character of Jane Eyre as a means of coming to terms with elements of her own life. Much evidence suggests that Brontë, too, struggled to find a balance between love and freedom and to find others who understood her. At many points in the book, Jane voices the author's then-radical opinions on religion, social class, and gender. The novel is narrated in such a way that the readers easily accept Jane's interpretation and explanations and interpretations of incidents, other characters and herself.

From its beginning, Jane Eyre explores and challenges the social preconceptions of nineteenth-century Victorian society. Themes of social class, gender relations, and injustice predominate throughout. Jane Eyre's tone is both Gothic and romantic, often conjuring an atmosphere of mystery, secrecy, or even horror. Despite these Gothic elements, Jane's personality is friendly and the tone is also affectionate and confessional. Her unflagging spirit and

opinionated nature further infuse the book with high energy and add a philosophical and political flavour.

3.10 Questions for Self-Evaluation

- i) Will you consider Jane as the heroine of the novel? Justify your answer.
- ii) Which are the five Settings in the novel?
- iii) What is the major theme in the novel?
- iv) Which narrative technique is used in the novel? How does it appeal to you?
- v) Can the novel be termed as Gothic novel? Illustrate.
- vi) Write a character sketches of the following characters:
 - A) Bertha Mason
 - B) Mr. Rochester
 - C) Mr. Brocklehurst

3.11 Summary

The novel 'Jane Eyre' is the most famous and celebrated novel of Charlotte Bronte published in October 1847. The plot of Jane Eyre follows the form of a Bildungsroman. In Jane Eyre, there are five distinct stages of development, each linked to a particular place: Jane's childhood at Gateshead, her education at the Lowood School, her time as Adele's governess at Thornfield, her time with the Rivers family at Morton and at Marsh End (also called Moor House), and her reunion with and marriage to Rochester at Ferndean. From these experiences, Jane becomes the mature woman who narrates the novel retrospectively. Her unflagging spirit and opinionated nature further infuse the book with high energy and add a philosophical and political flavour.

Jane meets with a series of forces that threaten her liberty, integrity, and happiness. Characters embodying these forces are: Aunt Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst, Bertha Mason, Mr. Rochester (in that he urges Jane to ignore her conscience and surrender to passion), and St. John Rivers (in his urging of the opposite extreme). The three men also represent the notion of an oppressive patriarchy. Blanche Ingram, who initially stands in the way of Jane's relations with Rochester, also embodies the notion of a rigid class system—another force keeping Jane from fulfilling her hopes. From its beginning, Jane Eyre explores and challenges the social preconceptions of nineteenth-century Victorian society. Themes of social class, gender relations, and injustice predominate

throughout. Jane Eyre's tone is both Gothic and romantic, often conjuring an atmosphere of mystery, secrecy, or even horror.

3.12 Assignments

- i) Narrate the story of Jane in third person narration.
- ii) Write an essay on, how does the novel present the picture of women in the then Victorian society?

3.13 Bibliography

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Unit 4

Aldous Huxley- The Brave New World

4.0 OBJECTIVES:

- To acquaint the students with the growth and development of the English novel in the 18th and 19th century.
- To develop the ability in the students to interpret analyse and evaluate a science fiction,
- To enable student to read novel closely with reference to the theme, plot and construction, technique, characterisation, point of view, setting , narrative, point of view, and social and political aspect of the novel, **The Brave New World**.
- To help the student to develop the oral

4.1 BACKGROUND OF 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY NOVEL.

According to Satintsbury's the first part of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in the 1678 is ranked as the novel. Robinson Crusoe (1719) by Daniel Defoe in view of Sampson is the first English novel "of genius". Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels in 1726 and others are designed as satire on human follies and presentations, and come within the category of the Novel. It is a parody of travellers' tales. The rise of the novel is as an important literary genre, which is generally associated with the growth of the middle class in England.

1) Eighteenth Century English Novel

This beginning of the novel showed emergence of the four pillars of English fiction in the eighteenth century: Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), Henry Fielding (1707-54), Tobias Smollet (1721-71) and Laurence Sterne (1713-68). Several literary development reached the first half of the eighteenth century and novel came into its modern form. Samuel Richardson's Pamela or Virtue Rewarded (1740) is an epistolary novel. It was new and remarkable in its exposition of human feelings and motives. It is heart touching novel not only in England but all over the world. Richardson continued with Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison. His Pamela continues his creed for moral theme and gave him widespread popularity.

In the real sense, Richardson's work proves foundation to the eighteenth century novel and further developments were made by Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett and Laurence Stern. Henry Fielding (1707-1754) a novelist of comic epic in prose, is famous for his novels Joseph Andrews, Jonathan Wild, Tom

Jones and Amelia. His novels are majorly parody of Richardson and presented social evil. Smollett contributed five novels: Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Ferdinand Count, Sir Lancelot Greaves and Humphry Clinker. All these novels are picaresque and sometimes deal with the self experience of Smollett. Laurence Sterne (1713–68) published *Tristram Shandy* in parts between 1759 and 1767. It has no direct opening as other novels but the author's opinion. The next one is Oliver Goldsmith whose *The Vicar of Wakefield* is whole class of domestic fiction.

2) Nineteenth Century novel:

Jane Austen's (1775-1817) novels are famous as novels of sensibility of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century realism. Her plots, though fundamentally comic, highlight the dependence of women on marriage to secure social standing and economic security. Austen presented the world of women, who usually did not inherit money, could not work and where their only chance in life depended on the man they married. She reveals not only the difficulties women faced in her day, but also what was expected of men and of the careers they had to follow. Austen's works include *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Mansfield Park*, *Persuasion* and *Emma*.

At the beginning of the early 19th century Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was not only a highly successful British novelist but influenced the novel of the nineteenth century. Scott is famous for the genre of the historical novel *Waverley* (1814), *The Antiquary* (1816), and *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). However, Austen is today widely read and her novels are screened for films and television series, but at the same time Scott is neglected. At the beginning of the 19th century most novels were published in three volumes. However, monthly serialization was revived with the publication of Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* in twenty parts between April 1836 and November 1837. The entry of Charles Dickens turns the novel into new phase in its history. He presented his life experiences, especially in the novels like *David Copperfield*, *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Great Expectations* (1860-61), His other novels are *Dombey and Son* (1846-8), *Bleak House* (1852-3) and *Little Dorrit* (1855-7) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-5).

An early rival to Dickens was William Makepeace Thackeray, who stood second to the Dickens. He is well known for his *Vanity Fair* (1847). It is a satire novel. The Bronte sisters were other significant novelists in the 1840s and 1850s. Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *Agnes Grey* are famous novels. Later, Anne's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) and Charlotte's *Villette* (1853) were published. George Eliot's (1819–80) first novel

Adam Bede was published in 1859. Her works widened the scope of the English novel Her contribution to the English are as: The Mill on the Floss , Silas Mariner , and Middlemarch ,

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) set the rural background for his novels especially, the Wessex novels. Charles Darwin is one of the important influences on Thomas Hardy. At the beginning he become famous because of such novels as, Far from the Madding Crowd (1874), The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886), Tess of the d'Urbervilles (1891), and Jude, the Obscure (1895). In his last two novels such as The Mayor of Casterbridge and Tess of the d'Urbervilles Hardy presents the tragic element.

Other novelists of the nineteenth century are as follows: George Gissing (1857-1903) who published 23 novels between 1880 and 1903. His best known novel is New Grub Street (1891).H. G. Wells (1866-1946) began writing career in the 1890s with science fiction novels like The Time Machine (1895), and The War of the Worlds (1898). He wrote realistic novels like: Kipps (1905) and The History of Mr Polly (1910).

4.2 ALDOUS HUXLEY AS A NOVELIST.

Aldous Leonard Huxley (6 July 1894- 22 November 1963) was born in England. He was the member of the famous Huxley family. His father was schoolmaster, Leonard Huxley. Aldous was the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley, the famous zoologist. His brothers were also famous biologist. Aldous learn in Hillside school, where his mother was teacher, He was educated in the Eton college. Because of illness he was blind for two to three years and it disqualifies him from the service in the First World War. He started to study English Literature after his eyesight recover. In 1916 he edited Oxford Poetry and later graduated with first class. For a year he taught at Eton, but unsuccessful. He married with Maria Nys, a Belgian refugee in 1919 and went to London with her. In 1920 Huxley worked at a chemical plant in Billin, Teesside. Crome Yellow (1921), Antic Hay (1923) are his early novels. These novels are social satire. By 1925 Huxley published three volumes of short stories and two volumes of essays. In 1925-26 he had tour around the world and the result was a travelogue, Jestling Pilate (1926). D H Lawrence was the friend of Huxley. After the death of Lawrence, Huxley edited Lawrence's letters. In 1930 Huxley started to live in Sanary, in France. There he wrote his most famous novel Brave New World (1932), a negative utopia or "dystopia". Huxley portrays a society operating on the principles of mass production and

Pavlovian conditioning. Huxley was strongly influenced by F. Matthias Alexander and included him as a character in *Eyeless in Gaza*.

Huxley moved to California in 1937 and formed the Vedanta Society. He was friend to J. Krishnamurti Swami Prabhavanda. From 1941 through 1960 Huxley contributed 48 articles to *Vedanta and the West*, published by the Society. Huxley wrote spiritual books *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956). Huxley worked as a writer for Hollywood. Huxley wrote for screen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1941) and *Jane Eyre* (1944) and other work. In California Huxley associate with Buddhist and Hindu groups and in the 1950s he experimented with hallucinogenic drugs, which wrote about in *The Doors of Perception* (1954). His *Brave New World Revisited* (1958), deals with pessimistic about the future threat of totalitarianism.

Huxley was awarded for *After Many Summer Dies the Swan*, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in 1939, for *Brave New World*, he was awarded American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1959. In 1962 he was awarded by the Royal Society of Literature as the Companion of Literature. In short Huxley contributed novels, short stories, poetry, screenplays, plays, essays, travel books to the English literature, which is the greatest treasure for us.

4.3 INTRODUCTION TO BRAVE NEW WORLD.

Huxley wrote *Brave New World* in 1931 when he was living in Italy and was famous as a social satirist because of his four successful satirical novels. Huxley's *Brave New World* is inspired by H G Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905) and *Men Like Gods* (1923). Unlike the most popular optimist utopian novels of the time, Huxley sought to provide a frightening vision of the future. Huxley referred to *Brave New World* as a "negative utopia", somewhat influenced by Wells' own *The Sleeper Awakes*.

The novel *Brave New World* deals with future, with the contemporary issues of the twentieth century such as, due to the mass production the products are available cheap and widely in the world and it is possible because of Industrial Revolution. He presented political, cultural, economical and sociological scenario of the world. Huxley used the setting and characters from his science fiction. He presented in the novel particularly the fear of losing individual identity in fast developing world of future. Huxley deals with outraged by the culture of the youth, commercial cheeriness, sexual promiscuity and inward-looking nature of many Americans.

Brave New World is divided into 18 chapters; the chapters of the novels do not have specific titles. Bernard Marx, a psychologist, Helmholtz Watson, Mustapha Mond, John the Savage Lenina Crowne etc are the characters in the novel. The title of the novel Brave New World is taken from Miranda's speech in William_Shakespeare's The Tempest, Act V, Scene i

O, Wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't.

(William Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act V, Scene I, ll. 203–206)

In the play The Tempest Miranda is living life of isolation and she knows only her father and his servants and Ariel. When she sees the people for the first time she is in excitement and utters the above lines. In fact she is not observing civilized people, but drunkard sailors. Huxley employs the same irony when the "savage" John refers to what he sees as a "brave new world".

4.4 THEME/ SUBJECT OF BRAVE NEW WORLD.

The Brave New World is the fantasy of the technology. This novel is about Utopia, an ideal state but a bad ideal state. We find that the novel deals with community stability verses individual freedom. The novel shows that at the end of the book that the World State's complete control over human activity destroys even the scientific progress that gained it such control.

Genetic Engineering is one of the themes of the novel. Huxley gave minute details of his new world breeds prescribed numbers of humans artificially for specified qualities. In our world sex is primary source of happiness and it is bound to rules and custom of our society. The sex is also way to develop human race. The new world of Huxley changes everything. The brave new world makes promiscuity a virtue: you have sex with any partner you want, who wants you- and sooner or later every partner will want you. Nobody is allowed to become pregnant because nobody is born; only decanted from a bottle. There is no concept of family.

Soma is a drug used by everyone in the brave new world. It calms people and gets them high at the same time, but without hangovers or nasty side effects.

This Utopia has a good side: there is no war or poverty, little disease or social unrest. But Huxley keeps asking, what does society have to pay for these benefits? The citizens of this Utopia must give up love, family, science, art, religion, and history. At the end of the book, John commits suicide and you see that the price of this brave new world is fatally high.

4.5 PLOT OF THE NOVEL BRAVE NEW WORLD

The novel Brave New World is divided into 18 chapters and we can group them in three Chapters each 1-6 gives introduction about World State and its activities. Chapter 7-9 is about the Reservation and the Savage. Chapter 10-18 is about the visit of John, the savage and his mother.

The Introduction (Chapters 1–6)

The novel opens in London in 632 (AD 2540 in the Gregorian calendar). In the first two chapters presents the readers education in the fundamental workings of a future society in which science and sociology become one thing. The vast majority of the population is living under the World State, an eternally peaceful, stable global society in which goods and resources are plentiful because the population is permanently limited to no more than two billion people and everyone is happy. The writer describe the World State from birth of children to the death and how it was diverse one that ours.

There is no natural reproduction of the children. Children are created, "decanted", and raised in "hatcheries and conditioning centres", where they are divided into five castes and they are designed to fulfil predetermined positions within the social and economic strata of the World State. Fetuses chosen to become members of the highest castes those are "Alpha" and "Beta", and they are allowed to develop naturally while maturing to term in "decanting bottles", while fetuses chosen to become members of the lower castes those are "Gamma", "Delta", "Epsilon" are subjected to in situ chemical interference to cause arrested development in intelligence or physical growth. In the Bottling Room we learn about "decanting" which is no less than the birth process as appropriated by the laboratory. New human beings – that moves, like automobiles in progressive stage of completion, towards their designated place in society,

All children are educated via the hypnopaedia process, which provides each child with caste-appropriate subconscious messages to mould the child's lifelong self-image and social outlook to that chosen by the leaders and their predetermined plans for producing future adult generations, as well as stopping the lower caste citizens from wanting to be more than they were grown to be.

To maintain the World State's Command Economy for the indefinite future, all citizens are conditioned from birth to value consumption with such platitudes as "ending is better than mending," "more stitches less riches", i.e., buy a new item instead of fixing the old one, because constant consumption, and near-universal employment to meet society's material demands, is the bedrock of economic and social stability for the World State. The people of World's state used to consumption the drug **soma**. **Soma** is an allusion to a ritualistic drink of the same name which was consumed by ancient Indo-Aryans. In the book, **soma** is a hallucinogen that takes users on enjoyable, hangover-free "holidays". It was developed by the World State to provide these inner-directed personal experiences within a socially managed context of State-run "religious" organisations; social clubs.

Recreational sex is an integral part of society, it is not biological activity to give birth to the children but according to the World State, sex is a social activity. It was encouraged from childhood. "Everyone belongs to everyone else" is repeated often in the novel which was the concept of the World State, and the idea of a "family" is considered pornographic; sexual competition and emotional, romantic relationships are rendered obsolete because they are no longer needed. Marriage, natural birth, parenthood, and pregnancy are banished in casual conversation. Thus, society has developed a new idea of reproductive comprehension.

Spending time alone is considered an outrageous waste of time and money, it was not allow in the World's State and wanting to be an individual is horrifying. Conditioning trains people to consume and never to enjoy being alone, so by spending an afternoon not playing "Obstacle Golf," or not in bed with a friend, one is forfeiting acceptance.

In the World State, people typically die at age 60 having maintained good health and youthfulness their whole life. Death isn't feared; anyone reflecting upon it is reassured by the knowledge that everyone is happy, and that society goes on. Since no one has family, they have no ties to mourn.

The conditioning system eliminates the need for professional competitiveness; people are interested in their jobs and cannot desire another. There is no competition within castes; each caste member receives the same food, housing, and soma rationing as every other member of that caste. There is no desire to change one's caste, largely because a person's sleep-conditioning reinforces each individual's place in the caste system. To grow closer with members of the same class, citizens participate in mock religious services called Solidarity Services, in which twelve people consume large quantities of soma

and sing hymns. The ritual progresses through group hypnosis and climaxes in an orgy.

In geographic areas nonconducive to easy living and consumption, securely contained groups of "savages" are left to their own devices. These appear to be similar to the reservations of land established for the Native American population during the colonisation of North America. These "savages" are beholden of strange customs, including self-mutilation and religion, a mere curio in the outside world.

In its first and chapters, the novel describes life in the World State as wonderful and introduces Lenina Crowne and Bernard Marx. Lenina, a hatchery worker, is socially accepted and comfortable with her place in society, while Bernard, a psychologist, is an outcast. Although an Alpha Plus, Bernard is shorter in stature than the average of his caste—a quality shared by the lower castes, which gives him an inferiority complex. His work with sleep-teaching has led him to realise that what others believe to be their own deeply held beliefs are merely phrases repeated to children while they are asleep. Still, he recognises the necessity of such programming as the reason why his society meets the emotional needs of its citizens. Courting disaster, he is vocal about being different, once stating he dislikes **soma** because he'd "rather be himself." Bernard's differences fuel rumours that he was accidentally administered alcohol while incubated, a method used to keep Epsilons short.

Bernard's only friend is Helmholtz Watson, an Alpha Plus lecturer at the College of Emotional Engineering (Department of Writing). The friendship is based on their similar experiences as misfits, but unlike Bernard, Watson's sense of loneliness stems from being too gifted, too intelligent, too handsome, and too physically strong. Helmholtz is drawn to Bernard as a confidant: he can talk to Bernard about his desire to write poetry.

The Reservation and the Savage (Chapters 7–9)

Bernard is on holiday at a Savage Reservation with Lenina. The reservation, located in New Mexico, consists of a community named Malpais. From a far, Lenina thinks it will be exciting. She finds the aged, toothless natives who mend their clothes rather than throw them away repugnant, and the situation is made worse when she discovers that she has left her soma tablets at the resort hotel.

In typical tourist fashion, Bernard and Lenina watch what at first appears to be a quaint native ceremony. The village folk, whose culture resembles the

contemporary Indian groups of the region, descendants of the Anasazi, including the Puebloan peoples of Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni, and the Ramah Navajo, begin by singing, but the ritual quickly becomes a passion play where a village boy is whipped to unconsciousness.

Soon after, the couple encounters Linda, a woman who has been living in Malpais since she came on a trip and became separated from her group, among whom was a man to whom she refers as "Tomakin" but who is revealed to be Bernard's boss, the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning, Thomas. She became pregnant despite adhering to her "Malthusian Drill" and there were no facilities for an abortion. Her shame at pregnancy was so great that she decided not to return to her old life, but to stay with the "savages". Linda gave birth to a son, John (later referred to as John the Savage) who is now 18.

Conversations with Linda and John reveal that their life has been hard. For 18 years, they have been treated as outsiders: the native men treated Linda like a sex object while the native women regularly beat and ostracised her because of her promiscuity, and John was mistreated and excluded for his mother's actions and the colour of his skin. John was angered by Linda's lovers, and even attacked one in a jealous rage while a child. John's one joy was that his mother had taught him to read, although he only had two books: a scientific manual from his mother's job, which he called a "beastly, beastly book," and a collection of Shakespeare's works, which have been banned in the World State for being revolutionary. Shakespeare gives John articulation to his feelings, though, and he especially is interested in Othello, Romeo and Juliet, and Hamlet. At the same time, John has been denied the religious rituals of the village, although he has watched them and even has had some religious experiences on his own in the desert.

Old, weathered and tired, Linda wants to return to her familiar world in London, as she misses living in the city and taking **soma**. John wants to see the "**brave new world**" his mother has told him so much about it. Bernard wants to take them back to block Thomas from his plan to reassign Bernard to Iceland as punishment for his asocial beliefs. Bernard arranges permission for Linda and John to leave the reservation.

John also seems to have an attraction to Lenina, as while Bernard is away, getting the permission to move the savages, he finds her suitcase and ruffles through all of her clothes, taking in the smells. He then sees her "sleeping" in a soma-induced comatose state and stares at her, thinking all he has to do to see her properly is undo one zip. He later tells himself off for being like this towards Lenina, and seems to be extremely shy around her.

John, the Savage and his mother visit the World State (Chapters 10–18)

Upon his return to London, Bernard is confronted by Thomas, the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning, who, in front of an audience of higher-caste Centre workers, denounces Bernard for his asocial behaviour. Bernard defends himself by presenting the Director with his long-lost lover, Linda, and unknown son, John. John falls to his knees and calls Thomas his father, which causes uproar of laughter. The humiliated Director resigns in shame.

Spared from reassignment, Bernard makes John the toast of London. Pursued by the highest members of society, able to bed any woman he fancies, Bernard revels in attention he once scorned. The victory, however, is short-lived. Linda, decrepit and friendless, goes on a permanent **soma** holiday while John, appalled by what he perceives to be an empty society, refuses to attend Bernard's parties. Society drops Bernard as swiftly as it had taken him. Bernard turns to the person he'd believed to be his one true friend, only to see Helmholtz fall into a quick, easy camaraderie with John. Bernard is left an outcast yet again as he watches the only two men with whom he ever connected find more of interest in each other than they ever did in him.

Encouraged by Fanny, Lenina visits John and tries to seduce him. She disrobes causing John to attack her for being an "impudent strumpet". Lenina locks herself in his bathroom. While Lenina is in the bathroom, terrified and dressing, John receives a telephone call from the hospital informing him that his mother is extremely unwell. He leaves, allowing Lenina a chance to escape.

John rushes over to see Linda and sits at her bedside, trying to get her out of her soma holiday so that he can talk to her. He is heartbroken when his mother succumbs to soma and dies. He is extremely annoyed by the young boys that enter the ward to be conditioned about death and annoy John to the point where he starts to use violence to send them away. John's grief bewilders and revolts the hospital workers, and their lack of reaction to Linda's death prompts John to try to force humanity from the workers by throwing their **soma** rations out a window. The ensuing riot brings the police, who quell the riot by filling the room with vaporised **soma**. Bernard and Helmholtz arrive to help John, but only Helmholtz helps him, while Bernard stands to the side, torn between risking involvement by helping or escaping the scene.

Following the riot, Bernard, Helmholtz and John are brought to speak with Mustapha Mond, the Resident World Controller for Western Europe. Inspired by John's questions, Mond gives details about the history of the events that led to the present society and his reasoning why things are better with a caste society and programs of social control. Bernard and Helmholtz are told they are to be exiled to islands. Bernard pleads for a second chance and accuses

John and Helmholtz for their predicament. Reduced to grovelling, he is removed by guards. Mond proceeds to explain that exile is actually something of a reward, a chance to interact with other freethinking individuals. He reveals that he too once faced island banishment for conducting brilliant but controversial scientific research; instead of exile, he accepted a position on the Controllers' Council in exchange for abandoning his experiments. Helmholtz embraces the Falkland Islands as his destination, believing that their bad weather will inspire his writing, and leaves to check on Bernard. Alone, Mond and John engage in philosophical arguments concerning God and the morals behind the existing society. It ends with John rejecting the illusionary happiness of Mond's world and accepting his "unhappy" way of life despite its "inconveniences". The next afternoon, Bernard and Helmholtz meet John before their exile. Bernard, now resigned to his fate but also reconciled with Helmholtz, apologises to John for his behaviour. John tells his friends that he asked Mond to exile him with them but was denied. Instead he is told that the "experiment" of him living in civilization will continue. John vows not to be a part of such an experiment and to leave the next day.

John moves to a hilltop "air-lighthouse" southwest of London, near the village of Puttenham, where he intends to adopt an ascetic lifestyle in order to purify himself of civilization and amend for his mistreatment of his mother. To his horror, he finds himself one day enjoying the process of making a bow. To atone, John brutally whips himself in the open. This self-flagellation is witnessed by bystanders, causing reporters, whom John attacks or chases away, to visit three days later looking for a story. That afternoon, in a lull between reporters, John catches himself fantasizing about Lenina, again causing him to flog himself. This time the act is captured by a spying photographer who turns it into a film shown all over Western Europe. The day after the film's release, hundreds of sightseers hoping to witness the curious behaviour themselves arrive at John's lighthouse via helicopters; as the growing crowd chants "We—want—the whip!" Henry and Lenina disembark from one of them. The sight of the woman whom he both adores and loathes is too much: as she attempts to speak to him, John attacks her with his whip. The crowd goes wild with excitement, and – as a product of their conditioning – they turn on each other in a frenzy of beating and chanting that devolves into a mass orgy of soma and sex, possibly a gang rape of Lenina. Late the next morning, John wakes alone and suddenly recalls that he too participated in the shamelessness. Onlookers arrive that evening but find John's lifeless body hung in the lighthouse.

4.6 OTHER ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL BRAVE NEW WORLD.

4.6.i Characters in Brave New World

John: John is the illicit son of the Director and Linda. He was born and brought up on the Savage Reservation. John the Savage is an outsider in both the worlds: on the Savage Reservation and in the civilised Brave New World. The Savage John has read nothing but The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. He quotes them extensively and, for the most part, aptly, though his allusion to "Brave New World", here the reference is Shakespeares' The Tempest John the Savage is intensely moral. In defiance of BNW's social norms, he falls romantically in love with Lenina, but spurns her premature sexual advances. After his mother Linda's death, John becomes ever more disillusioned with utopian society. Its technological wonders and soulless consumerism are no substitute for individual freedom, human dignity and personal integrity. He debates passionately and eruditely with World Controller Mustapha Mond on the competing merits of primitivism versus the World State. He went to the lighthouse, but he is hounded by reporters and hordes of intrusive brave new worlders. Guilt-ridden, John, the savage finally hangs himself after – we are given to infer – he has taken the soma he so despises when it was sprayed into an adrenaline struck crowd. This soma influence triggered an orgy which John was also consumed in. When he awoke the next morning, he realised the mistake he had committed. "Oh, my God, my God!" He covered his eyes with his hand."

Bernard Marx – an Alpha-Plus sleep-learning specialist at the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. Bernard is a misfit. He had inferiority-complex and depressive nature than any depth of philosophical conviction. Unlike his fellow utopians, Bernard is often angry, resentful, and jealous. At times, he is also cowardly and hypocritical. His conditioning is clearly incomplete. He doesn't enjoy communal sports, solidarity services, or promiscuous sex. He doesn't even get much joy out of soma. Bernard is in love with Lenina but he doesn't like her sleeping with other men even though "everyone belongs to everyone else". Bernard's triumphant return to utopian civilisation with John the Savage from the Reservation precipitates the downfall of the Director, who had been planning to exile him. Bernard's triumph is short-lived. Success goes to his head. Despite his tearful pleas, he is ultimately banished to an island for his non-conformist behaviour.

Helmholtz Watson – handsome and successful Alpha-Plus lecturer at the College of Emotional Engineering and a friend of Bernard. He feels unfulfilled writing endless propaganda poetry and he is against conformism and philistinism of the World State. Helmholtz is ultimately exiled to the Falkland

for helping John to destroy the soma rations of Delta's after Linda's death. Unlike Bernard, he takes his exile in stride and comes to view it as an opportunity for inspiration in his writing.

Lenina Crowne – a young, beautiful, purple-eyed Beta who is a nurse at the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. She normally dates only one person at a time. She is basically happy and well-conditioned but will use soma to suppress unwelcome emotions. Lenina has a date with Bernard, to whom she feels ambivalently attracted, and she goes to the Reservation with him. On returning to civilisation, she tries and fails to seduce John the Savage. John loves and desires Lenina but he is repelled by her forwardness and the prospect of pre-marital sex, rejecting her as an "impudent strumpet". Lenina visits John at the lighthouse but he attacks her, unwittingly inciting onlookers to do the same. Her exact fate is left unspecified but it is insinuated that the onlookers, perhaps also John, gang rape her for the rest of the night in a soma.

Mustapha Mond – Resident World Controller of Western Europe. He presides over one of the ten zones of the World State. He is sophisticated and good-natured. In his youth, Mond had himself flirted with doing illicit scientific research and heterodox belief. He still keeps a small library of forbidden books in his safe. Yet he opted for training as a future world leader rather than exile. The Controller argues that art, literature, and scientific freedom must be sacrificed to secure the ultimate utilitarian goal of maximising societal happiness. He defends the genetic caste system, behavioural conditioning, and the lack of personal freedom in the World State as a price worth paying for achieving social stability. Stability is the highest social virtue because it leads to lasting happiness.

Linda – John's mother, and a Beta-Minus. While visiting the New Mexico Savage Reservation, she became pregnant with the Director's son. During a storm, she got lost, suffered a head injury and was left behind. A group of Indians found her and brought her to their village. Linda could not get an abortion on the Reservation, and she was too ashamed to return to the World State with a baby. Her World State-conditioned promiscuity makes her a social outcast. She is desperate to return to the World State and to soma. When she returned she was treated to a series of soma baths and a pleasant death.

Thomas "Tomakin" aka The Director – The Director administrates the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. He is a threatening figure, with the power to exile Bernard to Iceland. But he is secretly vulnerable because he fathered a child, John, a scandalous and obscene act in the World State.

4.6.ii Setting of the novel

Setting plays a particularly important role in Brave New World. Huxley's novel is a novel of Utopia, and a science-fiction novel. The story opens in London some 600 years in the future- 632 A. F. (After Ford) in the calendar of the era. And there is the World State, an all-powerful government headed by ten World Controllers. Faith in Christ has been replaced by Faith in Ford, a mythologized version of Henry Ford, the auto pioneer who developed the mass production methods that have reached their zenith in the World State. There is no family, no natural born of the children. There is the World State and the primitive world.

4.6.iii Style of the novel

Although Huxley's writing style makes him easy to read, his complex ideas make readers think. It is a science fiction so most of the words or descriptions are not familiar but at the same time interesting. It is novel of ideas. The novel shows that Huxley is familiar with history and literature. He expected his readers to know the plays of Shakespeare, to recognize names like Malthus and Marx, to be comfortable with a word like "predestination."

4.7SUMMARY OF THE UNIT

Brave New World is the best novel of the 20th century, a scientific novel, and the best satire on the use of technology in the world. The novel Brave New World is divided into 18 chapters and we can group them in three Chapter 1-6 gives introduction about World State and its activities. Chapter 7-9 is about the Reservation and the Savage. Chapter 10-18 is about the visit of John, the savage and his mother. The novel raised the question that on which way our progress is going on. John, Bernard Marx, Helmholtz Watson, Mustapha Mond, Linda Crowne, Lenina etc are the major characters in the novel.

4.8DIFFICULT WORDS

Utopia: imaginary perfect social and political system.

Decant: pour slowly into another vessel slowly so as not to disturb the sediment.

Hatcheries: place for hatching(break out of an egg)

Fetus/ foetus: fully developed embryo in the womb or in an egg.

Alpha: the first letter in Greek alphabet.

Beta: the second letter in Greek alphabet.

Gamma: Greek letter.

Delta: Greek letter **d**

Soma: ritual drink.

Orgy: occasion of wild merry-making.

Malthusian: (supporter) of the principle of T R Malthus(1766-1834),
English economist, who declares that the growth of the world's
population would, unless checked lead to a world shortage of
food.

Embryo: offspring of an animal in early stage of its development before birth
(or before coming out of an egg.)

4.9 QUESTIONS.

- Discuss 'Brave New World as a satire on technology'.
- Comment on the theme of the novel Brave New World.
- Do you agree with the statement that Brave New World is Huxley's 'revolting against "The Age of Utopias"'
- Sketch the character of John

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Unit - 5

Albert Camus -The Outsider

5.00 Objectives -

- 1) To Introduce the Students with trend of existential novel.
- 2) To introduce the students with the novel 'The Outsider'.
- 3) To acquaint the students with elements of modernity in the novel.

5.1 Introduction to the author -

Albert Camus was an Algerian novelist born on 7th Nov. 1914 at Mondevi in Algeria. His childhood was painful because of loss of his father. His helpless mother could provide him in small ways. Being genius & good sportsman he suffered a setback because of tuberculosis with his uncle's motivation he started writing & reading. Initially he wrote articles. Then he developed interest in politics & literature. He also enrolled for membership of communist party as well as for diploma in philosophy. He practiced as a professional actor & also got job of a teacher. Divorce with his wife gave him another domestic set back. He wrote his first major work 'Caligula (1938) 'L' estranger' i.e. 'The Outsider' and Le Myth de Sisyphe' i.e. 'The Myth of Sisyphus' brought him great name as writer. He practiced his hand in novel writing, essay writing & Play writing. His participation in the communist activities, his interest in philosophy & the ground realities of the life brought him the realization of the nonsense of life. His writing reflected the incoherence, absurdity & nonsense of life. He also contributed to 'Alger Republic' as a journalist. After recovering from pulmonary disease he worked as a teacher in a private college. He continued as a writer with his works 'The Fall of Ataraxia', 'The Plague'. His disillusionment with politics turned him towards religion later on he wrote some more works like. 'The Delicate Murderess', 'The Exile of Helen' 'The Man in Revolt', 'The Just' etc. He was honored with Nobel Prize in 1957. He died on 4th January 1960 in a car accident.

Albert Camus was supposed to introduce the idea of absurd in the realm of philosophy. His serious pondering over man's existence in this world & his attempt to make the things meaningful & the resultant absurdity was the focus in Camus writing.

5.2 Characters in the novel

1. Meursault - the protagonist of the novel is a man of thirty and works as a clerk.
2. Marie Cordona - the girl friend of Meursault. She is simple, sensitive girl.
3. Raymond Sintes - Neighbour of Meursault.
4. Salamavo - Neighbour of Meursault.
5. The Caretakers of old People's Home at Morengo
6. The Nurse at old People's Home.
7. Celeste - a Restaurant owner & friend of Meursault.
8. The Journalist.
9. The Magistrate.

5.3 Central idea of the novel

The novel 'The outsider' is divided into two parts. First part is divided into six chapters & Second part is divided into five chapters. After these parts Albert Camus has attached his after words to the novel which make the ideas of existence & absurdity in the novel, more clear.

Part One - Chapter I

The novel is written in first person narration Meursault's mother dies at old People's Home at Marengo. His first sentence strikes the reader because he even does not remember whether she died that day or previous day. His boss unwillingly sanctions him leave of two days. He eats at Celeste's restaurant before going to old People's Home. He borrows black tie and armband from his friend Emmanuel. His very attitude while doing all these activities is so casual and does not express any emotions or grief on the death of his mother. He reaches to the old People's Home travelling by bus. We learn about some details about him & his mother through his dialogue with the warden. He admitted his mother at old People's Home one year ago and he did not visit her for the whole year because that meant spoiling his Sundays. This shows that Meursault does not follow social & domestic customs & bondage of human relations. The warden takes him to the little mortuary where the dead body of his mother is kept. The officials of the Old People's Home have arranged the funeral next day morning at 10 o'clock. Though Meursault sits beside the dead body of his mother, instead of feeling sorrow or reminding her memories, he indulges in the description of her room. He also denies to see the face of his mother. He chats

with the caretaker, drinks white coffee & smokes. His mother's old friends from the Old People's Home come to express their grief. One Arab nurse also accompanies them. Once again Meursault indulges in the observation of the old people. Because of the heat & travel. He feels his back aches. They all sit there for the whole night and sleep in their chairs. Meursault too sleep and wakes up in the morning when the preparations for the funeral are going on, he thinks about his friends in office. Before fixing up the coffin, he is asked whether he wants to see the face of his mother but he denies. Other old people except his mother's friend Thomas Perez are not allowed to attend the funeral because of their age & heat outside. Meursault, the warden and the nurse attend the funeral. Meursault feels affected because of the heat. Throughout the novel he expresses his dislike for the heat because it disturbs his senses. While walking with the others to the graveyard, he is asked the age of his mother but he does not know her age. Time and again he expresses monotony. The funeral is described hastily. He feels relieved when he reaches back to Alger.

Chapter Two - When Meursault wakes up next day he feels happy because it is Saturday & he can enjoy weekend. There is no feeling of grief or remembrance of his mother. He decides to go for swimming. There he happens to meet his old girl friend Marie Cordona. He enjoys some moments of love with her. In the evening both of them go to watch a film. She spends that night with him. Next is Sunday. Meursault does not like Sundays. He lies in the bed till 10. The chapter describes the dull & Monotonous life Meursault. He moves in his own flat observing the mess spread all over. That Sunday is described as a typical Sunday by him.

Chapter Three - Meursault works hard in the office on Monday. In the afternoon he spends some time with his friend Emmanuel looking at Sea. The chapter describes some nonsense activities such as running behind a vehicle. Catching and jumping into the vehicle. Then they come to Celeste's restaurant to eat something. He goes to his home & sleeps for a while and goes back to the office in the afternoon. In the evening he walks down to home. On the staircase he meets his neighbor Salamano and his dog. Meursault describes the strange relation between the dog & his master. They hate each other but cannot stay without each other. Then his next door neighbor arrives. His name is Raymond Zintes. Raymond invites him to have some wine and a bite of pudding in his room. To save his trouble of cooking, Meursault goes to his room. There

Raymond tells him about his fight with a man. Then Raymond tells him about his girlfriend. The man whom he fought is the brother of his girlfriend. He has a doubt that his girlfriend has been cheating him and extracting money from him. He has left her but before leaving her he has beaten her till she would bleed. Now he needs advice of Meursault about his whole matter. Raymond thinks that he was not sufficiently punished her. Then they decide to write a letter to her. Meursault consents to help Raymond by drafting a letter to his girlfriend.

Chapter Four - Next week end Marie and Meursault go to a beach few miles away from Algeries. Then they to Meursault's room that night. Next morning she stays there. He decides to go out for lunch. They happen to hear loud sound from Raymond's room. A crowd of neighbors gather at the door of Raymond. Someone calls the police. Raymond has assaulted his girlfriend and she cries out loudly. The policeman warns Raymond to go to police station next day. Marie is so much disturbed by the happening that she could not eat food. Meursault does not understand why, but he enjoys the food. When Meursault comes to his room after lunch, Raymond comes to his home telling that he has punished the woman. He wants Meursault to act as a witness for him. He only has to say that the girl has cheated Raymond. Raymond and Meursault then enjoy brandy and game of billiards. When they come back they learn that old Salamano's dog is missing. They console him that he will get his dog back.

Chapter Five - Raymond phones Meursault inviting him to spend his weekend at the chalet of his friend near Algeries. But Meursault says that he has promised his girlfriend to spend Sunday with her. Raymond invites her too. Raymond also informs that he has been followed all the day by a group of Arabs and one of them is the brother of his mistress. Meursault's boss asks him to come to discuss about a project. The office is about to open a branch at Paris but he plainly refuses to go to Paris because he has no dreams and aspiration. He had the dreams & aspirations when he was in school but now he is at ease with whatever he has now. That evening Marie comes to Meursault she asks him whether he would marry her, he answers positively. She wants to know whether he loves her he replies negatively. His answer that he may have married any woman who has asked him for. His dehydrated answer makes her sad. When he comes home, Old Salamano comes to him telling that he has lost his dog. There is a long discussion between them about dog. The loss of dog has

completely changed life of Salamono. In the night Meursault could hear the sobs of the old man who has lost the meaning of life with the loss of the dog.

Chapter Six - That Sunday Marie & Meursault go for swimming. Raymond also joins them. They catch a bus to go to Raymond's friend. When they are setting off, Meursault sees a group of Arab containing Raymond's mistress's brother. When they reach to the place, Meursault describes the beautiful sea shore. Then he describes the chalet of Raymond's friend Masson. Thereafter Marie, Masson & Meursault swim. After taking their lunch, the three men go out for walk. They happen to see two Arabs on the beach. Raymond, Masson and Meursault decide the strategy of fighting. There is a fighting between the three & the Arabs. One Arab attacks Raymond with a knife and cuts his arm open. Then the Arabs run away. Masson takes away Raymond to the doctor. Meursault stays with the women telling them what happened. When he comes back from the doctor, Raymond again decides to go for a walk. Meursault follows him Raymond while walking reaches to the place where the Arabs are taking rest. It is too much not outside. Raymond takes out his gun Meursault asks him to have a fair fight. He takes gun from Raymond and says that if the Arabs take out their knife, he will shoot them. But instead of fighting, the Arabs hide behind the rock. So Raymond & Meursault come back to the chalet. Instead of going back to the chalet, Meursault comes back to the rocks. The Arab is lying in the shadow and when he sees Meursault, he takes out his knife. It is too not outside. Meursault gets tense and shoots down the Arab. Then he fires four more times.

Part II - Chapter One - Meursault is arrested and questioned several times. It seems that he is very cool eventhough he is arrested and gets irretated by the repeated questions, He even does not want any lawyer because according to him he has committed the crime of killing the Arab and has accepted the crime. So they should punish him now but the magistrate is insistent that he must take the lawyer given by the law because it is law. The magistrate wants to know why he keeps quiet & Meursault answers that because he has nothing to say, he keeps quiet. The magistrate wants to know why he paused between first shot & second shot when he murdered the Arab. He also asks why he fired at the dead body. Meursault keeps silence. Then the magistrate takes out silver crucifix and tells Meursault crucifix and tells Meursault that God pardons everyone, but one must repent over one's crime first. Meursault fails to understand why the magistrate

is telling him all this. He is disturbed by the heat & the flies in the magistrate's office. The magistrate asks him whether he believes in God & Meursaults answers negatively. The magistrate desperately tries to tell him that God can forgive him & he should repent over one's crime first but he collapses with Meursault's silence. After that he is examined by the magistrate many times. Meursault observes that the magistrate because friendly & kind to him eleven months pass out in the interrogation. After every interrogation the magistrate escorts Meursault to the door of his office and says in friendly voice. 'That's all for today, Mr. Antichrist '

Chapter Two - Meursault says that he would not like to talk about this part of his life. He then describes his life in the prison. Initially he is kept in a combine cell with some Arabs. They laugh when they see him but become silent when he tells that he killed an Arab. After some days he is kept in a separate cell. One day Marie comes to visit him. Meursault describes other visitors. Marie wants to know whether he is fine and says that he must keep hoping Meursault answers positively. She says that when he will come out, they will marry. She keeps on smiling and talking.

Soon Meursault realizes that he is imprisoned but he thinks like a free man. His impulses of going to beach & feeling the water trouble him because he is closed in prison. Soon he learns to think like a prisoner. He manages the schedule of his time. He gradually gets used to everything. He remembers that his mother used to repeat that 'you end up getting used to everything'. Meursault then sort out his various desires that trouble him & overpower them with his willpower. First he has to overpower his desire for woman. Second is his desire to smoke. When he was imprisoned his belt, shoe laces, tie & everything in his pocket was taken away by him. So he used to break bits of wood off his bed plank and suck them. Soon he gets used to not smoking. Another major problem for him was of killing time. He manages that too. First he learns how to remember things gradually he could spend hours together to remember his flat, furniture in the flat etc. Another problem he faces that is of sleeping gradually he manages to sleep for 16 to 18 hours. Remaining time he spends in his meals, body functions, memories & reading the story of Czechoslovakian. He finds a scrap of newspaper in his cell, which contains the story of a man who has left his family to make fortune. When he becomes rich, gets married he comes back to his village to his mother & sister after 25 years.

His mother & sister are running a hotel. In order to surprise them, he leaves his family another hotel & he hires a room in his mother's hotel. He shows them his money but does not disclose his identity. During the night the mother & sister kill him for the sake of money. Next day the man's wife comes to the mother's hotel revealing his identity. Afterwards the mother hangs herself and the sister throws down herself in a well.

Meursault realizes that he is becoming serious in his looks and also states that 'I clearly heard the sound of my own voice'.

Chapter Three - Meursault's case starts in the court. He is taken to court for the trial. When a policeman asks him if he is nervous, he replies negatively and thinks that it would be interesting to watch the trial. Once again Meursault indulges in the observation of the court room. He happens to see the warden & the caretaker from Old People's home, Old Thomas Perez, Raymond, Masson, Salamano & Marie & Celeste. The trial begins. The presiding judge asks Meursault some questions about his personal details. He feels irritated but finds the man very friendly. Then Judge tells all the details of the murder. The Judge asks some questions to Meursault which could find him way to escape himself from the punishment but his true answers lead to Misunderstanding of Judges. Juries lawyers, prosecutors & people in the court reach to the conclusion that he is cold blooded heartless unnatural & antisocial man. Then the lawyer & the prosecutor interrogate the witnesses. The warden of the Old People's Home the caretaker, Thomas, Perez tells all the details that happened at the time of death of Meursault's mother. Then Celeste, Marie, Masson, Raymond, Salamano are also called as witness and they all repeat that Meursault is a good man & good friend of theirs. Raymond's evidence shows that Meursault has indulged in criminal activities & debaucherous activities. The prosecutor is very aggressive against Meursault calling him a heartless criminal.

Chapter Four - Next day the trial begins again. Meursault gets bored to listen to the prosecutor. The Prosecutor announces that criminal like Meursault has no place in the society. He claims that the crime was premeditated by Meursault. He emphasizes his insensitivity, ignorance & doubtful Morality. Moreover he charges that Meursault has not even regretted over his crime. He blames Meursault as a man with empty soul. But Meursault does not understand why he is so furious because Meursault has never regretted in his life. Finally the Judge asks him his motive behind killing the Arab and he is sure that he will not get

capital punishment. After waiting for some time in another room, he is taken to the court room to listen to the verdict that he would be decapitated in a public square in the name of French people.

Chapter Five - Meursault is taken to another cell. A chaplain is sent to him so that he should confess & regret over his crime but he denied visiting the chaplain. He remembers a story about his father. Then he feels the need of thinking rationally about the death on guillotine. During the period, he several times remembers what his mother used to say about certain things. He has appealed for relaxation in punishment. He speaks out his existentialism. Albert Camus has put forth the meaninglessness very vigorously. Meursault thinks that if his appeal gets dismissed, he will die at the age of thirty but it does not make any difference whether one dies at the age of thirty or seventy because according to him life is not worth living. He also thinks about other side that if his appeal is granted, he would not able to control his joy. Somehow the chaplain comes to him and wants to know why does not see him and Meursault answers that because he does not believe God. He also clears to the chaplain that he is not despaired but he is little afraid. Meursault gets annoyed & becomes violent. The warden then takes the chaplain away.

Afterword - In the afterward Camus has advocated the protagonist Meursault. To him though the society terms him as outsider, he is a man who, without any heroic pretensions agrees to die for the truth. He calls him the only Christ that we deserve.

5.4 Character of Meursault - Camus has portrayed the character of Meursault very mysterious, complex, strange, fundamental & nature. This is for the first time a hero is portrayed without heroic pretensions, without heroic physique. His character can be studied differently in the two parts of the novel.

In the first he is described as a natural man outwardly but inside he appears very insensitive & indifferent man. He thinks that life has no sense even in present & future. He is without any aspirations and dreams. Therefore when his boss asks him to take promotion and go to Paris, he directly denies the offer. He says 'He has asked me if I was not interested in a change of life. I have responded that one could not change one's life that everything has some merit and that mine here does not displease me at all. Reflecting upon it deeply, I was not unhappy. When I was a student I has good many ambitions of this sort, But when I have tried to give up my studies I have very soon understood that all that

was without any real importance ' (Page 44) His strangeness & insensitivity in case of relations & Values is also disturbing to 'so called' human beings. The very first sentence of the novel strikes us with the heartless & insensitive sentence, ' Mother died today or maybe yesterday, I don't know' His indifference to human values is visible in case of Marie who loves him & wants to marry him. But he answers her that he may marry her though he does not love her. The trait of his nature does signify him as an outsider in the first part of the novel. He is indifferent, insensitive, unenthusiastic, man without dreams & desires, feelings, emotions. He is a man of physical needs. Physical problems distort his inner systems. His nature is Careless & irresponsible. He is of the opinion that sentiments are not very steady but only discontinuous. Moreover the complexity of his character increases because there is no reason why he behaves so. Because, sometimes we find him following moral law. In the event of attacking Arab Raymond takes out his revolver, but Meursault takes out gun from his hand and says, 'Take him man to man and give me your revolver. If the other one intervenes, I shall descend upon him. Funeral of his mother, taking side of Raymond in case of humiliating his mistress, are the examples of complexity in Meursault's nature.

The murder of the Arab brings an unexpected turn in Meursault's life. Why does he kill the Arab remains a mystery. After this incident the second part of the novel begins. His arrest, his interrogation by the magistrate show him equally casual. He does not display the common reactions of fear, Pressure, tension, Submission, repentance, guilt conscious etc. He does not realize that he has killed the Arab. He has no reason for the crime. This casual approach disturbs the magistrate because the magistrate belongs to that majority group of people who consider any action without reason, Meaningless, absurd, abnormal and therefore dangerous. The magister wants him to confess & regret over his crime and submit to God but Mesursault denies that too because he does not believe God. His disbelief in God again disqualifies him to be a normal human being. In order to escape from the punishment his lawyer wants him to tell lies but he denies & clings to truth. His loneliness in the cell develops in him some values being true to himself, modesty. The situation does not compel him to surrender but he uses the situation to analyze himself and he could hear his own voice. He accepts openly the blame of murder but he does not accept that his insensitivity and indifference at the time of his mother's funeral does not mean

that he does not love his mother. To him relating the murder incident to the event of his mother's funeral is illogical. In a sense Meursault is a round character who undergoes a surprising change. In the first of the novel we find him observing his flat, people on the road but that observation is empty observation but observation in the prison is accompanied by introspection & understanding. The change in him is from casual external activities to the internal activity of thinking, thinking with understanding. He ponders over the sense of human existence. To him human life has no sense and what if he dies at 30 or 70. He is truthful when he says that he is little afraid but not despaired. A Critic mentions that 'He emerges as a new person, harbinger to raise his voice against social hypocrisies & religious illusions '.

5.5 Character of Marie Cordona -

Marie is the girlfriend of Meursault. Earlier she worked as a typist in his office. She happens to meet him again when he goes to swimming on the next day of his mother's funeral. She is simple, sweet & charming girl. She likes all the material pleasures like swimming, watching movies & romance. She enjoys the company of Meursault. She is serious about her relation with him and therefore asks him whether he will marry her & whether he loves her. His answer is very witty. He replies her that he may marry her though he does not love her. Marie is just like any common woman, dedicated to her man. She wants to visit place. She is loving & peaceful woman. Therefore incident between Raymond & his mistress disturbs her so much so that she cannot eat food. When Raymond, Meursault and Marie go to Masson's chalet, after lunch, she stays back home to help Masson's wife. Though she is common & simple she is courageous woman. She remains present in the court trial of Meursault. She also manages to visit him in the prison. She keeps on smiling and telling him this & that thing. She consoles him that some day he will come out of prison and they will marry & live life happily Marie exemplifies the absurdity of life. Though she sincerely loves Meursault she cannot get him as her husband.

5.6 Existential note & absurd element in the novel

Camus philosophy of absurd is based upon philosophy of existentialism. Cassell's Encyclopedia of literature Vol. 1 tells, ' Under the title existentialism are grouped a number of philosophic doctrines which all lay stress upon the existence of the individual, with his concrete experience and solidarity as

opposed to the theoretical abstractions' Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard studied all the existential thinkers keenly & framed the theory of existentialism. Heidegger was the chief exponent of this philosophy in Germany. Though existentialism belongs to the field of philosophy, its features can be applied to the piece of literature. After Second World War the theory became popular. Albert Camus who himself wrote about existential thinkers, denied the label existential writers but his novels, the protagonists in the novel, the style, narration & vision of the world underline the existential note in his novels.

Critics are of the view that ' In ' The outsider', camus tries to ascertain man's relation with the world and the society in which he lives, which is typical of existentialist literature' Through the character like Meursault Camus Speaks out not only existentialism but also the further stage of new humanism. In his realization of life during his introspection of prison life Meursault realizes that life no sense and it does not make any difference. If he dies in his 30 s or 70 s. In his afterword Camus also confirms that 'the hero of the book is condemned because he doesn't play the game. In this sense, he is an outsider to the society in which he liveshe refuses to lie. Lying is not only saying what isn't true. It is also, in fact especially. Saying more than is true We all do it, every day, to make life simpler. But, contrary to appearances, Meursault doesn't want to make life simpler. Albert Camus concludes that 'The Outsider ' as a story of a man who, without any heroic pretensions, agrees to die for the truth.

Through the novel particularly the proceedings in the court, Camus finger at the absurdity of the systems of the Society plays a game & the socialization of human beings means making them expert in playing the game. Playing this game means using truth according to one's convenience. Meursault does not use this convenient truth at the trial of court. His clinging to the very truth is taken as his heartlessness, insensitivity. When he denies changing the truth the society feels threatened and proves him outsider. Camus, through the court trial exposes the absurdity in the systems constituting Society. The argument by the prosecutor shows the glorifying words that can help a criminal to escape the charges by telling a lie. The absurdity lies in the fact that Meursault's lawyer asks him to tell a lie to get rid of the charges & punishment but Meursault prefers to tell the truth even at the cost of his life.

5.7 - Structure of the novel -

The outsider is a modern novel, Though the novelist is more interested in disclosing the problem of existence & the absurdity of social insistence than throwing light at the psyche of the protagonist, he does throw light on the psychology of the society & social systems. The novel is divided into parts. First part has 6 chapters & second part has five chapters. The novelist has used first person narration & very few dialogues are there. Similarly very little action except the murder of the Arab, takes place in the novel. The protagonist, though portrayed with simple strokes is very complex to understand. The first part is very descriptive and afflictively colors the monotony of urban life. The second part takes place in prison & court and rewards a considerable internal change. The novelist presents the protagonist as the Christ of modern time whom the society needs. The novel contains existential & absurd element.

5.8 Self Learning question

1. Examine the character of Meursault.
2. Discuss the existential note in 'The Outsider'
3. Comment on the absurdity in 'The Outsider'
4. Is Meursault really an outsider? explain
5. Explain the structure of 'The Outsider'

5.9 Summary -

'The Outsider' is the story of a middle class man named Meursault who is 30 & works in an office seems very strange because he does not cry on the death of his mother, feel bored at her funeral & involves in swimming. Watching movie with girlfriend on the very next day. He also supports his 'Morally doubtful' friend Raymond in taking revenge of his mistress. When he & his girlfriend go with Raymond to his friend's house to enjoy weekend, he kills an Arab & is arrested & sent behind the bars. The court trial begins. He admits that he murdered the Arab but he does not regret or feel guilty conscious. The prosecutor succeeds in proving him as heartless man. Consequently he is given Capital punishment.

5.10 Activities -

- 1) Collect more information about other novels of Albert Camus.
- 2) Compile information about existentialism & absurdism.

5.11 Difficult Words -

realm - area / field

martury - a place where dead bodies are kept.

hastily - speedily consent - accept

aspirations - desire / wish

5.12 Bibliography

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Unit-6

Dorries Lessing- The Grass Is Singing

Content:-

- 1) Objectives
- 2) Background of 18th and 19th century English novel
- 3) Doris Lessing's life and work
- 4) Doris Lessing as a novelist
- 5) About novel (Background and appreciation)
- 6) Important places in the novel
- 7) Point of view of the novel
- 8) Various characters in the novel
- 9) Summary in detail
- 10) Plot
- 11) Thematic Analysis of the novel
- 12) General note on the novel
- 13) Signature of the title
- 14) Feminist approach to the novel
- 15) Bibliography

Introduction :-

Novel could be seen even in character's conception of the gallery of characters in the Canterbury Tales. Several Elizabethan writers wrote prose fiction which laid the foundations of the English novel. Among them the most important were John Lyly who wrote Euphues Unfortunate Traveler. Gradually the novel of 17th century was meant for aristocratic families. The people could not understand even the language of the 17th century novel as there we find the influence of other languages like Latin and Greek.

In 18th century, Daniel Defoe's The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe published in 1719 is a very popular book even today. It is sort of biography of factious person. Then Jonathan Swift's popular work Gulliver's Travels reflected the writer's observation and understanding the meaning of human life as a whole. Samuel Richardson's Pamela or Virtue Rewarded (1740) is accepted by most critics as the first novel in English Literature.

Then there came the novel which paid attention on characters and not on incidents and these were few of the distinguishing qualities of this kind of novel. Later, Henry Fielding wrote The Adventure of Joseph Andrews (1742), Tom Jones (1749) which was regarded as the most outstanding novels of 18th century. It is Oliver Goldsmith who produced a very unique work of art entitled Vicar of Wakefield. Another writer named Lawrence Sterns published Tristan's Sandy and Dr. Johnson who created Rasselas were a few of the noteworthy novels of this period.

Background of 19th century novel:-

The novel gradually became the dominant form in literature during the Victorian age. A fairly constant accomplishment of this development was the yielding of romanticism to literary realism, the accurate observation of individual problems and social relationships. The close observation of a restricted social milieu in the novels of Jane Austen early in the century (Pride and Prejudice, 1813; Emma, 1816) had been a harbinger of what was to come. The romantic historical novels of Sir Walter Scott, about the same time (Ivanhoe, 1819), typified, however, the spirit against which the realists later were to react. It was only in the Victorian novelists Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray that the new spirit of realism came to fore. Dickens novels of contemporary (Oliver Twist, 1838; David Copperfield, 1849-1850; Great Expectations, 1861; Our Mutual Friend, 1865) exhibit an outstanding ability to create living characters; his graphic exposures of social evils and his powers of caricature and humor have won him a vast readership. Thackeray, on the other hand, indulged less in sentimentality sometimes found in Dickens's works. He was also capable of greater subtlety of characterization, as his Vanity Fair (1847-1848) shows. Nevertheless, the restriction of concern

in Thackerary's novels to middle and upper life, and his lesser creative power, render, him second Dickens in many readers minds.

Other important figures in the mainstream of the Victorian novel were notable for a variety of reasons. Anthony Trollope was distinguished for his gently ironic surveys of English ecclesiastical and political circles; Emily Bronte, for her penetrating study of passionate idealism; George Meredith, for sophisticated, detached and ironical view of human nature; and Thomas Hardy, for a profoundly pessimistic sense of human subjection to fate and circumstances.

A second and younger group of novelists, many of whom continued their important work into 20th century, displayed two new tendencies. Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling and Joseph Conrad tried in various ways to restore the spirit of romance of the novel, in part by a choice of exotic locale, in part by articulating and action. Kipling attained fame also for his verse and for his mastery of the single, concentrated effect in the short story. Another tendency, in a sense and intensification or realism, was common to Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, and H. G. Wells. These novelists attempted to represent the life of their time with great accuracy and in a critical, partly propagandistic spirit. Well's novels, for example, often seem to be sociological investigations of the ills of modern civilization rather than self-concentrated stories.

Doris Lessing

Doris Lessing's Life and Work:-

Doris Lessing was born in British parents on Persia (now Iran) in 1919 and was taken to southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) when she was five. She spent childhood on a large farm there and first came to England in 1949. She brought with her manuscript of her first novel. *The Grass is singing*, which was published in 1950 with outstanding success in Britain, in America, and in ten European countries. Since then her international reputation not only as a novelist but as non-fiction and short story writer has flourished. For her collection of short novels, five, she was awarded the Austrian State Prize for

European Literature in 1981. In 2001 she was awarded the David Cohen Memorial Prize for British Literature and the Spanish Asturias Prize. Among her other celebrated novels are *The Golden Notebook*, *The Summer before the Dark* and *Memories of a Survivor*. Her short stories have been collected in a number of volumes, including *Room Nineteen* and *The Temptation of Jack Orkney*; while her African stories appear in *this was the Old Chief's Country* and *the Sun between Their Feet*. *Shikasta*, the first in a series of five novels with overall title of *Canopus in Argus*; *Archives*, was published in 1979. Her novel *The Good Terrorist* won the W.H. Smith Literary Award for 1985 and the Montello Prize in Italy that year. *The Fifth Child* won the Grinzane Cavour Prize in Italy, an award voted on by students on their final year at school. *The making off the Representative for plane 8* was opera with Phillip Glass, libretto by the author, and premiered in Houston. Her most recent work includes the celebrated novels *Love, Again*, *Mara and Dan* and *Ben, in the world* and the two volumes of autobiography, *under my skin* and *Walking in the shade*. She lived in north London.

Doris Lessing as a novelist

The British writer Doris Lessing was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 2007 for her extraordinary contribution to literature. In her writing career, Doris Lessing has written more than thirty five books using various literary genres including fiction, short stories and non-fiction, in which she discusses radical social themes such as, racial prejudice and colour bar, gender bias, the lack of basic amenities, and poverty suffering in Zimbabwe. Lessing's concern for contemporary social and economic problems is reflected even her Nobel lecture entitled "On not winning the Nobel Prize" delivered by her on 7th December, 2007. In her speech Lessing draws the world's attention to the lack of educational resources in the developing nations as a result of which their people are deprived of the opportunity to acquire education. In her novels and short stories Lessing sensitively discusses challenging social issues and thus urges the readers to speculate about the possible solutions to these problems.

Lessing spent her first twenty five years in Southern Rhodesia and then in 1949 she shifted to London. The influence on her childhood experiences is clearly seen her earlier writing where she explores issues concerning the black natives of Africa and their struggle of survive due to the poverty, and lack of opportunities for education in their country. In her letter works written in a totally different landscape of England, Lessing moves onto explore more complex themes related to the British society and life of people in a developed country. She experiences new but different values of life in London. Observing the society around her minutely, Lessing makes her fictional characters her spokesperson to express her concern about grave social problems.

About Novel

The Grass Is Singing is the first novel published in the year 1950, by Doris Lessing the British Nobel Prize-winning author. It takes places in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), in southern Africa, during the 1940's and it deals with the racial politics between whites and blacks in the country (which was then a British contrary). The novel created a sensation when it was first published and became an instant success in Europe and the limited states. The novel considers the various forms of racial and ethnic or spiritual discrimination in the world. Is it still possible for someone to feel about another race or another group of individual the same way Mary, Dick and other white people in the novel feel about black? Do those feelings continue to manifest in the same kind of financial, emotional and physical violence? Mary's feelings about male natives and about Moses in particular are colored by her repressed sexuality. The principal white characters-Mary, Dick, Marston and Slatter-all have deluded themselves, one way or another, while none of the black characters, particularly Moses have any delusions at all.

Important Places

The novel is set in South Africa, which at the time the action unfolds was populated and governed as per the rules of a apartheid, institutionalized racism

in which the white minority was socially, legally and politically dominant over the black majority.

The Turner Home is another place in the novel. The house in which Dick and Marcy Turner live is little more than a shack: flimsy walls, no proper cutting and little or no interior decoration. In many ways, it's seen by other whites in the community as indicating that the Turners have a much lower standard of living than that lived by other whites in the community. In this house they are poor in pocketbook and in spirit.

Point of View

The novel is written from the third person omniscient point of view, albeit with some what limited perspective. To be specific, the narration focuses with almost completed exclusivity on the thoughts, feelings and motivations of its white characters. The black characters, who are admittedly secondary in narrative importance, receive little or no affection from the narration, their thoughts, feelings and motivations are, for the most part, not entered into. The most notable exception to this general rule is at the novel's close at which the narration explores the psyche of the writer, the black servant Moses. This approach to point of view has a definite resonance with one of the novel's key themes, the exploration of the relations between black and white. In short the novel focuses on the white characters is a manifestation of the character's limited awareness.

Characters in "The Grass is Singing"

Mary Turner:

'The Grass is singing' focuses on the blighted life of a woman whose spirit is destroyed by a disastrous marriage and by an environment to which she could not respond. More than any other, Doris Lessing is aware of the seductive cruelty of colonialism. She has resented voices against injustice, racism and sexual hypocrisy in the present novel. Every incident or situation in the novel is centered to the character of Mary.

At the opening of the novel; Lessing has presented mysterious murder of Mary Turner and at the end of the novel, it is exposed that Moses; black native boy killed her, Moses was confessed to the crime, but no native had been discovered.

There was district centre of forming in Southern Africa. There was a railway station. Near it was a store; Mary's father was working as a pump man on the railway. He used to drink every day and was always in debt. Mary's mother scolded him but he never gives in drinking, Mary had to suffer from poverty. Her brother and a sister died. When Mary was young, she also lost her parents. Then she came to the town, joined a girl's club and a job in an office. She was a thin girl with a fashionable curtain of light brown hair, serious blue eyes, and pretty clothes. Her friends called her as slim blonde. She lived in a girl's club to help women who could not earn much money. She had suffered a lot in her childhood but now her age was of thirty, and she was happy. She was now a personal secretary of her employer, and was earning good money. She also visited cricket team. She was so satisfied with her work, where she felt sufficient and capable, with her friends.

She thought of marriage and a widower of fifty five with half-grown children approached her. He needed a mother for his children and someone to run his house. He began to love her. Once at night, they were in his drawing room, and when he began to kiss her, she run out of his house into the night. After some days she met Dick Turner, a farmer at cinema, in the town and she married to him went to his country house. Dick was hard worker but always in debt. He hoped every year for good crop but nature never favored him. Then he was bankrupt and twice ill because of malaria. Mary couldn't get comfortable house, happiness and joy of married life. She was always restless, frustrated and in panic. She had to go to the farm and look after the work; going there in the farm. The native boys were never working properly and it made Mary furious. Once, she beat with a wipe to native boy, on her farm and he was Moses was working finally brought by Dick at him home. He was not aware of whip incident and Mary could not tell him. Moses was working as a kitchen boy at their home. Mary liked his strong and sturdy boy and he was very attractive too. But Mary was horrified by looking at him. Charlie Slatter and his wife Mrs. Slatter helped the Turners. But Charlie found that Mary was frustrated to country life; and Dick was always ill, bankrupt, feeble and desperate. He

thought to take the charge of this farm and asked the couple to go to the town. To the next day, Dick and Mary were leaving for the town but that last night, it was raining heavily. Dick was asleep but Mary could not sleep. In the mid night she wandered around her house. Moses tossed a weapon at her side and she lost her life. Lessing has created most pathetic, disastrous and touching character of Mary in this novel.

Turner:

Doris Lessing has introduced the nature of the Turners in South Africa, at the opening of the novel. The mysterious murder of Mary had taken place, and people spoke of the Turners in the hard, careless voices revered for misfit outlaws and the self-exited. The Turners were disliked though few of their neighbors had ever met them. They were never seen at district dances, or gymkhanas. They were living in a little box of house; and so they were called "poor whites". The turners were British, after all. Dick Turner was standing a few paces away, covered with mud; and was looking at the corpse of Mary, as well as at Moses.

Dick Turner met Mary at cinema. Their meeting occurred often and finally turned into love and marriage. Now Dick and Mary were living in their country house. Dick was hard worker, honest and loving by nature. But he was always in debts. He was bankrupt. Every year he hoped for good crop but failed to get it. His wife, Mary was not happy. She was always miserable, irritated and frustrated. Dick tried to please her. He was a good farmer. He planted trees to make money. But he could not obtain anything.

Mary was unaware of his family background. She knew so little about him. His parents were dead. He was an only child. He had been brought up somewhere in the suburbs of Johannesburg. He told Mary that his mother was always in grief and had to suffer. It showed that he loved his mother and resented his father. When he grew up, he had tried number of jobs. Now, he had come to Southern Rhodesia and had become a farmer, and 'to live his own life'.

He was always worried and suffered from malaria twice. Mary looked after the farming and boys working there. Day by day he became

feeble and was living only on future hope. He had brought a native boy Moses for the kitchen at home. Mary was afraid of him. He murdered Mary. But what was the mystery behind it, no one knows. Charlie Slatter and Mrs. Slatter helped the Turners. But Charlie was shrewd and greedy as he had planned to drive Mary and Dick to the town and take charge of his farm for grazing his cattle. He made them leave the village for town. Poor Dick heard his advise and was about to leave. Lessing has narrated very vivid character of Dick. Turners are on the background of pathos, mystery, poverty and frustration in human life.

Charlie Slatter:

“The Grass is singing” is a superb evocation of African’s majestic beauty, an intense psychological portrait of lives in confusion, a passionate exploration of the ideology of white supremacy. Doris Lessing has portrayed a variety of characters in African problems of color-bar. Niggers or Negros working in the field; and white people was controlling them. It is a racial struggle between black and white in South Africa, displayed by Lessing in the present fiction creation of Charlie Slatter is full of significance in the story of white people.

Charlie Slatter had been a Grocer’s assistant in London. He was still a cockney, even after twenty years in Africa. He came with one idea; to make money. He made it. He was crude, brutal, ruthless, yet kind hearted man. He farmed as if he were turning the bundle of machine which would produce lot of money of other end. He was hard with his wife, as well as children, until he made money. Above all he was hard with his farm labors. Slatter believed in farming with the sajmbok. It hung over his front door, like a motto on a wall. “You shall not mind killing if it is necessary”. He had once killed a native in a fit of temper. He was fined thirty pounds. Slatter was shortlist broad, powerful man, with heavy shoulders and thick arms. His face was broad and bristled, shrewd, watchful, and a little cunning. He had fair hair that made him look like a convict, but he did not care for appearance. His small blue eyes were hardly visible. He had rooted contempt for soft-faced, soft-voiced Englishmen. His own son’s now grown up, were gentlemen. He

had spent plenty of money to make them so; but he despised them for it. At the sometime he was proud of them.

Charlie Slatter was intimate friend of Dick Turner. When Dick was ill because of malaria he and his wife had helped him. However, Slatter was shrewd and was thinking to swallow the farm of Dick; for his cattle. He had thought that it would be a nice grazing field. He noticed that Mary was not interested in country life and Dick was always in debts. So, he suggested the couple to go to town and he would take charge Dick's farm. Unfortunately, Mary was murdered and now, he was looking into the matter. He had travelled from farm over the district telling people to keep quiet. He called the police and Moses was arrested. Slatter had taken charge of the affair. He went to the house of Turners. It was he, who, from beginning of the tragedy to its end, personified society for the Turners. Tony Marston was his assistant who was with him, everywhere.

Tony Marston:

Charlie Slatter had made Dick go to the town. Dick had agreed and Charlie had decided to buy his farm. He was cheating Dick. He had shown Tony Marston to Dick and had told him that Tony would look after 'his' farm. It was very horrible plan of Charlie. In this situation the character of Tony is brightly revealed by Doris Lessing in the novel.

Tony was of twenty years. He had a good, conventional education and had faced the prospect of becoming a clerk in his uncle's factory. To sit on the office stool was not his idea of life; and he had chosen South Africa as his home. It happened because his remote cousin was making money there in his business of tobacco. Tony intended to do the same. He had been dealing with his farm. He found Dick Turner unhappy near his farm. But even this tragedy of Dick Turner to him romantic. He noticed in South Africa that there was capitalization all over the world; and small farmers would inevitably be swallowed by the big ones. He had the 'progressive' ideas about the color-bar. There he observed conflict with self-interest. He had brought with him the books. Books on the color question on Rhodes and

Kruger on farming, on the history of gold. But he could not read them. A man cannot work twelve hours a day and then feel fresh enough for study.

He took his meals with the Turners and spent all day with Dick on the lands. He was interested in everything. Tony hardly was Mary. He was disturbed by her. As Charlie had suggested them to leave, they were preparing to leave. Tony saw that Moses, native boy, was very close to Mary. He was furious and asked Mary to ask him to go away. Mary was helpless and she asked Moses to leave her alone, when mysterious murder of Mary occurred Tony was present at the home of the Turners. He was now with Charlie Slatter. Tony's role is most dramatic and reflecting his love for Dick's family and grudges against the black natives in South Africa.

Moses:

Mary was not good cook. So Dick unable stand the dirt and bad food any longer, said he would bring up one of the arrived at the door. Mary recognized him as the one she had struck with the whip over the face two years before. She saw the scar on his cheek. His eyes bent down. He was Moses. She could not work with him but she could not tell the whip incident to Dick. Dick remarked that he was clean and one of the best boys on his farm.

She used to sit quite still, watching him work. The powerful, broad-built body fascinated her. She had given him white dress to wear in the house. His muscles were tempting to her. He appeared even taller and broader than he was because of the littleness of the house. He was a good worker. She became used to him, and the memory of that wipe slashing across his face faded. When Dick was ill with malaria he took care of Mary and Dick days and nights. So, Mary began to love him. But she could not express her love. Moses used to dress her. It was seen by Tony. He was jealous of black natives. A white person may look at a native, who is no better than a dog. So, Tony warned Mary again and again to ask that boy go away. Mary was in panic. But she could not resist the words of Tony. At last, she asked Moses to leave her home and go away.

It was dark night. Dick was in a sound sleep but Mary was wandering around her house though it was raining. The darkness of the night, the bush, and the rain was fearful. However, there stood Moses near the tree. He glanced at Mary and tossed a weapon beside her. She was dead. No one knows that what the mystery behind this murder, but Moses was arrested and was taken away by the police. So, the character of Moses is full of suspense and of mystery.

“The Grass is Singing”

Summary

Mary Turner was the wife of Richard Turner. Richard was a farmer of Negsi. Mary Turner was found murdered on the front verandah of their house, yesterday morning. The houseboy had been arrested. He was confessed to the crime. It was said that he was in search of wealth sensational headline was seen in the newspaper, so, people were angry. They said when natives steal, rape or murder, the murder was simply not discussed. Someone said, “A very bad business. But no one expressed anything even on this remark”

It was a farming district. Isolated white families occasionally met there. There they noticed their black servant’s faces. Charlie Slatter had travelled from farm to farm over the district telling people to keep quiet. So the most interesting thing about the whole affair was the silent. The Turner’s were disliked because they were British after all. They were never seen at district dances. They always ignored South African rules. Charlie Slatter knows about the Turner’s deeply. He was there on the day of murder. Charlie Slatter, an outsider, has been allowed to take charge of the affair. Dick Turner’s farm boys came to him. He sat down to write a note to the Sergeant at the police camp.

Slatter lived five miles from the Turner’s. The farm boys discovered the body. The Slatter sent a personal letter to Denham at the police camp, twelve miles away. So the sergeant sent out half a dozen native policemen at once to the Turner’s farm to see what they could find. Then he

also came on the scene of murder. The native police did not have to search far for the murderer. They saw Moses in front of them and they snapped the handcuffs on him, and went back to the house to wait for the police cars to come.

There they saw Dick Turner come out of the bush by the house with two dogs at his heels. He was talking, crazily to himself. He was wandering in and out of the bush with his hands full of leaves and earth. He was a white man. He was somewhat mad. Black men though they are policemen, do not lay hands on white flesh.

The laws of the country were strict so everyone knows what they could not do. If someone did an unforgivable thing, like touching one of the king's women, he was severely punished. He was likely to be impalement. Over an ant-heap, on a stake so it was the tradition to face punishment. Aspect of the affair was dropped, for Moses might not have been a Matabele at all. He was in Mashonaland but natives commissioners like to think in terms of the past.

Charlie Slatter went to the Turner's place by fat American car. He personified society for the Turner's from beginning of the tragedy to its end. The Turner's were bound to come to grief.

Slatter had been a grocer's assistant in London. He was still a proper cockney, even after twenty years in Africa. He had come to make money. He made it. He was crude, brutal, ruthless, yet kind hearted man, in his wife as well as with his children. He was a rich farmer now. Until he made money he was also hard with farm labors. A motto was hung over his front door, "You shall not mind killing if it is necessary". He had killed a native in a fit of temper. He was fined thirty pounds. He was shortest, broad and bristad. He was shrewd, watchful and a little cunning. He had a fair hair that made him look like a convict; His small blue eyes were hardly visible. He had lived under the South African sunshine for many years.

He hoped to get to the Turner's quickly. He wondered why his assistant, Marston had not come to him about the murder, or at least sent a note. He thought perhaps he might have run away because of fear. Anything was possible, thought Charlie. He had a rooted contempt for soft-faced, soft-

voiced Englishmen. His own sons grown up, were gentlemen. He had spent plenty of money to make them so. But he despised them for it. However he was proud of them. About Marston, now, he felt nothing but irritation.

His car was puncture Turner was an object of pity and Marston was of irritation. Slatter thought that he might have prevented this murder. Slatter was fain in this race. The puncture was mended and finally he reached the house. Suddenly he noticed six bicycles leaning against the wall. Six native policemen were standing under a tree and among them the native Moses, his hands linked in front of him. It was a wet, sultry morning. Charlie walked to the police men and they saluted him. They were in fancy dresses. Charlie disliked it and thought that his natives are fine in loincloths. He could not bear the half-civilized natives.

The policemen were strong but Moses was stronger and powerful man. He was black and dressed in a single and shorts, which were damp and muddy, Charlie looked into his face, who was murdered. The man started back expressionless. His own face was curious. It showed guarded vindictiveness and fear. But he was uneasy, troubled. Then he looked at Dick Turner, standing behind him, covered with mud. Charlie took him to his own car. He did not know that Dick was crazy. He put Dick into back seat of his car and then went into the house.

Marston was standing there. His face was pale and strained. He told Charlie that he slept late. When he came into the house he found Mrs. Turner on the verandah. Charlie stared at Mary, lying on the verandah. Marston told him that Mary was lying there; he lifted her on to the bed. He added that the dogs were licking at her, and there was blood everywhere. He told Charlie that he did not know anything about the murder.

Charlie thought that so many of them came from England to learn farming; but extremely adoptable; but the adoptability redeemed them. They get used to old settlers ideas. But one never had contact with natives, except in the master servant relationship.

Tony Marston was confused; but he had his own ideas about the murder. He stated that anger, violence, death and sergeant natural to that vast, harsh country Charlie Slatter and sergeant Denham asked some

questions to Tony. He replied that he had been there about three weeks, living in a hut. He had run their house for six months when they were away. The he liked to go on a tobacco farm. He stated that the murder was surely unpleasant. Then both pointed out that they did not like niggers murdering white women. There was a court case to come yet. The sergeant said that the case would be a matter of form. Then native policemen lifted the body of Mary Turner, which was wrapped in a blanket into the back seat. She was stiff. They could not put Moses, the murderer into the same car with her. Black man should not be close to white women, even though she was dead, and murdered by him. Dick Turner was sitting in the back and it was Charlie's car. It was felt that Moses had committed a murder; but he should not go by car. Men looked at the murderer. They thought that black man who will thief, rape, murder, if given half choice. It is the problem of color-bar. Black people and white civilization is presented here. Charlie and Dick travelled by car, but Tony were left in the empty house. But he was troubled by the attitude of the two men. He was upset. So, that morning, he packed his things and walked over to the Slatter to tell Charlie he would not stay. Charlie also thought there was no need of a manager then. After that the Turners farm was used for grazing cattle of Charlie.

Tony went back to town searching for a job. But his early carefree adaptability was gone. He visited several farms but could not get a job. He was sad because Sergeant Denham had said that the native had murdered many Turner while drunk, in search of money and jewelry. When the trial was over, Tony was penniless. He met a man from Rhodesia, who told him about the copper mines and the high salaries. So he travelled by the train to the copper belt. Tony found there was that the salary was not enough, as the cost of living was very high there. He was the young man from England and he thought one should take things as they came. Life isn't as one expects it to beyond soon.

There were centers of farming districts and railway stations all over southern Africa. Near the stations was the post office, a hotel and a store. South Africa was created by fine financiers and mine magnates. In the old buildings grocery, and butchery as well as bottle-store were seen.

For Mary, England was her 'Home' but her parents were South Africans and had never been to England. The store was the real centre of her life. She used to buy dried peaches or a tin of salmon for her mother. She would linger there, staring at the piles of sweets. When she grew older the store came to have significance. It was place where her father bought his drink. Her mother complained to the barman, that she could not make ends meet. But her husband squandered his salary in drink. He was on the railway, working as a pump man. His bill of drink was killing the life of the family. Mary's brother and sister both died of dysentery. The family moved three times before Mary went to school. Then she was sent to boarding school and her life changed. Now she was happy because she was away from her fuddled father and bitter mother. At sixteen she left school and took a job in an office in town; in South Africa. By the time; she was twenty she had a good job. The she was alone as her mother died. Her father was five hundred miles away; transferred to another station. She hardly saw him. Mary was pleased to be rid of him. By dropping her father she seemed in some way to be avenging her mother's sufferings.

However, though she was a daughter of a petty railway official and a woman whose life had been so unhappy of economic pressure that she had pinned to death; was living like the daughters of the wealthy in South Africa. Till she was twenty five nothing happened to break the smooth and comfortable life she led. Then her father died. So; now, nothing was left for her in old parental house. She was beautiful girl and her friends admired her. At thirty nothing has changed.

Now she was personal secretary of her employer; and was earning good money. She had the undistinguished dead leave appearance of South African white democracy. She chose to live in a girl's club; to help women who could not earn much money. Outside the girl's club; she led a full and active life. But she never liked parties or had become a center of a crowd. Her life was rather extraordinary. There was daily routine of her work. A man who treated her like a sister 'took her out' daily. Then she became friend of half the town; and in the evening she went to the sun downer parties that prolonged till midnight; or danced or went to the pictures she was never in bed before twelve or later. South Africa is a wonderful place; for the unmarried white women. But she did not get married. She had been

bridesmaid a dozen times. But she was enjoying her lonely life. She cared not for men. Yet outside the office and the club her life was entirely dependent upon men. She heard other people's complicated stories. But she was a woman of thirty without love troubles, headaches, sleeplessness or neurosis. When Mary thought of "home" and wedding she recalled her poor father's hut, mother's sufferings and death of her brother and sister. She shuddered she had tried to forget it years ago. But she was restless and full of panic. Her men friends treated her just like a good pal; with none of this silly sex business.

Her friends commented her solitude. But she tolerated everything. She knew that they were treacherous friends. She began to dress in simple cloths. So, she had lost her charming poise. Then she began looking around for someone to marry. And the first man she allowed to approach her was a widower of fifty-five, with half grown children. So she felt safer with him. He wanted mother for his children and to run his house for him. When he began to love her, she ran away to her home. She fell on her bed there and wept. She avoided men though she was above thirty. But she was looking for a husband. In the subject of gossip of the people, scandals grew and it created panic in her mind. She looked very dull people remarked that she was really a futile woman. Some gossiping women had said she ought to get married.

Then she meet Dick Turner, He was the first man who treated her wonderfully and unique. They met casually at the cinema. He was always in his farm but rarely came to the town. He did not like the town life. But thousands of people in Africa lived in towns. Dick looked at Mary's lovely face. Then he took her at his home. They had met in cinema. His dream was to get married and have children. He was hard worker in his farm because he is in debt. He ought of getting out of debt and build a house and enjoy rich life. Finally, Mary arrived at the house of Dick. She found Dick was a rich farmer.

Though it was comfortable; Mary had to live in a country house. She thought, her father, forms his grave, had sent out his will and forced her back into the kind of life. He had made her mother lead. Charlie Slitters farm was close to their farm. An elderly native was family servant and Dick

introduced him to her. She had never come into contact with natives before. So, she was afraid of African natives. Samson, the native servant was now in their family. He gave all information about the kitchen and of the house to Mary. Dick had some pet dogs and he was once furious about Samson because he had let his dogs go. It was troublesome to find them now from the bush.

One day Mr. and Mrs. Slatter met to Dick and Mary at their home. Mr. Slatter thought that Mary was a good woman but married a good for nothing like Dick. Mrs. Slatter had a large house and her three sons were at university. She had a comfortable life. Their meeting was over. Dick and Charlie Slatter spoke about farming and the labors with irritation. They stated that those native workers had no idea of the dignity of labor, no idea of improving themselves by hard work. Mrs. Slatter expressed her affection or Mary. But Mary had no desire for Mrs. Slatter company.

Dick and Mary were standing in the verandah. Suddenly, their servant arrived there and he told them that he wanted to leave his job. Mary was furious and desired to hurt him. But, Dick tried to speak softly to the boy. However, Mary was so furious that she gave the money. He was owed, and dismissed him. But the boy said, "It is not me you are hurting, it is yourself. If you go on like this you will never get any servant. They soon teach the women who don't know how to treat their boys." Mary was frustrated. Dick had gone to bed early, as he always did. But Mary began to picture herself walking there up and down in the darkness, with the hated bush all around her, outside that pigsty; he called a house, having to do all her own work. Only a few months ago she had been living her own life in town, surrounded by friends who loved her and needed her. Then she cried for hours, till she could walk no more.

Towards the end of that week Mrs. Slatter invited them both for an evening party. But Mary refused to go and Dick was silent.

Mr. Slatter was making money by malpractice and Dick was always in debt. His marriage was a failure and seemed impossible to right. He drove himself to work harder, so that things could be better and children would be possible. However, at his home were the scenes and storms of temper. There was irritation, fury but no comfort and peace in their lives.

Mary and Dick tried to earn some money by bee-keeping, planting trees in the farm, keeping pigs and finally setting up a store. But their poverty and debts made them upset and so they were in great trouble. One day Mary thought to return to the town; to the club, and even to get a job in her former office. But everything was changed there. She reached the club. Then she walked to the office. The man there scandalized her and told her that the job had been filled already. She was that the job had not been filled and that he was putting her off. Then Charlie Slatter had met her. He asked shrewdly where her old man was. She knew that he was planning to bug that fool Dick Turner's farm when he went bankrupt. He needed extra grazing for his cattle.

Dick went to the town and met Mary. Both returned again to the home. She thought she was made idle, by nature alone and sufficient to herself.

But there was sudden change in her life. A few months after she had run away, and six years after, she had married Dick, he got ill; his first man.

During the period of Dick's illness, Mary looked after the farm and native boys working there. It was malaria district and he had lived in it so long. He had malaria in his blood; for years. It was very sharp attack. Mary informed about it to Mrs. Slatter. Then Charlie brought the doctor in his car. The doctor said that the house was full of mosquitoes. He suggested the bush should be cut. Ceiling should be put at once. There was danger of their both getting sunstroke. Charlie and his wife helped Mary and her husband. The native boys knew of Dick's illness and so, they were not honest in their work. Mary observed them, scolded them but they threatened her that they would not come for work. Thus she was troubled by them. She wandered in their hutments and found that they were savage people. However, Mary hoped that Dick would be cured and that she wanted him to be a success and make money. He had lived for so many years with the working natives; planning a year ahead that his horizons had narrowed to anything else. She did not care to show her ability, and he disliked the farm and its problems but she was married to Dick and so she must think of him. She needed a man stronger than herself, and she was trying to create one out for Dick. So, she must think of him. She has ceaseless struggle with her servants, and once,

she had beaten a boy on her farm, with a whip. He was Moses. Dick and Mary had to face with drought, disappointment, restlessness and horror of the natives boys. Dick also hoped that they should have a child.

One day, Dick brought the farm native to home. He liked to keep him as house boy. He was strong and sturdy as well as attractive; and so Mary was tempted to him. Though she disliked black natives; she did not refused Moses as house boy. Mary recognized him as the one she had struck with the whip over the face two years before. She saw the scar on his cheek. She was even horrified to see her at her home. She did not speak any word to Dick. She had never told him about the incident of the whip, for fear of his anger. He worked in the kitchen. Moses always stood, leaning against the outer wall and looking at Mary. Dick was again ill. Mr. and Mrs. Slatter helped them. But Charlie desired to remove Dick from his farm. The Turners were hoping to prosper in farming, keeping chickens. But they never achieved anything. Selfish Charlie once visited to the house of Dick, with a young boy of twenty years old from the town. He was Tony Marston. Charlie Slatter found that Dick was ill and bankrupt and Mary was in the horror of native boys on the farm. So, he suggested Dick that no woman knows to handle niggers. He asked him to give up farming and get off the place for some days. He should get into town. He told Dick that Tony Marston would be able to manage farming; he had brought him for the same work. Tony Marston noticed that Mary was very dear to Moses. Charlie made Dick and Mary leave to the next morning for town. Tony also found that native, Moses, was always dressing her. He remarked that was not customary in this country. He asked Mary to drive Moses away from her home. He threatened her to do so. Therefore, Mary asked Moses to give away.

It was dark night. Dick was in a sound sleep. But Mary could not sleep. She came out of her bed, wandered around her house. Moses was waiting there in the darkness. He pulled out the weapon, looked at it, and simply tossed it down outside Mary. It was raining. Then Moses moved from verandah to Englishmen's hut. Dick was in sound sleep. He had completed his revenge. Then he went through the soaking bush and leaned against he would remain until pressure came to find him.

PLOT

The novel begins with a cutting from newspaper article about the death of Marcy Turner. It says that Mary Turner, a white woman was killed by her black servant Moses for money. The author of the article is unknown. The news actually acts like an omen for other white people living in that African setting. After looking at the article, people behave as if the novel shift to a flashback of Mary Turner's past life up to her murder at the hand of Moses in the next chapter.

Mary has a happy and satisfied life as a single white Rhodesian (we assume, though the novel refers to both Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa simply as South Africa, while making clear farm is in Southern Rhodesia) woman. She has a fine job, numerous friends and values her independence. Nevertheless, after overhearing an insulting remark at party about her spinsterhood, she resolves to marry.

The man she marries, after a brief courtship, Dick Turner, is a white farmer struggling to make his farm profitable. She moves with him to his farm and supports the house, while Dick manages the labor of the farm. Dick and Mary live together an apolitical life mired in poverty. When Dick gets sick Mary takes over the management of the farm and rages at the incompetence of her husband's farm practice. To Mary, the farm exists only to make money, while Dick goes about farming in a more idealistic way.

Mary and Dick live a solitary life together. Because of their poverty Dick refuses to give Mary a child. They do not attend social events, yet are a great topic of interest among their neighbors. Mary feels an intimate connection with the nature around her, though being in general rather unexplorative in nature.

Mary is overtly racist, believing that whites should be masters over the native blacks. Dick and Mary both often complain about the lack of work ethic among the natives that work on their farm. While Dick is rarely cruel to the workers that work for them, Mary is quiet cruel. She treats herself as their master and supervisor. She shows contempt for the natives and finds them disgusting and animal-like. Mary is cross, queenly, and overtly hostile to the many house servants she has over the years. When Mary oversees the farm labor she is much more repressive than Dick had ever been. She works

them harder, reduces their breaks time, and arbitrarily takes money from their pay. Her hatred of native's results in her whipping the face of a worker because he speaks to her in English, telling her he stopped work for a drink of water.

This worker, named Moses, comes to be a very important person in Mary's life when he is taken to be a servant for the house. Mary does not fear her servant Moses but rather reserves a great deal of disgust, repugnance, and avoidance for him. Often Mary does all she can to avoid having any social proximity with him.

After many years leaving on the farm together, Dick and Mary are seen to be a condition of deterioration. Mary often goes through spells of depression, during which she is exhausted of energy and motivation. In her frailty, Mary ends up relying more on Moses. As Mary becomes weaker, she finds herself feeling endearment towards Moses.

On a rare visit from their neighbor, Slatter, Mary is seen being carelessly and thoughtlessly kind to Moses. This enrages Slatter demands that Mary not live with worker as a house servant Slatter sees himself as defending the value and integrity of the white community.

Slatter uses his Charisma and influence to convince Dick to give up ownership of his farm and go on a vocation with his wife. This vocation is to be a sort of convalescence for them. Dick spends his last month on his farm with Tony, who has been hired by Slatter to take over the running of the farm. Tony has good intentions and is very superficially cultured, but he finds himself having to adapt to the racism of the white community. One day Tony sees Moses dressing Mary and is surprised and somewhat amazed by Mary's breaking of the 'color-bar'.

The book closes with Mary's death at the hand of Moses. Mary is expecting his arrival and is aware of her imminent death. Moses does not run from the scene as he originally intends but waits a short distance away for the arrival of the police.

Thematic Analysis of the novel

Doris Lessing Persia is a Nobel Prize winner writer for literature in 2007. She is regarded as one of the most influential and outstanding writer in England. She has presented the various problems through the works. She is novelist, notification and short story writer with a great repute. She has so many prizes and awards for not only her collection of short novels but also to her other works. The novels like The Golden Network, The Summer Before the Dark, and Memories of a Survivor are some of the fine examples. Her most recent works includes the celebrated novels such as Love, Again, Mara and Dan and Ben. She is very bold and straight forward to write the problem of women. According Margaret Drabble, “Lessing is one of the first women to write truthfully about sex...she is also prophet. Her judgments are practical, based on observations.”

The present novel “The Grass is Singing” is the best example where in the themes of ‘racial discrimination’ and ‘feminine psyche’ go hand in hand. This is the high tension story of a woman (Mary) whose life was changed by a few careless words. Even though Mary Turner, the protagonist of the novel had led a somewhat lineated life in her sleep South Africa town, she was happy until she overheard some friends say that she would never marry.

Then she realized that it was desirable to have a husband. Unconsciously she began to look for a man to marry; and she found one. He was farmer, a hardworking sensitive man with an intense love of his land, a stubborn pride but with a fatal weakness. So, Mary denial of sexuality is manifested both through an impersonal, shy stiffness of manner and her repulsion of the thought of intimacies. Mary saw Dick or Richard Turner weak, and goalless, she hated him and the hearted turned upon her. It happened because Mary is unable to care with external reality..

When Dick took her to his farm, Mary stepped into a life completely different from anything; she had never imagined. She hated the stuffy little house, she hated the natives, she hated Dick at times and most of all she hated the burning heat and loneliness. She stayed on the farm fighting against the realization that the security and happiness which she and Dick needed so desperately might never come. Gradually the years after years worked their slow passion. And then finally one heat laden afternoon, without even

realizing what she had done. Mary Turner lit the fuse that to a sheltering explosion of violence and tragedy.

The novel says about Mary “Mary’s personality was determined by her upbringing, the poverty of the family, their situation, emotional, and economic.” Then she likes to keep her colonizer’s role to perfection but she is observed with natives. She treats them worse than even animals. Her self-conscious behaviors and repressed sexual attitudes lead her to tragic death. These repressions surface in the form of her desire for Moses, the native African who works for the Turners and her killer too. She neglects Dick and looks at Moses. Mary needs to find worthiness in her man. She breaks down. Breakdown and fragmentation are important themes in Lessing’s works.

When all hopes are pinned on the tobacco crop are shattered as a result of drought, she suffers from loss of hope and emptiness as she realizes that it would be years before they could get off the farm. It is for a time of “dull misery”. When she asks Dick if they can have a child and when he refuses she sinks further into the darkness of herself. By now she has developed all signs of a nervous, breakdown, littleness and lack of interest, irritation and tiredness. She makes a last desperate attempt to spend time with Dick on the farm but have to meet no success.

Afterwards, Mary runs away to town to get back her job. Her experience with the boss and others at the office makes her realize that she is a misfit. She seems to have come from another world with her chipped nails. Coarse hands, streaky hair, muddy shoes. Her isolation on the farm and the degradation she had sunk due to poverty and the inhospitable African climate makes her unsuitable for company. So, she is brought back by Dick to his farm.

The Mary-Moses relationship undergoes a change. Her mind allows her to let everything slide and she is unable to cope with external reality. When she announces that he wants to leave she breaks down. A new relationship develops between them as she feels herself to be helplessly in his power. She suffers from a strange and irrational fear, the colonizer expecting the colonized to strike back perhaps. Finally, Moses advances towards her and kills her.

Moses, however, belongs to the repressed fact of her personality. For Mary then the one reality she is forced to comfort is that of Moses. In her

mind confusion has been effected, making her both the powerful and the powerless. Moses is physically strong and takes initiatives both of which are qualities she is unable find in her husband. Her search for in her husband, a man who will assume power is what invests Moses with it while the dialectics make. The relationship for Mary was both threatening and terrifying. However, Dick became to her, as time went by, more and more unready while the thought of African grow obsessive. She remains is a dream of her own and Moses is part of her downfall.

Doris Lessing's novel is a remarkable and unique piece of work. At time violent and harsh as the brown searching blue sky of the veldt. The Grass is Singing is mercilessly penetrating and costs a spell all its own.

At times, too, it is angry at the festering question of black against white, which broods over the land like thunder. But above all, it is the story of Marcy Turner who was a victim of conflicting forces within her setup by a few casual, overheard words.

General note on the novel "The Grass is Singing"

"The Grass is Singing" written by Doris Lessing is first published in 1950 by Thomas Y Crowell company. This is the high tension story of a woman whose life was changed by a few careless words. Even though Mary Turner had led a somewhat limited life in her sleepy South African town, she was happy until she overheard some friends say that she would never marry. Then she realized that it was desirable to have a husband. Unconsciously she began to look for a man to marry; and she found one. He was a farmer a hard working sensitive man with an intense love of his land, a stubborn pride but with a fatal weakness. So Mary's denial of, a sexuality is manifest both through on impersonal, shy stiffness of manner and her repulsion at the thought of intimacies. Mary saw Dick, weak, and goal-ness, she hated him and the hatred turned upon her. It happened because Mary is unable to cope with external reality.

When Dick took her to his farm, Mary stepped into a life completely from anything; she had ever imagined. She hated the stuffy little house, she hated that natives, she hated Dick at times and most of all she hated the burning heat and the loneliness. She stayed on the farm fighting against the

realization that the security and happiness which she and Dick needed so desperately might never come. Little by little year's worked their slow poison. And then finally one heat-laden afternoon, without even realizing what she had done. Mary Turner lit the fuse led to a shattering explosion of violence and tragedy.

The novel says of "Mary's personality was determined by her upbringing, the poverty of the family, their situation, emotional and economic". Then she likes to keep her colonizer's role to perfection but she is observed with natives. She treats them worse than animals. Her self-conscious behavior and repressed sexual attitudes lead her to tragic death. These repressions surface in the form of her desire for Moses, the natives who work for the Turner's and her killer too. She neglects Dick and looks at Moses. Mary needs to find worthiness in her man. She breaks down. Breakdown and fragmentation are important themes in Lessing's work.

When all hopes she had pinned on the tobacco crop and shattered as a result of drought, she suffers from loss of hope and emptiness as she realizes that it would be years before they could not get off the farm. It is for her a time of "dull misery". She has developed all signs of a nervous breakdown, listlessness and lack of interest, irritation and tiredness. She makes a last desperate attempt to spend time with Dick on the farm but here too meets no success.

Afterwards, Mary runs away to town to get back her job. Her experience with the boss and others at the office makes her realize that she is misfit. She seems to have come from another world with her chipped nails, coarse hands, streaky hair, and muddy shoes. Her isolation on the farm and the degradation she had sunk to due to poverty and the inhospitable African climate makes her unsuitable for company. So, she is brought back by Dick to his farm.

The Mary-Moses relationship undergoes a change. Her mind allows her to let everything slide and she is unable to cope with external reality when she breaks down. A new relationship develops between them as she feels herself to be helplessly in his power. She suffers from a Stanger and irrational fear, the colonizer expecting the colonized to strike back perhaps. Finally, Moses advances towards her and kills her.

Moses, however, belongs to the repressed facet of her personality. For Mary then the one reality she is forced to contort is that of Moses. In her mind confusion has been effected, making her both the powerful and powerless. Moses is physically strong and takes initiatives both of which are qualities she is unable to find in her husband. Her search for a man who will assume power is what invests Moses with it while the dialectics make the relationship for Mary both threatening and terrifying. However, Dick became to her, as time went by, more and more unreal while the thought of the African grew obsessive. She remains in a dream of her own and Moses is part of her dream. She forgets reality and that is her downfall.

Doris Lessing's novel is a remarkable piece of work. At time violent and harsh as the brown earth and arching blue sky of the veldt. *The Grass is Singing* is mercilessly penetrating and casts a spell all its own. At times, too, it is angry at the festering question of black against white, which broods over the land like thunder. But above all, it is the story of Mary Turner who was a victim of conflicting forces within herself set up by a few casual, overheard words.

The title "The Grass is Singing"

Doris Lessing has presented Epigraph from 'The Waste Land' with which the novel begins encapsulates the atmosphere of aridity and a sense of waiting for the rain, the gossip and criticism of verandah-talk from the sub-text of the novel. The novel is richly complex due to the manner in which it can be variously read.

In the Epigram of 'The Waste Land' T. S. Eliot writes that in the decayed hole among the mountains, in the faint moonlight, the grass is singing, over the tumbled graves, about the Chapel. There is the empty Chapel, only the wind's home. In a flash of lightning; a clamp gust bringing rain. The limp leaves waited for rain, while the black clouds gathered far distant. The jungle crouched, humped in silence. Then spoke the thunder.

It is the Epigraph that seems to present hollowness, disappointment, frustration and boredom in the life of human beings. Doris Lessing's novel "The Grass is Singing" is intensely dramatic and full of provocative motion. It is a story of a desperately independent city bred women who gives up the comforts of the cosmopolitan life, for the sake of her man and

eventual husband. Joining her husband in the country where he is trying to make his way, she makes a young bride's attempt to make the best of things, but is unprepared to deal with the reality of country living. Gradually, farm life begins to unnerve her, and in a gripping series of events, she loses her self control and becomes sexually involved with another man. Finally she has to meet the tragic death. Thus Lessing gives a charming landscape of nature around Mary. The rain, the clouds, the blast of the wind, darkness of the night and frustration, disappointment and boredom in Mary's life, so; the title 'The Grass is Singing' is very significant to the novel.

The spirit of feminism in 'The Grass is Singing':

Doris Lessing's fictional world is vast and ever expanding, her writing modes diverse and challenging. She is one of the most fearless and significant contemporary writers living today. She published her first novel 'The Grass is Singing'.

Margaret Drabble writes that Lessing is personal; one of the first women to write truthfully about sex.....she is also pathetic, but not in the vague passionate mood. Her judgments are practical, based on sound observations. She is one of the very few novelists who have refused to believe that the world is too complicated to understand.

Lessing certainly pioneered the feminist movement. It may be meaningful to have exploration of 'feminism' in Lessing's fiction. Lessing's women are highly intelligent and political human beings; for whom the battle for equal rights has already been won. But she feels that an idealistic and romantic notion may be ultimately damaging to woman. Mary Turner presents this notion and finally dies. Mary Turner's country life; her hopelessness and her sexual attraction for strong Moses make her die. So, Lessing has expressed spirit of feminism in the tragic story of Mary Turner, in "The Grass is Singing".

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M.A.ENGLISH

2ND YEAR

PAPER-3

**PERIOD STUDIES
THROUGH LITERARY
GENRES : POETRY**

UNIT 1

Background of English Poetry

1.0 Introduction

Dear students, this unit aims at making you familiar with overall development of English poetry from Chaucer to modern period. Each century in the history of English literature records emergence of poets, various poetic movements of schools, the features of these movements & schools etc. This unit takes elaborate survey of the development of poetry, various movement & schools as well as major poets, so that you can have a clear panorama of English poetry. We have already discussed the poems prescribed for your study, the type of poem, the poet and his contribution etc. this unit will help you to link all the poets & their poetry in historical perspective. We will learn about each & every phase of development of poetry age wise.

1.1 14th Century: Age of Chaucer 14th century covers the earliest inhabitants in Britain, old English period, Middle English period and late Middle English period. Because Chaucer is the major poet of this period is also known as Age of Chaucer.

1.1 A: Old English Period & Middle English Period-

1.1 A i: Historical Perspective:

Goodman, in his “History of English Literature” Vol. I, divides the old English period into Celtic Period, Roman Period, Anglo Saxon Period & Christian Period. According to him earliest inhabitants of Britain were Celtic people. Roman Emperor Claudius conquered Britain and occupied Britain for near about 350 years. Later an Anglo Saxon invaded Britain. When a group of Christian missionaries entered Britain they converted non Christians Anglo Saxon into Christians and established monasteries.

Middle English period was the period of Norman invasion. This period shows influence of French power & language over English language & literature.

Literary Characteristic:

Pagan origin, anonymous writing & imitative quality are the literary characteristics of Old English period whereas Middle English Period shows experimentation & transition because of the influence of French language & literature. Like Old English writers, the writers of Middle English Period also concealed their authorship and their writing remained anonymous. The major output of literature during this period is poetry.

Development of forms of poetry & poems-

Epic was the form that emerged in Old English Period. Anglo Saxon Epic “Beowulf” is the remarkable example. Some poems like “The Wanderer”, “The Seafarer” shows some lyrical quality.

Middle English Period records growth of various poetic forms such as Religious & didactic poetry-for e.g. *Ormulum, The Owl & the Nightingale* etc. Chronicles for e.g. Layamon’s *Brut, Robert of Gloucester* etc. Romances for e.g. Matter of France, Matter of Britain etc. the alliterative poems-for e.g. *Pearl, Purity, Patience* etc.

1.1 A ii: The Late Middle English Period/ Age of Chaucer:

Historical Perspective: Though this is short period the major events of this period is was between French & English. Along with this political event, the period also records social & intellectual movements. This short period shows many upheavals such as- the plague called the Black Death, the consequent poverty, unrest, revolt of farmers. The intellectual element of this period can be found in the growing spirit of inquiry, particularly critical of the Church.

Literary Characteristics of the period:

- 1) The transition that began in Middle English Period, continual in the Late Middle English Period also and the transitional vigor was added with the beginning of Renaissance.
- 2) This period records the expansion of English literature because of the translation adaptations & imitation of foreign works. Drama & novel interrogated the romantic ideals.
- 3) Unlike old & middle English Period, the authors of this period revealed their identity.

- 4) Development of various literary forms & standardization of English language was the marked feature of this period.

Development of Poetic forms:

Many forms of poetry arose during this period. Allegory, ballad, descriptive & narrative poems & material romances were the subtypes used by poets of this period for some specific purposes such as allegory was used for preaching moral & religious lessons ballad dealt with love theme & adventures of local heroes. Some lyrical poems were written and fabliau's, the form of French satirical short story was also favored. Major contribution of descriptive & narrative poetry is recorded by major poets of this period.

Major poets of the period:

Geoffrey Chaucer (Approx. 1343 to 1400) is the representative poet of the period and is often admired as "The father of English Poetry". His contribution to descriptive & narrative poetry is the strong foundation of English poetry. Goodman divides his literary career into 3 phases/period- French, Italian & English. French & Italian period shows Chaucer as apprentice adaptor, translator & imitator whereas English period records his genius contribution of English poetry in the form of his poem *The Canterbury's Tales* as well as his other poems *Book of the Duchess, House of Fame, Troilus & Criseyde* etc.

John Gower- is one of the contemporaries of Chaucer. His major poems are- *Speculum Meditantes, Confession Mantis Vox Clamantis* He is noted not for his originality but for his art of storytelling.

William Langland- His popular poem is *The vision of William concerning Piers Plowman*. It is said that the values reflected in the poem inspired 16th century reformers.

1.2 15th Century Poetry-

Historical perspective- Relatively barren 15th century was a crucial age because of some political happenings. French defeated Henry V. His son Henry VI had no authority of his own some significant changes could be seen in the reign of Henry VIII. The Dawn of Renaissance was visible.

a) Literary Characteristics-

- 1) 14th Century riches of Chaucer were not present in 15th century. There was long barren period of 150 years. The successors of Chaucer lacked the accurate versification, majority of people were involved in religious & political changes, and sociopolitical scenario was in the process of changes. These are some reasons for the literary barrenness in the period.
- 2) The poets of this period were not original creators but they simply imitated Chaucer. They lacked qualities like imagination & diction.

b) Development of poetic forms:

Pastoral poetry, allegory, balled & carols were the sub types of poetry that developed during this period. Out of them Balled was practiced more. The world balled is used for dancing song. Ballads are mainly folk narrative poems. Popular subjects are the preferable matter of ballads. Ballads were popular because of the dramatic element.

15th century saw some popular ballads like *Chevy Chase*, *The Nut Brown Maid*, *Waly Waly*, *The Wife of Usher's Well*, *Robin Hood's Death & Burial* etc.

c) Major poets of 15th century:-

Almost all poets of this period were influenced by Chaucer. They were categorized as English Chaucerian & Scottish Chaucerian.

English Chaucerian:

- a) John Lydgate- He wrote many poems. He became famous of his member of poems. "Troy Book", "The Story of Thebes", "fall of Princes" are some of his interesting poems.
- b) Thomas Occleve- He wrote many poems. His poems suffer many lacunas such as loose structures, lack of creativity and lack of humor. His major poem is "The Regiment of Princes".
- c) Stephen Hawes- His dullest allegory is "The Pastime of Pleasure". Though he was Lydgate's follower he was dull in poetic creation.
- d) John Skelton- He wrote some graceful poems in the tradition of Chaucer. His typical poems are "Garland of Laurel", "Why Come Ye Not to Courte".
- e) Alexander Barclay- His important poems are "The Ship of Fools", "Certayne Ecloges" etc. The poetry of English Chaucerian's finger at the

degeneration of poetry whereas Scottish Chaucerian's contributed quality stuff.

Scottish Chaucerian:

- a) James I- He shows strong influence of Chaucer in his poem "The King's Quair".
- b) Robert Henryson- He wrote some finest poems in Scottish language. In his realistic expressions & true nature pictures he shows complete influence of Chaucer.
- c) William Dunbar- Dunbar is acknowledged as a genius poet of this period. He wrote courtly poetry in medieval fashion. His important poems are "Thrissil & the Rios", "The Two Maryit Women & the Wedo", "The Flying of Dunbar & Kennedie" etc.
- d) Gavin Douglas- Though he showed lack of originality in subject matter, Douglas was admired as scholarly craftsman of Scottish Chaucerian's. His well known poems are "The Practice of Honor", "King Heart", "Conscious" etc.
- e) Sir David Lindsay- To compensate his lack of poetic gift, Lindsay showed command over low humor & satire, easy verse & sparkling words. "Squyer Meldrum" is one of his best poems.

1.3 16th Century/ Elizabeth Period/ Age of Shakespeare:-

This period termed with various titles such as 16th Century, Elizabethan Period (because this period was ruled by Queen Elizabeth), the age of Shakespeare & also the period of Renaissance & the last stage of this period is known as Jacobean Period.

a) Renaissance & Its Feature:-

Renaissance means 'rebirth'. This period experienced revolutionary change in all most all fields of the society. Renaissance also devoted the closing of Middle Ages and spiritual & mental rebirth of the society. Revival of knowledge is another implication of Renaissance.

W. H. Goodman in his "History of English Literature" Vol.1 has mentioned following features of Renaissance.

- 1) The revival of learning: with the capture of Constantinople, many scholars from different corners of the world visited Italy. Italy became the new center of

learning. The new learning & translations of Greek masters like Homer, Plato, and Aristotle opened up new treasure of literature & knowledge. William Grocyn introduced Greek knowledge treasure to England.

2) Humanism: Disclosure of new knowledge & culture introduced humanism to mankind. New learning helped in clearing the age old thoughts that life is not meant for enduring pain to get heaven after life but it is beautiful because of human achievements which must be adored.

3) The Reformation: The revival of knowledge led to inquiry of church ideals. The new reading of scriptures guided men to reinterpret the ideals of church.

4) Nationalism: The long war with France fostered a national spirit in English people. Chaucer wrote the nationalism thorough his literature. Elizabethan writers also showed complete influence of renaissance through their literature.

5) Discovery: At the end of 15th century, discovery of America by Columbus & Cabot, Vasco Da Gama's round to Cape of Good Hope opened up many voyages to cross the Atlantic. They gathered riches & wonders so that the past glorious were kept aside.

6) Printing & Education: Innovation of printing added to the growth of education & spread of new learning. Because of revival of knowledge, dissemination of secular education became possible. It also led to establishment of grammar schools.

b) Literary Characteristics:-

- 1) Exposure to the study of Greek literature brought back the influence of classics. This influence helped in tempering & polishing the roughness of contemporary English literature.
- 2) English renaissance also resulted into number of translations. By the end of Elizabethan period almost all ancient works were translated.
- 3) Peaceful socio political conditions of the Elizabethan society gave birth to large number of pamphlets, treaties & literature.
- 4) Revolt against the past & adventurous spirit of the age could be seen in the search for distant & beautiful. The activities & literature of the period show it richly.

- 5) Along with exposure to the past because of knowledge 16th century literature got enriched with many foreign influences particularly from Italy.
- 6) Of course the foreign influences did not mar the independence of the 16th century literature. The writers of the age followed new style & manner.
- 7) Literary production particularly drama was abundant but poetry was also great & original. After Chaucer, Spenser wrote the poetry of genius & beauty.

c) Development of poetic forms:-

Dramatic poetry, Lyrical poetry, Descriptive & Narrative poetry & religious, satirical & didactic poetry are some subtypes developed during this period.

The university wits i.e. pre Shakespearean dramatists & Shakespeare himself contributed quality dramatic poetry. Variety, ease, fluency, blank verse, flexibility are some of the qualities of the dramatic poetry of this period. Lyrics developed abundantly because of the lively mood of the age. Sonnet, subtype of lyric also flourished in this period in two forms- Italian/ Petrarchan form & English/ Shakespearean form. Wyatt practiced Italian type & Surrey introduced English form which was further enriched by Shakespeare. Descriptive & narrative poetry of the age culminated into allegory & pastoral poetry. These poems enjoyed popularity because of the qualities like fresh fancy, high descriptive strength & rich style. Poets like Gascoigne, Donne, Hall etc. contributed religious, satire poetry.

d) 16th century poets:-

Poets of Elizabethan period can be divided from Wyatt to Spenser & from Spenser to Donne. Goodman mentioned that England in the 15th century was politically barren. Under the rule of Henry VII, the English court became a center of culture. It was the period of experiment and preparation. It came to an end in the year 1579 <p.302>

Sir Thomas Wyatt practiced lyrics, epigrams, songs & sonnets. He got the credit of introducing personal feelings in his poems. Majority of his poems treated love themes. Earl of Surrey wrote graceful & highly finished sonnets

& miscellaneous poems. He got the credit of introducing English material form & blank verse. Thomas Sackville practiced the form of allegory. George Gascoigne wrote well know satire which were known for ease & versatility.

Edmund Spenser is called the ‘harbinger of English poetry’ in the 16th century. His “Fairy Queen” proved his genius as a poet. He practiced epic, pastoral poetry, marriage songs which changed the style & language of English poetry. After Spenser poets like Sir Philip Sidney, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, William Warner, Marlowe Shakespeare, Thomas Campion & Fletcher brothers enriched English poetry.

With John Donne started a new type of poetry which was termed as metaphysical poetry. John Donne led the movement of metaphysical poetry.

Metaphysical Poetry:- Goodman while explaining the movement of metaphysical poetry writes that ‘ the metaphysical are those who wrote during the 17th century under the influence of John Donne, first & greatest of them. Donne started to write about 1592 and Marvell died in 1678; so that what we describe as “Metaphysical Poetry” involves a considerable period of time and great social, cultural & intellectual changes as well as a number of individual personalities & talents.’ <p.404>

Metaphysical Poetry has its specific characteristics features. Post Elizabethan period that is restoration period or 17th century was the period of political & religious tensions. Scientific spirit started replacing the earlier religious attitude. Metaphysical poets captured this spirit of their time in their poetry. Therefore the simplicity & conventional mode of Elizabethan poetry was also replaced by complexity & intellectualism. Metaphysical poets were all learned people from various fields of knowledge. They utilized their knowledge in projecting their ideas in their poems. Further their intellectual beat of mind could also be seen in the logical development of thought in their poems.

All the traditional concepts of love, body, life & death were interpreted intellectually in their poetry. They used variety of images from their field of knowledge to fuse the thought & feelings in their poems. It was the use of such unusual images that differentiated Metaphysical poems from other poems and also conferred obscurity on them. The images in the poem not only showed the relation between a word & a feeling but also developed a

thought. The images were known as conceits. Metaphysical poets were beyond the limit of poetical diction and utilized words from different registers.

Metaphysical poets were influenced by John Donne as well as his contemporary Ben Jonson. In summing up the qualities of a Metaphysical poet Goodman writes 'The Metaphysical poet, then, is characteristically intellectual & introspective. His poems develop by the process of logical argument and his imagery ranges over an ultimate field of experience, intellectual & otherwise. He is sensitive to & interested in the complexities & subtleties of experience; and his sensitivity expresses itself in flexibility of attitude and tone. His diction is free from convention & he is actually aware of the resources of words, so that he packs meaning into them & frequently uses puns. His handling of verse is remarkably skillful & sure and he combines an ability to suggest the idiom & movement of speech with the successful handling of difficult stanza forms'. (p.410, 11)

Along with Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, Thomas Traherne, Abraham Cowley, Andrew Marvell are some more metaphysical poets. Except Donne, all these poets belong to 17th century. So we will learn more about these poets when we will discuss poetry of 17th century.

Let's discuss about John Donne, the leader of metaphysical poets in 16th century.

John Donne (1572-1631):-

Dryden's comment on Donne & his follower poetry brings them the title as "metaphysical poets". Donne, the genius figure of his period wrote lyrics, satires, religious poems, elegies etc. Dr. Johnson because of Donne's originality called him a wit. Donne's view on death, love, relation between soul & body as reflected in his poems brought him the title metaphysical poet. Neglecting the conventions of courtly poetry & Elizabethan poetry, Donne practiced his own way. Harshness, fresh & new images, intellectualism, learned expressions are some of the qualities of his poetry. These qualities also finger at his revolutionary nature. His poems are often categorized as obscure & complex because of the subtle idea expressed in

minimum words. Uncommon & ridiculous concepts & paradoxical ideas in his poem deny the easy & singular interpretation of his poems. That is why his poems are obscure to understand. Even though he is obscure, his love poems are highly appreciated. “The Good Morrow”, “Song”, “The Sunny Rising”, “Canonization”, “Valediction Forbidding Mourning”, “Trepidation of the Sphere”, “The Extasie” etc. are some of his very famous poems.

1.4 17th Century/ Age of Milton:-

17th century is also known as age of Milton because of his “Paradise Lost”. The poets of this period wrote under the influence of John Donne, who is known as metaphysical poets. Some of the poets wrote under the influence of Ben Johnson, who is known as Cavalier poets.

Historical Perspective:- 17th century was a very crucial period because it saw the civil war, execution of Charles I, rise & disappearance of Cromwell and the restoration of monarchy. Puritanism, rationalism & scientific spirit are the landmark of this age. ‘History of English Literature’ by Goodman locates the dripping of Puritanism in the world of political theories & morality, rationalism in the complete break with middle ages as well as in psychological investigations and scientific spirit in a new interest in the study of human experiences & gathering of experimental data.

a) Literary characteristics of the age:-

- 1) By the end of 16th century the spirit of renaissance was declining. Impact of Puritanism was shadowing the Elizabethan fever. Consequently the confusions & the transitions in the period made it gloomy. Lack of production of quality literature except Milton’s, added to the gloom of the age.
- 2) In comparison with the golden era of Elizabethan period, restoration period showed the deterioration of the literature.
- 3) Impact of Puritanism affected the growth of literature with the exception of Metaphysical Poetry.

b) Development of poetic form:-

The subtypes developed during this period were lyrics, sonnets, epic, odes & descriptive and narrative poetry.

Crashaw, Vaughn wrote inspiring religious lyrics and love lyrics. Milton's sonnets were classified as noblest. His 'Paradise Lost' shows the complete influence of Puritanism. Cowley practiced Pindaric odes. Milton, Crashaw, Herrick wrote descriptive & narrative poetry.

c) Major poets of the period:-

The poets of the period are Cavalier and Metaphysical poets.

Metaphysical Poets:- Dear students we have already discussed about the school of Metaphysical Poetry & the leader John Donne in the previous topic. Lets have a look at the metaphysical poets of 17th century.

As we know that Metaphysical Poets changed the style of Elizabethan poets and wrote intellectual poetry. Though their subjects are religion, love, life, death & soul they, with logical reasoning, expressed these subjects with mysterious element.

George Herbert:-wrote serious poems about religion. The collection of his lyrics is titled as 'The Temple'. His knowledge of theology & enthusiasm for church are reflected in his poems. Metaphysical poets make use of physical senses to convey their spiritual experiences. Herbert's poems mainly deal with his spiritual conflict. The conflict arises out of the relation between God & soul. His style consists of quietness, homeliness, and humor & colloquial diction.

Henry Vaughan:-Vaughan wrote about church festivals. He effectively communicated childhood, communion with nature through his poems. He found God and infinite reality in nature. He wrote religious & love poems. His significant poems are "Olor I scanus" "Silex Scintillans" etc.

Richard Crashaw:-He wrote beautiful religious poems but because of lack of obscurity & pictorial images, many critics do not categorize him as a Metaphysical Poet. Intense passion, beauty, pictorial images, gaudy & extravagant expressions & sensuous embellishment made his poems remarkable. "The Harming Heart", "A Hymen to the Name & Honor of the Admirable Teresa" etc. is some of his important poems.

Thomas Traherne:- Traherne is less known poet who wrote about childhood & beauty of nature. Some of his themes & ideas show closeness to metaphysical type.

Abraham Cowley:- He practiced his hand on many genres. Influenced by the transitional period he reflected various moods in his writing. Though he was metaphysical poet, he also used classical style. “The Mistress”, “Davidcis” are his well known work.

Andrew Marvell:- As a versatile poet he showed influence of Elizabethan style. His poem “To His Coy Mistress” Marvell used fantastic conceit to show the assimilations of logic & passion.

Dear students, the poets who wrote under the influence of Ben Jonson are known as Cavalier Poets. Their poetry is called as Caroline Poetry. These poets wrote easy, graceful poems but they were less spontaneous to the Elizabethan poets, whereas their leader Ben Jonson wrote under the influence of Horace. Majority if the Cavalier poets dealt with the theme of love and war. Robert Herrick, Thomas Carew, Sir John Suckling, Richard Lovelace are some well known Cavalier poets.

Robert Herrick:- He was a poet of high lyrical power. His enjoyment of nature & fresh outlook on life made his poetry fresh & passionate. His meditative & observant nature was also reflected in his poetry. “Noble Numbers”, “Hesperides” are the volumes of his poetry.

Thomas Carew:- He was influenced by his contemporaries as well as Donne & Jonson. He too wrote fresh lyrics & fine elegy. His major works are, “Coelum Britannicum”, “The Rapture”.

Sir John Suckling:- Irrespective large quality of output, Suckling’s best poems are less in quantity. “Balled Upon a Wedding”, “Why So Pale & Wan Found Lover” are his best poems.

Richard Lovelace:- He used conceits extravagantly and showed no craftsmanship. His well known poems are “To Lucasta, Going to Wars”, “To Althea from Prison”.

Milton:- Milton’s literary career started at the age of 17. “Ode On The Morning of Christ’s Nativity” is his first great poem. Goodman has divided his literary

career into three phases. The first phase up to 1640 contain his mature & promising like his above mentioned first poem. “On Shakespeare”, “On Arriving at the Age of Twenty” are his minor poems on love & beauty. “I Allegro” and “II Pensereso” also belong to this period which reflect the joyous & thoughtful mood. These poems are the apt example of Cavalier & Puritan ideals. “Lycidas” is the masterpiece pastoral elegy by Milton which he wrote in the memory of his friend Edward King. This poem exemplifies Milton’s serious reflection on life & death. Milton’s poetic ability is at its best in the poem “Comus”. Second phase of Milton as prose writer also brings him the fame as a sonnet writer. His best of sonnets like, “On His Blindness” belong to this phase. Third phase of his career is enriched by his epic “Paradise Lost”. “Paradise Regained” and “Samson Agonists” belong to the same period.

Milton’s poetry is enriched with the features like Puritanism, influence of renaissance, classicism, concept of beauty, sublime thoughts and lapidary style etc.

1.5 17th century- Age of Dryden.

The later part of 17th century is called the Age of Dryden or Restoration period.

Historical Perspective:- This period was the release from Puritanism & restoration of Charles II. The period was morally degenerating. The indecency of the period was also reflected in the literature of the period.

a) Literary characteristics of the period:-

- 1) This age being corrupt, was also lacking morality & spirituality.
- 2) French influence could be seen on the literature of the period particularly drama.
- 3) The writers were realistic in their expressions. Dryden, the major writer, wrote about the comet nature of the society.
- 4) The literature of all period criticized contemporary political situation as well as set new ideas to replace the previous.

b) Development of poetic forms:-

Going away from the earlier metaphysical influence, the poetry of this period shows classical influence & neo classical features like order, balance,

polish etc. Ode, lyric, Satire, narrative poetry were the forms practiced by the poets. Satire, irony, wit were the devices used by the poets for didactic purpose.

Major Poets:- Edmund Waller, Sir John Denham, William Davenant & Dryden were the poets of this period.

Edmund Waller & Denham wrote clear & neat poetry. They wrote occasional poems. Davenant wrote tedious poems of love & honor.

John Dryden:- though he wrote odes, elegy, historical poems & didactic poems, his genius as a poet must be credited to his political satire like “Absolom & Achitophel”, “The Medal” and “MacFleckno”. His “Religio Laici”, “Hind & the Panther” were also popular poems. He dedicated the last years of his life to translations of his classics.

1.6 The 18th Century:

The development of poetry in 18th century can be seen in Age of Pope & Age of Transition.

Age of Pope: Another name used for Age of Pope is Augustan Age. The writers of the period resembled themselves with great Roman masters like Horace, Cicero etc. Two political parties Whig & Tory were very influential. Middle class people became the center of society. This age was called Classical age because he was the representative poet. The age was called the age of Reason because of the influence of French ideal.

a) Development of poetic forms:-

Lyric, ode, satire, narrative poetry & the pastoral were the popular forms practiced by the poets.

b) Major poets:-

Alexander Pope:- Pope was the chief poet of this age. He wrote beautiful pastoral poems as well as didactic poems but his major contribution was to satiric poems. Out of which the mock heroic poem “The Rape of the Lock” is the most popular. His craftsmanship was also reflected in his satire “The Dunciad”. The further development of him as a poet could be seen the satires named “Satire & Epistles of Horace Imitated”. He translated some classical

poems Mathew Prior, John Gray, Ambrose Phillip, Addison, Swift, Thomas Parnell, Allan Ramsay were the contemporaries of Pope.

Age of Transition:- Second half of 18th century was named as age of transition. The transition was caused because of the decline of Tory Party, French revolution was at the hands, and literary field bloomed with research & originality because of commercial expansion.

Rise of romantic poets showed the decline of heroic couplet & Pindaric ode. The period saw revival of ballad, descriptive & narrative poems & lyrics.

Major poets:- Dr. Samuel Johnson continued Pope's tradition of satire. "London", "The Vanity of Human Wishes" was his well known satires. He wrote with classical influence & didactic spirit.

Churchill & Oliver Goldsmith were the contemporaries of Johnson.

Rise of new poetry:-

By the end of 17th century, the rise of new poetry marked its existence. These poets discovered from the classical mode of expression & preferred a new mode of writing with love for nature, personal emotions, subjectivity, sensitivity & simplicity. The poets who practiced these features in their poetry are called as 'Precursors of the Romantic movement' by Goodman. <p. 845>

John Dyer, Thomas Gray, William Collins, Edward Young, Robert Blair, Christopher Smart, James Macpherson, Thomas Percy, Thomas Chatterton, Robert Fergusson, George Crabbe, William Cowper, Robert Burns, William Blake were the precursors of Romantic movement.

1.7 19th Century:-

This century could be studied in 3 parts-

Romantic Poetry

Victorian Poetry

Pre-Raphaelite Poetry

Romantic Age:- The end of 18th century marked some important happenings such as French revolution, Industrial revolution, spread of science, Impact of scientific theories on the mind of people & American independence. Romantic

age was also called as age of Wordsworth because he led the Romantic Movement. Goodman has pointed out the characteristics of romanticism in the second volume of “History of English Literature” as follows- <p.20 & 21>

- 1) Romantic Movement was marked by a strong reaction & protest against rules & customs.
- 2) Romanticism returned to nature & to plain humanity for its material.
- 3) Romanticism was marked by intense human sympathy & understanding of human heart.
- 4) Romantic Movement was expression of individual genius rather than of establishment of rules.

Romantic age is mainly the age of poetry. Love for human beings, lyrical quality, simple style & diction, love for nature were some features of Romantic poetry.

It is said that English Romantic Movement began in 1798. The publication of “The Lyrical Ballads” confirmed Romantic Movement. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelly, Keats were the major romantic poets. Lyric, ode & sonnet were the favorite forms of romantic poets.

Major Poets:-

William Wordsworth-

These problems constituted the first phase of his life. The second phase of his life was influenced by French Revolution and his love for nature. Romantic poets emphasized love for liberty which is also reflected in their poetry. Wordsworth criticized his own country for declaring war against France. His stay with his sister Dorothy drew him towards the love of nature. He wrote philosophical poems *The Reclues*, *The Prelude*, and *The Excursion*. The third phase of his life was more creative when he published *Lyrical Ballads*. He contributed many good poems during this phase such as *Ode to Duty*, *Ode to Immortality*, *The Excursion* etc. The phase brought him the honour of Poet Laureateship. *Laodamia* is the major poem of this phase.

Wordsworth was mainly appreciated for his Nature Poetry. He found nature as his friend, guide and philosopher. The harsh realities of life made him depressed but nature's healing power restored in him the love for life. His belief in nature and the presence of divinity in nature exemplifies his Pantheism. When he wrote that he could 'hear the sad music of humanity in nature', the mystical note of his poetry was underlined. Wordsworth's poems were essentially poems of a common man because of their simplicity, innocence, everyday experience as well as childlike interest. His poems exactly exemplified his definition of poetry as well as his theory of poetry.

S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834)

Coleridge's interest in mature poetry increased with his friendship with Wordsworth. *Poems on Various Subjects* was the first volume of his poetry. Publication of *The Lyrical Ballads* was a joint venture by Wordsworth and Coleridge. *Kubla Khan*, *Rime to An Ancient Mariner* and *Christable* were the most popular poems by Coleridge. Apart from these poems Coleridge also wrote bet odes like *Ode to the Departing Year*, *Ode to France* *Ode to Dejection etc.*

Unlike Wordsworth, Coleridge showed strong fascination for supernaturalism. Therefore his best poems *Kubla Khan*, *Christable*, *Rime to An Ancient Mariner* dealt with supernatural theme. His deep love for nature, sensuousness and humane approach classified him as romantic poet.

Walter Scott (1771-1832)

He started his poetic career with translations of German poems. His first volume of poetry was *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. His other popular poem poems were *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake* etc. Through his lyrics he revived past. His love of nature, emotions, imagination, and memory of the past, individualism categorized his as a romantic poet.

Byron (1788-1815)

Byron was a fine combination of creative artist and a man of action. He wrote lyrics, satires etc. *Hours of Idleness*, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, *Parisian*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Vision of Judgement* were best of his poems. His love for liberty and revolutionary

approach brought him reputation. Satire and passion were force of his poetry. His treatment to nature differed from rest of the other romantic poets.

P.B. Shelley (1792-1822)

In comparison with other romantic poets Shelley had more philosophical bent. *Queen Mab, Alastor, The Revolt Of Islam Prometheus Unbound, The Cenci, Epipsychidion, Adonis, Ode to The West Wind* were his popular poems. Lyric was his favourite form. Personal note was the strong element of his poetic expression. His rebellious and reformatory attitude were clearly visible in his poetry. Philosophical ideas, Platonism, idealism were some more features of his poetry.

John Keats (1795-1821)

Hypersensitive nature, undue criticism of poetry and some personal shocks affected Keats' life more. He belonged to the group of younger romantic poets. *Endymion, Isabella, Hyperion, The Eve of St. Agnes, The Eve of Saint Mark* were the most famous poems by Keats. His odes were his greatest poetic achievement. His eight odes- *Ode to Nightingale, Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode to Psyche, Ode on Poets, Ode to Autumn, Ode on Melancholy* etc. very effectively presented Keats' fascination for the world of imagination and art. Along with lyrics and odes, he also wrote beautiful sonnets such as *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer, When I have fears that I may Cease to be, Bright Star; Would I steadfast as thou art* etc. Keats was a poet of pure beauty and sensuousness and romance as well as high passion and pictorial quality of his poetry conferred immortality on him as well as his poems. His love for Hellenism and medievalism was clearly visible through his poems and also explained his concept of beauty as – Beauty is truth, truth beauty. Because of his love for the world of art and imagination, he was criticized as escapist by the critics.

Thomas Campbell, Leigh Hunt, Samuel Rogers, Thomas Moore, James Hogg, Robert Southey, James Smith, Thomas Hood etc. were some minor poets of the period.

Victorian Period - 1833-1880

This was essentially the age of prose. Revolution in commercial field caused material development during the age. Revolution in the field of science culminated into intellectual development. It was also the age of democracy and

social unrest. Literature of the Victorian age absorbed all the above characteristics of the age. The writers of the age could not continue with the rebellious and liberal attitude of the romantic poets. Therefore they turned towards past for maintaining discipline and rules. This gave birth to 'Oxford movement' which was an attempt to regain the tradition which was lost in the course of time. The literature of the age developed on two lines- art for art's sake and art for the sake of life. Writers like Tennyson, Browning, and Mathew Arnold followed the line art for the sake of life. Writers like Walter Pater followed the line- art for the sake of art.

Victorian age was named after Tennyson as age of Tennyson. Tennyson, Browning Mathew Arnold etc. were the major poets of the period.

Major Poets-

Lord Alfred Tennyson- (1809- 1892)

Tennyson was the representative poet of his age. He dealt with problems of human life seriously and reflected the Victorian spirit of compromise through his poetry. Sublimity, clearness, simplicity, musical quality, love for nature were the features of his poetry. *The Princess, The lady of Shallot, The Lotos Eaters, Tears Idle Tears, In Memoriam, Maud* were his great poetic achievements.

Robert Browning- (1812-1889)

Browning very effectively practiced the forms of dramatic monologue, lyrics and dramatic romances. As a young poet his poems were a sincere attempt but *Paracelsus* was counted as his extraordinary work. His some popular poems were published in the volume *Men and Women*. His finest love poems were- *Evelyn Hopes, The Last Ride Together One Way of Love Porphyria's Lover* etc. The significant poems were also- *Rabbi Ben Ezra, A Death in the Desert Andre Del Sarto* etc. All these poems reflect some features of his poetry such as optimism, obscurity, his philosophy of life etc.

Mathew Arnold. (1822-1888)

He wrote lyrics, elegies and narrative poems. Mathew Arnold's poetry is interpreted as a golden mean between the two lines of poetry- art for the sake of art and art for the sake of life. His elegies are counted as his best contribution such as *Thyrsis, Rugby Chapel, and Dover Beach* etc. His *Sohrab and Rustam,*

Balder Dead were written in the style of epic. His poetry reflected his theory of poetry. He wrote with classical influence. His elegies reflected the profound note of melancholy. Along with classicism and note for melancholy, Arnold wrote about nature with depth.

Mrs. Elizabeth Browning, Arthur Clough, Charles Kingsley were some minor poets of Victorian age.

Pre- Raphaelite Poetry-

Pre – Raphaelite poetry is basically poetry of revolt. These poets not only revolted against Victorian poetry but wanted to locate actual connectivity with nature. The group of young artists who revolted, they called themselves Pre-Raphaelites. They were painters, sculptors and poets. D.G. Rossetti, William Michael, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Thomas Woolner, Swinburne were precise as well as elaborate in the pictorial descriptions in their poems. They selected their subject matter from medieval period. They followed the principle ‘Art for the sake of Art’ while composing their poems. Influence of romantic poets on Pre Raphaelites was visible through the features like romanticism, sensuousness, melodious expressions etc.

1.8 Modern Poetry-

Imperialism, demand for social reform, First World War were the features of the beginning of modern period. Various trends of poetry developed during 1880-1919 such as the Naughty Nineties or Aesthetic Movement, The Decadents, The Realists, The Pessimists, The Transitional Poets, The Georgians, The Imagists, Trench Poets/ War Poets etc.

Goodman has underlined the features of the beginning of modern literature such as – revolt against conventional morality, revolt against Victorian Romanticism, foreign influences- Italian, Norwegian, Russian etc., break up of Victorian society, scientific theories, machine age, attack on Victorian family, changing family relationship, decline of religion, optimism, political and economic theories, the great war, spread of education, output of books, literature of social purpose, dominance of novel, rebirth of drama and experiments in literary form.

Writers of the Naughty Nineties- J.A. Symonds, Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde, John Davilson

Poets of Decadents- Ernest Dowson, Edmund John

The Realists- Wilfred Blunt, William Henley, Rudyard Kipling

The Pessimists- Thomas Hardy. A. E. Housmanare

The Transitional Poets- Robert Bridges, G.M. Hopkins, W.B. Yeats

The Georgians- Walter De LA Mare, E.C. Blunden, John Masfield, W.H. Davis, G.K. Chesterton

The Imagists- T.S. Eliot, Richard Aldington, and English poets of 30s

Trench Poets/ War Poets- Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen

Modern literature after 1918 was more affected by the two world wars, new tendencies were replacing the previous. Literature was written with purpose. Discoveries in the field of philosophy and psychology gave birth to new theories which were applied to modern literature. Writers like James and T.S. Eliot incorporated new techniques, influence of media was visible.

Post War poetry emerged with new tendencies and new themes, the lack of values led to pessimism and disillusionment. Modern poetry was influenced by psychology, politics, surrealism, new romanticism, religion and search for values.

Poets of Twenties- T.S. Eliot, the Sitwell's etc.

Poets of Thirties- W.H. Auden, Isherwood, Stephen Spender, C. Day Lewis, Louis Mac Niece

Poets of Forties- George Barker, David Gascoigne, Dylan Thomas, Sidney Keyes, Alun Lewis

Unit 2

The Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse-Geoffrey Chaucer

Objectives-

1. To acquaint the students with the development of English poetry from Chaucer to modern times
2. To introduce the students with various representative poets of different periods through their prescribed poems
3. To make the students familiar with various poetic movements and schools through the prescribed poems
4. To introduce the students various forms of poems through the prescribed poems
5. To acquaint the students with various themes, treatments devices and styles through the prescribed poems.

2.0 Introduction to the Poet-

Geoffrey Chaucer is often adored as father of English Poetry. He belongs to late Middle English Period. Born about 1343, Chaucer served as a soldier in France. He has knowledge of business and worked as Controller of Customs, Justice of Peace, Member of Parliament and Clerk of Works. His literary contribution can be divided into three phases which show his growth as a poet. The first phase of his literary career is known as 'French Period'. During this period he translated and adopted works from French for e.g. *Roman de la Roses*, *The Book of Duchess* and some miscellaneous poems. The second phase of his literary career shows his contact with Italian literature, therefore, is known as 'Italian Period'. Great Italian writers Petrarch and Boccaccio inspired him. The poems of this period are *The parliament of Fowls*, *The House of Fame*, and *The Legend of Good Woman* etc. His third literary phase which is known as 'English Period' records his original contribution to English poetry. *The Canterbury Tales* is the major work of this period. John Gower, William Langland, John Brabour are the contemporaries of Chaucer.

2.1 About the Poem-

Dear Students, the prescribed poem for your study *Complaint of Chaucer to his purse* deals with the theme of universal interest which is timeless also. Chaucer complains against the purse because it is empty. He, in humorous manner, shows that purse filled with money is another name of life.

Let us read the poem

Poem-

The Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse

To you, my purse and to none
Other wight,
Complain I, for ye be my lady dear;
I am sorry now that ye be so light
For certes ye now make me heavy cheer;
Me mere as life be laid upon my bier.
For which unto your mercy thus I cry,
Be heavy again, or ells must I die

Now vouchsafe this day era it be night,
That I of you the blissful Sound may hear,
Or see your colour like the sune bright,
That of yellowness hadde peer.
Ye be my life! Ye be my heart's steer!
Queen of comfort and of good company!
Be heavy again or ells must I die!

Now, purse! That art to me my life's light
And Saviour, as down in this worlde here,
Out of this towne help me through your might,
Since that you will not be my treasurer;
For I am shave as nigh as nay frere.
But now I pray unto your courtesy
Be heavy again or ells must I die.

2.2 Central Idea of the Poem-

Dear Students, the poem uses words and spellings from 14th century English but the detailed reading of the poem easily conveys the thought behind the poem to you.

The poet does not count anything else than his purse because the purse is his dear Lady. He is very sad because the purse is light. It means the purse is without money. He requests the purse to be heavy again to make his cheerful. Without heavy purse, it seems that the poet is lying on his bier. Therefore he cries to his purse have mercy upon him and be heavy again or else he will die. Only if there is money in the purse, it will confirm day light for him. Without money it will be darkness of night. The poet wants to hear the blissful sound of money which is as bright as the Sun light. The poet appeals the purse to be his

life. He flatters his purse as the direct control of his heart, queen of comfort and good company. Every stanza of the poem ends with the request to the purse to be heavy or the poet must die.

The poet addresses the purse as the light of his life. For him the purse is his savior on this earth. The poet wants the purse to save him with her power i.e. money. He calls the purse as his treasurer. He once again prays to the purse to show him courtesy and be heavy again or he will die.

2.3 Theme of the Poem-

The poem is superlative praise of purse. The theme of the poem is timeless universal theme i.e. importance of money. Though the poem is from Late Middle English period, its theme makes it applicable to every age, every nation and individuals. Chaucer's complaint to his purse is not individual but representative. The poem underlines the inevitability of money in every period. Last line of every stanza turns Chaucer's complaint into request. The very poem assures that money is another name of life. Various comparisons used in the poem throw light on the significance of money in life. The poet intensely describes sound, color and company of money. The poet reaches to the extent of comparing money with savior on this earth. The poet calls the money as lady savior, queen of comfort and good company. He feels sad if his purse is empty. It is his purse that decides light and darkness in his life. The bright color of money and its blissful sound make the poet cheerful. This is how the poet develops the theme of importance of money.

2.4 Comparisons/images in the Poem-

To explain the importance of money, Chaucer has used very interesting comparisons. These comparisons/images not explain the external form of money in currency in 14th century but also glorify its universality. The poet complains to his purse and asks it to be his dear lady. He compares the sound of money with blissful sound and the color of money with bright color of the sun. He further calls money as the queen of comfort and good company. The money confirms day or night in the life of the poet. If the purse is heavy it will be bright day. If the purse is light it is like night. In this world, his heavy purse is his savior. The purse is mighty enough to help the poet. Therefore the poet prays his purse to be heavy again otherwise he will have to die. The poet wants his purse to bring life to him.

2.5 Self Learning Questions-

1. Explain importance of the purse as reflected in the poem
2. What is Chaucer's complaint to his purse?

3. Write a note on the images used in the poem.
4. Examine the theme of the poem.

2.6 Summary

The poem '*The Complaint of Chaucer to his purse*' explains the importance of money. He feels sorry because his purse is not heavy that is not filled with money. Without his heavy purse, the poet feels willingly lying on his bier. Therefore he appeals the purse to show him mercy. It is the purse that decided his day and night. It is the blissful sound and sun bright color of the money that makes him happy. His heart will be steered by money and he wants the money to be his life. He calls money as the queen of comfort and good company. He calls his purse as his savior in this world. It is the might of his purse that can save him.

2.7 Activities-

- a. Find out information about Chaucer as a poet
- b. Collect information from internet about other poems of Chaucer

2.8 Difficult words-

Bier- a frame on which a coffin or a dead body is carried/place before burial

Vouchsafe- confirm

Peer- to look closely

Steer- direct/control

Might- power

2.9 Bibliography-

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Unit 3
Sonnets from ‘Amoretti’
Sonnet I , sonnet Lxxv
by Edmund Spenser

3.0 Introduction to the Poem-

Edmund Spenser was born about the year 1552. After Chaucer’s death, with a considerable gap of 150 years, Spenser emerged as a poet of equal caliber. His ‘*shepherdess calendar*’ introduced him as a new poet. The poem was published under the name of ‘*Immerito*’. His other poems are ‘*Muiopotmos*’, ‘The complaints,’ ‘*Mother Hubbard’s Tale*’ ‘*Daphanaida*’, ‘*Amoretti*, *The Farie Queen*’ etc. He deals with various themes like love, poetry, religion, marriage etc. Spenser’s contribution to English poetry is noteworthy. His ‘Spenserian Stanza was the foundation of all kinds of narrative poetry. Verbal melody, music based on the figure of speech onomatopoeia, word picture, gorgeous scenes are some important features of his poetry He practiced his hand on various kinds of poetry-such as elegy, marriage songs, Eclogues, ode, mock epic, etc. That is why he is admired as poet of poets.

3.1- About the poem-

‘*Amoretti*’ and ‘*Epithalamion*’ were published in 1595. ‘*Amoretti*’ is a series of sonnets that tell us about second courtship of sonnets that tell us about second courtship of Spenser. He wrote ‘*Amoretti*’ sonnets with the influence of classical writers like Petrarch, Ronsard, Desportes, Sidney etc. The sonnets express the personal feelings of the poet in 14 lines.

3.3- The Poem-

Sonnet I

Happy ye leaves when as those lily hands,
which hold my life in their dead doing might
shall handle you and hold in loues soft bands,
like captiues frembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines, on which starry light,
those lamping eyes will deigne sometimes to look
and reade the sorrows of my dying spright,
written with teares in harts close bleeding book.
And happy rymes bath’d in the sacred brooke,
of helion whence she deriued is,
when ye behold that Angels blessed looke,
My soules long lacked foode, my heaquens bliss.
leaques,lines, and rymes seek her to please alone

whom if ye please, I care for other none.

Sonnet LXXV

One day I wrote her name upon the strands,
but came the waues and washed it away:
agaya I wrote it with a second hand,
but came the tyde and made my paynes his pray.
Vayne man, said she, that does it vaine assay,
a mortall things so to immortalize,
for I my selne shall hyke to this decay,
and my name bee wyped out lykewize.
Not so (quod I) let baser things desire
to dy in dust, but you shall like by fame:
my verse your vertues rare shall eternize
, and in the hevens wryte your glorius name.
where when as death shall all the world subdew
our loue shall like. and later life renew.

3.4- Central idea of the Poem-

Sonnet I describes the heavenly beauty of the poet's beloved. The poet wrote poems about his beloved. He imagines what will happen when his beloved will hold the pages on which the poems are written, in her hands. He feels that the pages will be very happy & lucky. The pages will work as bond of love between him and her. The Pages will tremble like captive. The beloved will not just hold the pages in her lily white hands but in the form of those pages she will hold his life in her hands. The poet calls her hand 'dead doing might' because the beloved has the power either to confer life or death on the poet, The poet also feels that the lines written on the pages are very happy & lucky because the star like light on her shining eyes will read those lines. In those lines she will be able to read the sorrow of his dying spirit. The poet has written those lines with tears in the bleeding book of his heart. He imagines that the rhymes will be happy by bathing in the pious stream of Helicon. His beloved also has her origin in the same stream. He calls his beloved the long sought food of his soul. She is heavenly bliss for him. He has written those leaves i.e. pages, lines & rhyme to please her, if they please her he does not care for anything else.

Sonnet Lxxv explains the power of love & immortality of art that eternalizes beauty & love.

One day the poet wrote the name of his beloved on sand (beach). The waves came & washed away her name. The poet wrote her name again & again the tide and washed away the name. The beloved said to the poet that he was making vain effort to make a mortal thing immortal. She told him that she herself was subject to decay and her name also would wipe away with her. But the poet told her that baser things go to the dust but she would live by her fame

his poems would sing her virtues & would make her eternal. Her name would be gloriously written in heaven. The world would subdue to death but his love would remain alive & would be renewed.

3.5 Theme of the Poem

Edmund Spenser sings the glory of love in his sonnet. The sonnets record his courtship with a lady Elizabeth Boyle. '*Amoretti*' is a sequence of 88 sonnets. These sonnets convey his platonic philosophy of love & immortality art confers on love. In the first sonnet the poet describes the heavenly beauty of his beloved as well as the might of love. He writes his rhymes to make her happy because she can confer life or death on him. Spenser speaks out very conventional idea that love can confer life on lovers. The divinity in the beauty of the beloved is the same that of the creative ability of the poet.

Sonnet Lxxv describes the might of love. The very act of writing beloved's name on the sand by the poet shows that love is material feeling and it vanishes with the mortal human being. But the poet emphasizes the might of love that will make him to write rhymes explain the beauty of his beloved, physically she will die but through the poems written about her, her beauty & his love for her will remain eternal. This is how the poet confirms that art can bestow immortality on mortal things. Spenser's love crosses the boundary of mortality & speaks about eternal feeling of love, Art can defeat death. When world is subjected to death, his love will remain alive and will be renewed whenever people will read his poem.

3.6 Devices/images used in the poem

Spencer has used very conventional images to explain the concept of love and to describe the beauty of his beloved. The stock images seem traditional in modern times but might name appealed to the readers of 14th century.

In sonnet I, the poet uses the image of leaves for the pages of his book. The pages hold by the beloved actually tremble because of air & because the pages are lightweight but the poet imagines that just as the captives tremble at the sight of a victor, the pages are trembling in the hands of the beloved. The fair hands of the beloved are lily white. The image of lily not only indicates the colour but also smoothness, softness & delicate touch of the hand. Her eyes are described by the light of the stars. The lines of the poem are written with tears in the bleeding book of heart. She is compared with blessed angel and also the long sought food of the poet's soul.

3.7 Form of the poem

The Poem '*Amoretti*' is written in sonnet form except for the curtail sonnet, the ordinary sonnet consists of 14 lines written in iambic pentameters with considerable variations in rhyme scheme. There are three types of sonnets-

1 Spenserian sonnet - It has a rhyme scheme abab, bcbc etc. Because of rhyme scheme it is known as link sonnet.

2 Petrarchan sonnet - This type is also known as Italian sonnet. This sonnet also consists of 14 lines but it is divided into one stanza of 8 lines which is called octave or octet and another stanza of 6 lines called sestet.

3 Shakespearean sonnet- This type is of 14 lines written in iambic pentameter consisting of three quatrains i.e. three stanzas each of four lines and a concluding stanza of two lines i.e. couplet.

3.8 Self learning Questions

- 1) Examine Edmund Spenser as a love poet with reference to his prescribed sonnets
- 2) Discuss the themes of the sonnets by Spenser
- 3) Comment on the form of sonnet.
- 4) Explain the images used in the sonnets by Spenser

3.9 Summary

The two prescribed sonnets by Spenser explain the poet's love for his beloved and describe her divine beauty. The poet writes his rhymes to please her and if she feels happy by those rhymes, the poet will get life. The pages on which he has written rhymes, those pages, the rhymes will be happy & lucky. The poet also sings the glory of love in the next sonnet. He writes his beloved's name on the sand which gets wiped off by waves. The beloved says that her name will also get wiped off after her death but the poet assures her that his love for her will make her immortal. Her name will remain alive with his poems.

3.10 Activities-

- 1) Collect information about other sonnets in *Amoretti*
- 2) Compile more information about Spenser from Internet.

3.11 Difficult words-

leaves -leaves,	loves -loves
might - power	lyke-like
captives - captives	rhymes-rhymes
broke-stream of water	Helicon-name of place
heavens -heavens	bliss-bliss-happiness
again -again	tyde-tide
vain-vain	assay-effort
wiped-wiped	lykewize-likewise
wryte-write	

3.12 Bibliography

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Unit 4 The Flea-John Donne

4.0 Introduction to the Poet

Born in 1572, John Donne was a leading metaphysical poet. His poetry can be divided into (1) Secular poems (2) Divine poems. '*Songs & sonnets*' '*The Satires*' '*The Verse letters*' etc are secular poems & '*The Divine poems*, '*Holy Sonnets*' etc are his religious poems. He was ascetic & intellectual in his tastes, He has written near about 55 love lyrics. His love poems range from physical feelings to spiritual feelings. His love for his wife Anne Moore is reflected in the passionate feelings in his love poems. As the same the feeling platonic love is reflected in '*The Canonization*' shows the relation between man & his creator. Because he is a metaphysical poet, along with passionate expressions, his love poems also analyze the love situations intellectually. Sincerity, seriousness, Realism, cynicism, obscurity, conceits & hyperboles, with, sensibility are some important features of Donne's poetry.

4.1 About the poem

'*The Flea*' is a love poem and is a typical metaphysical poem. Donne has selected a popular subject from Renaissance. Amateur poet of the period wrote on the subject of Flea, an insect. The poets of the period felt envy for insect like flea which could freely the body of their beloveds. Being lovers & human beings what they were denied by their beloveds, the insects could enjoy easily.

4.2 The poem- *The Flea*

Marke but this flea, and marke in this,
How little that which thou clenys't me is,
mee it suck'd first and how sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingled bee;
confesse it, this cannot be said.
A sinne, or shame, or losse of maidenhead,
yet this enjoyes before it wooe,
And pampers'd swells with one blood made of two
and this, alas, is more than wee would doe.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where wee almost, nay more than maryed are;
This flea is you and I, and this

our marriage bed and marriage temple is;
 Though parents grudge and you, we're met,
 And cloystered in these living walls of Jet.
 Though use make thee apt to kill mee
 Let not to this, selfe murder added bee,
 And sacrilege, three sinnes in killing three.
 cruell and sodaine, wast thou since
 purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?
 In what could this flea guilty bee,
 Except in that drop which it suckt from thee?
 Yet though triumph'st, and saist that thou
 Find'st not thy selfe, nor mee the weaker now;
 'Tis true, then learne how false, fears bee,
 Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to mee
 will wast, as this flea's death took life drom thee.

4.3 Central idea of the poem

The poem is in the form of one sided dialogue by the poet who is talking to his beloved. He asks her to mark the flea and then think how trivial is the thing that she had denied to the poet. What he is means to say is, the flea has easily touched the body of his beloved and has sucked a drop of blood of his beloved and has sucked a drop of blood from her body. The poet also wants to enjoy physical pleasure with her notice one interesting happening that the flea sucked a drop of blood from the poet's body first and then it sucked blood from the beloved. This is how their bloods have mingled in the body of the flea. The poet wants the beloved to confess that what the flea has done cannot be called a sin or shame or loss of virginity. The flea is lucky because it enjoys the physical pleasure even before wooing the beloved. It is pampered & swelled because of drinking the blood. Unfortunately the poet & his beloved cannot enjoy the same.

We can imagine from the further lines that the beloved gets angry by what the poet has said & she wants to kill the flea but the poets asks her to stop and spare the flea because they are more than married in the body of the flea. He tells her the flea is the unity of the poet and his beloved. The flea is like their marriage bed because in it their bloods have mingled. He also calls the flea as their marriage temple because they have become one in him. Though her parents will complain but they have come together in the body of the flea. The poet says that she may kill the flea and thus will the poet also but why she is committing self murder. Because their bloods are mingled in the flea the poet imagines that his beloved is committing 3 murders-the flea's the poet's & her own. But what the poet says in the last stanza makes us clear that the beloved has crushed the flea with her fingers. Therefore he asks her why she purpled her nails with the blood innocent flea. There was no fault of the flea except it sucked a drop of blood from her body. The beloved feels triumphant by killing

the flea. The poet calls her cruel and tells her that just she has lost little life in the death of the flea; she will also not lose her honor in yielding to the poet.

4.4 Theme of the poem

The Flea is a typical metaphysical love poem. Though the feeling of love begins with demand for physical union, the poet's analysis of it takes it to the spiritual level with the hyperbolic interpretation the poet puts forth his demand of physical union. Referring to a trivial act of the Flea, the poet asks his beloved that the flea can touch her body without her permission then why he is denied what a flea can enjoy. His imagination that by sucking blood of the poet and his beloved, the flea has united them in its body, achieves the extent of hyperbole. The beloved is denying him physical pleasure but they are already net in the body of the flea. Further the use of conceit enlarges the scope of love from physical to spiritual. The poet imagines that the flea has sucked blood from their bodies and thus has united them in its body in that sense the flea is their marriage bed. It is also their marriage temple because they have become one in the body of the flea. The poet compares the sucking of blood by the flea and his demand of love at equal level and claims that by killing the flea, the beloved has lost little life of hers. So she will not lose honor in submitting to the wish of her lover. The poet's metaphysical perspective of love does not consider physical union as sin or loss of virginity on the part of his beloved.

4.5 Use of conceit/hyperbole in the poem-

Use of conceit is a unique feature of metaphysical poetry. Conceit is usually understood as farfetched idea. Metaphysical poets being educated from various disciplines of knowledge selected the symbols & images from these disciplines unlike the traditional images or stock symbols Therefore the images used by metaphysical poets are difficult to understand easily and create ambiguity. Because their ideas are farfetched they are also understood as hyperbole. In the poem '*The Flea*', Donne has used minor insect a drop of blood from the beloved's body & then from the poet's body. This causal happening leads towards high imagination by the poem. He interprets this act of sucking blood from their body as their uniting/meeting in the body of the flea He further imagines that the body of flea is their marriage bed and also their marriage temple. Calling the flea as marriage bed and marriage temple is the remarkable conceit by the poet.

Dear students, you can learn more about metaphysical poet, conceits used by them in the unit on 'Background of English poetry'.

4.6 Ambiguity/complexity in the poem

One of the characteristic features of metaphysical poetry is ambiguity/complexity. This is caused because of the ideas, images symbols present in the form of conceits. Metaphysical poets were educated people from different disciplines of knowledge. Instead of using stock images & symbols, they used new images & ideas from various disciplines like mathematics, science, space etc. Consequently, understanding of the ideas was not as easy as it was in other poems. In the poem '*The Flea*' also Donne has used the insect Flea to explain his idea of physical union of the lover & beloved in the body of the flea. He imagines that the flea has sucked blood from his body as well as his beloved's body. Thus they have united in the body of the flea. Therefore it is their marriage bed and marriage bed also. Using the image of such a trivial insect to explain such a high idea causes complexity in the poem.

4.7 Self learning questions

- 1) Examine 'The Flea' as a metaphysical poem.
- 2) Discuss the use of conceit in 'The flea'
- 3) Explain the theme of 'The Flea'
- 4) Why is the 'poem' *The flea* complex?

4.8 Summary

The flea is a metaphysical poem and dramatic lyric. The lover is speaking to his beloved. He tells her that she is denying him what the flea has causally done to her. The flea has sucked a drop of blood from her body and from the lover's body. Thus they have united in the body of the flea. The poet/lover wanted to have the same union but the beloved denied him. The poet imagines that with mingling of their blood in the body of the flea, the flea has become their marriage bed & marriage temple. The beloved gets angry with this idea and wants to kill the flea. But the poet stops her saying that by killing the flea she will commit three murders-the poet's, the flea's and she feels triumphant and says that she & her lover do not feel weak for having killed the flea. The poet says that similarly her fear of losing honor in submitting to the wish of her lover.

4.9 Activities

- a) Collect more information about other poems of Donne.
- b) Compile information about conceits used by other metaphysical poets.

4.10 Difficult words

Metaphysical - beyond physical
conceit- farfetched idea

4.11 Bibliography

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Unit 5 Paradise Last-Book IV - John Milton

5.0 Introduction to the poet-

John Milton is the representative poet of 17th century so much so that the period is known as Age of Milton. He was born on 9th Dec. 1608 in Bread street, cheapside W.H. Goodman has divided his literary career into four phases.

The first phase of his literary career begins at the early age of 15 when he paraphrased the psalms and composed some Latin poems.

The second period shows influence of Spenser and Ovid on Milton. Poems composed during this period-'On the Death of a fair infant Dying of cough; 'At a vacation exercise' 'on the morning of Christ's Nativity' etc. reflect the serious nature of Milton. Some serious & genuine poems of this period are *Comus*, *Lycidas* etc. The third period is of prose contribution by Milton. His *On his Blindness*, *On the late Massacre in Piedmont* are some significant sonnets of this period. Fourth period records most creative surge of Milton's genius. *Paradise lost* is the master piece of this period followed by *Samson Agonist* & *Paradise Regained*.

5.1 About the poem-

Paradise lost is an epic masterpiece written by Milton. The epic narrates the story of creation of the world, First man & woman's stay in the Garden of Eden and sin committed by man. The epic explains God's ways to man.

Dear students, out of 12 books of the poem Book 4 of the epic is prescribed for your study This is a poem of near about 1000 lines. These lines make you familiar with the character Satan, Adam, Eve & other Angels.

5.2 Poem

O For that [warning voice](#), which he who saw

Th' *Apocalyps*, heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Wo to the inhabitants on Earth! that now, [5]
[While time was](#), our first-Parents had bin warn'd
The coming of thir secret foe, and [scap'd](#)
[Haply](#) so scap'd his mortal snare; for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The Tempter ere th' Accuser of man-kind, [10]
To [wreck](#) on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first Battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoycing in his speed, though bold,
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,

Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth [15]
 Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest,
 And like a devillish Engine back recoiles
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubl'd thoughts, and from the bottom stirr
 The Hell within him, for within him Hell [20]
 He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
 One step no more then from himself can fly
 By change of place: Now conscience wakes despair
 That slumberd, wakes the bitter memorie
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be [25]
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his grievd look he fixes sad,
 Sometimes towards Heav'n and the full-blazing Sun,
 Which now sat high in his Meridian Towre: [30]
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.
 O thou that with surpassing Glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole Dominion like the God
 Of this new World; at whose sight all the Starrs
 Hide thir diminisht heads; to thee I call, [35]
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;
 Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down [40]
 Warring in Heav'n against Heav'ns matchless King:
 Ah wherefore! he deservd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. [45]
 What could be less then to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompence, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher [50]
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burthensome, still paying, still to ow;
 Forgetful what from him I still receivd,
 And understood not that a grateful mind [55]
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and dischargd; what burden then?
 O had his powerful Destiny ordaind
 Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood
 Then happie; no unbounded hope had rais'd [60]
 Ambition. Yet why not? som other Power
 As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
 Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
 Fell not, but stand unshak'n, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. [65]
 Hadst thou the same free Will and Power to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
 But Heav'ns free Love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his Love accurst, since love or hate,

To me alike, it deals eternal woe. [70]
 Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I flie
 Infinite wrauth, and infinite despaire?
 Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell; [75]
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep
 Still threatning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
 O then at last relent: is there no place
 Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left? [80]
 None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Then to submit, boasting I could subdue [85]
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vaine,
 Under what torments inwardly I groane:
 While they adore me on the Throne of Hell,
 With Diadem and Sceptre high advanc'd [90]
 The lower still I fall, onely Supream
 In miserie; such joy Ambition findes.
 But say I could repent and could obtaine
 By Act of Grace my former state; how soon
 Would high recall high thoughts, how soon unsay [95]
 What feign'd submission swore: ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have peirc'd so deep:
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse [100]
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase deare
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher; therefore as farr
 From granting hee, as I from begging peace:
 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead [105]
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this World.
 So farewell Hope, and with Hope farewell Fear,
 Farewel Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
 Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least [110]
 Divided Empire with Heav'ns King I hold
 By thee, and more then half perhaps will reigne;
 As Man ere long, and this new World shall know.
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envie and despair, [115]
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betraid
 Him counterfet, if any eye beheld.
 For heav'nly mindes from such distempers foule
 Are ever cleer. Whereof hee soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calme, [120]
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
 That practis'd falshood under saintly shew,
 Deep malice to conceale, couch't with revenge:
 Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive

Uriel once warnd; whose eye pursu'd him down [125]
 The way he went, and on th' *Assyrian mount*
 Saw him disfigur'd, more then could befall
 Spirit of happie sort: his gestures fierce
 He markd and mad demeanour, then alone,
 As he suppos'd all unobserv'd, unseen. [130]
 So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of *Eden*, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, Crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound the *champain head*
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairie sides [135]
 With thicket overgrown, *grotesque* and wilde,
 Access deni'd; and over head up grew
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and Pine, and Firr, and branching Palm
 A Silvan Scene, and as the ranks ascend [140]
 Shade above shade, a woodie *Theatre*
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher then thir tops
 The *verdurous* wall of paradise up sprung:
 Which to our *general Sire* gave prospect large
 Into his *neather Empire* neighbouring round. [145]
 And higher then that Wall a circling row
 Of goodliest Trees loaden with fairest Fruit,
 Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue
 Appeerd, with gay *enameld* colours mixt:
 On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams [150]
 Then in fair Evening Cloud, or *humid Bow*,
 When God hath showrd the earth; so lovely seemd
That Lantskip: And *of* pure now purer aire
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive [155]
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
 Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmie spoiles. As when to them who saile
 Beyond the *Cape of Hope*, and now are past [160]
Mozambic, off at Sea North-East windes blow
Sabean Odours from the spicie shoare
 Of *Arabie* the blest, with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League
 Chear'd with the *grateful* smell old Ocean smiles. [165]
 So entertaind those odorous sweets the Fiend
 Who came thir bane, though with them better pleas'd
 Then *Asmodeus* with the fishie fume,
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the Spouse
 Of *Tobits* Son, and with a vengeance sent [170]
 From *Media* post to *Ægypt*, there fast bound.
 Now to th' ascent of that steep savage Hill
Satan had journied on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick entwinn'd,
 As one continu'd *brake*, the undergrowth [175]
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplext
 All path of Man or Beast that past that way:
 One Gate there only was, and that look'd East
 On th' other side: which when th' arch-fellon saw

Due entrance he disdaind, and in contempt, [180]
 At [one slight bound](#) high over leap'd all bound
 Of Hill or highest Wall, and [sheer](#) within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling Wolfe,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eeve [185]
 In hurdl'd Cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o're the fence with ease into the Fould:
 Or as a Thief bent to unhoord the cash
 Of some rich Burgher, whose substantial dores,
 Cross-barrd and bolted fast, fear no assault, [190]
 In at the window climbs, or o're the tiles;
 So clomb this [first grand Thief](#) into Gods Fould:
 So since into his Church [lewd Hirelings](#) climbe.
 Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
 The middle Tree and highest there that grew, [195]
 Sat like a [Cormorant](#); yet not true Life
 Thereby regaind, but sat devising Death
 To them who liv'd; nor on the vertue thought
 Of that life-giving Plant, but only us'd
[For prospect](#), what well us'd had bin the pledge [200]
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to thir meanest use.
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views [205]
 To all delight of human sense expos'd
 In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,
 A Heaven on Earth, for blissful Paradise
 Of God the Garden was, by him in the East
 Of *Eden* planted; *Eden* stretchd her [Line](#) [210]
 From [Auran](#) Eastward to the Royal Towrs
 Of Great [Seleucia](#), built by *Grecian* Kings,
 Or where the Sons of *Eden* long before
 Dwelt in [Telassar](#): in this pleasant soile
 His far more pleasant Garden God ordaind; [215]
 Out of the fertil ground he caus'd to grow
 All Trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming Ambrosial Fruit
 Of vegetable Gold; and next to Life [220]
 Our Death the Tree of Knowledge grew fast by,
 Knowledge of Good [bought dear by knowing ill](#).
 Southward through *Eden* went a [River large](#),
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the [shaggie](#) hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulft, for God had thrown [225]
 That Mountain as his Garden mould high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous Earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
 Rose a fresh Fountain, and with many a rill
 Waterd the Garden; thence united fell [230]
 Down the steep glade, and met the neather Flood,
 Which from his darksom passage now appeers,
 And now divided into four main Streams,
 Runs divers, wandring many a famous Realme

And Country whereof here needs no account, [235]
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
 How from that Saphire Fount the [crisped](#) Brooks,
 Rowling on Orient Pearl and sands of Gold,
 With mазie [error](#) under pendant shades
 Ran Nectar, visiting each plant, and fed [240]
 Flours worthy of Paradise which not [nice Art](#)
 In [Beds and curious Knots](#), but Nature [boon](#)
 Powrd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plaine,
 Both where the morning Sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc't shade [245]
[Imbround](#) the noontide Bows: Thus was this place,
 A happy rural seat of various view;
 Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gumms and Balme,
 Others whose fruit burnisht with Golden Rinde
 Hung amiable, [Hesperian Fables](#) true, [250]
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
 Betwixt them Lawns, or level Downs, and Flocks
 Grasing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
 Or palmie hilloc, or the flourie lap
 Of som [irriguous](#) Valley spred her store, [255]
 Flours of all hue, and without Thorn the Rose:
 Another side, [umbrageous](#) Grots and Caves
 Of coole recess, o're which the [mantling](#) vine
 Layes forth her purple Grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant; mean while murmuring waters fall [260]
 Down the slope hills, disperst, or in a Lake,
 That to the fringed Bank with Myrtle crownd,
 Her chrystal mirror holds, unite thir streams.
 The Birds thir [quire](#) apply; aires, vernal aires,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune [265]
 The trembling leaves, while [Universal Pan](#)
 Knit with [the Graces and the Hours](#) in dance
 Led on th' Eternal Spring. Not that faire field
 Of *Enna*, where [Proserpin](#) gathering flours
 Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie *Dis* [270]
 Was gatherd, which cost *Ceres* all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove
 Of [Daphne](#) by *Orontes*, and th' inspir'd
Castalian Spring, might with this Paradise
 Of *Eden* strive; nor that [Nyseian Ile](#) [275]
 Girt with the River *Triton*, where old *Cham*,
 Whom Gentiles *Ammon* call and *Lybian Jove*,
 Hid *Amalthea* and her Florid Son
 Young *Bacchus* from his Stepdame *Rhea's* eye;
 Nor where [Abassin](#) Kings thir [issue](#) Guard, [280]
 Mount [Amara](#), though this by som suppos'd
 True Paradise under the *Ethiop* Line
 By *Nilus* head, enclosd with shining Rock,
 A whole days journy high, but wide remote
 From this *Assyrian* Garden, where the Fiend [285]
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
 Of living Creatures new to sight and strange:
 Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
 Godlike [erect](#), with native Honour clad

In naked Majestie seemd Lords of all, [290]
 And worthie seemd, for in thir looks Divine
 The [image of thir glorious Maker shon](#),
 Truth, wisdom, Sanctitude severe and pure,
 Severe but in true [filial freedom](#) plac't;
 Whence true authority in men; though both [295]
[Not equal](#), as thir sex not equal [seemd](#);
 For [contemplation hee](#) and valour formd,
 For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,
 Hee for God only, [shee for God in him](#):
 His fair large [Front](#) and Eye [sublime](#) declar'd [300]
 Absolute rule; and [Hyacinthin Locks](#)
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 Shee as a [vail](#) down to the slender waste
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore [305]
[Disheveld](#), but in wanton ringlets wav'd
 As the Vine curls her tendrils, which impli'd
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
 Yielded with [coy](#) submission, [modest pride](#), [310]
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
 Nor those [mysterious parts](#) were then conceald,
 Then was not guiltie shame, [dishonest](#) shame
 Of natures works, honor dishonorable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubl'd all mankind [315]
 With shews instead, [meer shews](#) of seeming pure,
 And banisht from mans life his happiest life,
 Simplicities and spotless innocence.
 So passd they naked on, nor shund the sight
 Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill: [320]
 So hand in hand they passd, the lovliest pair
 That ever since in loves embraces met,
Adam the goodliest man of men since borne
 His Sons, the fairest of her Daughters *Eve*.
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green [325]
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh Fountain side
 They sat them down, and after no more toil
 Of thir sweet [Gardning labour](#) then suffic'd
 To recommend coole [Zephyr](#), and made ease
 More easie, wholsom thirst and appetite [330]
 More grateful, to thir Supper Fruits they fell,
 Nectarine Fruits which the compliant boughes
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat [recline](#)
 On the soft downie Bank [damaskt](#) with flours:
 The savourie pulp they chew, and in the rinde [335]
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor [gentle purpose](#), nor endearing smiles
[Wanted](#), nor [youthful dalliance](#) as beseems
 Fair couple, linkt in happie nuptial League,
 Alone as they. About them frisking playd [340]
 All Beasts of th' Earth, since wilde, and of all chase
 In Wood or Wilderness, Forrest or Den;
 Sporting the Lion rampd, and in his paw
[Dandl'd the Kid](#); Bears, Tygers, [Ounces](#), [Pards](#)

Gambold before them, th' unwieldy Elephant [345]
 To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreathd
 His Lithe [Proboscis](#); close the Serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with [Gordian twine](#)
 His [breaded](#) train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass [350]
 Coucht, and now fild with pasture gazing sat,
 Or Bedward [ruminating](#): for the Sun
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone carreer
 To th' [Ocean Iles](#), and in th' ascending Scale
 Of Heav'n the Starrs that usher Evening rose: [355]
 When *Satan* still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length faild speech recoverd sad.
 O Hell! what doe mine eyes with grief behold,
 Into [our room](#) of bliss thus high advanc't
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, [360]
 Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright
[Little inferior](#); whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them Divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that formd them on thir shape hath pourd. [365]
 Ah [gentle pair](#), yee little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
 Happie, but for so happie ill secur'd [370]
[Long to continue](#), and this high seat your Heav'n
[Ill fenc't](#) for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
 As now is enterd; yet no purpos'd foe
 To you whom I could pittie thus forlorne
 Though I unpittied: [League](#) with you I seek, [375]
 And mutual amitie so streight, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
 Accept your Makers work; he gave it me, [380]
 Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest Gates,
 And [send forth all her Kings](#); there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous ofspring; if no better place, [385]
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
 On you who [wrong me](#) not for him who wrongd.
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I doe, yet [public reason](#) just,
 Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg'd, [390]
 By conquering this new World, compels me now
 To do what else though damnd I should abhorre.
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,
 The [Tyrants plea](#), excus'd his devilish deeds.
 Then from his loftie stand on that high Tree [395]
 Down he alights among the sportful Herd
 Of those fourfooted kindes, [himself now one](#),
 Now other, as thir shape servd best his end
 Neerer to view his prey, and unespi'd

To mark what of thir state he more might learn [400]
 By word or action markt: about them round
 A Lion now he stalkes with fierie glare,
 Then as a Tyger, who by chance hath spi'd
 In some Purlieu two gentle Fawnes at play,
 Strait couches close, then rising changes oft [405]
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Gript in each paw: when *Adam* first of men
 To first of women *Eve* thus moving speech,
Turnd him all eare to hear new utterance flow. [410]

Sole partner and sole part of all these joyes,
 Dearer thy self then all; needs must the Power
 That made us, and for us this ample World
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite, [415]
 That rais'd us from the dust and plac't us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can performe
 Aught whereof hee hath need, hee who requires
 From us no other service then to keep [420]
 This one, this easie charge, of all the Trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that onely Tree
 Of knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life,
 So neer grows Death to Life, what ere Death is, [425]
 Som dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowst
 God hath pronounc't it death to taste that Tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many signes of power and rule
 Conferd upon us, and Dominion giv'n [430]
 Over all other Creatures that possess
 Earth, Aire, and Sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easie prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights: [435]
 But let us ever praise him, and extoll
 His bountie, following our delightful task
 To prune these growing Plants, and tend these Flours,
 Which were it toilsom, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus *Eve* repli'd. O thou for whom [440]
 And from whom I was formd flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my Guide
 And Head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For wee to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks, I chiefly who enjoy [445]
 So farr the happier Lot, enjoying thee
 Præeminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thy self canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak't, and found my self repos'd [450]
 Under a shade of flours, much wondring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
 Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread

Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd [455]
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperient thought, and laid me downe
 On the green bank, to look into the cleer
 Smooth Lake, that to me seemd another Skie.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite, [460]
A Shape within the watry gleam appeard
 Bending to look on me, I started back,
 It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
 Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt [465]
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow staies [470]
 Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare
 Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human Race: what could I doe, [475]
 But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
 Till I espi'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,
 Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,
 Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd, [480]
Thou following cryd'st aloud, Return faire *Eve*,
 Whom fli'st thou? whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, neerest my heart
 Substantial Life, to have thee by my side [485]
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;
 Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seisd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excelld by manly grace [490]
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
 So spake our general Mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half imbracing leand
 On our first Father, half her swelling Breast [495]
 Naked met his under the flowing Gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her Beauty and submissive Charms
 Smil'd with superior Love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the Clouds [500]
 That shed *May* Flowers; and press'd her Matron lip
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turnd
 For envie, yet with jealous leer maligne
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plaind.
 Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two [505]
 Imparadis't in one anothers arms
 The happier *Eden*, shall enjoy thir fill
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,

Among our other torments not the least, [510]
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines;
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd'n? [515]
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should thir Lord
 Envie them that? can it be sin to know,
 Can it be death? and do they onely stand
 By Ignorance, is that thir happie state,
 The proof of thir obedience and thir faith? [520]
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Thir ruine! Hence I will excite thir minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with designe
 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt [525]
 Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This Garden, and no corner leave unspi'd;
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet [530]
 Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by Fountain side,
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
 What further would be learnt. Live while ye may,
 Yet happie pair; enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. [535]
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began
 Through wood, through waste, o're hill, o're dale his roam.
 Mean while in utmost Longitude, where Heav'n
 With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting Sun [540]
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern Gate of Paradise
 Leveld his evning Rayes: it was a Rock
 Of Alablaster, pil'd up to the Clouds,
 Conspicuous farr, winding with one ascent [545]
 Accessible from Earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggie cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climbe.
 Betwixt these rockie Pillars Gabriel sat
 Chief of th' Angelic Guards, awaiting night; [550]
 About him exercis'd Heroic Games
 Th' unarmed Youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial Armourie, Shields, Helmes, and Speares
 Hung high with Diamond flaming, and with Gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the Eeven [555]
 On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting Starr
 In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd
 Impress the Air, and shews the Mariner
 From what point of his Compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste. [560]
 Gabriel, to thee thy course by Lot hath giv'n
 Charge and strict watch that to this happie place
 No evil thing approach or enter in;
 This day at highth of Noon came to my Spheare

A Spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know [565]
 More of th' Almightyes works, and chiefly Man
Gods latest Image: I describ'd his way
 Bent all on speed, and markt his Aerie Gate;
 But in the Mount that lies from *Eden* North,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks [570]
 Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him; one of the banisht crew
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the Deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find. [575]
 To whom the winged Warriour thus return'd:
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the Suns bright circle where thou sitst,
 See farr and wide: in at this Gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac't, but such as come [580]
 Well known from Heav'n; and since Meridian hour
 No Creature thence: if Spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have oreleapt these earthie bounds
 On purpose, hard thou knowst it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal barr. [585]
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tellst, by morrow dawning I shall know.
 So promis'd hee, and *Uriel* to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd [590]
 Bore him slope downward to the Sun now fall'n
 Beneath th' *Azores*; whither the prime Orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither rowl'd
Diurnal, or this less volubil Earth
 By shorter flight to th' East, had left him there [595]
 Arraying with reflected Purple and Gold
 The Clouds that on his Western Throne attend:
 Now came still Eevning on, and Twilight gray
 Had in her sober Liverie all things clad;
 Silence accompanied, for Beast and Bird, [600]
 They to thir grassie Couch, these to thir Nests
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful Nightingale;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the Firmament
 With living Saphirs: Hesperus that led [605]
 The starrie Host, rode brightest, till the Moon
 Rising in clouded Majestie, at length
Apparent Queen unvaild her peerless light,
 And o're the dark her Silver Mantle threw.
 When *Adam* thus to *Eve*: Fair Consort, th' hour [610]
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest
 Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night to men
 Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines [615]
 Our eye-lids; other Creatures all day long
 Rove idle unimploid, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his Dignitie,

And the regard of Heav'n on all his waies; [620]
 While other Animals unactive range,
 And of thir doings God takes no account.
 To morrow ere fresh Morning streak the East
 With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform [625]
 Yon flourie Arbors, yonder Allies green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands then ours to lop thir wanton growth:
 Those Blossoms also, and those dropping Gums, [630]
 That lie bestrowne unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
 Mean while, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest.
 To whom thus *Eve* with perfet beauty adord.
 My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst [635]
 Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains,
 God is thy Law, thou mine: to know no more
 Is womans happiest knowledge and her praise.
 With thee conversing I forget all time,
 All seasons and thir change, all please alike. [640]
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun
 When first on this delightful Land he spreads
 His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flour,
 Glistring with dew; fragrant the fertil earth [645]
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful Eevning milde, then silent Night
 With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,
 And these the Gemms of Heav'n, her starrie train:
 But neither breath of Morn when she ascends [650]
 With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, floure,
 Glistring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
 Nor grateful Eevning mild, nor silent Night
 With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon, [655]
 Or glittering Starr-light without thee is sweet.
 But wherfore all night long shine these, for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
 To whom our general Ancestor repli'd.
Daughter of God and Man, accomlisht *Eve*, [660]
 Those have thir course to finish, round the Earth,
 By morrow Eevning, and from Land to Land
 In order, though to Nations yet unborn,
 Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
 Least total darkness should by Night regaine [665]
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In Nature and all things, which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heate
 Of various influence foment and warme,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down [670]
 Thir stellar vertue on all kinds that grow
 On Earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the Suns more potent Ray.
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,

Shine not in vain, nor think, though men were none, [675]
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise;
 Millions of [spiritual Creatures](#) walk the Earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night: how often from the steep [680]
 Of echoing Hill or Thicket have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to others note
 Singing thir great Creator: oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk, [685]
 With Heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full [harmonic number joind](#), thir songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.
 Thus talking [hand in hand alone](#) they pass'd
 On to thir blissful Bower; it was a place [690]
 Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd
 All things to mans delightful use; the roofe
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
 Laurel and Mirtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side [695]
Acanthus, and each odorous bushie shrub
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flour,
Iris all hues, Roses, and [Gessamin](#)
 Rear'd high thir [flourisht](#) heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic; underfoot the Violet, [700]
 Crocus, and Hyacinth with rich inlay
 Broiderd the ground, more colour'd then with [stone](#)
[Of costliest Emblem](#): other Creature here
 Beast, Bird, Insect, or Worm durst enter none;
 Such was thir awe of Man. In shadie Bower [705]
 More sacred and sequesterd, though but [feignd](#),
Pan or *Silvanus* never slept, nor Nymph,
 Nor *Faunus* haunted. Here in close recess
 With Flowers, Garlands, and sweet-smelling Herbs
 Espoused *Eve* deckt first her Nuptial Bed, [710]
 And heav'nlyly Quires the [Hymenæan](#) sung,
 What day the [genial Angel](#) to our Sire
 Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd
 More lovely then [Pandora](#), whom the Gods
 Endowd with all thir gifts, and O too like [715]
 In sad event, when to the unwiser Son
 Of [Japhet](#) brought by *Hermes*, she ensnar'd
 Mankind with her faire looks, to be aveng'd
 On him who had stole *Joves* authentic fire.
 Thus at thir shadie Lodge arriv'd, both stood [720]
 Both turnd, and under op'n Skie ador'd
 The God that made both Skie, Air, Earth and Heav'n
 Which they beheld, the Moons resplendent Globe
 And starrie [Pole](#): [Thou](#) also mad'st the Night,
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the Day, [725]
 Which we in our appointed work imployd
 Have finisht happie in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the Crown of all our bliss
 Ordaind by thee, and this delicious place

For us too large, where thy abundance [wants](#) [730]
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promis'd from us two a Race
 To fill the Earth, who shall with us extoll
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. [735]
 This said unanimous, and other Rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure
 Which God likes best, into thir inmost bowre
[Handed](#) they went; and eas'd the putting off
 These troublesom disguises which wee wear, [740]
 Strait side by side were laid, nor turnd I [weene](#)
Adam from his fair Spouse, nor *Eve* the Rites
 Mysterious of [connubial Love](#) refus'd:
 Whatever Hypocrites austerely talk
 Of puritie and place and innocence, [745]
 Defaming as impure what God declares
 Pure, and commands to som, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker [bids increase](#), who bids abstain
 But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?
 Haile wedded Love, [mysterious Law](#), true source [750]
 Of human ofspring, sole [propriety](#),
 In Paradise of all things common else.
 By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men
 Among the bestial herds to raunge, by thee
 Founded in Reason, Loyal, Just, and Pure, [755]
 Relations dear, and all the Charities
 Of Father, Son, and Brother first were known.
 Farr be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
 Perpetual Fountain of Domestic sweets, [760]
 Whose [bed is undefil'd](#) and chaste pronounc't,
 Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.
 Here [Love](#) his golden [shafts](#) imploies, here lights
 His constant Lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile [765]
 Of Harlots, loveless, joyless, unideard,
 Casual [fruition](#), nor in Court Amours
 Mixt Dance, or wanton Mask, or Midnight Bal,
 Or Serenate, which the [starv'd](#) Lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. [770]
 These lulld by Nightingales imbraceing slept,
 And on thir naked limbs the flourie roof
 Showrd Roses, which the Morn repair'd. Sleep on
 Blest pair; and O yet happiest if ye seek
 No happier state, and [know to know no more](#). [775]
 Now had night measur'd with her shaddowie [Cone](#)
 Half way up Hill this vast Sublunar Vault,
 And from thir Ivorie [Port](#) the Cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustomd hour stood armd
 To thir night watches in warlike Parade, [780]
 When *Gabriel* to his next in power thus spake.
[Uzziel](#), half these draw off, and coast the South
 With strictest watch; these other [wheel](#) the North,
 Our circuit meets full West. As flame they part

Half wheeling to the Shield, half to the Spear. [785]
 From these, two strong and suttel Spirits he calld
 That neer him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with wingd speed
 Search through this Garden, leave unsearcht no nook,
 But chiefly where those two fair Creatures Lodge, [790]
 Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harme.
 This Eevning from the Sun's decline arriv'd
 Who tells of som infernal Spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
 The barrs of Hell, on errand bad no doubt: [795]
 Such where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.
 So saying, on he led his radiant Files,
 Daz'ling the Moon; these to the Bower direct
 In search of whom they sought: him there they found
 Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of *Eve*; [800]
 Assaying by his Devilish art to reach
 The Organs of her Fancie, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, Phantasms and Dreams,
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise [805]
 Like gentle breaths from Rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distemperd, discontented thoughts,
 Vaine hopes, vaine aimes, inordinate desires
 Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.
 Him thus intent *Ithuriel* with his Spear [810]
 Touch'd lightly; for no falshood can endure
 Touch of Celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discoverd and surpriz'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous Powder, laid [815]
Fit for the Tun som Magazin to store
Against a rumord Warr, the Smuttie graine
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the Aire:
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
 Back stept those two fair Angels half amaz'd [820]
 So sudden to behold the grieslie King;
 Yet thus, unmovd with fear, accost him soon.
 Which of those rebell Spirits adjudg'd to Hell
 Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison, and transform'd,
 Why satst thou like an enemie in waite [825]
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
 Know ye not then said *Satan*, fill'd with scorn
 Know ye not mee? ye knew me once no mate
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soare;
 Not to know mee argues your selves unknown, [830]
 The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
 Your message, like to end as much in vain?
 To whom thus *Zephon*, answering scorn with scorn.
 Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same, [835]
 Or undiminisht brightness, to be known
 As when thou stoodst in Heav'n upright and pure;
 That Glorie then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee, and thou resembl'st now

Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foule. [840]
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherube, and his grave rebuke
Severe in youthful beautie, added grace [845]
Invincible: abasht the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Vertue in her shape how lovly, saw, and pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seemd [850]
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the Sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glorie will be wonn,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said *Zephon* bold,
Will save us trial what the least can doe [855]
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend repli'd not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud Steed reind, went hautie on,
Chaumping his iron curb: to strive or flie
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd [860]
His heart, not else dismai'd. Now drew they nigh
The western Point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron joind
Awaiting next command. To whom thir Chief
Gabriel from the Front thus calld aloud. [865]

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpses discern
Ithuriel and *Zephon* through the shade,
And with them comes a third of Regal port,
But faded splendor wan; who by his gate [870]
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approachd
And brief related whom they brought, where found, [875]
How busied, in what form and posture coucht.

To whom with stern regard thus *Gabriel* spake.
Why hast thou, *Satan*, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturbd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress [880]
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Imploi'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus *Satan* with contemptuous brow. [885]
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question askt
Puts me in doubt. Lives ther who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt, [890]
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and; soonest recompence
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;

To thee no reason; who knowst only good, [895]
But evil hast not tri'd: and wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer barr
His Iron Gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was askt.
The rest is true, they found me where they say; [900]
But that implies not violence or harme.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling thus repli'd.
O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
Since *Satan* fell, whom follie overthrew, [905]
And now returns him from his prison scap't,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicenc't from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain [910]
However, and to scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrauth,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Seavenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain [915]
Can equal anger infinite provok't.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled, or thou then they
Less hardie to endure? courageous Chief, [920]
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alleg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answerd frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, [925]
Insulting Angel, well thou knowst I stood
Thy fiercest, when in Battel to thy aide
The blasting volied Thunder made all speed
And seconded thy else not dreaded Spear.
But still thy words at random, as before, [930]
Argue thy inexperience what behooves
From hard assaies and ill successes past
A faithful Leader, not to hazard all
Through wayes of danger by himself untri'd,
I therefore, I alone first undertook [935]
To wing the desolate Abyss, and spie
This new created World, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Powers
To settle here on Earth, or in mid Aire; [940]
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay Legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve thir Lord
High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymne his Throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight. [945]

To whom the warriour Angel, soon repli'd.
To say and strait unsay, pretending first
Wise to flie pain, professing next the Spie,
Argues no Leader, but a lyar trac't,

Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name, [950]
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
 Armie of Fiends, fit body to fit head;
 Was this your discipline and faith ingag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve [955]
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power supream?
 And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more then thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilly ador'd
 Heav'ns awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope [960]
 To dispossess him, and thy self to reigne?
 But mark what I arreede thee now, avant;
 Flie thither whence thou fledst: if from this houre
 Within these hallowd limits thou appeer,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chaid, [965]
 And Seale thee so, as henceforth not to scorne
 The facil gates of hell too slightly barrd.
 So threatn'd hee, but *Satan* to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage repli'd.
 Then when I am thy captive talk of chaines, [970]
 Proud limitarie Cherube, but ere then
 Farr heavier load thy self expect to feel
 From my prevailing arme, though Heavens King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy Compeers,
 Us'd to the yোক, draw'st his triumphant wheels [975]
 In progress through the rode of Heav'n Star-pav'd.
 While thus he spake, th' Angelic Squadron bright
 Turnd fierie red, sharpning in mooned hornes
 Thir Phalanx, and began to hemm him round
 With ported Spears, as thick as when a field [980]
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded Grove of ears, which way the wind
 Swayes them; the careful Plowman doubting stands
Least on the threshing floore his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side *Satan* allarm'd [985]
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:
 His stature reacht the Skie, and on his Crest
 Sat horror Plum'd; nor wanted in his graspe
 What seemd both Spear and Shield: now dreadful deeds [990]
 Might have ensu'd, nor onely Paradise
 In this commotion, but the Starrie Cope
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the Elements
 At least had gon to rack, disturbd and torne
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon [995]
 Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden Scales, yet seen
 Betwixt *Astrea* and the *Scorpion* signe,
 Wherein all things created first he weighd,
 The pendulous round Earth with balanc't Aire [1000]
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battels and Realms: in these he put two weights
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;

The latter quick up flew, and kickt the beam;
 Which *Gabriel* spying, thus bespake the Fiend. [1005]
 Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own but giv'n; what follie then
 To boast what Arms can doe, since thine no more
 Then Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubl'd now
 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, [1010]
 And read thy Lot in yon celestial Sign
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist. The Fiend lookt up and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night. [1015]

5.3 Central idea of the poem

Dear students, before knowing the story of '*Paradise lost Book IV*' Let's have a quick look at what has happened in first book. Book I begins with the scene of hell. Satan & his followers who rebelled against god are thrown out of heaven and are presently in hell. First Satan & his deputy Beelzebub come to senses. Book II tells about Satan's plan of ruining the new world created by God for his new creation. Satan passes through the space & comes to the outer surface of the universe. He disguises himself as a young angel. Book IV starts with Satan's pondering over the things. When he looks at the glittering sun, he at once feels envy and remorse because there was a time when he held higher position than the sun. He also repents why he rebelled against God. He realizes that God conferred boons & benefits on Satan. He should have been grateful to God but he rebelled in the expectation of becoming superior to God. Satan blames himself because he practiced his free will. He is also aware of the fact that he has no place to hide himself from the anger of God. He is also aware that he cannot escape his disillusionment because he himself is hell. His followers worship him as their king. Therefore he cannot ask for the forgiveness of god. His ego interferes. Because there is no hope for him he also does not fear. He thinks that evil is only good for him and hell is his kingdom. When all these mixed emotions rule his mind, it's clearly seen on his face. Somehow he controls himself. The sun spirit Uriel follows him because he is warned against fraud spirit attempting to break from hell. Uriel's eyes follow Satan and find him disfiguring. Satan is unaware of being watched by Uriel. He reaches to the border of Eden garden which is surrounded by close & high thickets & trees. Satan's unhappiness is driven away by the pure air of paradise. But his despair does not leave him. There is only one gate to enter the paradise which is guarded by angels. But Satan, the first thief & the first betrayer, leaps over the high walls of trees & enters the paradise. Milton describes him flying like a sea bird and sitting on the Tree of life Tree of life is the highest tree in Eden Garden. From there Satan observes the wealth of nature spread in the garden. Milton elaborately describes the pastoral beauty of the place God has created all happiness, all sorts of living creatures. Then Milton describes the newly created

creatures-man and woman by God. Adam is tall & erect like God. He looks like the lord of the place. Both of them are royal in their personality. Milton describes their qualities. They are conferred with truth, wisdom, holiness, purity & total liberty. Milton, then, explains their anticipated functions. Adam is made for thought & bravery. He is made to devote God. Eve is soft, sweet, and graceful & made for Adam. Their duty is to look after the garden. So they work & wonder hand in hand naked. They do not have sense of sin. Satan watches them with their delight & liberty and once again feels the sense of repentance. But he decides that he will spoil their happiness. He also comments that he wants to be so close Adam & Eve that either he will be in heaven with them or they will go to hell with him. He says that they should blame God for compelling Satan to spoil the happiness of Adam & Eve. Satan then disguises himself as four footed animal so that he can observe Adam & Eve.

Adam talks to Eve about God's grace to them. God has made this world filled with trees, river, mountains, fruit other small & big animals. In return they have to perform the easy job of looking after the place. He also reminds her one restriction by God. They are allowed to enjoy every delicious fruit in Eden garden, except the fruit of knowledge tree. He tells her that they should not bother about the restriction and do their job & enjoy their freedom eve answers that because he is her guide. She remembers the day she came into being when she came to senses she started walking and happened to see her reflection in the water. First she bewildered because she saw Adam, out of fear she started running away. But Adam explained her about her creation by God. She is made up from one rib of Adam & created to accompany him. Since then they have been leading happy life. When Satan happens to listen the dialogue between Adam & Eve, he feels envy for them. He also learns from their speech that they have been for bidden to eat the fruit of knowledge tree. This information will help him to make his plan to ruin the best creation of God. He then takes round of Eden Garden out of the intension of meeting any angel and gathering more information that may help him in his plan.

Meanwhile we are taken to another corner of Eden garden where Gabriel is sitting who chief of angles is appointed for the security of the place. The young angels are practicing heroic games. Their amours are decorated with diamond & gold. At that time Uriel arrives there informs Gabriel about a sprit making inquiry about the new world created by God. His eye pursued the spirit but it disappeared. He is afraid that some fallen angel might attempt to create problem. Gabriel promises that he and his army will find out it by the day break.

It is evening time. All birds & beasts go to take rest. The sky shines with little stars. Adam & eve have also finished their work & have reached to their bower. Eve is curious to know that if everyone takes rest in the night why the moon & stars shine. Adam answers that God has created millions of lives walk upon the earth. They cannot be seen with physical eyes. Moon & stars provide

their warm heat for the vegetation. Then they offer their prayers to God before going to sleep.

Then Gabriel orders the angels to search for the spirit. Ithureal & Zephon are given the duty to see. Whether Adam & Eve are safe when Ithureal & Zephon reach to the bower of Adam & Eve they find the evil spirit in the form of a load sitting near Eve's ear and trying to excite her imagination. They touch the load and Satan comes back to his real guise. Both the angels are surprised to see Satan, the king of hell there. When the angels inquire why was he disguised and what was he doing there. Satan hatefully replies that he belongs to a higher position than them therefore they cannot ask him any questions. But because the good angels are on the right side, they boldly ask him to go to their master. Satan realizing the power of good feels ashamed. When he takes to Gabriel, he asks Satan why has he entered the Eden garden. Satan reproaches that he found the opportunity so he came out. He tells that neither hell nor Eden Garden is properly guarded. He tells a lie that he has come there in search of happiness. There is a verbal war between Satan & Gabriel. Gabriel asks him to go back to hell or he will chain him & send him to hell. Satan angrily answers that first he should capture him and then think of enchaining him. The squadron of angels gets angry with Satan and they are ready to fight with him. Satan also, realizing the danger, collects his strength and expands himself to his full height. To interfere the war God sends a scale which shows that Gabriel's side is heavy & Satan's side is light. Satan then flies away from the place.

5.4 *Paradise lost Book IV as epic*

W.H. Goodman explains that the epic is a type of narrative verse that possesses several distinctive features. English epic is based on Greek and Latin models. In subject it is elevated and inspired by some heroic or religious ideal. The style is suited to the subject; it is noble & dignified, moving with a stately solemnity. The characters that appear in the course of the narrative are simple in structure and are cast in the heroic mould.

'Paradise lost Book IV' being the part of epic 'Paradise lost' shows features of epic. The setting of the book is hell, space & Eden garden. The characters are angels such as Satan, Uriel, Gabriel, Ithureal, Zephon & human beings like Adam & Eve. Milton's genius reaches to its zenith in the description of the pastoral beauty of Eden garden as well as the description of Adam & Eve. He has also given grand epic similes. The subject of *Paradise lost* is grand. It deals with the theme of God's ways to man. Milton's use of sublime language, pictorial beauty of nature, epic similes and angelic characters make '*Paradise lost IV*' an epic. Milton not only describes the characters but also throws light on the role of Satan & the earliest human behavior. Milton's genius lies in describing the physique & psyche of that character which were & have been unseen. The character of Satan, his psyche is superbly presented by Milton. The way he exposes the nature of Satan, his imagination reaches to height. The very activities of Satan

bring him various titles like first rebellion, first betrayer, and first thief. Milton has portrayed the new world created by God with all its bounty & beauty. The epic *Paradise lost* is enriched with emotional, the logical & intellectual foundation.

5.5 Satan's character

Satan plays important role in the epic *Paradise lost* and Book IV of *Paradise Lost* introduces us with the nature of Satan. His character displays a spectrum of feelings. So at a time we feel sympathy for him but we also hate him for his ego & villainy. Satan's behavior and his feeling resemble with human nature. The beginning of the book introduces us the character of Satan who has escaped from Hell and is in search of New world created by God. He has been punished by God for his revolt against God; still he plans to attempt defeat of God. To plan his scheme he disguises himself & enters Eden Garden stealthily. He lands on the highest tree of life which is at the Centre of the Garden. Right from the beginning of the book, Satan is engaged in the war of emotions on the battle ground of his mind. On the other hand he feels strong repentance for his act of betrayal of God. He knows that God conferred endless grace on him and he was next to God. But his free will created lust for power in his mind. He wanted to be superior to God and therefore revolted against God and got defeated by him. As a punishment he was thrown into hell. But he has come out of the Hell with evil intension of spelling the world by God. As soon as he crosses the Boundary of Hell & enters the universe with bright sun, he feels despair & envy, because once he too enjoyed higher position than the sun. He also feels that whatever he did to God in return of His grace was nothing but betrayal and he has no place to go and confess his sin. He knows that asking forgiveness of God means asking peace from Satan. No hope is left for him. God's punishment should have brought Satan to some positive change but we see Satan becoming more defiant. He thinks that if there is no hope then he should not feel fear also and plan for the indirect defeat of God. He feels envy for Adam & Eve also because they are enjoying the grace of God. His ego is fanned by his envy. He knows that he carries his hell within wherever he goes he takes his hell with him. He confirms to have friendship with Adam & Eve that will bring him either to leaves or will take them with him to hell. When he learns that God has forbidden Adam & Eve to eat the fruit of knowledge free, he thinks that he can use the information for hatching his conspiracy. He even tries to excite the imagination of Eve who is fast asleep, by disguising as a toad when caught by Ithureal & Zaphon, instead of feeling ashamed he answers in hateful, egoist manner. Throughout the book Milton has sketched the character of Satan in a pattern. There is a continuous play of remorse, envy, anger & ego in Satan. His individualism, intellectual analysis, emotional outburst, strength & free will enchant us. For these Qualities he may claim the title of hero. His realization of

his sin tempts us to feel pity for him but he cannot be called a hero because irrespective of his Qualities & act of sin takes him to the scale of evil.

5.6 Other Characters in the poem

Along with the major character of Satan, Milton's has drawn some angelic & human character in the poem.

Adam, the First man is portrayed as erect and tall like God. He has the ability to think, He is wise and brave and obedient to God. He is aware of God's grace to him as well as his duty to God. It is he who answers the curious Question of Eve about the working of the universe, the creatures, the animals etc. Milton has drawn the character with majestic stature.

Eve, the first woman, is portrayed with delight smokes. She is created, from one of the ribs of Adam to accompany him. Milton describes that Adam is created to devote God and Eve, to devote Adam. She too is obedient and grateful to Adam. She trusts him that whatever he tells her is correct. She gets answers for her Questions by Adam. Through their dialogue Milton informs us about the creation of new world and the function of every element in the world.

Along with these human characters, there are some angelic characters are also portrayed by Milton. Uriel is the sun spirit. He is given the job of watching the universe. When he sees a new angel disfiguring, he immediately informs Gabriel.

Gabriel is the chief of the squadron of angels who are appointed to guard the paradise. As soon Gabriel is informed about an evil spirit. He sends the angels to watch every corner of the garden. He asks Ithureal & Zephon to watch the bower where Adam & Eve sleep.

Ithureal & Zaphon are the angels who catch Satan disguised as toad & exciting the imagination of Eve.

5.7 Pastoral beauty in *Paradise lost Book IV*

Milton's imagination is presented in ripped manner in the description of the pastoral beauty in Eden Garden. We observe the beauty through the eyes of Satan when he reaches to the Border of Eden Garden. The Garden is surrounded by mounds covered with grass. The Border of the garden is secured by small thickets as well as big trees in such a manner that no one can easily enter the garden. Along with the pastoral beauty Milton has elaborately described the shapes, colors, hues & fragrances. Satan lands on the big tree in the garden like a sea bird and looks at the wealth of nature spread around. The tree of life is the highest tree. Beside it is the tree of knowledge. It is also a tree of death because it gives the knowledge of evil also. Then Milton describes the large river flowing through the shaggy hill. Sometimes the river flows underneath the big mountains. It has a caused a fresh fountain of water. The up & down flow of river is divided into four main streams. The lines-

‘How from the sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl & sands of gold,
 with mazy error under pendent shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant & fed flowers worthy of paradise’
 describes the riches of paradise. Milton further describes the treasure of plants,
 trees, flowers & fruits in the paradise
 ‘A happy rural seat of various view:
 Groves those rich trees wept odorous gums & balm;
 other’s whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
 Hung amiable ----’
 Lines 230 to 280 thoroughly describe various flowers, trees, fruit & fragrances
 in the Eden Garden. Lines 330 to 350 describe the delicious fruits & various
 animals like bears, tigers, leopards, elephants in the garden.

5.8 Features of Milton’s Poetry-

W. H. Goodman in his first volume of *History of English Literature* has elaborately explained the features of Milton’s poetry as follows-

In the rule of James I & Charles I Puritanism was very strong and Milton was very much influenced by his age & Puritanism Milton’s major poems show the influence of Puritanism. Goodman writes that ‘He drew the subject matter of *Paradise Lost*’ and ‘*Paradise Regained*’ from the Bible. He describes Heaven and Hell. He talks of God & Christ. He gives the origin of man & his first sin also (page 686). His *Paradise Lost* reflects complete Puritanism.

Along with the force of Puritanism, Milton also shows influence of Renaissance. The spirit of romance, dancing & rustic sports underlines Elizabethan influence in his poems. The influence of Renaissance is also seen in his humanitarian approach.

His introduction of various epic similes shows his deep study of Latin & Greek. Goodman remarks that ‘a great charm of his poetry resulted from his classical bent of mind. His love & respect for the ancients made his poetry sublime & lofty’ (Page 690)

Another feature of his poetry is his sense of beauty. In *Paradise lost Book IV*, Milton’s imagination is at the Zenith when he describes the beautiful pastoral scene in Eden Garden as well as the characters of Satan, Adam & Eve.

The grand theme, the vast & rich description of Eden garden, the majestic garden, the emotional exaltation and the lapidary style automatically confer sublimity on Milton’s poetry.

Along with Puritanism, Renaissance & classicism, Milton’s work is also influenced by his own life which brings autobiographical element to his writing. Goodman has quoted Coleridge’s observation, In *Paradise Lost* indeed in every one of his poems-it is Milton himself whom you see; his Satan, his Adam, his Raphael, almost his eve-are all John Milton and it is a sense of this intense

egotism that gives me the greatest pleasure in reading Milton's work' (Page 693)

These are some features of Milton's poetry that make him the representative figure of his age.

5.9 Self learning Question-

- a) Discuss the central idea of *Paradise lost Book IV*.
- b) Why does Satan come to new world?
- c) Examine Satan's character.
- d) Comment on other character in Book IV
- e) Write a note on the description of Pastoral beauty in *Paradise lost Book IV*.

5.10 Summary-

Paradise lost Book IV tells us the story of Satan's entry in the Eden garden. Satan, who has been thrown to hell by God as punishment of his revolt, wants to defeat God indirectly by spoiling the new creation of God. That's why Satan enters Eden gardens. He feels envy for Adam & Eve for whom God has created the new glorious world. He sees Adam & Eve and keeps watch on them. In disguised manner he moves around to collect more information about them that could help them to prepare his plan of revenge. At last when he is attempting to excite the imagination of Eve, he is caught by the angels and taken to their leader Gabriel. Instead of feeling ashamed, Satan answers him in very hateful manner. The argument between grows heated and war like condition is created. God interferes the situation by sending a scale that shows situation by sending a scale that shows that Satan is wrong. Satan fries away.

5.11 Activities-

- a) Collect more information about the other books of *Paradise last*
- b) Compile more information about Milton's other poems.

5.12 Bibliography-

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Unit 6

Hidden Flame- John Dryden.

6.0-Introduction to the Author-

John Dryden (1631-1700) is the representative poet of Restoration period. He practiced his hand on many literary genres such as comedy, tragedy, poetry, heroic drama & translation. His poetry differs from that of romantic & metaphysical poets on the basic factual subject matter as well as his precise & concentrated thoughts. He is the dominant literary figure of his age who established the heroic couplet as a standard form of English poetry. His satires exemplify it effectively. He was conferred with the honor of poet laureate in 1668. His well known poems are *Absalom & Achitophel*, *Mac Flecknoe*, *The Hind and the Panther*, *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*, *Alexander's Feast* etc.

6.1 About the poem

The poem *Hidden Flame* by Dryden is written from the viewpoint a woman. The idea of love here is platonic therefore being flame it is hidden.

6.2 The poem

Hidden Flame

I Feed a flame within, which so torments me
that it both pains my heart and yet contents me;
'Tis such a pleasing smart and I so love it,
That I had rather die than once remove it.

Yet he, for whom I grieve, shall never know it,
My tongue does not betray, nor my eyes show it.
not a sign, nor a tear, my pain discloses,
But they fall silently, like dew on roses.

Thus, to prevent my love from being cruel,
my heart's the sacrifice, as tis the fuel;
And while I suffer this to give him quiet,
my faith rewards my love, though he deny it.

on his eyes will I gaze, and there delight me,
while I conceal my love no from can fright me.
To be more happy I dare not aspire,
Nor can I fall more low, mounting no higher.

6.3 Central idea of the Poem

The Hidden Flame is a love poem. The poet has written this poem from the viewpoint of a woman. This woman does not want to expose her feeling of love to the person she loves. She tells us her secret with the help of many contradictory statements. The woman tells us that there is a flame in her heart. This is the flame of love. The flame torments her. She is having a strange feeling of this love. It gives her pain but at the same time it contents her. The flame pleases her so much so that she loves it. Though the flame of love gives her pain, she does not want to remove it rather she would prefer to die. Another interesting thing she tells about her love is that she will never betray her by exposing her love neither her eyes will reflect her love. She will not disclose her love & its pain through signs or tears. Her tears will fall silently just as dew drops fall on roses. Thus she will prevent her love from being cruel, because if people come to know her secret she will suffer a lot. Her heart is the sacrifice and it is the fuel of her love. She will suffer because of it but the person, whom she loves, will enjoy peace. Her faith is the reward of her love. She will look into her lover's eyes & she will find delight there. She will conceal her love so that there is no fear of any frown. She means to say that since the world always frowns at lovers as people do not like love & lovers. She will hide her love. Therefore there is no fear of frowning on her by others. She wants to be happier therefore there is no fear of frowning on her by others. She wants to be happier therefore she does not aspire more. She will not fall low or mount high. In case of love she will not expect more nor will she give it up.

6.4 Theme of the Poem-

Dear students, Dryden has explored the theme of love in this poem. But the expression of love is in platonic manner. Being a man, Dryden is looking at the theme of love from the viewpoint of a woman. The woman is in love with someone but she does not want to expose her love either to the person or to the world. A question may arise in our mind such as what is the point in hiding the feeling love or if the lady is hiding her love then what's the point in loving at all. At this point the poem differs from other love poems. The theme of the poem shows metaphysical bent. Dryden here repeats Shakespeare's idea that love nourishes the lover & gets nourished by the lover. In this poem, the flame of love is in the heart of the woman, it is tormenting her but at the same time it is satisfying her. She finds that hidden flame very pleasing. So she loves it. The very idea that one is in love sets the one apart from other common people. She would prefer to die than to remove it from her heart. Generally a person who is in love can be identified with the help of some symptoms such as the words spoken by the person, the person's eyes reflect his/her love for some person, or the tears shed by the person give evidence that he or she is in love. But the woman assures that her tongue, her eyes, her tears will not disclose her love to

the world. The highest limit of concealing of love is, the woman will not even expose her love to the person she loves. Those who fall in love either move ahead on the path of progress by expressing love to the person they love or out of the fear of the society they give up their love but the woman in the poem wants to keep her love hidden & states quo. She says that she is happy with the hidden feelings of love in her heart. She does not aspire for further progress, nor does she lower down herself by giving it up.

6.5 Significance of the title

The title of the poem *Hidden Flame* is significant. The very contraction in the poem begins with the title. Flame cannot be concealed for two reasons- Flame shines and thus cannot be hidden. If one tries to hide it means putting it off. Dryden is actually talking about the flame of love which cannot be seen with physical eyes but can be felt. The woman in the poem does not want to disclose her love to the world & even to the person whom she loves. Moreover she assures that her tongue, her eyes & even her tears will not expose her love. She will hide it in her heart. It gives her pain but at the same time it satisfies her. Her love is such a joyous pain for her that she would prefer to die than to remove it from her heart. She is not afraid of the world because she has concealed her love so nobody will frown at her. As reader a question troubles us, what is the use of such love then? But the woman has a reply to it she says, my faith rewards my love. By hiding her love, She wants to be more happy because she does not aspire more nor does she give up her love.

6.6 Self-learning Questions

- 1) Discuss the poet's idea of love in *Hidden flame*
- 2) What is the significance of the title *Hidden Flame*?
- 3) Explain the contradictory statements in *Hidden Flame*

6.7 Summary

The poem *Hidden Flame* is written from the viewpoint of a woman. The woman is in love with someone but she does not want to disclose her love to the world as well as the person whom she loves. The hidden love gives her pain but at the same time satisfies her. She promises that her tongue, her eyes, her tears will not disclose her love. Her heart is the fuel for her love and will get nourished by her love. Because she has cancelled her love from everyone she is not afraid of the world. She does not aspire more from love nor will she give her love up.

6.8 Activities

- a) Collect more information about Dryden as a poet.
- b) Compile information about contemporary poet of Dryden.

6.9 Difficult Words-

torment- trouble content-satisfaction
aspire- wish fright-fear

6.10 Bibliography

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Unit 7

Ode on a Grecian Urn - John Keats.

7.0 Introduction to the Author

John Keats, a major poet of Romantic Period, was born in London in 1795. His literary career began in 1817 with the publication of first volume of his poems. In 1818, came his another work *Endymion: a poetic romance*. His personal life was full of many problems. His health was affected because of a walking tour, criticism of his poetry hurt him a lot, death of his younger brother, unsympathetic attitude of his wife Fanny Brown towards him period of sufferings Keats produced his best works like 'The Eve of saint Agnes & other poems'

Keats stands as the poet of beauty among his entire contemporary poet. He was influenced by his predecessors like Spenser, Milton & Dryden. His poems show influence of Greek & Medieval literature. Keats wearied life diverted him towards the world of imagination. His poems reflect some of the important features of romantic poetry such as sensuousness, high imagination, and sense of beauty. His best of poem are found in his odes. His odes are perfectly shaped & steeped in emotions. His odes succeed in taking his readers from harsh reality & ugliness of life to mysterious & enchanting world of imagination. Along with mystery & enchantment Keats colors his odes with lyrical beauty. His odes are immortalized with the subtle feeling of beauty through sublime imagination.

7.1 About the Poem

The prescribed poem *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is one of the finest odes of John Keats. This is one of the finest odes of John Keats. The ode underlines the lofty & subtle imagination through which the passive antique Urn becomes highly eloquent. The ode is an example of the impact of Hellenism on Keats.

7.2 Poem

Ode on a Grecian Urn-John Keats

I

Thou still unravished bride of Quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A floery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? what maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? what struggle to escape?

What pipes & timbrel? What wild ecstasy?

II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are Sweeter, therefore, ye soft pipes, play on,
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of notone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave.
Thy song, nor even can those trees be bare;
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade though thou hast not thy bliss.
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III

Ah, happy happy boughs! that cannot shed
your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu;
And happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new,
More happy love! more happy happy love!
For ever warm & still to be enjoyed,
For ever painting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion for above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful & cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or seashore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And little town, thy streets for ever more
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V

O Attic shapel fair attitude with brede
of marble men & maidens overwrought;
with forest branches and trodden weed;
Thou silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As thoth eternity: cold pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of whom thou sayst
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty',—that is all

Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.

7.3 Central idea of the poem-

The poem *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is divided into five stanzas. Keats happened to see a Grecian Urn, i.e. an Urn from Greek period. The pictures carved on the Urn from Greek period. The pictures carved on the Urn inspired him to write this poem.

In the first stanza, the poet admires the beauty of the Urn. He compares the Urn with a bride whose veil is not yet opened & who is silent. He calls the Urn, the child of silence & slow time because nobody will believe that the urn belongs to Greek period. It is so beautiful and well shaped. He also calls the Urn 'Sylvan historian', a historian who is telling the story of woodland. The Urn is telling a flowery tale more sweetly than the poems by the poet. The Poet asks some questions to the Urn. He wants to know whether the shapes carved on the Urn with the border of leaves are from Tempe, a valley in Greece or dales of Arcady, valleys of Arcadia. He wants to know whether the shapes carved on the Urn are human beings or Gods, why the maidens are running, what is the mad pursuit, what is the struggle to escape for, what are the musical instrument and what kind of wild ecstasy is there.

Second stanza describes the pictures of musician playing musical instruments, & a bold lover chasing his beloved. The poet gives a wonderful statement that the melodies that we hear are sweet but sweeter are the melodies that are unheard. The poet imagination reaches to its highest limit. He can hear the melodies sung through musical instruments played by musician carved on the Urn. He asks the musician to play the pipes, not to the physical ears but to the ears of spirit. These tunes are 'ditties of no tone' that is tuneless or inaudible songs. The musician is a young man. He is playing his musical instrument standing beneath the tree. The poet imagines that the song of the musician will never end; neither the tree will lose its leaves. Then the poet describes the poem, when he writes-

'Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence & slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme;

Though the Grecian Urn, the poet shows the superiority of art over reality. Real moments are momentary and therefore the joy of real moments is also momentary. Relatively art confers eternity on joy & beauty on the moments captured with the help of art. Thus the poet admires the Urn as well as impact of art when he says-

O Attic shape Fair attitude! with brede
of marble men & maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou Silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: cold pastoral !
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain in midst of other woe.
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou says
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'- that is all
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.

7.6 The poem as ode-

While explaining the concept of ode, Gagan Raj writes that ode refers to a lyric poem, which is usually of some length. The main features have been an elaborate stanza structure, a marked formality and stateliness in tone and style (which make it ceremonious) and lofty sentiments and thoughts. In short an ode is rather a grand poem; a full dress poem (Dictionary of literary Terms, P 116-117). The word 'Ode' has Greek origin & it means song. Ode is an address to some abstract idea/thing/personal/animal. The tone of ode is usually serious & exalted.

Greek poet Pindar gets the credit of writing first ode. Later on Roman poet Horace improved the form of ode. Therefore odes are named after them such as Pindaric ode and Horatian ode. Pindaric odes have regular & fixed structures & little complex whereas Horatian odes also have regular structure but without divisions. Critics have admired Keats for conferring possible highest perfection on ode and his odes are counted as the ripest fruit of his maturity as a poet. His famous six odes- *The Ode to Psyche*, *Ode to Melancholy*, *Ode to Nightingale*, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, *Ode to Indolence* and *Ode to Autumn* are counted as incomparable. His prescribed ode for our study is, *Ode on a Grecian Urn* & describes the pictures carved in the Urn. The poem maintains a serious tone though it deals with sensuous, emotional and imaginative mood and the conclusion of the poem gives a thought that is developed through the description of the various pictures on the Urn.

7.7 Structure of the Poem-

The structure of the poem is well knit & compact. Being in the form of ode, the poem addresses to a Grecian Urn. The poem is divided into five stanzas. First stanza of the poem arises our curiosity about the Urn because of the questions posed by the poet. Stanzas 2 to 4 describe various pictures carved on the Urn and the imaginative interpretation of pictures which exemplify Keats' idea of beauty- 'beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder.' Stanza 5, once again admires the Urn as the symbol of eternity conferred by art. The last

Stanza also consolidates the grasping of all descriptions in the form of a thought given in the concluding line-

Beauty is truth, truth beauty'
The diction is elegant & style is lapidary.

7.8 Self learning questions-

- 1) Explain the pictures carved on the Urn in the poem *Ode on a Grecian Urn*.
- 2) What is Ode? Examine *Ode on a Grecian Urn* as ode.
- 3) What is the theme of *Ode on a Grecian Urn*?
- 4) Write a note on Keats as a poet with reference to *Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

7.9 Summary-

Ode on a Grecian Urn is a lyric that describes various pictures carved on the urn. First picture described is of a musician who is playing musical instrument beneath a tree. His melodies are unheard but the poet imagines that unheard melodies are sweeter. There is the picture of a young lover who is following his beloved to kiss her. He cannot enjoy the happiness of kissing his beloved because he is in picture but the poet imagines that the lover should feel sorry because his beloved and his love for her remain young forever. Another picture is of a priest who is leading a decorated heifer for sacrifice to some green altar. He is followed by a procession of the people. The poet imagines about the town emptied by these people who will never return to their town because they are in picture. According to the poet, the Urn with all these pictures is a symbol of eternity conferred by art and is giving the message- 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty.'

7.10 Activities

- a) Gather more information about other romantic poets.
- b) Compile information about Romanticism/Romantic movement.

7.11 Difficult Words

Unravished-whose veil is not yet opened.
leaf-fringed- border of leaves.
Temp-a valley in Greece
dales of Arcady-valley of Arcadia (Place)
Pursuit -effort
ditties of no tone-tuneless, inaudible song
grieve- sorrow
bliss- joy
bid a dieu-say farewell

high sorrowful & cloy'd-profoundly miserable
heifer-a young cow/calf
lowing -crying
blanks- sides (of the cow)
citadel- castle
desolate- lonely
Attic shape- Greek shape
brede- embroidery
overwrought- carved

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Unit-8

A Victim- Alfred Tennyson

8.0 Introduction to the poet-

Alfred Tennyson was a Victorian poet. He was Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland. Tennyson is very famous for his short lyrics. He has used classical myths as the themes of his poetry. Along with lyrics, he has also written some blank verse. His famous poems are 'Break, Break, Break', 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', 'Tears Idle Tears', 'Crossing the Bar', 'Ulysses', 'In Memoriam' etc. His poems have provided immortal phrases. Tennyson writes with the influence of romantic poets like Keats and others. His descriptive writing and use of rich imagery illustrates the influence of romantic poets on him. His poems also reflect the features of Victorian poetry such as maturity of feelings, love for order and tendency of moralizing, conflict between religion and science. His prescribed poem is not one of his important poems but is rich in description and emotions.

8.1 About the poem-

The poem tells the story of a king whose Kingdom faces a severe problem and He is given the advice of sacrificing his most loved one. The poem expresses the dilemma of a mother and a father and husband

8.2 Poem – **The Victim**

Alfred Tennyson

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low;
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe;

So thick they died the people cried,
 'The Gods are moved against the land.'
The Priest in horror about his altar
 To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:
 'Help us from famine
 And plague and strife!
 What would you have of us?
 Human life?
 Were it our nearest,
 Were it our dearest,—
 (Answer, O answer)
 We give you his life.'

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
 And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
 And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
 Or down in a furrow scathed with flame;
And ever and aye the Priesthood moan'd,
 Till at last it seem'd that an answer came:
 'The King is happy
 In child and wife;
 Take you his dearest,
 Give us a life.'

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
 The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
 She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
 His beauty still with his years increased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold;
 He seem'd a victim due to the priest.

The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
'The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the boy.'

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;
The mother said, 'They have taken the child
To spill his blood and heal the land.
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea;
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?'

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
'O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for me.'
The King was shaken with holy fear;
'The Gods,' he said, 'would have chosen well;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won:
'We have his dearest,

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow,
To the altar-stone she sprang alone:
'Me, not my darling, no!'

He caught her away with a sudden cry;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking, 'I am his dearest, I—
I am his dearest!' rush'd on the knife.
And the Priest was happy:
'O Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the wife!'

8.3 Central Idea of the Poem-

The poem 'A Victim' tells the story of natural calamity faced by the citizens of a kingdom. A kingdom is affected by epidemic like plague and people die in large number. After plague, famine attacks people and they die. Throughout the small village and in cowsheds fire and smoke is spread. After the natural calamity, enemy attacks the kingdom and again number of people die. People who are buffeted by these continuous attacks begin to think that because gods are against them, they are suffering so much. The Priest of the kingdom raises his hands towards sky and prays Thor and Odin. He prays Thor and Odin to help them from famine, plague and strife. He wants to know what Gods want from them. He asks whether Gods want them to sacrifice human life to please them. He also asks whether Gods want them to sacrifice the life of the nearest and dearest one. He requests Gods to answer and they will sacrifice the life. Irrespective of the prayers, enemy keeps on the attack. Cattle die, animals die. Because of the food, everything gets destroyed. The Priest keeps on praying and complaining and one day it seems that he receives answer from Gods. The answer told by the Priest is 'The king is living happy life with his wife and child and the Gods want the life of his dearest one.' The Priest starts searching for the King who has gone for hunting in the forest. When the Priest and people come to the King's wife, they find her sitting with the child folding her arms around him. The child is only 8 years old and is very beautiful. The Priest finds

the child suitable victim to sacrifice to Gods. The Priest holds the child and happily says that the Gods have given the answer and they will give them the child. The King returns home from hunting and he has brought a game for the child. The mother of the child tells him that people have taken the child to sacrifice because the land is sick, people are diseased and affected by famine. They will spill the blood of the child on the land to make it productive again. To get the life of people back, gods must be satisfied. The mother prays to the king to tell her whom he loves more; his wife or child. The King is worried. He says to his wife that there is no use of discussing the question because the judgment is already given by the Priest. He has selected the child. The King is afraid of Gods. He answers that the Gods have selected their victim. He further tells to his wife that they both; wife and child are near and dear to him. And who is the dearest to him, he cannot answer. But the priest is happy because he has the dearest one of the king i.e. the king's only child. Preparations are made for the ritual of sacrifice. When the child is kept on the altar stone, the king's wife springs to the altar stone saying that she is the dearest of the King and not the child. She is caught and taken away but she keeps on crying that she is the dearest and throws herself on the knife. Thus she sacrifices herself. The Priest happily says that Gods have decided who was dearest to the King and they have given life to the Gods.

The poem ends on the note of self sacrifice of the King's wife.

8.4 Structure of the Poem-

The poem is composed of 6 stanzas. First few lines of each stanza have rhyme scheme ab ab but remaining lines are relatively short and without rhyme scheme. The poem is simple, straight forward and is narrated in story form. It is descriptive in nature and without any complication. Tennyson has not used many devices and has, thus, saved the poem from being ambiguous. But the simplicity does not rob the poem off its beauty. Some lines like, 'Then Thorpe and byre arose in fire', 'The Child was only eight summers old', exemplify the poetic beauty. The poem develops with some characters like Priest, King and his wife. Tennyson has painted a word picture with the descriptive lines of the poem. He has effectively used the element of mythology in enhancing the effect of the poem. The story, if on one hand is literal, and then on the other hand it leads to thinking about human relations and the role of divinity in

deciding human life. Almost all poems by Tennyson contain the element of melancholy. Tennyson is also criticized for his style containing repetition and assonance. The poem contains repetition and assonance.

8.5 Element of melancholy-

Tennyson's dissatisfaction with his contemporary age is strongly reflected in the element of melancholy in his poems. 'The Victim' also contains a strong note of melancholy. The poem begins with the note of melancholy with the description of the spread of plague, famine and attack of enemy, death of people, cattle, birds, fishes, dead people lying everywhere and furrows scathed with flame. The devastation creates an atmosphere of melancholy spread all over the kingdom. It increases more when the Priest takes the king's child for sacrifice. Crying of the King's wife and helplessness of the King who fails to point out who is his dearest and to save his wife and child, add to the melancholy of the poem. The poem also ends on the note of melancholy. When the King's wife sacrifices herself instead of her child. A King and A Queen can be afraid of Gods and fail to save their child but a mother is not afraid of God and saves her child. This is illustrated by the sacrifice made by the mother. Her sacrifice is accepted as the decision of Gods

8.6 Element of mythology-

Tennyson was dissatisfied with his contemporary age therefore found refuge in past. His refuge in past is often criticized as his escapist tendency by his critics. His withdrawal in past is found in his use of mythical element in his poems. His important poems like 'The Lotos Eaters', 'Ulysses', 'Tithonus', effectively make use of mythology. 'The Victim' also contains an element of mythology.. When the kingdom is affected by natural calamities like plague, famine and is attacked by his enemy, the Priest prays to Gods- Thor and Odin.

Odin was a major God according to Norse mythology. He was associated with war, battle, victory, death, wisdom, shamanism, magic, poetry, prophecy and hunt. Thor was the son of Odin. He was a hammer wielding god. He was associated with thunder, lightning and storms.

The Priest requests gods to help them and wants to know what offerings gods want from them and one day it seems that the Priest receives an answer that the gods want the life of the dearest of the king. The Priest goes in search of the king to know who his dearest is. The king is in the forest for hunting. When the Priest goes to king's wife, he thinks that the beautiful child of the king is the due victim to satisfy the gods and so he takes the child for sacrifice but as we know at the end of the poem, the queen sacrifices her life to save the life of her child.

8.7 Theme of the Poem-

The Poem is in story form. The poem develops the theme of human relations and role of divinity in deciding human life.

The poem tells a story about a kingdom. The kingdom gets affected by number of natural calamities like plague and famine and is even attacked by enemy. The people begin to think that gods are unhappy with them that's why they are pouring calamities on them. The Priest prays to Gods- Odin and Thor. He wants the gods to help them. He also asks gods what they want the people to offer them. One day the Priest tells that the gods want the life of the dearest one of the King. Accordingly the Priest selects the only child of the king as victim to offer to gods. The king's wife wants to know who the dearest one of the king is. The king, who is afraid of gods, finds no use of answering this question. When the child is about to be sacrificed, the wife of king sacrifices herself to save the life of her child. The poem underlines the unconditional love of a mother for her child. It may be difficult for a man who is king also to decide his dearest one- wife or child. It may be difficult for a wife who is queen also to decide who dearest one is. But it is not difficult for a mother to choose her dearest one. The poem indirectly explains the complexity of human relations and also underlines the helplessness of human beings in maintaining the relations. The poem also provokes to think about the role of divinity in deciding human life. Gods who are the creators and protectors of human beings, do they really want sacrifice of the same? Can they be satisfied with the offerings of human life? Or is it the blind faith of the Priest and people that is responsible for destroying the queen and happiness of the King's life? Many such questions arise in our mind after reading the poem. The poem is appealing at twofold levels. On one level, it is simply the story of a kingdom and the king, queen and

their only child. On the other level, the poem denotes role of divinity in disposing of human happiness for no logical reason.

8.8 Self learning Questions-

1. Discuss the story in the poem 'The Victim'.
2. Explain the element of melancholy in the poem.
3. Examine the element of mythology in the poem.
4. Discuss the structure of the poem.

8.9. Activities-

1. Collect more information about Odin and Thor
2. Find out other myths used by Tennyson in his poems.

8.10 Summary-

The poem tells a story about a kingdom. The kingdom gets affected by number of natural calamities like plague and famine and is even attacked by enemy. The people begin to think that gods are unhappy with them that's why they are pouring calamities on them. The Priest prays to Gods- Odin and Thor. He wants the gods to help them. He also asks gods what they want the people to offer them. One day the Priest tells that the gods want the life of the dearest one of the King. Accordingly the Priest selects the only child of the king as victim to offer to gods. The king's wife wants to know who the dearest one of the king is. The king, who is afraid of gods, finds no use of answering this question. When the child is about to be sacrificed, the wife of king sacrifices herself to save the life of her child. The poem contains elements of melancholy and mythology.

8.11 Glossary-

Famine- draught

Byre- cowhouse

Thorpe- small village

Foe- enemy

Furrow- long narrow trench cut in the earth by plough

Scathed- severe, harsh

Appeased- satisfied

Rites- religious/ solemn ceremony.

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Unit-9

A Dialogue of Self and Soul- W. B. Yeats

9.0 Introduction to the poet-

William Butler Yeats was born at Sandymouth near Dublin on June 13, 1865. He began writing poetic plays at young age. Critics have divided his poetry into various periods. Such as-

1. **The Celtic Twilight Period-** During this period Yeats wrote poems with mixed influence from Walter Pater, Romantics of 90s and Pre Raphaelite poet like Rossetti. He also included Irish mythology, magic and Occultism in his poetry. *The Juvenilia, The Crossways, The Rose, The Wind among the Reeds* are some remarkable poetic works of this period.
2. **Transitional Period-** Frustration in love affair, dissatisfaction with Irish people, and interest in Theosophy, company of friends like Arthur, Symons, and Ezra Pound made Yeats more realistic during this period. *Adams Curse, The Folly of being Comforted, The Green Helmet and Other Poems* are some important poetical works of this period.
3. **Maturity and Complexity-** The poetry of this period reflects maturity of Yeats as a poet. Because he drew images from various sources his poems become complex.
4. **Period of Maturity-** This is the last phase of his poetic career. Poems written during this period *The Full Moon in March* reflects his poetic wisdom.

Yeats was acclaimed as major English poet. Though he wrote on various subjects like ancient legends, mythology, folklore, politics, history, love friends. He also created new myths. His maturity as a poet is reflected in the mythical note in his poems that makes his poetry complex. Yeats practiced his own theory of mask which provided a refuge from the increasing pressure of the science oriented materialistic world around him. Yeats was also admired as the chief exponent of the symbolist movement in England. He is praised as myth maker by Cleanth Brooks.

9.1 About the poem- The Poem *A dialogue of Self and Soul* is one of the important poems by Yeats. The Poem is from his volume *The Winding Stair and Other Poems*. The poem invites attention towards Yeats' concern for life and health. The poem also has autobiographical note.

Dear Students let's read the poem first

9.2 Poem- A Dialogue of Self and Soul

I

My Soul , I summon to the winding ancient stair;
Set all your mind upon the steep ascent,
Upon the broken, crumbling battlement,
Upon the breathless starlit air,
"Upon the star that marks the hidden pole;
Fix every wandering thought upon
That quarter where all thought is done:
Who can distinguish darkness from the soul

My Self . The consecrated blade upon my knees
Is Sato's ancient blade, still as it was,
Still razor-keen, still like a looking-glass
Unspotted by the centuries;
That flowering, silken, old embroidery, torn
From some court-lady's dress and round
The woden scabbard bound and wound
Can, tattered, still protect, faded adorn

My Soul . Why should the imagination of a man
Long past his prime remember things that are
Emblematical of love and war?
Think of ancestral night that can,
If but imagination scorn the earth
And intellect is wandering
To this and that and t'other thing,
Deliver from the crime of death and birth.

My self . Montashigi, third of his family, fashioned it
Five hundred years ago, about it lie
Flowers from I know not what embroidery —
Heart's purple — and all these I set
For emblems of the day against the tower
Emblematical of the night,
And claim as by a soldier's right
A charter to commit the crime once more.

My Soul. Such fullness in that quarter overflows
And falls into the basin of the mind
That man is stricken deaf and dumb and blind,

For intellect no longer knows
I, Is from the I, Ought, or I knower from the I Known —
That is to say, ascends to Heaven;
Only the dead can be forgiven;
But when I think of that my tongue's a stone.

II

My Self . A living man is blind and drinks his drop.
What matter if the ditches are impure?
What matter if I live it all once more?
Endure that toil of growing up;
The ignominy of boyhood; the distress
Of boyhood changing into man;
The unfinished man and his pain
Brought face to face with his own clumsiness;
The finished man among his enemies? —
How in the name of Heaven can he escape
That defiling and disfigured shape
The mirror of malicious eyes
Casts upon his eyes until at last
He thinks that shape must be his shape?
And what's the good of an escape
If honour find him in the wintry blast?

I am content to live it all again
And yet again, if it be life to pitch
Into the frog-spawn of a blind man's ditch,
A blind man battering blind men;
Or into that most fecund ditch of all,
The folly that man does
Or must suffer, if he woos
A proud woman not kindred of his soul.
I am content to follow to its source
Every event in action or in thought;
Measure the lot; forgive myself the lot!
When such as I cast out remorse
So great a sweetness flows into the breast
We must laugh and we must sing,
We are blest by everything,
Everything we look upon is blest.

9.3 Central Idea of the poem- The poem is a dialogue between soul and self. Here self means poet himself and soul means his soul. The soul invites self to ascend the winding stair and reach to the tower. Winding stair here means journey from material life to the world of spirit, God and the tower stands for the world of God. The soul invites self to unite with Him (God). The soul tells the self that on reaching the top, the self will learn about the hidden Pole (Truth) and asks to pay attention to the Infinite, the Absolute, and the Eternal who can distinguish between day and night. According to soul, this type of action can liberate the self from the bondage of life and death.

The self replies to the soul. It shows the soul Sato's sword. The sword's blade is sharp and clean. The sword is centuries old but not trusted at all. The wooden scabbard of the sword is covered in silk cloth that is embroidered with flowers. The cloth must be torn from the dress of a court lady. The sword is symbolic of the will of action, of a war. The silk cloth that covers the sword stands for love, acceptance of life. The self denies the soul's offer to leave this world. The self prefers to accept the world.

The soul reminds the self i. e. the poet that he is old now and he should not think in terms of love and war. Because he is old he should think of that darkness that covers the temporal. Here the temporal stands for life whereas the darkness stands for death or life after death. The soul reminds the self that the self should focus his thoughts on permanent darkness. That can save him from the cycle of life and death. The soul calls upon the self to select ascetic life and reject the material life.

But the self is happy with the life and the activities related to it. Showing Sato's sword, the self informs the soul that the sword was designed by a person Montashigi, some 550 years ago. The beautiful silk cover and the sword are the symbolic of day and light and the tower to which the soul is inviting is symbolic of night, darkness. The self shows liking for day, light and not for darkness. The self wishes to fight the life like soldier and do the crime of life and death again and again.

The soul, on the other hand tries to explain the blessing of eternity. Once there is the realization of oneness with the eternal, one gets great bliss and the realization of this bliss makes one speechless.

The soul tries to explain the difficulties, anxieties and problems of life and appeals the self to give up liking for such life. But the self is willing to accept the life with all its difficulties and problems. A grown up man is fully aware of the enemies around him. But the self thinks that life with all its blots and blemishes is acceptable than barren ascetic life. The self argues that life is like blind man's ditch full of breeding frogs. He will accept it. He stupidly loved a woman who did not respond his love and made his life miserable. But he wants to live this life. The self rejects the summon of soul and prefers to accept life with all its difficulties. Once he accepts it, his heart experiences joy around him

and thus feels it as a mystic experience. In the concluding lines of the poem the poet gives the message of accepting life with all its oddities. Therefore he concludes-

'We must laugh and we must sing

We are blest by everything,

Everything we look upon is blest.'

9.4. Theme of the Poem-

The poem is a dialogue between self and soul and this dialogue gives birth to many themes.

Theme of mysticism- The dialogue of self and soul speaks about mystique side of life. The self speaks for external and material life. Whereas the soul tells about the importance of ascetic life. The soul summons the self to the 'winding ancient stair' i. e. to leave the material world and move towards ascetic life. The soul invites the self to the world of heaven. While explaining the importance of ascetic world the soul throws light on the material world full of problems. Yeats has used number of expressions to present the mysticism such as 'upon the broken, crumbling battlement', 'breathless starlit air'. The line 'who can distinguish darkness from soul?' suggests mysterious desire to get absorbed in the darkness. The soul wants the self to realize the truth about life. Obscure expressions like-

' For intellect no longer knows

Is from the ought

Or knower from the known'

Once again underline the mystic note in the poem. The concluding lines such as , ' When such as I cast out remorse

So great a sweetness flows into the breast'

reflect the mystique experience.

Theme of Conflict- The poem also records the theme of conflict between physical and metaphysical, material and spiritual aspects of life. The poet deals with the ancient conflict between self and soul. The poet's soul invites him to spiritual world and explains him the painful and difficult status of material life. Whereas the self argues the need of living life even after knowing the tensions and pretensions of material life. By giving reference to Sato's sword, the poet underlines the significance of action and love in life. The self is aware of the oddities and adversities of life but still demands that 'I am content to live it all again' and thus sings the glory of accepting the challenges of life and says- 'we must laugh and we must sing, we are blest by everything.'

In this ancient conflict the self wins over the soul.

9.5 Autobiographical element in the poem-

The second phase of Yeats' literary career (1900-1915) buffeted him with bitter experience of life. He acquainted with the painful side of life. His frustration in love, disappointment with the Irish people and his involvement in Theosophy brought him face to face with reality. The poems of this phase and the third phase of his literary career known as the phase of maturity and complexity reflect his sense of life, reality and how it is full of disillusionment, impatience and indignation. 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul' reflects this disillusionment and longing for another world in the form of verbal conflict between self and soul. The soul makes the Self aware of the miseries of life summons it to the path of eternity. But the Self rejects the soul's call and asserts the wish of living life with all its complexities.

9.6 Self learning questions-

1. Comment on Yeats as a mysterious poet.
2. Discuss the theme of conflict in the poem
3. Examine contribution of Yeats as a poet with reference to his prescribed poem

9.7 Summary-

The poem is in the form of dialogue between self and soul of the poet. The soul summons the self to leave the material life and select the path of eternity. But the self advocates the material life. The self attracts the attention of soul to Sato's sword which represents both war and love. The soul suggests that the self should not think about war and love but about god and eternity because material life is full of sorrow and difficulties therefore the self should try to get rid of the cycle of birth and rebirth. But the self prefers to live life and commit to rebirth irrespective of all the difficulties and sorrow.

9.8 Assignments-

1. Search the information on biography of Yeats
2. Compile information on the contemporary poets of Yeats

9.9 Glossary-

Occultism- the study of supernatural

Theosophy- philosophy containing knowledge of god

Blots and blemishes- flaw

Exponent- promoter, representative

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Unit-10

Gerontion - T.S. Eliot

10.0 Introduction to the poet-

T. S. Eliot was born at St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. He is acclaimed as a classist, an innovator, a critic, a social reformer and a mystique as well as many-sided personality. Awarded with British Order of Merit and noble prize for literature in 1948, Eliot influenced the growth of English poetry in second and third decade of 20th century. His poem *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1914) heralded the birth of new poetry. The poet's awareness of his contemporary age is well recorded in the poem. Eliot's another remarkable poem *The Waste Land* (1920) established him as a forceful poet. Publication of *The Hollow Man* (1925) and *Ash Wednesday* show deviation from the thoughts present earlier in Eliot's poems. *Journey of the Magi* underlines a note of spiritual consolation. Along with poetry, Eliot has also practiced his hand on poetic drama. *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) and *The Family Reunion* (1939) are his remarkable poetic dramas. With these plays, Eliot revived poetic drama successfully.

10.1 About the poem-

The poem *Gerontion* deals with one of the recurrent themes in Eliot's poems- the horror of life without faith. The absence of faith reflects weariness of knowledge and drying up of emotions. The poem contains religious, historical and modern elements. The poem is narrated by *Gerontion* i.e. an old man who is living in a damaged house and commenting on his contemporary life.

10.2 Poem - *Gerontion*

Thou hast nor youth nor age
But as it were an after dinner sleep
Dreaming of both.

HERE I am, an old man in a dry month,
Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain.
I was neither at the hot gates
Nor fought in the warm rain
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass, 5
Bitten by flies, fought.
My house is a decayed house,
And the Jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London. 10
The goat coughs at night in the field overhead;
Rocks, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds.
The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea,
Sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter.

I an old man, 15

A dull head among windy spaces.

Signs are taken for wonders. "We would see a sign":
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvenescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger 20

In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas,
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk
Among whispers; by Mr. Silvero
With caressing hands, at Limoges
Who walked all night in the next room; 25
By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians;
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room
Shifting the candles; Fraulein von Kulp
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door? Vacant shuttles
Weave the wind. I have no ghosts, 30
An old man in a draughty house
Under a windy knob.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions, 35
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed, 40
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with

Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues 45
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.
The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I
Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last 50
I have not made this show purposelessly
And it is not by any concitation
Of the backward devils
I would meet you upon this honestly.
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom 55
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
How should I use it for your closer contact? 60
These with a thousand small deliberations
Protract the profit of their chilled delirium,
Excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled,
With pungent sauces, multiply variety
In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do, 65

Suspend its operations, will the weevil
Delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled
Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear
In fractured atoms. Gull against the wind, in the windy straits
Of Belle Isle, or running on the Horn, 70
White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims,
And an old man driven by the Trades
To a a sleepy corner.

 Tenants of the house,
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season. 75

Dear Students, the poem is quite difficult to understand. Here is the meaning of the poem.

10.3 Central Idea of the Poem-

The word Gerontion derives from Greek word Geron which means little old man. The poem begins with an epigraph and the lines of epigraph are taken from Shakespeare's Measure for Measure Act III Scene I. The line comment on life.

The old man narrates the poem in first person. He informs that he lives in a dilapidated house in a dry month waiting for rain. A boy is reading to him. Gerontion is feeling hollow because he did not commit any heroic action. He did not participate war. This expression of Genrontion shows autobiographical element because Eliot also wanted to participate war but he could not. The old man's house is decayed. The decayed house symbolizes two more things- the decaying body of the old man as well as decaying European civilization in post war period. The expression 'Rock, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds ----' explains psychological as well as geographical landscape which indicates Genrontion's sense of loneliness and dullness. He once again calls himself an old man with dull head and whose senses are lost. Further Gerontion refers to a religious happening – birth of Jesus Christ. At the time of Christ's birth, the Magi were

led to the birth place by a sign. Thus Christ the tiger came to life. Here the reference of tiger is from William Blake's poem 'The Tyger'. According to this poem Lamb and Tiger are created by the same God. Lamb stand for innocence of God and tiger stand for power and wrath of god. Line 21 to 32 of the poem give different allusions. In these lines the season spring indicates the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus. Line 22 of the poem refers to the presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Holy Communion. The congregation and the priest eat bread and drink wine, symbolically they eat flesh and drink blood off Jesus because Christ said 'Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.'

Reference to Mr. Silvero, Madame de Tornquist, Kulp exemplify the nervous restless cosmopolitans. They represent the disturbance and restlessness of inner life of Gerontion. These people also signify the fact that because modern people have lost their faith, they do not believe religious activity and perform those activities only formally. Line 29 to 30 express the hopeless life of modern man. Gerontion who is the representative of modern man find life a burden and full of vanity. This lack of faith is not only in case of religion but also in case of history. In lines 34 to 46, Eliot has taken references from Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. The reference of wrath bearing tree in line 47 indicates the knowledge of good and evil. God is angry with mankind from the very first disobedience of man. After his thinking over the contemporary age, Gerontion cannot reach to any conclusion. In the concluding part, Gerontion evades knowledge of self and tries to justify himself that he is old and has lost all his senses. Therefore he cannot communicate with god. His memories and senses are cold but he has the power to stir the impotency. Gerontion thinks of surrendering to the old set of values but even after doing so the mortality, destruction and disintegration cannot be stopped. Unlike Ulysses, Gerontion in his old age is driven to a sleepy corner. The poem ends on the same idea of the decayed house where Gerontion lives in a dry season with dry brain.

Dear Students, after learning the central idea of the poem, let's look at the various aspects of the poem.

10.4 Complexity in the poem/ Use of allusions in the poem-

The poem 'Gerontion' is highly complex for several reasons. Eliot in his literary theory emphasizes that a poem should be an entity itself. So that the reader need not to search for references outside the poem to know the meaning of the poem. As a poet he himself makes ample use of allusions that makes his poems complex. Allusions are external references used by the poet to explain his ideas. In the poem 'Gerontion', the old man who is the mouthpiece of Eliot, comments on the stagnation in modern life. Here the old man represents the modern civilization. He also focuses on the lack of faith and self-knowledge which results into the hollowness. Consequently life becomes dry and deteriorates. To explain his idea Eliot has taken several religious, historical and social happenings. Lines 17 to 32 refer to some religious and social happenings as well as names like Mr. Silvero, symbolize the restless, nervous, displaced cosmopolitans. These cosmopolitans also project Gerontion's inner life. Lines 34 to 46 present Gerontion's historical perspective and also show the reflection of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Lines 47 to 48 once again refer to religious happenings. The epigraph of the poem is taken from Shakespeare's play. T.S. Eliot thinks of modernity in terms of history and religion. Therefore the meaning of the poem pervades on three levels- modernity, religion and history. The reader has to search for the references to relate to the meaning. This very activity enhances the complexity of the poem. Along with these allusions, Eliot also refers to other pieces of literature or writing in different lines such as – 'Being read to by a boy---', '---backward devils', 'Came Christ the tiger---' etc. The references to Dante, William Blake, Shakespeare, A.C. Benson, Lancelot Andrews, and Henry Adams make the understanding of the poem more difficult.

10.5. Elements of modernity, religion and history in 'Gerontion'

The poem 'Gerontion' reflects the modern life without faith and Gerontion, the old man, is the representative of modern people who have no faith, no self-knowledge, no belonging to history. Therefore they feel hollow and old and dry like Gerontion. This hollowness is the representative feature of modernity. Eliot unfolds the restlessness of modern man at twofold levels- religious and historical. He claims that modern man has neither true knowledge of history, religion and self. The initial description of the old man, the dilapidated house,

the barren environment is not only of Gerontion alone but at the symbolic level it is the description of modern world. It is further illustrated by Gerontion's sense of dullness and loneliness. Referring to the birth of Jesus Christ, Gerontion touches the topic of faith. He explains that lack of faith turns the religious rites into formalities. Therefore people cannot connect themselves to God and thus feel hollow. Gerontion, being the representative of modern civilization, also lacks belongingness to history at two levels. First, he himself could not participate war and perform heroic deeds. Second, he finds the knowledge of history elusive. Along with lack of historical knowledge, modern civilization lacks self-knowledge. Therefore the dryness and loneliness. Lines 8 to 10 show the impact of commercial interest in modern Europe and lines 23 to 28 show the restlessness of modern people. So through Gerontion, Eliot rationalizes the inability of faith in modern man. Thus Eliot refers to elements of modernity, religion and history

10.6. Theme of the poem-

As a modern poet, Eliot recurrently deals with the theme of lack of faith. The lack of faith results into disillusionment, weariness of knowledge and emotional dehydration. The theme is developed through the character of Gerontion, the old man. The life of this old man is the exemplification of the theme. The poem is in the form of monologue. Gerontion is reflecting over his dry and desolate condition and by mentioning the hollow life of cosmopolitan people, he is trying to analyze the reasons for this declining condition of modern man. He himself explains the reasons that modern people go to church and they perform the rituals as formality and thus feel hollow because lack of faith does not allow them to relate themselves to God. Moreover no true knowledge of religion and history is also responsible for the hollowness. The lack of belongingness to history is caused because the available knowledge of history is elusive. Modern civilization being commercial has no self-knowledge. This causes dryness of emotions. Therefore Gerontion also feels that he is without all the senses and his condition is very bad. He isolated and lonely and is waiting for the rain that can remove the dryness. Here the waiting for rain can be interpreted as grace of God with which he can step into faith and thus belong to history and religion. It is belongingness that makes life

meaningful. Eliot constantly comments on the contaminated life even in his other famous poems like 'Ash Wednesday' and 'The Wasteland'.

10.7 Self learning Questions-

1. Discuss T.S. Eliot as a modern poet with reference to 'Gerontion'
2. Examine various elements in 'Gerontion'.
3. Comment on the theme of 'Gerontion'
4. Evaluate the poem 'Gerontion'
5. Explain the reasons for complexity in 'Gerontion'
6. Write a note on allusions in 'Gerontion'.

10.8 Summary-

The poem is in form of monologue. Gerontion an old man is telling about his life. He is old, dry and living in a damaged house. He speaks out his inability to perform heroic deeds. He could not participate war even. He also describes the barren and polluted environment around him. He then talks about birth of Jesus Christ. He further explains that due to lack of faith people perform religious rites as formalities. He also talks about history. According to him the knowledge of history is elusive. Therefore people suffer from lack of belongingness. Gerontion speaks out the sorrow that lack of belongingness to history, lack self-knowledge, lack of faith dry up emotions. The dryness and desolation experienced by Gerontion is symbolic to that of desolation and dryness of modern civilization. In this poem, the life of Gerontion is not the life of an individual but old age, decaying house and dryness of Gerontion represents the declining, decaying and desolate modern civilization. Due to number of historical, religious and literary allusions the poem is complex to analyze.

10.9 Activities-

1. Collect more information about features of modern poetry
2. Compile information about poems dealing with modernity and lack of faith by Eliot.

10.10 Difficult words-

Genroution- old man

Dilapidated- broken down

Wrath- anger

Sacrament- ritual

Communion- spiritual union

Congregation- churchgoers

Cosmopolitan-Multicultural

Vanity- nothingness

Evade-Escape-

To stir- to move

Allusion- references

Stagnation- inaction

Enhances- increases

Dehydration- dryness

Elusive-abstract

Contaminated- polluted

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Unit 11

The Send Off – Wilfred Owen

11.0. Introduction to the poet-

Wilfred Owen is known as a leading First World War poet. His participation in war as a soldier and his war experiences set the raw material for his poetry. He joined war in 1915 and only one week before the end of war, he was shot and killed in 1918. He was awarded with Military Cross. He started writing poetry at the early age. Before joining war his writing was influenced by romantic poets like Keats and Shelley. After joining war his poetry underwent a change. It is also the Influence of Siegfried Sassoon that changed the voice of Owen. Sassoon's study of Freudian psychoanalysis helped him to relive his war experiences in the form of poetry because Owen's doctor, as a part of therapy treatment, advised him to translate his experiences in the form of poetry. Sassoon's influence can be seen on his famous poems 'Dulce Et Decorum Est', 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' etc. His poems are specifically about horrors of trench and gas warfare. He disillusioned the glory around war. The realistic face of war washed out the adjectives related to war. His 25 poems were published in his lifetime in various journals. Sassoon published a volume of his poems. His all poems were published in edited anthologies posthumously. Along with 'Send Off', 'The Sentry', 'The Show', 'Exposure' are some of his well-known poems.

11.1 About the poem-

The poem 'Send Off' describes the soldiers going to fight world war I. The setting of the poem is a railway station where the soldiers are ready to board a train to take them to their destination. The poem needs to be read from the viewpoint of a soldier and not from the viewpoint of general public who do not know the realities of the war. The tone of the poem is serious and pessimistic.

11.2 The Poem-

The Send-off

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.
Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard,
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers.
Shall they return to beatings of great bells
In wild trainloads?
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,

May creep back, silent, to still village wells

Up half-known roads.

11.3 Central idea of the poem-

The poem 'Send Off' describes the event of soldiers going to the destination of battlefield. It can be said that they are being observed by a soldier. The poem goes like this. The soldiers are going through a dark lane to a siding shade where their train is. While walking they are singing a song. They line near the train to board. Their faces are at a time reflecting paradoxical emotions, that of happiness and seriousness. Their family members, relatives and friends have put many garlands on them so that they are looking like dead people who are piled up with wreaths of white flowers. Porters are watching the soldiers in dull manner. A tramp is staring the soldiers hard. He feels sad because they are leaving their camp. Then the train gets signal the lamp winks to the guard. It means the train gets signal to move. Then the soldiers go secretly just as wrong deeds are hushed up secretly. The soldiers no longer belong to their people because nobody knows where the soldiers are being taken and no one knows whether they will return alive because people never learn about the soldiers after they reach to battlefield. The women who offered them flowers even they do not know. Nobody knows whether they will return alive or dead. Very few will come back and they will be welcomed by drum sounds and yells. Later on they go back to their places with silence. They will bring back with the horrifying memories of war and to heal themselves they need silence and privacy.

The poem exposes the true feelings of a soldier who has fought the war and therefore feels the need of tearing out the glorified concept of war.

11.4 'The Send Off' as a war poem-

The poem 'The Send Off' describes true picture of war situation and its impact on people. The impact is twofold. In public opinion war is a national event and they find the soldiers going to warfront as great fighters but here, in the poem Owen truly describes the war situation. He has taken an event where the soldiers are boarding a train that is taking them to an unknown destination. Relatives and friends have honored the soldiers with wreaths of white flowers

but with these white flowers they are looking like dead than alive. The soldiers are barding the train 'with faces grimly gay'. With the device of Oxymoron Owen explains that the soldiers know what will happen to them when to go to warfront. Still they have put on happy faces so that their relatives will not get upset. With the help of simple words Owen has effectively described the severity of the situation

11.5 Significance of the title 'The Send Off'-

Title of the poem 'The Send Off' is significant. Usually Send Off is a ceremony arranged for a person who is retired from his job or who is promoted to higher position at other place or changing job. This is the ceremony of saying good bye to a person happily. But the situation described in the poem is altogether different. Here the soldiers are going to warfront. They are unaware of their destination and they do not know whether they will die or come back alive. But the soldiers have intentionally put on happy faces so that their relatives should not get upset. Owen has selected the situation of departure of the soldiers. Departure is usually a situation that separates people from each other. Here the soldiers may get separated permanently because they going to fight a war. With the use of devices of oxymoron and words like darkening lanes, grimly gay, dead, dull, wrongs, hushed up, creep back, silent Owen effectively creates the atmosphere of tension.

11.6 self Learning questions-

1. Evaluate Wilfred Owen as a war poet.
2. Comment on 'The Send Off' as a war poem.
3. How does 'The Send Off' expose reality of war?
4. Bring out the significance of the title 'The Send Off'.

11.7 Summary-

The poem 'The Send Off' is about war situation. Soldiers have gathered on a train station and they are boarding a train that will take them to an unknown destination. Though they are singing songs to inspire themselves, their faces are grimly gay. That is they have put on happy faces to conceal the seriousness of the situation so that their relatives should not get upset. They have been

felicitated by their friends, relatives with white wreaths just as dead men are decorated with flowers. Then the signal gives sign and the lamp gives signal. The soldiers go away secretly just as wrongs are being hushed up. The soldiers are no longer of their people's because their people will never know where they are being taken. Nobody knows whether they will return alive. Very few of them will return and they will silently go back their villages because they would need silence and privacy to come out of the horrifying experiences of war.

11.8 Activities-

1. Collect more information about war poetry
2. Compile more information about other war poems by Owen

11.9 Difficult words-

Posthumously- after death

Battlefield- where war is fought

Paradoxical- contradictory

Grim- sad

Gay- happy

Wreath- garland

Heal- set right

Glorify-adore

Significance- meaning

Felicitate- welcome

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Unit 12

The Mosquito- D.H. Lawrence

12.0 Introduction to the author-

D.H. Lawrence is well known as a novelist but he has practiced his hand on poetry, dram, essay, literary criticism painting. During his life he received severe criticism because of his views about 'emotional health, vitality, spontaneity and instinct'. After his death E.M. Forster admired him as 'the greatest imaginative novelist of our generation' whereas F.R. Leavis advocated his 'artistic integrity and moral seriousness'. He started his literary career by writing poems and short stories. Then he wrote his first novel *The White Peacock* (1910) His strong love for his mother is reflected in his autobiographical novel *Sons and Lovers*. After that he wrote many successful novels such as *The Trespasser*, *The Lost Girl*, *Aron's Road*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. His compositions of poems are *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*, *Pansies*, *Nettles*. His short stories collection is titled as *England, My England and Other Short Stories*. *Studies in Classic American Literature* is a set of critical essays.

As a poet he was influenced by Walt Whitman and as a poet his best writing is found in his nature poems. He writes poems in the wake of modernists. According to Lawrence personal sentiments and spontaneity are the vital elements of his poetry.

12.1 About the poem-

The poem 'The Mosquito' is about a trivial insect mosquito. The poem displays Lawrence's minute observation and his best use of satire. The poet describes the simple act of biting of a mosquito and a man's efforts to save himself from that biting. The minor act is portrayed in the manner of war between two equal fighters. Lawrence's descriptive power and his verbal power are at their best in describing the act.

12.2 Poem

When did you start your tricks,

Monsieur?

What do you stand on such high legs for?

Why this length of shredded shank,

You exaltation?

Is it so that you shall lift your center of gravity upwards

And weigh no more than air as you alight upon me,

Stand upon me weightless, you phantom?

I heard a woman call you the Winged Victory

In sluggish Venice.

You turn your head towards your tail, and smile.

How can you put so much devilry

Into that translucent phantom shred

Of a frail corpus?

Queer, with your thin wings and your streaming legs

How you sail like a heron, or a dull clot of air,

A nothingness.

Yet what an aura surrounds you ;

Your evil little aura, prowling, and casting a numbness on my mind.

That is your trick, your bit of filthy magic :

Invisibility, and the anæsthetic power

To deaden my attention in your direction.

But I know your game now, streaky sorcerer.

Queer, how you stalk and prowl the air

In circles and evasions, enveloping me,

Ghoul on wings

Winged Victory.

Settle, and stand on long thin shanks

Eyeing me sideways, and cunningly conscious that I am aware,

You speck.

I hate the way you lurch off sideways into air

Having read my thoughts against you.

Come then, let us play at unawares,

And see who wins in this sly game of bluff,

Man or mosquito.

You don't know that I exist, and I don't know that you exist.

Now then!

It is your trump,

It is your hateful little trump,

You pointed fiend,

Which shakes my sudden blood to hatred of you :

It is your small, high, hateful bugle in my ear.

Why do you do it?

Surely it is bad policy.

They say you can't help it.

If that is so, then I believe a little in Providence protecting the innocent.

But it sounds so amazingly like a slogan,

A yell of triumph as you snatch my scalp.

Blood, red blood

Super-magical

Forbidden liquor.

I behold you stand

For a second enspasmed in oblivion,

Obscenely estased

Sucking live blood,

My blood.

Such silence, such suspended transport,

Such gorging,

Such obscenity of trespass.

You stagger

As well as you may.

Only your accursed hairy frailty,

Your own imponderable weightlessness

Saves you, wafts you away on the very draught my anger makes in its snatching.

Away with a pæan of derision,

You winged blood-drop.

Can I not overtake you?

Are you one too many for me,

Winged Victory?

Am I not mosquito enough to out-mosquito you?

Queer, what a big stain my sucked blood makes

Beside the infinitesimal faint smear of you!

Queer, what a dim dark smudge you have disappeared into!

12.3 Central idea of the poem-

The poet directly addresses the mosquito who wants to bite the poet. The poet asks when it started his tricks. He addresses the mosquito as monsieur. Further inquiries of the poet show the keen observation of the mosquito. He asks the mosquito for what it is standing on his high legs. Why the mosquito has spread its long shred. Once again the poet uses a word for the mosquito and that is exaltation. He asks the insect why it lifts itself alight upon the poet's body and stands there. The poet calls it phantom because it disappears and appears again and again. The poet says that he heard a woman calling the mosquito the winged victory. But the mosquito, in reply, turns its head towards its tail and smiles. The poet wants to know how the frail body of the mosquito can have so much devilish power in it. The poet finds it strange that with the thin wings and shaking legs the mosquito sails like a water bird or like a dull clot of air or like nothingness. The poet wonders what an aura surrounds you. The aura stuns the poet. Here the poet is referring to the humming sound made by the mosquito. The poet finds the sound evil and stunning. The poet thinks that it is the filthy trick played by the mosquito. The mosquito gets invisible and it has anesthetic power in its humming sound with which it deadens the attention of the poet. The poet cannot see the direction from which the mosquito will attack the poet. But the poet knows its game now. Once again the poet calls the mosquito as streaky sorcerer. The poet then describes the strategy of the mosquito before biting the poet. It stalks and prowls in the air in circles and evasions and envelops the poet. He calls the mosquito a ghoulish on wings and winged victory. The poet is aware that it stands on its long thin shanks and

looks at sideways of the poet. The poet knows that it is looking at the poet cunningly. The poet hates the way it cuts round around him just as the mosquito has read the thoughts of poet against him.

The poet then challenges the mosquito. He says to it to play the game of unawareness and see who wins the game of bluff. He wants to see who wins, man or mosquito. The poet asks the mosquito to pretend that it does not know that the poet exists and the poet does not know that the mosquito exists. The poet further says that the little trump of the mosquito is very hateful and it shakes the poet's blood with hatred. The humming sound of the mosquito sounds like a bugle in the ear of the poet. He asks it why does it do so and adds that it is bad policy. But he also knows that the mosquito cannot help it. The mosquito bites the poet. The poet could see red blood drop and calls the blood as super magical forbidden liquor. For a moment the poet finds the mosquito in the state of oblivion. It seems happy for sucking the blood of the poet. The sucking of blood by the mosquito is very silent activity. The poet calls it suspended transport, gorging and obscenity of trespass. He again addresses the mosquito as stagger. Like stagger the mosquito puts its trump in the poet's body. It is the hair like frail body of the mosquito, its imponderable weightlessness saves it from being caught. The mosquito moves away from the poet with a look of derision. The poet addresses it as winged blood drop. The poet asks a question to the mosquito whether he can overtake mosquito. The question contains its answer that the poet cannot overtake the mosquito. The poet doubts whether the fight between the mosquito and the poet is the fight between one and many because being powerful and big the poet is defeated. The poet once again asks a funny question whether he is not mosquito enough to out mosquito the one. The poet says that the blood drop sucked by the mosquito makes a big stain and he finds the mosquito disappearing into darkness.

12.4 Imagination and description in the poem-

The poem is one of the finest example of Lawrence's imagination and keen observation. Actually a mosquito is very small and frail insect. It is difficult to see the mosquito completely with bare eyes but the poet describes the mosquito as minutely just as it is of his own size. He puts his total imaginative power to its highest extent to describe the mosquito in very effective manner.

This is how he describes the mosquito – ‘what do you stand on such high legs for?’, ‘you turn your head towards your tail and smile’. Further he uses different words to address the mosquito such as monsieur, exaltation, phantom, winged victory, heron, dull clot of air, ghoul, stagger, sorcerer. The poet has used these expressions to explain the very physique of the mosquito. The poet confers human emotions and acts like smile, eyeing, cunningly consciousness, reading the thoughts, yelling, happiness, derision etc. This is evident of the poet’s minute observation and high imagination. Lawrence is always at his best in the description of creatures. This is also evident in his another poem ‘Snake’.

12.5 Irony and Satire in the poem-

Lawrence uses the device of irony and satire to show inability of human beings in front of the frail and minor creatures. In the poem ‘The Mosquito’, he selects the subject of a frail insect, mosquito. Every person experiences the attacks of mosquito, its hateful sound and painful biting. But unable to escape the attacks we usually neglect the mosquitoes. But the poet takes it seriously. He keenly observes the activities of it and in ironical manner he describes the mosquito and its strategies to attack human being and suck his blood. Very first line of the poem underlines the ironical tone in the poem when the poet asks the mosquito ‘When did you start your tricks Monsieur?’ The line ‘You turn your head towards your tail and smile’ not only shows the high imagination but also the concealed satire in the activities of the mosquito. The irony in the line ‘And see who wins in this sly game of bluff, Man or mosquito’ takes mosquito at the level of man or man at the level of mosquito. The line ‘You don’t know that I exist and I don’t know that you exist now then!’ underlines the hypocrisy equal in man and insect. The question by the poet ‘Am I not mosquito enough to out mosquito you?’ is the apex of irony that exists in the relation between man and mosquito. The question by the poet ‘Can I not overtake you?’ is rhetorical. It also shows the inability of man to overpower the mosquito. This is how the poem is steeped with irony and satire.

12.6 Self Learning Questions-

1. Examine D.H. Lawrence as a poet with reference to the prescribed poem.
2. Write a note on the element of irony and satire in the poem

3. Discuss the quality of imagination in the poem 'The Mosquito'

4. Sketch the character of mosquito as described in the poem.

12.7 Summary-

The poet is observing a mosquito. The mosquito is ready to bite the poet. The poet wants to know when the mosquito will start its tricks. The poet minutely describes the activities of the mosquito such as how it stands on its high legs, how its shank is long, how weightless it is. The mosquito is called by many names such as Monsieur, exaltation, phantom, winged victory, heron, and dull clot of air, nothingness, and ghoul. A game is going on between the poet and the mosquito. It tries to bite the poet and the poet pretends that he is not aware of the intension of it. So that the poet can escape from its biting. But the mosquito succeeds in sucking blood from the poet's body. The poet finds himself helpless and realizes that being man and powerful creature he is unable to overpower the mosquito because it is so frail and phantom like that after fulfilling its wish it disappears in darkness and the poet can do nothing.

12.8 Activities-

1. Compile more information about D.H. Lawrence as a poet

2. Compile information about Lawrence's other poems about birds and beasts

12.9 Difficult words-

Monsieur- (French word) meaning sir

Shank- trunk

Exaltation- adoration

Phantom- ghost

Sluggish- slothful

Queer- strange

Heron- one legged water bird

Aura- appearance

Prowl- hang around

Anesthetic- numbing

Sorcerer- magician

Ghoul- spirit that robs graves and feeds on the corpses

Sly- crafty

Trump- significant act

Enspasmed- uncontrollable tightening of muscle

Oblivion- forgetfulness

Gorging- consuming

Trespass- intrude

Imponderable- immeasurable

Infinitesimal- tiny

Smudge- smear

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Unit 13

Next Please- Philip Larkin

13.0 About the Poet-

Philip Larkin, a modern English poet, was born on 9th August 1922. Out of his own interest in literature, his father introduced him with the literature of Ezra Pound, Eliot, James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence. During his university education period he formed a group of friends to discuss each other's poems and music. Kingsley Amis, a dramatist remained his close friend. After completing his education Larkin became a librarian and received acknowledgement for his work and he also excelled in administrative work. He started writing in his teen age. His earlier poems show the influence of Yeats, Auden and Eliot whereas his mature poetry shows the influence of Hardy. The characteristics of his poetry are termed as combination of 'ordinary colloquial style having clarity and reflective tone'. Death and fatalism are recurrent themes in his poetry. Critics view his poems with different opinions. Tijana Stojkovic calls Larkin as 'an excellent example of the plain style in modern times'. According to Stephen Regan, 'Larkin frequently embraces devices associated with the experimental practices of modernism such as linguistic strangeness, self-conscious literariness, radical self questioning, sudden shift of voice and register, complex viewpoints and perspectives and symbolist intensity'. His famous poems are 'Church Going', 'Maiden Name', 'Born Yesterday', 'The Whitsun Weddings', 'An Arundel Tomb', 'This Be the Verse' etc. Larkin also practiced his hand on fiction and Nonfiction. His well-known fictions are 'Jill', 'A Girl in winter' etc. and Nonfiction are 'All What Jazz', 'Required Writing-Miscellaneous Pieces, Further Requirements: Interview' etc.

13.1 About the poem-

The poem 'Next Please' is about man's longing and desires. This poem also deals with one of the recurrent theme- death. We develop the habit of expectations and try to pour all good things in our life but we forget that death is the end of life.

13.2 Poem-Next, Please -by Philip Larkin

Always too eager for the future, we

Pick up bad habits of expectancy.

Something is always approaching; every day

Till then we say,

Watching from a bluff the tiny, clear

Sparkling armada of promises draw near.

How slow they are! And how much time they waste,

Refusing to make haste!

Yet still they leave us holding wretched stalks

Of disappointment, for, though nothing balks

Each big approach, leaning with brasswork prinked,

Each rope distinct,

Flagged, and the figurehead wit golden tits

Arching our way, it never anchors; it's

No sooner present than it turns to past.

Right to the last

We think each one will heave to and unload

All good into our lives, all we are owed

For waiting so devoutly and so long.

But we are wrong:

Only one ship is seeking us, a black-

Sailed unfamiliar, towing at her back

A huge and birdless silence. In her wake

No waters breed or break.

13.3 Central Idea of the Poem-

The poem is divided into 6 stanzas and talk about human habit of expectations. The poet says that we are too eager about our future. Therefore we develop the habit of expectations. We expect that good things will happen to us every day. The poet compares good things with ships. He says that when we look at future we feel that a large fleet of ships that is promises of good happenings are approaching to us. But it seems that the speed of the ships is very slow. Moreover the ships that is good things deny to make haste to reach to us. But the ships leave a frame of disappointment also. The poet means to say that happiness takes lot of time to reach to us but happy moments go way immediately. The happiness reaches to present time and turns into past very nest moment. We think that each one of us drag to the time when we get happiness and we try to unload happiness in our life. We feel that owe the goodness in return of the long waiting. We wait for good moments with devotion. Therefore we owe good things. But the poet says that we are wrong because only one ship is seeking us. The ship is black and unfamiliar. Behind the ship tows a huge and 'birdless' silence. Behind that there is no braking of water. The ship is probably the ship of death.

13.4 Imagery in the poem-

The poem 'Next Please' deals with favorite theme of Larkin. He talks about human habit of expectations. All human beings expect good things and life and they wish that good things should happen in their life speedily. Therefore they

look at their future with expectations. The poet has used the same imagery to explain two different ideas. The image of ship is used by the poet first to explain the idea of happy things. When we look at future, the poet imagines that we find a 'sparkling armada of promises drawn near'. Here the sparkling armada is nothing but large fleet of ships that stands for happy happenings in our life. But are surprised to see that happiness comes to us so slowly. It seems that happiness wastes lot of time in reaching to us. Somehow the ships of happiness reach to us but the ships are anchored. The poet means to say that happiness does not stay with us it only passes by our side and soon the happy present turns into past. We feel that we owe happiness long time because we have waited for it with great devotion but we are wrong to feel so. In the concluding stanza the poet uses the same image to convey another meaning. He says that only one ship seeks us. The ship is black and unfamiliar. Behind the ship there is huge silence. The poet calls it birdless silence. Usually when ships move on the sea, they are followed by sea birds. But this ship is not followed by any bird because this is probably the ship of death.

13.5 Self learning Questions-

1. Comment on the contribution of Philip Larkin as a poet.
2. Discuss the central idea of the poem 'Next Please'.
3. Explain the use of imagery in the poem 'Next Please'

13.6 Summary-

The poem 'Next Please' is about the idea of human expectations. Human beings develop the habit of expectations and they feel that their future has lot of happiness for them. They wait for the happiness. They think that happiness reaches to them very slowly. They are more disappointed to see that happiness does not stay in their life it only passes by and soon present happy moment turns into past. The poet sees only one thing seeking human beings that is death. After death there is nothing else.

13. 7. Difficult words-

Bluff- a cliff or headland with broad and very steep face

Armada- large fleet of ships

Stalks – frame

Balks- prevents

Heave- left or drag with great efforts

Devoutly- piously, religiously

13.8 Activities-

Compile more information about Philip Larkin.

13.9 Bibliography-

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www.poemhunter.com/phili-larkin

www.phiplarkin.com

M.A.ENGLISH

2ND YEAR

PAPER-4

AMERICAN LITERATURE

Unit - 1

Twentieth Century American Poetry

Contents

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Subject Explanation

1.2.1 Social Cultural Context of American Literature

- * Reality and the writer-**
- * Modernity and Progressive ethos**
- * Americanism and culture of Abundance**
- * Dissenting Views**
- * The writer and the Society**

1.2.2 Twentieth Century American Poetry

1.2.3 Confessional Poets

1.2.4 Black Poets

1.2.5 New Poetry

1.2.6 Aspects of 20th century American Poetry

1.3 Self learning Questions

1.4 Conclusion

1.5 Glossary

1.6 Bibliography

1.0 Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able -

- a) to know social and cultural context of American Literature
- b) to learn different aspects of twentieth century American Poetry
- c) to emphasize confessional poetry, Black poetry and New poetry on

American soil.

1.1 Introduction

After reading this book the reader will be aware of the major figures in twentieth century American poetry. Not only this, students will also find the central texts as well as some of the issues behind the impact of modernism upon American poetry. The American Poetry in twentieth century became international. The modern American poetry followed new techniques. The poets like H. D. and William Carlos Williams followed new techniques. The readers will be acquainted with the influence of T. S. Eliot's poetry and criticism and prominence of feminist, multi-cultural and Native American situation. American poetry is also the reflection of contemporary events such as world war, civil war, conflicts between blacks and whites, outcome of Harlem Renaissance etc. 'A chronology sets out the major social, political and literary events of the century as they provide a broad context for the poetry. The historical prospective provides the dominance of New England and the east coast academies at the turn of the century, to the major strands and multiple voices of American Poetry 100 years later.'

1.2 Subject Explanation

1.2.1 Social Cultural Context of American Literature

"We must indeed all hang together or most assuredly we shall all hang separately" were the famous words of an American founding father Benjamin Franklin. The American writers have always been preoccupied with the spiritual and moral concerns of life that put America on the road to civilization. This togetherness has motivated them to put the first man on the moon to peep into human mind and soul, to seek vast storages of energy and inspiration to seek new thrills of discovery. American society and literature have always been trying to capture and communicate that thrill of discovery, that thrill of

excitement as experienced by the founding fathers. The social and cultural context of modern American literature has been influenced by different factors.

*** Reality and the writer-**

In 1961 Philip Roth said "The American writer in the middle of 20th century has his hands full in trying to understand and to describe and then make credible much of the American reality. Modern life has thrown in a harsh reality, something far from the real and the ideal. The modern American society was a grim witness to murders and mutilations, mindless inanities from public figures, mild stagger in corruption etc. At such times, it becomes the prime responsibility of the writer to guide the society to a new life, a new way. Ezra Pound's lines "O! Helpless few in my country, O! Remnant enslaved," are very meaningful. Society always looks up to the religion for a hope, a guidance but the money making structure of American business civilization forwarded no hope, besides society also witnessed a serious struggle between black men and white men. Such differences in the society and culture reflected in the literature of the times. If the culture represented a true expression of modern mind, literature represented a protest, an accusation against vulgarity and the hollowness of society. The new culture of Bohemianism expatriation, commitment to radical political forces and social symptoms of American society are seen in the writings of Wharton, Frost, W. Stevens and Saul Bellow.

*** Modernity and Progressive ethos**

20th century America witnessed an unprecedented economic growth. On the one side cities were coming up with rising sky scrapers with progress, prosperity and abundance and on the other side, life was disintegrating. The social and economic order also brought in many differences in the distributing of wealth, power and abundance. The growth of cities and migration of these villages to these cities resulted in a cultural craze. The craze for money and

luxury brought in number of labor and farmer women protesting against the few. Modernity failed away for progressive reformers who brogan to address issues of social and economic conflicts. The ideas of social justice and material abundance helped the population on the hand but destroyed the social harmony. In the words of President Wilson “Our duty is to cling to reconsider, to correct the evil without in fairing the good; to purify and humanize every process of our common life without weakening of sentimentalizing it.

*** Americanism and culture of Abundance**

The modern American life experienced a life of abundance with America topping in almost all the fields. The political motive became liberal activism-home ownership, medical care, higher education etc. The entire society was fed with promises of improvement with a general rising level of income and living standard, there was an all out urge towards progressivism which is now called as Americanism. This Americanism asserted a great American culture. It is no more than the mechanical production of Pleasure. The period between 1930 and 1960 gives birth to an affluent society that by itself struggled against colonial mentality. It opposed self imposed repression, strict sexual codes, conventional gender roles, communal values based on The Bible. This protest against the old produce a culture of modernity, modern furniture, cosmetics, colored bathrooms etc. American society witnessed a clash between the old and the new; the old produce a morality and new consumes vitality. Get ahead and adjustment became the watchwords of modern American Culture. This craze for money and luxury also brought in spiritual degradation.

*** Dissenting Views**

The ideological conflicts in the American society had great impact, on its political, intellectual, and cultural life too. In 1924 Waldo Frank started a new movement called the war of new consciousness. He lamented the misery and spiritual poverty and the emotional chaos of the modern America. Many other

philosophers tried to bring in a national culture. This dissent released a number of civil rights and anti war protest. This new consciousness was fully supported by the college youths in such movements like Rock and Roll Beats, Anti-Vietnam protests etc. The New left of the 1960 turned against the hypocritical middle class Americanism.

*** The writer and the Society**

As in any cultural history, the American writer rose to safe guard it's cultural. Writers like Brooks, Franks, Pound hope to review a central poetry towards a unified culture. Emerson wrote, "I explore and sit at the feel of the familiar the low". Efforts were made on one to bring in the black and the white on one platform by such people like Martin Luther King-Junior. New social conditions of culture have to be developed. A notion of mass society was convinced by a group of writers. Mass society provided a strong bondage of family and neighborhood. An increasingly managed society helps to tone down the destructive forces and help the American society in finding a better and greater value. R. P. Blackmur commented in his 'The Economy of the America', "The trade of writing is the chief positive obstacle in a world to the preservation and creation of the art of literature".

The American creative Spirit has always come to the help of its society at moments of resistance and counter resistance from within the society and culture. The study of major classics in American Literature leads to the conclusion that the writer must bear mind at each step that is business is not to ask what the situation would be likely to make of his characters; but what his characters would make of the situation.

1.2.2 Twentieth Century American Poetry

In twentieth century, America became the country of diversity. Accordingly, the poetry is full of geographical diversity. The writers reflect

their original culture through their writing. The decade of 1910s saw American poetry reaction of little magazine- 'Poetry in Chicago' (1912). It is considered as the beginning of the new poetry- 'The Poetic Renaissance'. 'The Little Review' (1914) was also encouraging new writers. Then T. S. Eliot published his famous poem 'Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' in the anthology 'Modern American Poetry' in 1919.

Then American poetry touched another phase that of imagists. Imagists aim at presenting their subjects with clarity, precision and economy of language. T. S. Hulme, J. S. Flint formed a group of poets, Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, Hart Crane, Carl Sandburg and Wallace Stevens were the major poets in this movement. According to T. S. Hulme "Imagists presented complex, intellectual and emotional experience in an instant of time". They used concentrated images in the language of common speech. They tried to prove that beauty might be found in small commonplace things. Amy Lowell published 'Some Imagist Poets' (1915). Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) was an early American imagist poet and probably the best of the poets who continued to write under the influence of this technique. John Fletcher and William Carlos Williams also contributed imagist poetry.

Wallace Stevens was born in 1879 as a Dutchman. He grew up in farms and was a Republican. He became a lawyer in 1904 and later became an insurance man in 1916. His early poems appeared in 1900 in the 'Harvard Advocate'. He came under the spell of Ezra Pound and the Imagist Movement. He used free verse and accurate words. He had the habit of mocking either at himself or the audience. He was accused of being odd and underdeveloped poet. He wrote all the matters that excited him. He paid attention to rhythm, sound and tone. Once he said, "I can write poetry on anything under the sun". According to him, poem is a style. He invented new philosophy that death is the mother of beauty and reality is the mother of elegance. His poem 'The Emperor of Ice-Cream' is the supreme example that describes the theme of death.

Another poet, William Carlos Williams was also a great modern poet. He used American English and background as his material for poetry. His poems shift emphasis from action to reaction, perception to sympathy and object to subject. His short poem 'This is just to say' presents a very simple, natural and usual action. It is the everyday situation.

Theodore Roethke spent his childhood in and around greenhouse. His first volume of poetry was published in 1941. He announced his intention of using himself as the material of his art. His main concern was to be with the evolution and identity of self. He says, "I am necked to the bone-Myself in what I wear.

Robert Lowell was also a great poet coming from the university world. His poetry deals with the unconscious material, the complexities of modern life or strains in Western consciousness. He writes of Idolization of destructive behavior and sum of his intimate revelations are evidently written in a spirit of cruel offence to those close to him. His aim was to present actuality in his poetry. He deals with the theme of time, faith, love, history and death in his poems.

Robert Frost is one of the greatest American poets. The study of Robert Frost is the challenging and interesting experience to all. His some of the famous poems can be listed as 'Mending Wall', 'Moring', 'Design', 'Directive', 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening'. Our prime minister Late Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru liked his poetry. The following lines from Robert Frost are memorable -

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep"

Ezra Pound was an imagist. According to him "Image is which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time". He laid emphasis

more on the quality of sound in poetry, i.e., the poem as heard and spoken. He was both a writer and critic. T. S. Eliot says, "Ezra Pound is the most important poet in the English language".

1.2.3 Confessional Poets

The critic David Holbrook puts Robert Lowell, Theodore Roethke and Sylvia Plath in the group of confessional poets. All the three were subjected to internal disturbance and what the psychoanalysts say about their poetry an exploration of the unconscious. In its literary application confession is closely associated with their biography. These poets deal in their poetry with intensely personal matters. The sense of eternal torture is one of the motivating forces behind any confessional art. Though the statements made by them may not always be facts, they do contain emotional truth.

Sylvia Plath is a prominent poet of the confessional school. She uses her own life in her poetry. She has written some volumes of poetry for e.g. 'The Colossus' and 'Ariel' are her famous volumes. 'Lady Lizarus', 'Daddy', 'Tulips' are her most famous confessional poems. On the other hand she is feminist too. She is the cry of women of her time. For e.g. her poem 'Mushrooms' is the best poem that depicts the glorification of woman. She says "week shall inherit the earth" indicates the greatness of woman community.

1.2.4 Black Poets

Black poets produced much of literary works in American literature in the group of black poets. There are Langston Hughes, Marianne Moore, Zora Hurston, Gwendolyn Brooks, Claude Mckay, Dorothea Mathews and Isabel Neill. Anne Sexton also wrote poetry about Black Women. According to her, "To be a woman is to know extraordinary forms of agers, joy and impatience, love and hope.

1.2.5 New Poetry

There was a kind of change in modern poetry after the two world wars. Robert Frost and Robinson wrote new poetry. Robinson wrote about defeated people. Everything, he wrote, had a dry humour and a profound pity for mans suffering. Robinson won the Pulitzer prize for poetry for three times. There was newness in his poetry. T. S. Eliot was born and educated in the U.S.A. Although he had published very litter verse, it is of great importance. For e.g. 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' and 'The Waste Land' are his famous poems depicting the modern sensibility. E. E. Cummings followed T. S. Eliot in his techniques. The usual techniques of Cummings made his poems difficult. He was annoyed by mans activities. Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg wrote poetry to describe the American people. Lindsay published 'The Congo and other poems' and secured his name and fame. Carl Sandburg won the prize for 'Chicago- I' like Walt Whitman. All these poets experimented with new forms, commented upon the bitter aspects of life. There poetic techniques and devices were quite new. In this way American poetry has been travelling through different ups and downs but made its own identity in the world literature.

1.2.6 Aspects of 20th century American Poetry

The 20th century American Poetry can be termed as a revolt, revolution, discovery and the development of new ideals and theories. The earlier part of American Poetry was very much influenced by the English traditions, but the 20th century poetry turned to be inspired by Americanism. The 20th Century American life witnessed the deadening moral sensibility. The daily life went on unnoticed, unheard, unhidden by the society - fixes the scandals, the insanities, the treacheries, the idiocies, the lies, the pieties, the noise were all the American

life had to show. The necessity of times forced the writer to carve out a new path, new force, new poetry.

The 20th century American Poetry can be divided into two Periods.

- i) From the 1890 to the First World War.
- ii) From the post world war- I to the present.

In the first period there is an obvious influence of Victorianism and its half respectable literary criticism (forms). The poets of this period were greatly influenced by the vast materialistic gain, America achieved. As a result their Poetry did not portray the sufferings and miseries of the society. On the other hand it dealt with song and dance, jazz, city and factory life. The second period marked out a change as it happened with the English Roman Poets. There was a renewed attention to know what poetry is and to see what poetry can do for the society. The business of poetry became the removal of masks from the face of the society. The shedding of contentions and bold experimentation became the strong currents in 20th century American Poetry. New and strong voices like Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, Theodore Roethke, and Robert Lowell were heard. Imagism became a strong current in American Poetry. The imagist poets decided to-

- i) To use the language of common speech, the exact word and not a decorative word.
- ii) To create new rhythms as the expression of new mood.
- iii) To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject.
- iv) To present an image - not vague but - magnificent.
- v) To produce poetry i.e. hard and clear.
- vi) To believe that concentration is the very essence of poetry.

Imagism was followed by new theories like surrealism, Marxism, Dadaism and expressionism by which new experiments were made both in poetry and drama.

Another significant aspect of American Poetry is the Portrayal of an American tradition or what is famously known as Americanism. Poets like

William Carlos Williams, Robert Lowell, and E.E. Cummings addressed issues of social and economic conflicts in their poetry. They propounded an ideal community, a perfect America by showing the ills and deficiencies of the society. They talked of an extraordinary loyalty to Americanism. George Santayana said about America- "The hearty unity and universal hum of America". Americanism is simply modernism purer in America than elsewhere. They believed that the whole world was being Americanized by the telephone by the trolley car, the department store, the advertising press, automobiles, radios, cinema, color printing etc. In fact, it showed the face of an affluent society.

Another important feature of the 20th century American Portray is the epic narration of a singular subject. By an epic narration the poet strived towards a statement that defines Eliot, Wallace Stevens and other tried to reflect on the disintegration of values. For example -

"We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Head piece filled with straw"

The late 20th century American Poetry lamented about the misery of the present generation, spiritual poverty, its intellectual chaos. It once again describes the ideological conflicts of the society. It tried to hold the high ideas towards a national culture. The post war prosperity is amply evident in the poetry of these times. There was a wide change in almost all concepts, discourses, canons, ideologies and cultural forms. In conclusion the 20th century American Poetry can be termed as the Poetry invisible agencies dominated by the cultural chaos and how they are substantiated by intelligence, spontaneous emotion, love and beauty. It provides a resurgence theme of wonderment by American writers about where they lived.

1.3 Self Learning Questions:-

- a) What are the different factors that influenced social and cultural context of modern American Literature?
 - b) Trace the development of Modern American Poetry.
 - c) Explain, how Modern American Poetry is called confessional poetry.
 - d) Explain, the Imagist Movement in American Poetry.
 - e) What are the different aspects of Modern American Poetry.
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1.4 Conclusion:-

Though the tradition of Whitman has been carried through the decades by the American bard, American Literature has undergone significant changes in the twentieth century. The century has been a period of rapid changes and the American writer has not just accepted and internalized this phenomenon of change but has also reflected it through his literature. The minorities and powerless sections of the society have made significant contribution and have been recognized not only on the national but also on the international level. These writers and their literature stand for the spirit of individualism, freedom and democracy. once in his manifestation in London Ezra Pound said that poetry was behind the novel, painting and music, in finding a contemporary form for the new century. Pound was also interested in music, wrote music criticism and explored research into early musical instruments Langston Hughes, a famous poet of Harlem Renaissance, integrated musical form much more fully into his poetry. He incorporated various forms from the legacy of Black Music - blues form, that supplied and invocative lyric form, diction and rhythm, an emotional tone and a narrative - the temporary relief of suffering through self expression and communal experience. For Example 'The Weary Blues'. There is also jazz rhythm in his poetry. A number of other American poets responded to their interest in dreams, myths and transformation which was the way to the self more directly and imaginatively. Theodore Roethke and Galway Kinnell responded to it. Williams was interested in translating some of the poems of Surrealists of Europe twentieth century American Poetry has been treated as a

century of long poems. For example T. S. Eliot's 'The Wasteland' (1922), Ezra Pound's 'Cantos' (1919-69), William Carlos Williams' 'Paterson' (1946-1958), Robert Frost's 'Marriage Poem' such as 'The Death of a Hired Man', 'The Witch of Coos' and 'Home Burial', Robinson's 'The Man Against the Sky', Stevens' 'The Comedian as the Letter C', 'The Man with the Blue Guitar' (1937), 'Examination of the Hero in a Time of War' (1942), 'An Ordinary Evening in New Heaven' (1950), etc.

1.5 Glossary:-

H. D. -Hilda Doolittle (1886-1961), American Poet who formed imagism

Bohemianism - A new lifestyle in the company of people having the same interest in arts

Expatriation-The word comes from the Latin terms ex ("out of") and patria ("country, fatherland"). a person temporarily or permanently residing in a country other than that of the person's upbringing.

Mutilations -A kind of physical injury causing the functioning of a body

Americanism-An Ideology of Modern Americans, A struggle for Individualism

Geographical Diversity - Area wise variety of writers

Imagism-A new kind of literary movement in Modern American Poetry.Ezra Pound is called the father of Imagism

Harlem Renaissance -A literary movement of Black Writers at Harlem.

Pulitzer Price -it is a U.S. award for achievements in newspaper and online journalism, literature, and musical composition.It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of American (Hungarian-born) publisher Joseph Pulitzer, and is administered by Columbia University in New York City.

Jazz- it is a music genre that originated at the beginning of the 20th century, arguably earlier, within the African-American communities of the Southern United States.

Dadaism - was an art movement of the European avant-garde in the early 20th century. Dada was born out of negative reaction to the horrors of World War I. This international movement was begun by a group of artists and poets associated with the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich.

Expressionism -Expressionism was a modernist movement, initially in poetry and painting, originating in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century.

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Unit - 2
Sylvia Plath
(1932 - 1963)

Contents

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction - The Poet

2.2 Subject Explanation

2.2.1 The Poem - Mushrooms

* Summary

* Poetic techniques and devices in the Poem.

2.2.2 The Poem - The Colossus

* Summary

* Poetic techniques and devices in the Poem.

2.2.3 The Poem - Suicide off Egg Rock

* Summary

* Poetic techniques and devices in the Poem.

2.3 Self Learning Questions

2.4 Summing Up

2.5 Glossary

2.6 Bibliography

2.7 Questions for practice

2.0 - Objectives:

- 1) To acquaint the students with the growth and development of American Modern poetry in English.
- 2) To train the students for a close reading of the texts prescribed.
- 3) To help the students develop the ability to interpret American Literature in the context of world literature.

2.1 - Introduction - The Poet:

Sylvia Plath was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on 27 October 1932. She was the first child of Otto Plath and his second wife, Aurelia Schober Plath. Her father taught Entomology and German at Boston University and her mother was a high school teacher. Otto was a noted authority on the subject of bees. But he died of embolism. It is the disease causing block-up of heart's blood vessel. Due to the complications in surgery he died on November 5, 1940 while Sylvia was 8 years old. She never fully recovered from the loss of her father. She continued to publish her poems. In August of 1950, she published her first short story "And Summer Will Not Come Again." In 1952, her story "Sunday at the Mintos" was awarded.

Sylvia Plath suffered a lot throughout her life because of severe depression. While she was in Smith College, she experienced a severe episode of depression that led her to a suicide attempt. This experience is presented in her novel. 'The Bell Jar' which was published after her death in 1963. It is an autobiographical novel.

Sylvia Plath won the Fulbright Scholarship and joined Newnham College, Cambridge (England). It was a new chapter in her life as she met there young poet Ted Hughes in 1956. She married him the next year. She decided to be a

good wife. Her poetic talent was developed under the influence of her husband (Ted Hughes), Dylan Thomas and G.M. Hopkins. While Plath was doing the course of poetry under the guidance of Robert Lowell, she met Anne Sexton, a poet who then became a good friend to her. Plath and Hughes went to America, lived there but returned to London with their children Frieda and Nicholas. On February 11, 1963 Plath gassed herself in her kitchen, ending her life at the age as thirty. Her gravestone is in Yorkshire. Plath got name and fame as a writer after her death. She left the world but left behind the golden treasure of confessional poetry for the world.

Her Works:

- 1) The Colossus and Other Poems (1960).
- 2) The Bell Jar (1961).
- 3) Three Women (1962) a Radio Play BBC.
- 4) Ariel (1965).
- 5) Uncollected Poems (1965).
- 6) Crossing the Water (1971).
- 7) Crystal Gazer and Other Poems (1971).
- 8) Winter Trees (1971).
- 9) Letters Home (1975) edited by her mother.
- 10) The Bed Book (1976).
- 11) Collected Poems (1981) ed. by Ted Hughes Posthumous Pulitzer Prize.
- 12) The It Doesn't Matter Suit (1996).
- 13) Collected Children's Stories (UK, 2001).
- 14) Mrs. Cherry's Kitchen (2001).

2.2.1 - The Poem - Mushrooms:

*** Summary of the Poem :**

***Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem.**

Overnight, very
Whitely, discreetly,
Very quietly

Our toes, our noses
Take hold on the loam,
Acquire the air.

Nobody sees us,
Stops us, betrays us;
The small grains make room.

Soft fists insist on
Heaving the needles,
The leafy bedding,

Even the paving.
Our hammers, our rams,
Earless and eyeless,

Perfectly voiceless,
Widen the crannies,
Shoulder through holes. We

Diet on water,
On crumbs of shadow,
Bland-mannered, asking

Little or nothing.
So many of us!
So many of us!

We are shelves, we are
Tables, we are meek,
We are edible,

Nudgers and shovers
In spite of ourselves.
Our kind multiplies:

We shall by morning
Inherit the earth.
Our foot's in the door.

*** Summary:**

Dear Student, the Poem is about a small delicate and neglected Plant. The Poem is an account of Physical appearance or the life cycle of a mushroom. It is said the idea of writing the Poem on Mushrooms came from Plath's husband. Actually Plath had interest in the study of mushrooms it was stated in her Journal on 14th November 1959. The poem is an analogy between mushrooms and human life. It is not a regular plant or an important plant. Such is the case with women or downtroddens. But the truth is told at the end of the poem "Weak shall inherit the earth."

Sylvia Plath Was a confessional Poet and it is true that such a poet uses poetry for self examination. She describes "Mushrooms" as being very quiet. She points out that no one takes cognizance of mushrooms or never treat them equals. She describes how women were hammering away their inequalities. There is a presentation of the fact that women are perfectly voiceless. She emphatically states with repetition of lines "So many of us." But she ends the poem with a ray of hope. "Weak shall inherit the earth." The poem seems to be the cry of women. Mushrooms stand for women. They are not reorganized by men. The male dominant society looks down upon the female

community. They treat them as their inferior by all means. In reality women play a great role in human life.

Mushrooms are white and quiet and grow on the loam and start their life. Nobody pays attention to them, stop them from growing but betray them. They grow silently without disturbing others. They are very soft who grow under the leafy bedding. They are earless and eyeless in the sense that they have habit to listen harsh words and unfair sights. They are perfectly voiceless. Though they are soft; they widen the crannies day by day. They diet on water or on crumbs of shadows.

Sylvia Plath then describes the Position of women in society. They are just shelves, tables or meek or edibles. But they grow at night and by morning they appear again a living plant. Let there be troubles and sorrows, but they try to overcome it and proceed the further life. Though they are delicate and weak, but never go away from life. They continue their life despite all the calamities. So Sylva Plath, being a feminist strongly concludes the poem - "We shall by morning/ inherit the earth." This is nothing but the reality because the last line confirms that "our foot's in the door." The social movement is already started and the time has to welcome the next futurity.

*** Poetic Techniques and Devices:**

There are 11 stanzas having triplets each. 'Triplets' means three lines. The lines in every stanza are uneven. The words and phrases are uneven just as the uneven shapes of mushrooms. The mushrooms will take over with slow vegetable - like insistence, the more you pick them, the more they grow. Their shapes are of different kinds. They look like tables, fists, hammers. This poem has little or no difficult words. The eleven stanzas of the poem are close to resembling a Haiku. It is a form of Japanese Poetry with 17 syllables in three unrhymed lines of five, seven and five syllables, often described a season or

nature. Most of the words have compress and suggestive meaning particularly in the first three stanzas of the poem.

Actually the poem shows the life cycle of mushrooms. They perform activities essential to the functioning of the eco system by decomposing organic matter. Some of the critics have said that the idea behind the writing of the poem came from Plath's husband. Actually Plath was also interested in the study of mushrooms. It was stated in her journal on 14th November 1959. Mushrooms are not a regular plant. If it is compared to the human beings, they are also not the 'regular' human beings. It is metaphorical aspect that the poet talks of women. She was being a feminist, interested in exposing the life cycle of women community. She found similarity between mushrooms and women in male dominant society. So these Plants are nothing but women. She repeatedly says." So many of us/ So many of us." Their voices are quite perfect. They are sure that they would inherit the earth. And naturally women of the modern world are advancing towards new cycle of life. Though the male dominant society treats them as weak but their steps are advancing to the new doors of the world.

The truth in the poem is that Sylvia Plath tells about the living organism that is capable of overcoming the challenges in this modern world. The Plant of mushroom appears very soft and delicate and it can be crushed easily. But despite this fact mushrooms stand and live a life as human beings. It is to be expected that because the title of the poem is 'Mushrooms', nobody should expect that mushrooms could 'Take hold of the loam.' It is the intention of the poet to use mushrooms as metaphor for a group of people who assert themselves 'discreetly', 'overnight' and 'very quietly' to inherit the earth'. 'The last line of the poem is very meaningful that the growth of the women liberation which Plath's poetry helped to ignite will have an overwhelming impact since their 'foot is already at the door.' In this way 'Mushrooms' is quite symbolic

and meaningful poem expressing the optimistic message for women community in the modern world.

2.2.2 The Colossus:

*** Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem.**

Friends, this Poem tells us about Sylvia's love for her father. Because her father influenced her childhood. But due to the cruel struck of luck Sylvia's father died when she was just eight years old. It was not recoverable loss. She felt emptiness in her life. The Poem is a good metaphor used to highlight her father's life. Actually, the "The colossus" refers to one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It is bronze statue of Apollo at Rhodes. The gigantic figure towered over everything in the harbor but in the poem the statue is broken into pieces. The broken pieces of statue are scattered about in the sea and the shore.

The Colossus:

I shall never get you put together entirely,
Pieced, glued, and properly jointed.
Mule-bray, pig-grunt and bawdy cackles
Proceed from your great lips.
It's worse than a barnyard.

Perhaps you consider yourself an oracle,
Mouthpiece of the dead, or of some god or other.
Thirty years now I have labored
To dredge the silt from your throat.
I am none the wiser.

Scaling little ladders with glue pots and pails of Lysol
I crawl like an ant in mourning
Over the weedy acres of your brow
To mend the immense skull-plates and clear
The bald, white tumuli of your eyes.

A blue sky out of the Oresteia
Arches above us. O father, all by yourself
You are pithy and historical as the Roman Forum.
I open my lunch on a hill of black cypress.
Your fluted bones and acanthine hair are littered
In their old anarchy to the horizon-line.
It would take more than a lightning-stroke
To create such a ruin.
Nights, I squat in the cornucopia
Of your left ear, out of the wind,

Counting the red stars and those of plum-color.
The sun rises under the pillar of your tongue.
My hours are married to shadow.
No longer do I listen for the scrape of a keel
On the blank stones of the landing.

*** Summary of the Poem:**

In this Poem Sylvia Plath is exploring a very private, very personal experience, her relationship with her dead father whom she both adores and hates because he died. She hates in the sense that even after death the father figure influenced her life. Through this poem we got a clear picture of the devastating strength of her emotions. The father seems as a great but broken statue a ruin from some former time. The poet says:

O father, all by yourself
You are pithy and historical as the Roman forum.

The Poet is laboring as she has been for thirty years, she says to get him "put together entirely/ Pieced glued and properly jointed" to bring him back to life. Sylvia imagines that the Colossus, which once dominated the harbor at Rhodes, is her father's dead body now lying broken into pieces on a hillside. The father's ancient power and size have been destroyed through time.

The broken statue indicates that the dead man cannot be recovered through piecing him. Plath successfully uses the statue as a symbol for the father's vanished power.

At the very outset of the Poem she expresses her inability to put the pieces together. She says, "I shall never get you put together entirely". The other thing is that she cannot repair and restructure the statue. The Poem is nothing but a conversation with a broken statue as if Sylvia is talking to her dead father. She takes resort of ancient figure to express her feelings for her dead father. She comes to reality and accepts her limitations and inability to restructure the statue. In the same manner, recalling of her father cannot bring her father back to her.

In the next stanza she also tells her inability in clearing the throat of the statue. She is quite helpless. She has passed thirty years of her life. She used to learn the lessons of life from her father but now she is alone. So she says "I am none the wiser." There are wild grasses and weeds growing over it and the speaker tries to clear it all. By the third stanza, the colossus becomes even larger and imposing when she describes herself as an ant, crawling and mourning. It may be because of the long time that has passed, the weeds have infested the statue's brow, the head has become just a skull and the eyes are not just empty but bald. Here we find that the poetess uses the historical and mythological part of ancient times. For example she uses the blue sky over them as "out of the Orestia, "a trilogy of ancient Greek Plays. In addition to that she compares the statue, of course, her father, to the Roman Forum. She describes the hair of the statue as "acanthine" in the shape of the acanthus leaf. Then we find her having her lunch on a hill of black cypress. She observes the fluted bones where there are some artistic designs. It is the reality that bones are nothing but a ruin, a death.

She tried to squat in the left ear, but in vain. It is useless as it the left ear, but in vain. It is useless as it can keep her "out of the wind." It is the reality that

she cannot go away from. She admits that while the sun rises, she remains "married" to shadow and married to her dead father. The sun of her life is no more. Her relationship is with shadow. It is symbolic in the sense that her father, the sun giving the light (knowledge) is no more. So she is in the shadow. It is very clear that she accepts her fate. She also admits that her efforts are useless and it is having no impact on the statue of colossus. After all it will remain stony and it cannot comprehend her efforts. She does not hope for release anymore.

*** Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem:**

Sylvia Plath imagines that the colossus which once dominated the harbor at Rhodes, is her father's dead body. Now it is lying broken into pieces on a hillside. The statue is a symbol of her father's vanished power. The father's "ancient" power and size have been destroyed in due of course of time. The broken statue indicates that the deal man cannot be recovered through piecing him of course; Sylvia loves her father even after she lost him when she was just eight years old. So she has used the image of the Colossus once before, in an easily poem called "Letter to a Purist" (1956), without identifying the statue with her anther and without imagining that the statue had been broken into pieces. She always wants to be released from the past memory of her father but she cannot.

'The Colossus' has the direct conversational tone and there are fire lines in each stanza. The lines in the poem are not rhymed and the line lengths follow no regular pattern. The poem by no means appears formless but it is much less strictly and rigidly controlled. There are six stanzas having no rhyme scheme. The poem goes on to discover its own language of praise and contempt for the father. The central metaphor is ingeniously varied, as in the comparison of the eyes of the statue to "bald white tumuli" or in the conversion of the tongue into a pillar. By sticking to the fantasized situation- a young daughter's archaeological

reconstruction of the father- statue- Plath gives a surrealistic quality to the metaphor.

Sylvia Plath, as a writer, liked to repeat old themes and recapture popular traditions and she turned instinctively to ancient beliefs in the supernatural as an antidote to an overly sexualized super rationalized circulation. In addition to that she used these images as an antidote to her personal over socialization and super rationalism. She used them as an outlet for her blocked emotions. She powerfully revised such images to fit them into motifs specifically applicable to herself. Plath's "Shadow" represents precisely what can not appear in her mirror- the ghost of creativity. Shadow betokens the imaginative self that might have been but was forbidden to be, the defeated "deep" self. 'In The Colossus', the textual "I" states that her "hours are married to shadow"- that is, to the soul of father husband who lives only in her remembrance. As a result, she herself becomes increasingly shadowlike. Indeed she is the only shadow being in the scene, since the "colossus" stands in the sun, making the shade that she lives in. She complained of living in the "shadow" of the powerful males she felt both tied to and intimidated by. So often in the journals and letters as in her poems the 'I' fails to make a shadow of her own.

When Sylvia says, "My hours are married to shadow" implying a bond that is unbreakable. She doesn't hope for release anymore but finally resigns to her fate. An 'oracle' is a prophet or a seer with a source of wisdom. 'Lysol' is the trade name of a mixture of cresols and soft soap which is used as an antiseptic and disinfectant, while a tumuli is an ancient burial mound. 'Oresteia' is a Greek myth which refers to Orestes. Orestes is the name of Agamemnon's son. He killed his mother, Clytemnestra and her lover in revenge because Clytemnestra and her lover murdered his father. Orestes killed both of them at the urging of his sister Electra. The poem is full of Sylvia Plath's intense emotions. She feels at the loss of her father. There is deep sorrow and sadness. The 'Roman Forum' is the place of assembly for judicial and other public

business and discussion in ancient Rome. It was once the centre of life of the city but now it lies in ruins. It is in destructive condition. Plath has also used the Latin word 'cornucopia' that means 'horn of plenty.' It is a symbol of plenty which consists of a goat's horn overflowing with flowers, fruits and corn.

The poem also depicts the theme of Electra complex. It is the relationship between father and daughter. Electra the daughter of Agamemnon avenges her mother and the lover of her mother for the sake of Agamemnon's death. Plath loves her father from the bottom of her heart but she is unable to recreate her father figure in the world. The fact that the statue is addressed at one point as "father" has caused many critics to link this poem with Plath's own father and her poetic treatment of him. Perhaps the colossus is not the actual father but the creative father. The giant statue is mythic and larger than life, but in being so it is also past - it is irrevocably dead and cannot be reconstructed. But it has become her only home. She lives in its shadow and views the living world from its perspective. Her own life, as she sees it, is therefore a living death. 'The Colossus' represents a turning point in her poems about the father, about the gods in her mythology, and about what she spoke of as her 'death', the failed suicide attempt of 1953. She is, however, at this point, turning from the stone wreckage of another being to the ruins of her own. The movement is vital, or it indicates her wish to leave death - her father's actual death and her own dramatized death - for new life. Plath successfully uses the statue as a symbol for the father's vanished power. Instead of the awkward and arch language of the earlier poems, she finds a more colloquial language with which to address her father. Sylvia Plath wants to point out that life is a straight journey and there is no turning back. We cannot regain our life. Once it is gone, there is nothing else but the reality of life.

2.2.3 - The Poem - Suicide off Egg Rock:

*** Summary of the Poem :**

*** Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem.**

The title of the poem has the touch of history and legends. Sylvia Plath has selected Egg Rock to point out 'death' as an 'escape from this world. Even in her novel 'The Bell Jar' she refers egg rock as a stage for suicide.

Dear student, let us know first what the concept of egg rock is, or what is the egg rock. Egg Rock is in the Atlantic Ocean. It is about two miles out from Lynn Beach on the Swampscott side of Nahant, U.S.A. Egg Rock covers three acres of Land. It is about 750 feet long and 200 feet wide and is over 80 feet above sea level at its summit. Actually it was called Birds' it was a safe place for sea gulls to lay their Eggs There.

Actually Egg Rock the Poem is already published by one of the earlier poets in 'The Lynn Weekly Mirror' in 1825. The poet composed the poem under the Pen name 'Z'. This Poem describes the location of egg rock. In the first four lines the poet says-

“My theme is Egg Rock, Well-known unto me,
Yonder, like a lone block it lies in the sea,
For sea gulls the haunt, it long has been known.
Not far from Nahant and seen from the town.”

These lines very clearly point out the above mentioned location of the Egg Rock. Poetry about Egg Rock characterizes the rock as a solid, stable, everlasting presence in the harbor, able to survive turbulent waves and weather.

Egg Rock is the suitable place to escape from the world of imperfection. This is the place to die or committing suicide. The dying person, who jumps into the ocean, says the final goodbye to the world. The people who are fed up with this world, come to suicide and get freedom from this world.

Suicide off Egg Rock:

Behind him the hotdogs split and drizzled
On the public grills, and the ochreous salt flats,
Gas tanks, factory stacks- that landscape
Of imperfections his bowels were part of-
Rippled and pulsed in the glassy updraught.
Sun struck the water like a damnation.
No pit of shadow to crawl into,
And his blood beating the old tattoo
I am, I am, I am. Children
Were squealing where combers broke and the spindrift
Raveled wind-ripped from the crest of the wave.
A mongrel working his legs to a gallop
Hustled a gull flock to flap off the sandspit.

He smoldered, as if stone-deaf, blindfold,
His body beached with the sea's garbage,
A machine to breathe and beat forever.
Flies filing in through a dead skate's eyehole
Buzzed and assailed the vaulted brainchamber.
The words in his book wormed off the pages.
Everything glittered like blank paper.

Everything shrank in the sun's corrosive
Ray but Egg Rock on the blue wastage.
He heard when he walked into the water

The forgetful surf creaming on those ledges.

*** Summary of the Poem:**

In the poem, there is also a man who is the victim of Egg Rock. The man, who is going to jump into the Ocean, feels that the world is not a perfect one. It is the world of imperfection. The surrounding atmosphere is full of pollution. We get it from the words and phrases used by the poet. For eg. The salt flats, ochre, hot dogs split, drizzling on the public grills' etc. The sun is shining brightly but causing adverse effects. Due to the sun the polluted atmosphere nearly is shining or reflecting business. The little children are mentioned

playing where combers break. They are playing and squealing in the ocean. 'The combers' mean the peak point of the wave that splashes or sprinkles. It appears as the angry ocean. The waves attack the seashore.

There is the dead body floating over the sea surface and that is pushed by the sea waves to the sea shore. There are gull flocks, the sea-birds collecting the food. But a mongrel runs after them. All the gulls flap off the sand spit, a ditch where sand is collected. They came together near the sand spit to enjoy the food thrown away by persons.

The dying man experienced the fearful atmosphere of the place. The atmosphere appears to be very terrible one. The sound of the place smoldered him as if stone-deaf and blind-folded person. The dead body of the person is beached with the sea-garbage. Human body seems to be a machine that runs nonstop. But that machine stops forever after suicide off egg rock. The breathing and heart beating of the machine stop forever, never to start again. The dead body of the man begins to decay as like as a dead skate. It is a large flat long-tailed sea fish. Flies are buzzing around the dead body. The flies almost attack the vaulted brain chamber. It is an indescribable scene. Because it is very dirty one.

Sylvia Plath peeps through the mind of the dead person before his suicide. The life is as a book and the words are the experiences that they turn as pages turn in books. Metaphorically the poet says that the page becomes a blank paper when everything is finished after suicide or death. Of course, the chapter, pages of life remain blank after death. The person described in the poem understands that his body would turn into the sea-garbage and a blue wastage. The Egg Rock is in the middle of sea and the waves always splash the Egg Rock creating a surf-cream on the ledges. The waves never stop for anyone who jumps into it. The sea water had forgotten that someone had just jumped to his death in it. It seems that it is the habit of the sea water to see the suicide case jumped into it.

In this way, Sylvia Plath points out that the place- egg rock is a way of rescue from the hurry and worry of the world of imperfection. She imagines the psychological condition of the man who comes to the place of suicide.

The person who jumps off Egg Rock never comes back to the world. Sylvia Plath also suicide but her act is in the kitchen room. It seems that it was in her mind to suicide and to be away from this world.

*** Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem:**

The Poem is quite symbolic because it is the reality of the life of modern man who is always in conflict. The whole world has become the polluted Place as she describes the garbage of the sea water. It is the blue garbage. The poet looks into the mind of the man who is going to suicide off egg rock. The man is representative of modern man in the world. When all doors are closed, such a man opens the doors of death by suicide. The act of suicide is nothing but a release from the world of hurry and worry.

The Poem is full of images. Of course; they are taken from the surrounding of the Atlantic Ocean coast line. The atmosphere is full of pollution. For example, the salt flats, ochre, hotdogs split, drizzling on the public grills. The sun is shining brightly but causing damnation. The children are playing and squealing where combers break. These combers go upwards. It is the indication of angry ocean. Thus angry waves attack the rock on the sea shore. Because of the shining sun the dirty atmosphere blushes. The sea gulls are gathered and dogs are running after them. This scene indicates that one's food is snatched by others. One's life is ended by others. This is the principle of modern world. This is the theme of life and death. One's death is other's life.

Egg rock, once, was called a place of security where birds used to lay eggs as it was the place of security. But that place of security has now become the place of suicide. In a way the place has become the place of freedom or

release from the world. The dying man is horrified by the dangerous scene of the ocean. The theme of death and life is very clear in the poem. In her novel 'The Bell Jar' she has mentioned the same egg rock as the Place of escape from the imperfect world. Every human being struggles to become perfect. Perhaps death (suicide) is the way to the world of perfection. We may say that the poem is a journey from imperfection to perfection.

Human body is treated as a machine that runs non-stop. As long as the machine works there is life. Once it stops the life ends (Actually breathing and beating 'stops'). The dead body begins to decay. Then the flies buzz around the dead body. These are the theme one's death is other life. The flies enjoy the dead body.

There is another symbol that of a book. The life is as a book and the words are experiences. As long as, there is life, the letters are there in the book. Once the life is ended, the pages of the book become empty After all the dead body would turn into blue garbage. The waves create a surf-cream on the ledges. It is said, "time and tide wait for none". In the same manner the sea water had forgotten that someone had just jumped to his death in it. The man who suicides off egg rock, understands that life once lost, never comes again. There is no retake in life.

2.3 Self Learning Questions:-

2.7.1 Answer the following questions in about one or two sentences.

1. Why did Sylvia Plath use Mushrooms as a symbol for woman community?
2. What is the intention of Sylvia Plath in repeating the line “So many of us? So many of us”?
3. What is Roman Forum? Why does Plath refer it in the poem?
4. What is the poem “The Colossus’ about?

5. What is the concept of 'suicide' according to Sylvia Plath?
6. How does Sylvia Plath compare the life of mankind to?

2.7.2 Descriptive Questions.

1. Discuss Sylvia Plath as a confessional Poet
2. Bring out the autobiographical element in Poems prescribed for your study.
3. Explain how Sylvia Plath's Poetry is the voice of woman in 20th century.

2.4 Summing up:-

Once Alfred Alvarer, a great American critic said, "The concept of extremism is the result of the overtly confessional attitude of the poets who very often suffered from mental imbalance. The reason for such an outspokenness and fragmentation of the poet is to be found not only in the psycho-biographical life of the poet but also in the extraordinary socio-political order of the post-war especially in America." The critic rightly points out the situation of the poet's mind. It is also supported by Psychoanalysis. It is a fact that the knowledge of Psychoanalysis is very useful to understand confessional Poetry.

Sylvia Plath uses the method of self dramatization in her concessional poetry. But she is different from other confessional Poets. First, she is unable to keep her interest centered narrowly on herself. Secondly, her sense of selfhood differs essentially from the day to day identity of the poet as a person as she is projected in confessional poetry. She was influenced by Robert Lowell who taught her to lose self consciousness to project personal experiences with ease in poetry. Plath's poetry reflects at large the emotional psychological and social crisis experienced by the age in general and America in particular. Sylvia Plath is a great subjective Poet and a political one as well. Once she remarked, "I am rather a political person." She is also influenced by her contemporary Poets like

Anne Sexton and Theodore Roethke. Plath's early Poems have the same themes that of Roethke's Poetry. Anne Sexton was the friend of Sylvia Plath. She also experienced the fits of madness. Sylvia also recorded mental tension and struggles of life in her poetry as it is recorded by Anne sexton. Their poetry revealed deep illness of their minds. Sylvia Plath's Poetry expresses tension between the self and the external world. In this way, at the centre of Confessional Poetry, lies the attempt at making everything Personal. Sylvia Plath the Self and the world stand in a tense relationship with each other. Her Poetry derives its force as much from her personal factor as from her awareness of the threat of the external world.

2.5 Glossary:-

2.5.1 Mushrooms:-

Discreetly	- without disturbing others, un-obstructively.
Betray	- to give up, deceiving
Earless & eyeless	- having no rights
Crannies	- a small crack
Crumbs	- a small piece of bread and butter
Shelves & Tables	- a commodity, article to display in the showcase
Nudgers & Shovers	- a struggle to stand in life

2.5.2 The Colossus:-

Pieced	- broken Pieces
Glued	- Joined things together
Mule- bray	- a donkey's cry
Pig-grunt	- The rough sound of Pig
The Colossus	- Immense Statue of an ancient Roman
Agamemnon	- a Roman warrior and a ruler
Clytemnestra	- Agamemnon's wife
Bawdy Cackles	- Humorously indecent series of light sounds
Barnyard	- a farmhouse area
Oracle	- the Place where the ancient Greeks consulted a god, the Person giving wise guidance
To dredge	- sprinkle
Tumuli	- (Plural of tumulus) - Barrow, Burial Mound
Orestes	- the name of Agamemnon's son
Oresteia	- a Greek myth derived from Orestes

Acanthine	- Large leaves of acanthus plant
Anarchy	- political disorder, situation beyond control
Electra	- Agamemnon's daughter
Squal	- to sit on one's heels
Cornucopia	- a Latin word, mean the horn of plenty
Roman Forum	- a museum where great historical articles, statues are preserved
Cypress	- an evergreen tree, a symbol of sorrow

2.5.3 Suicide off Egg rock:-

Hotdogs	- meat like substance
Drizzle	- slow rainfall
Ochreous	- brownish color
Damnation	- destruction
Tattoo	- the sound while soldiers come back
Squealing	- the sound of animal
Combers	- the highest peak of waves
Sand spit	- the ditch of sand
Gull	- sea bird
Gallop	- horse's fastest race
Smoldered	- resounding of sound
Skates	- a large flat long- tailed sea- fish
Shrank	- to become small or shorten
Egg rock	- A large block of egg rock in the Atlantic Ocean near Nahant, U.S.A.
Blue Wastage	- the sea water appears blue so the garbage in it is called blue Wastage
Ledges	- the range of rocks

2.6 Bibliography:-

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2.7 Questions for Practice

2.7.1 Answer the following questions in about one or two sentences.

1. What do mushrooms stand for as described in the poem? How?
2. What are the qualities of Mushrooms mentioned in the poem?
3. What does the line “We shall by morning/inherit the earth” suggest?
4. Who are shelves, tables, meek and edible according to Sylvia Plath?
5. What is ‘Colossus’?
6. What does the line “My hours are married to shadow” suggest?
7. What do you know about ‘egg rock’?
8. Why does the poetess use egg rock a suitable place for suicide?
9. What is the theme of the poem ‘Suicide of Egg Rock’?
10. Does Sylvia Plath express the voice of women through her poem? How is it?
11. Do you find Sylvia Plath confessing her truth of life? How? Point out in brief.

2.7.2 Descriptive Questions.

1. Comment on the theme of suffering and death in the poetry of Sylvia Plath.
2. Find out the element of fear and conflict in the Poems of Sylvia Plath that are prescribed for your study.
3. Explain, how Sylvia Plath has used the imagery in the Poems prescribed for your study.
4. How can you explain Sylvia Plath as a feminist with the help of means prescribed for your Study?
5. Explain Sylvia Plath's attitude against the male dominant society the help of poems prescribed for your study.
6. How does Sylvia Plath use symbolism in her Poems prescribed for your study?

Units - 3
Robert Lowell
(1917-1977)

Contents

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction - The Poet

3.2 Subject Explanation

3.2.1 The Poem - Water

* Summary

* Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem

3.2.2 The Poem - Neo-Classical Urn

* Summary

* Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem

3.2.3 The Poem - For the Union Dead

* Summary

* Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem

3.3 Self Learning Questions

3.4 Summing Up

3.5 Glossary

3.6 Bibliography

3.7 Questions for practice

3.0 Objectives :

1. To acquaint the students with the growth and development of Modern American Poetry.
2. To train the students for a close reading of the texts prescribed.
3. To help the students develop the ability to interpret American Literature in the context of world literature.
4. To understand the confessional poetry that Robert Lowell fathered.

3.1 Introduction :

He was born on 1st March 1917 at Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. His original name was Robert Traill Spence Lowell IV. He was considered to be the founder of the confessional Poetry movement. He belonged to the Boston Brahmin family. There was the tradition of reputed literary figures in this family. The family included the poets like Amy Lowell and James Russell Lowell. His mother also belonged to William Samuel Johnson, a signer of the United State Constitution.

He learnt at St. Mark's School, a prominent Prep-School in Southborough, Massachusetts. Then he went to Harvard College for two years and transferred to Kenyon College in Gambier Ohio. Lowell reflected his life through his Poetry. His life was full of torments and anxieties. When he was at Harvard he determined to be a Poet. Then as per the advice of John Crowe Ransom, he decided to study Philosophy. He came across the renounced figures like Allen Tate, Randall Jarrell. His poetry flourished with the proper guidance of Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren.

Robert Lowell married Jean Stafford in 1940. She was a novelist. In 1941 they remarried in a Catholic Church. He turned himself a catholic. It lasted until 1947 as his wife divorced him. He reflected it in his first two books - 'Land of Unlikeness' (1944) and the Pulitzer Prize winning 'Lord Weary's Castle' (1946). Robert Lowell appeared in the anthology of 'Mid Century American Poets'. The anthology included Muriel Rukeyser, Karl Shapiro, Elizabeth Bishop, Theodore Roethke, Randall Jarrell and John Ciardi.

He was a strong objector during the World War-II. He was imprisoned several months in Danbury Connecticut. He wrote his experiences of prison in the poem 'Memories of West Street and Lepke' form his book 'Life studies'. He was an active member in the 'Civil Rights Movement.' He opposed the US involvement in Vietnam. He also actively participated in the 'Peace March' in

Washington DC in October 1967. He was arrested many times. The details are found in the early sections of Norman Mailer's 'The Armies of the Night.'

Lowell was addicted to alcoholism and suffered from manic depression. He was hospitalized many times. He married, for the second time, to writer Elizabeth Hardwick in 1949. In 1970 he left Elizabeth and married the British author Lady Caroline Blackwood. He lived in England many years. Lowell suffered a heart attack in a cab, in New York, and died in 1977.

*** Lowell's Poetic Career**

Robert Lowell reached wide acclaim when he published 'Lord Weary's Castle' in 1946. It was the revised version of early book 'Land of Unlikeness' (1944) 'Lord Weary's Castle' was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1947. In 1951, he wrote the book entitled 'The Mills of the Kavanaughs'. In 1959, he published 'Life Studies', a great literary work in his life time. 'It marked both a big turning point in Lowell's career and a turning Point for American Poetry in general. One critic, M. L. Rosenthal labeled the book "Confessional." Then Lowell turned to translations of classical and modern European Poets. He published the book 'Imitations' that received the 'Bollingen Poetry Translation Prize' in 1962. In 1964, Lowell Published his next book 'For the Union Dead' which was widely praised by the readers. During 1967 and 1968 he experimented with a verse journal, published as 'Notebook-1967-68'. There were three volumes of the book, particularly fourteen lines Verse form, sonnets appeared in the volumes. In 1974, he published 'The Dolphin' which includes poems about his daughter, Harriet and his ex-wife, and his new wife, Caroline Blackwood whom he used to call her by nickname "Dolphin". He published his last volume of Poetry, 'Day by Day' in 1977. The Same year he died, In it he wrote with free Verse. Lowell was on the position of U.S. Poet Laureate during 1947-48.

Lowells Literary Works

'Land of Unlikeness (1944)'
'Lord Weary's Castle (1946)'
'The Mills of the Kavanaughs (1951)'
'Life Studies (1961)'
'Imitations (1961)'
'For the Union Dead (1964)'
'The old Glory (1965)'
'Near the Ocean (1967)'

'Prometheus Bound (1969)'
'Notebook (1969)'
'History (1973)'
'The Dolphin (1973)'
'Day by Day (1977)'
'The Oresteia of Aeschylus (1978)'
'Collected Poems (2003)'

3.2 Subject Explanation:

3.2.1 The Poem - Water

It was a Maine lobster town—
each morning boatloads of hands
pushed off for granite
quarries on the islands,

and left dozens of bleak
white frame houses stuck
like oyster shells
on a hill of rock,

and below us, the sea lapped
the raw little match-stick
mazes of a weir,
where the fish for bait were trapped.

Remember? We sat on a slab of rock.
From this distance in time
it seems the color
of iris, rotting and turning purpler,

but it was only
the usual gray rock
turning the usual green
when drenched by the sea.

The sea drenched the rock
at our feet all day,

and kept tearing away
flake after flake.

One night you dreamed
you were a mermaid clinging to a wharf-pile,
and trying to pull
off the barnacles with your hands.

We wished our two souls
might return like gulls
to the rock. In the end,
the water was too cold for us.

*** Background:-**

The Poem is having the setting of sea-shore; many boats are anchored to it. It is the Location of Maine town coastline. There is the habitual action of the boatmen to go off for granite quarries on the island. It is nothing but the act of fishing.

*** Summary of the Poem:-**

The Poem appeared in the volume of poems published in 1964. The Poem depicts the experience of the Poet while both Elizabeth and himself enjoyed the anecdote in 1948, summer season, when both the lovers enjoyed the cold rock side cascade and splashing sea water on the rocks. The poet wrote his experience and sent to Elizabeth in 1962. After that he published the poem in the volume, 'For the Union Dead' in 1964 in which 'Water' was the opening poem.

It is the morning scene that the poet describes of the coastline. All the boatmen are preparing themselves to push off the boats and to set out for fishing. It is the rocky coastline where there are waterfalls to enjoy. The boatmen went off by leaving their white houses as if stuck like oyster shells on a hill of rock. The Poet describes the coastline landscape with his Power of imagination.

There is small dam in the rocks made of sticks and leaves of trees or a sea-grass. The cascade falls and the sideways fish jump to the trapping place as there is bait for fish.

Then the poet describes the image of the rock where they sat upon. The sprinkles of water or splashing waves create iris (rainbow like) and then turn it in purple colour. Actually it was the gray rock. But because of the usual drenching of water to the rock, it has turned into a green. Of course, the moss has colored the rock. Not only this but the sea-waves always attack the rock and tearing away 'Flake after Flake'. The rocks turn into pieces. Here we find the nature decorates as well as destroys.

The Poet turns to his beloved and tells her about her dream. In the dream his beloved tells herself as a mermaid clinging to a wharf-pile and pulling off the barnacles with her hands. Barnacles are the small sea-animals that fasten themselves to ship bottom or at the bottom of rock.

In the last stanza we find that the poet again using an imagery of gulls (sea-birds). They both compare themselves to the sea-birds and their coming to the rock are as if coming of the sea-birds. But the ending line is quite suggestive "In the end the water was too cold for us." Here, the poet finds himself afraid of the cold water. When the sea-water is cold, there is a suggestion that both the lovers are satisfied with their embrace and the soul. Because the sea-side rock is the meeting place for the secret lovers. It is the autobiographical touch to the Poem. Robert Lowell and Elizabeth went to the Place in 1948 (before marriage) and then in 1949 they got marry. Of course, it is a love poem full of images. The lover realizes his beloved that in man's life everybody has to work for his daily bread and butter. The batmen sail off and do the business of fishing. When all went off their houses remain empty. They are as if stuck objects to the rock mountain.

*** Poetic devices used in the Poem**

The Poem is of eight stanzas having four lines each. Of course, the lines are uneven in length. There is no rhyme-scheme as such. The setting is of the Maine town. The setting is of the sea-shore, a coast line buzzed with boats and boatmen. They are the symbols of life full of rituality. It is the life that should have to continue the daily work, without break. Their houses are just as nests hung on the trees. The Poet describes them "White frame houses stuck like oyster shells on a hill of rock." The gray rock is the symbol of firm and stable life. Though the waves attack on the rock, the rock stands still. The waves are the symbol of problems and difficulties in our life that occur recurrently. The lovers call themselves, gull, the sea-birds, who sit on the big rock to converse each other. The lovers understand the philosophy of life from the objects of nature. The diction in the Poem is very simple. The Poem depicts a very beautiful atmosphere. So the Poem is also called a love Poem.

3.2.2. For the Union Dead - by Robert Lowell

The old South Boston Aquarium stands
in a Sahara of snow now. Its broken windows are boarded.
The bronze weathervane cod has lost half its scales.
The airy tanks are dry.

Once my nose crawled like a snail on the glass;
my hand tingled
to burst the bubbles
drifting from the noses of the cowed, compliant fish.

My hand draws back. I often sigh still
for the dark downward and vegetating kingdom
of the fish and reptile. One morning last March,
I pressed against the new barbed and galvanized

fence on the Boston Common. Behind their cage,
yellow dinosaur steamshovels were grunting
as they cropped up tons of mush and grass

to gouge their underworld garage.

Parking spaces luxuriate like civic
sandpiles in the heart of Boston.

A girdle of orange, Puritan-pumpkin colored girders
braces the tingling Statehouse,

shaking over the excavations, as it faces Colonel Shaw
and his bell-cheeked Negro infantry
on St. Gaudens' shaking Civil War relief,
propped by a plank splint against the garage's earthquake.

Two months after marching through Boston,
half the regiment was dead;
at the dedication,
William James could almost hear the bronze Negroes breathe.

Their monument sticks like a fishbone
in the city's throat.
Its Colonel is as lean
as a compass-needle.

He has an angry wrenlike vigilance,
a greyhound's gentle tautness;
he seems to wince at pleasure,
and suffocate for privacy.

He is out of bounds now. He rejoices in man's lovely,
peculiar power to choose life and die--
when he leads his black soldiers to death,
he cannot bend his back.

On a thousand small town New England greens,
the old white churches hold their air
of sparse, sincere rebellion; frayed flags
quilt the graveyards of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The stone statues of the abstract Union Soldier
grow slimmer and younger each year--
wasp-waisted, they doze over muskets
and muse through their sideburns . . .

Shaw's father wanted no monument
except the ditch,
where his son's body was thrown
and lost with his "niggers."

The ditch is nearer.
There are no statues for the last war here;
on Boylston Street, a commercial photograph
shows Hiroshima boiling

over a Mosler Safe, the "Rock of Ages"
that survived the blast. Space is nearer.
When I crouch to my television set,
the drained faces of Negro school-children rise like balloons.

Colonel Shaw
is riding on his bubble,
he waits
for the blessed break.

The Aquarium is gone. Everywhere,
giant finned cars nose forward like fish;
a savage servility
slides by on grease.

*** Background: -**

'For the Union Dead' is one of the most celebrated and anthologized American Poems written during the second half of the twentieth century. Robert Lowell - wrote it for the 1960 Boston Arts Festival starting the poem in January and not finishing it until just before the June celebration. Read to an enthusiastic crowd, the poem solidified Lowell's reputation as one of the major American Poets of his generation.

The occasion of the poem's public debut clearly influenced its composition. The poem's various references to Boston streets and landmarks were instantly recognizable to its audience. The poem sets much of its action close to the festival's location. The Boston Arts Festival took Place in the Boston Public Garden, adjacent to the Boston Common that the poem describes.

Among the prominent aspects of the Boston landscape that the poem mentions are the memorial to Colonel Robert Shaw and the recently built underground parking garage on the Common. Yet the poem's audience was hardly limited to Bostonians. Indeed 'For the Union Dead' received a great deal of national attention when Lowell chose it to be the title poem of his 1964, Collection.

'For the Union Dead' contemplates the legacy of the civil war, embodied in the memorial to Colonel Robert Shaw, a white soldier who died while commanding an all black regiment. To much Northerners, Shaw symbolized Union Idealism, one hundred years after his death. Lowell contrasts Shaw's heroism with contemporary forms of self-interest and greed in 'For the Union Dead'.

*** Summary of the Poem:-**

'For the Union Dead' begins with an epigraph. The Poem's epigraph is the Latin inscription on the memorial to Colonel Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment that he commanded. In English, the inscription (Which Lowell revised for the Poem) reads, "He leaves all else to serve the republic." By quoting this inscription, Lowell introduces the theme of noble self-sacrifice.

The opening stanza describes the closed South Boston Aquarium. The simple sentence patterns emphasize a sense of loss and dilapidation. In particular, a list of strong adjectives evoke this melancholy mood, the windows are "Broken" and "Bourded", the weathervane's scales are "Lost" and the fish tanks are "airy" and "dry." Everything is ruined, broken and bare.

While the opening stanza seems to imply nostalgia for a time before the South Boston Aquarium's ruin, the next two stanzas suggest that the past was far from ideal. The speaker remembers a childhood visit to the aquarium. Peering into the tanks, he feels great excitement as his hand "tingled." However, what delights him is not the sight of the fish but an idiosyncratic desire to "burst the bubbles" coming from them. Furthermore, this image of rising bubbles-which

the poem will return to- presents the fish as trapped and submissive, "Cowed, compliant." The next stanza further elucidates the speaker's theory of historical regression. The speaker claims to "Sigh still/ for the dark downward and vegetating kingdom, of the fish and reptile." "The kingdom of fish is literally heading" "Dark downward" as they swim down and always from the aquarium light. More broadly, this image suggests a sense that, like the fish and reptile kingdom, the kingdom of humans is getting worse, darker and less noble. Also the word 'Kingdom' introduces the poem's public interests, 'For the Union Dead' addresses the mood of American society as it regresses from idealism to despair.

Continuing a sentence from the previous stanza, the poem describes the "new barbed and" galvanized/ fence on the Boston Common." This image suggests much of the speaker's attitude toward contemporary life. What is 'new' is particularly ugly and menacing border between people. The "Fence" spits the Boston common, a public area where people usually congregate. Instead of a crowd enjoying the scenery however, bulldozers dig up earth in order to build a parking garage. The scene is portrayed as savage and hellish as the bulldozers are metaphorically described as "Dinosaurs" and the underground garage is deemed an "underworld." Thus, modern construction tools evoke a prehistoric, animalistic world.

Then the poet describes the poem's central figure: Colonel Robert Gould Shaw or more precisely, a memorial to him by Augustus St. Gaudens. During the Civil War, Colonel Shaw led the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment, an all black squad, on an attack on Fort Wagner, South Carolina. On July 18, 1863, Colonel Shaw was killed. At the time, Shaw and his death represented to many Northerners the idealism of the Union cause. Among the poets who sought to immortalize Shaw in verse was Lowell's ancestor, poet James Russell Lowell.

The monument to Colonel Shaw overlooks both the Boston common and the Massachusetts state House. In these stanzas "For the Union Dead" portrays the harshness of contemporary existence as literally shaking the monument. Like the statehouse metaphorically "Shaking over the excavations" in anger, the "Civil war relief" is "Shaking." This stanza depicts a basic contrast between the idealism the soldiers displayed when dying for a just cause and contemporary societies more amoral struggle to construct more parking spaces. Even the effort to stabilize the monument with a "Plank Splint" suggests a lack of care for the honorable moments in Boston's past that the monument commemorates.

In the lines from 25-36, the stanzas also contrast Boston's present with its Past. William James was a philosopher, author (His most famous book is 'The Types of Varieties of Religious Experience) and member of the distinguished James family. (His brother Henry, the novelist and short story writer, wrote, among other works, Portrait of a Lady.) James's comment at the monument's 1897 dedication that he "could almost hear the bronze Negroes breathe" gives a sense of deep appreciation and respect for the slain men's heroism and sacrifice. Yet a few generations later, "Their monument sticks like a fishbone/ in the city's throat." Instead of reverence, the city's attitude toward the soldiers and what they represented has shifted to discomfort. Furthermore, the stem images that Lowell presents of colonel Shaw suggests Shaw's unease with the public role others claim for him: "he seems to wince at pleasure/ and suffocate for privacy."

Stanza 10th analyses the particular heroism that Shaw's actions displayed. Unlike James, who "could almost hear the bronze Negroes breathe." Show is flatly described as being "Out of bounds now." In a literal sense, Shaw exists "Out of bounds", because he is dead and beyond the bounds of life. In a more figurative sense, Shaw's self sacrifice seems incomprehensible to the contemporary age. Shaw's triumph was "to choose life and die" he acted humanely but at the cost of his own life.

In the following two stanzas the civil war seems to recede into the New England landscape of "small town New England greens." "White churches," and the monument. Even the bronze soldiers appear to "grow slimmer and younger each year". Like the flags that adorn the graves of the Union dead, the connection between New England's present and its past seems increasingly "frayed." Until this point, "For the Union Dead" idealizes Shaw's sacrifice and to a certain extent, the age and culture that Valorized Shaw's actions as noble. In this stanza, the poem's tone shifts; the language turns sparse and conversational.

Between lines 53-59, in quick succession, these two stanzas present a series of apocalyptic images of twentieth century life. "The ditch is nearer, "the poem flatly declares in an image that echoes that of the ditch where Shaw and the black soldier were hastily buried. As the poem quickly makes clear, recent technological advances and cultural changes have increased the possibility for mass killing. War has become more terrible and less worthy of commemoration, Lowell, the former conscientious objector 'to World War-II, notes "There are no statues for the last war here."The last War" means only the previous, not the final war. World war-II featured the first atomic bomb, whose effects a commercial photograph, "not a civic monument, displays. In turn, this mass slaughter of civilians becomes 'an advertisement for a safe testifying to its resiliency. "Space is nearer the Poem declares, referring most overtly to the various space explorations. However this pared-down declaration suggests that technology has brought mankind closer to a giant void, not a new frontier of knowledge. Finally, the television set prevents images of civil rights strife, "the drained faces of Negron school children "recall the difficulties civil rights activists faced and the hostility Africa, American school Children encountered when trying to integrate schools.

The final two stanzas of the poem revise images from earlier in the poem. Like the child in stanza-2, whose "hand tingled/ to burst the bubbles, Shaw is riding on his bubble, "waiting" for the blessed break." This apocalyptic image

suggests either a further, more awful bloodshed or break toward the idealism Shaw represents. The final stanza's tone, attentively plaintive and angry, suggests the former possibility- "The Aquarium is gone," the speaker stakes, implying that it has been replaced with something far worse. Technology and its influence are ubiquitous; instead of actual fish for children to admire, shark like, "giant finned cars" fight each other for parking spaces. The final two lines "a savage servility/ slides by on grease," further echo the poems earlier images. The technologically driven present makes people servile as "the cowed compliant fish" of the second stanza; ironically, though mankind has become even more savage than these animals.

*** Poetic techniques used in the Poem:**

Robert Lowell was the most celebrated Poet of his generation. Lowell's first book 'Land of Unlikeness' was Published in 1944. His second book, 'Lord Weary's Castle' won the 1947 Pulitzer Prize. However many critics cite Lowell's fifth book 'Life studies' as his most important and influential collection. 'Life Studies' introduces many of the stylistic and thematic elements that would characterize what many called "Confessional Poetry."

The Publication of 'For the Union Dead' was a major literary event. The book received enthusiastic, prominent reviews in many major periodicals, including the "New York Times, 'Herald Tribune' and 'News Week'. In general the poem was admired by many reviewers as "the greatest poem," "Most celebrated poem" or "a major poem." This poem has various themes to interpret. Most of the critics have searched out the major themes as below:

*** Idealism and Despair:-**

"For the Union Dead" celebrates Colonel Shaw for embracing a paradox. Shaw the Poem declares, "Rejoices in man's lovely/ peculiar power to chose life and die." This "Power" is "lovely" meaning both beautiful and full of love

because an almost Christ like, self sacrificial desire motivates his death. The "Power" is "Peculiar", meaning both odd and particular to humans. The oddness resides in the fact that Colonel Shaw dies for his principles; his strength does not protect his life. Finally, this power is peculiar to humankind as a 'full consciousness of the consequences makes Shaw's action heroic. He faced the risks consciously.

Lowell also 'delights' in these actions. However "For the Union Dead" repeatedly contrasts the idealism that motivates- Shaw with contemporary forms of motivating self-interest. The most persistent contrast is between the Civil War and World War-II. In his October 13, 1943 letter to President Roosevelt, Lowell stated his opposition to World War-II in language evocative of 'For the Union Dead." Lowell said, "Members of my family has served in all our wars since the Declaration of Independence." Lowell Characterized America as "Prepared to wage a war without quarter or principles." According to "For the Union Dead" this lack of mercy and morals characterizes modern warfare, which is waged with weapons indiscriminates and awful as the nuclear bomb. What is lacking is Shaw's heroic doomed idealism- his willingness to, "to choose life and die."

Devolution of Humankind

According to "For the Union Dead," technology works to remake humans into beasts. Early in the poem, the speaker declares, "I often sigh still/ for the dark downward and vegetating kingdom/ of fish and reptile." Similarly, the poem often sighs for technology's ability to blur the boundaries between the "downward..... kingdom/ of fish and reptile" and that of humans. A fear that technology devolves humankind fills the poem. For example the phrase "Yellow dinosaur steam shovels' were grunting" and "giant finned cars nose forward like fish both compare inanimate technological products and implicitly, those who use them to creatures far below humans in the classical great chain of being "grunting" beasts or "cowed compliant fish."

As humans become more beastly, they also increase their ability to slaughter each other. In a very subtle reference, "For the Union Dead" mentions the Civil War soldiers' "Muskets." Instead of muskets, modern armies possess atom bombs. "Space is nearer," the Poem declares, after describing "the blast" that leveled Hiroshima. Accompanying its devolution, humankind's increased firepower brings it closer to the point of extinction. For Lowell, writing during the cold war nuclear arms race, the possibility of nuclear war appeared frighteningly real; if carried out, such a war would have completed the task of turning men and women back into beasts.

***Public V/s Private life:-**

The title of 'For the Union Dead' announces that the work addresses a public subject, the Civil War's long and tortured legacy. However, the poem begins with the private childhood memory of poet visiting the south Boston Aquarium. By its end, 'For the Union Dead' relates this memory to much more public events and places among them a memorial to the Union dead. William James's comments at its dedication, and a photograph of Hiroshima placed in a bank window. This technique of showing how the larger political realities intrude into seeming private moments distinguishes much of Lowell's poetry, even when it tells what seems to be a narrowly personal anecdote; his poetry often calls attention to the larger societal, cultural and historical forces at work.

For example, the third stanza mentions, "One morning last March/ pressed against the new barbed and galvanized/ fence on the Boston common." The opening of this sentence is highly conversational: its tone could be employed in a chat with a friend. Yet, as the anecdote unfolds, it becomes clear that it addresses not so much the speaker's private life, but the scarring of public space. The fence is "barbed and galvanized," suitable for a prison. Yet this menacing fence guards the Boston common, a place where public events take place and where people are free to gather. Thus, the image of the speaker

"pressed" against the fence stands for the individual isolated from communal space. At fault is "Progress" defined as the need for more parking spaces.

3.2.3 The Neo-Classical Urn

Robert Lowell is a confessional poet. In this poem he tells his experience in his life. This poem is about the collection of turtles. It is a symbolic presentation in the poem. This poem is a response to John Keats' Ode on a Grecian Urn' and is about nature versus artificial. During his illness his mental situation was out of order. His personality could be dangerously unstable.

There are some resources of the poem that we find in the collection of Saskia Hamilton, the editor, who has produced a book that is full of major events giving Lowell's profile and dimension of life. He lived through the most exhilarating and painful experiences of the 20th century. Lowell wanted to make his experiences immortal through his poetry. He even objected the world war-II and opposed the Vietnam War. In his letter to Ezra Pound, Robert Lowell as a 18 year old frustrated poet writes in Italy, "All my life I have been eccentric to normal standards. I had violent Passions for various pursuits usually taking the form of collecting: tools, names of birds, marbles catching butterflies, snakes, turtles etc. buying books on Napoleon, None of this led any where.... I caught over thirty turtles and put them in a well where they died of insufficient feeding." The letter is very important to take the poet's experience transferred to the poem "The Neo-classical Urn". Of courses, it is after 30 years.

Lowell describes his experience with turtles that he dropped them one by one in the well. Turtle's struggled to survive. They try to climb up. But the condition of turtles seems very bad. They cannot walk more. Some of them died on the spot and a few tried to climb up. But they also fall down on the ground and no more. The Poet Says;

In that season of Joy

My turtle catch

Was thirty three

It was joyous to catch the little turtles, for a boy. He almost caught 33 turtles and dropped them into the well. It is called a Neo Classical Urn, which is also placed in the natural background. Turtles are dropped one by one. They create some sort of noise that sound is the elegy of turtles. The poet calls himself, "The boy was pitiless who strummed their elegy." For the whole month the struggle of the turtles continued. One by one died of hunger and came up fouling on the surface of the water. The condition of turtles after death is also pointed out by the Poet. He says; "And popped up dead on the stale scrummed surface- limp wrinkled heads and legs withdrawn in pain". The Poet observed the pathetic condition of turtles. He himself felt sorry for that. It happened because of him. His surprising remark "what pain? A turtle's nothing," indicates his sorrowful situation of mind. At the end of the Poem, Lowell observes the last surviving turtle passing through the grass, carrying the load of its curved back. The Poet experienced the dying smell of turtles. So the Poet says, "I rub my skull, that turtle shell, and breathe their dying smell."

*** Poetic techniques used in the Poem:-**

The poem is the recollection of poet's past experiences and he makes them memorable. He points out the tragedy of turtles which is caused by the poet himself. The sources of the poem indicate the reality and confession of the poet. The turtle tragedy is accepted as an unhappy incident in poet's life. The poet confesses openly that the tragedy in the life of turtles took place because of his pitilessness.

The poet has given the speed of the turtle to his poem. The poem is divided into three stanzas. The first stanza contains 13 lines, second 14 lines and the third 15 lines. It seems that the movement of the poem is as good as that of

the turtle going one step by the other with a slow speed. It is symbolic one. The structure of the poem is meaningful. The lines in the stanzas are uneven. It has a natural shape as that of a turtle.

The poem stands as an experience in poet's early life when he calls himself a 'pitiless boy.' But now he repents and rethinks over his past mistake. The title of the poem is symbolic one. It is analogous to the 'Grecian Urn' described by John Keats. It is Neo Classical in the sense that man's art and natural art come together and it creates a new beauty. Here, in the Poem, Lowell finds a strange thing. The turtles died. The natural objects are no more. So it is Neo-Classical Urn.

3.3 Self Learning Questions

1. When did Robert Lowell get first Pulitzer Prize?
2. For Which literary piece did Robert Lowell get the first Pulitzer Prize?
3. Which is the literary piece published by Robert Lowell that changed the history of American Poetry?
4. Which was the verse journal published in 1967-68 that Lowell experimented?
5. What is the location of the Poem "water" described by Lowell?
6. In which volume did Lowell Publish his Poem "Water" in 1964?
7. Which People are described in the Poem "water"? What is their business?
8. Is the Poem 'water' autobiographical? How?
9. Why did Robert Lowell write the Poem 'For the Union Dead'?
10. What is the background of the Poem 'For the Union Dead'?
11. Who is described as the central figure in the Poem 'For the Union Dead'?
12. Which regiment did Colonel Shaw command?
13. What was the regiment consisting of?
14. When was Colonel Shaw killed?
15. Which creatures are described in "New Classical Urn"?

16. Which romantic Poem in English has become the source of 'Neo Classical Urn'?
17. Is it the poem 'Neo Classical Urn' an experience of the poet in the past? How?
18. What was the event in the past that the poet experienced?
19. What happens with turtles?
20. How was the 18 year old boy described in the poem?

3.4 Summing Up

Robert Lowell is considered to be the great poet of America. His real subject in these poems is finally human and morally responsible in a world. We can compare Lowell with Wilfred Owen and John Milton. Like Wilfred Owen, Robert Lowell warns. His effort is to be truthful. His concern is also less poetry than pity. Wilfred Owen's subject was limited to 'War and the Pity of war.' Lowell's like Milton's is large. His private experiences are transformed to the public. His experiences are based on painful honesty, history, family and self. These experiences make his poetry more and more popular. For e.g. 'Water' is poet's own experience in the company of nature. Love couples arrive at seashore and enjoy the water fall, the big rock which is attacked by sea-waves. The mind of movers is also full of waves attacking each other's mind. It is the personal experience of the Poet that he wrote once to Elizabeth, his wife. In the Poem 'Neo Classical Urn', Robert Lowell tells his past experience when he was a 'pitiless boy'. His Personal experiences are made public. In the same manner he takes resort of history in the poem 'For the Union Dead.' It is the poem that depicts good relationship between Blacks and Whites. Colonel Shaw, the Whiteman led the Regiment of Blacks. They follow his order in the battle. Colonel Shaw fought the battle died with the black soldiers. This is the historical experience by which he wants to teach lessons of morality and social values to the present day

America. So, Robert Lowell surpassed all other great poets and became the national Poet of America.

3.5 Glossary

The Poem-Water

Maine	-	Name of the town in America
Oyster Shells	-	Bivalve mollusks that live in marine, the valves are highly calcified
Lapped	-	to place, to join, to convert into a layer
Mazes of a weir	-	Puzzling of barriers
Iris	-	Thin circular structure in the eye.
Drenched	-	To wet through
Flake	-	A flat thin piece of something
Mermaid	-	A daughter of king fish
Clinging	-	To hold
Work - pile	-	Landing place of ship
Barnacles	-	A kind of crab living in shallow water
Gulls	-	Sea birds

The New Classical Urn (1964)

Turtle	-	sea-animals with a hard shell, tortoise
Ferment	-	leaven
Hummed	-	to sing with closed lips
Sprinted	-	to run a short distance very fast
Nymph	-	kind of goddess in ancient Greek & Roman literature
Swerved	-	to change direction suddenly
Bogs	-	marshy land
Seines	-	fishing net
Plop	-	dropping sound
Gobs of hash	-	a small piece of food (meat)

- Lute - harp a musical instrument with strings
- Strummed - rough sound through the lute
- Popped up - suddenly came up
- Slummed - upper layer on the surface
- Limp - crippled situation
- Hump backed - A curved back having a hump over it.

For the Union Dead

- South Boston - American City
- Aquarium - A place where statues or historical monuments are placed
- Excavations - A process of recording Archeological
- Monuments
- Colonel Shaw - A Commander of Negro Infantry
- Negro-Infantry - A group of Negro soldiers
- Civil War - A War in America between Blacks & Whites
- Sparse - thinly dispersed or scattered.
- Grand Army of - was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Republic the Union Army US Navy, Marines and Revenue Cutter Service who served in the American Civil War
- Muskets - is a muzzle-loaded, smoothbore firearm, fired from the shoulder. Muskets were designed for use by infantry. A soldier armed with a musket had the designation musketeer
- Niggers - Negroes
- Armadillo - New World placental mammals with a leathery armor shell
- Ignited - To arouse the passions of; excite

Clenched - To close tightly, to grasp tightly

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3.7 Questions for Practice

1. Consider 'For the Union Dead' as a brilliant satire on Modern day America.
2. To what extent is 'For the Inions Dead' an elegy on the black soldiers commanded by a white officer who died during Civil War?
3. Comment on the theme of the Poem 'Water.'
4. Explain the Poem 'water' as a love poem.
5. How does Robert Lowell touch his personal experience to the Poem "water"?
6. How does Lowell present his pitiless experience of the past in his Poem Neo Classical Urn'?
7. Explain Robert Lowell as a Confessional Poet.

Unit - 4.
Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-2000)

Contents

- 4.0 Objectives**
- 4.1 Introduction - The Poet**
- 4.2 Subject Expiation**
 - 4.2.1 The Poem - Sadie and Maud
 - Summary
 - Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem
 - 4.2.2 The Poem - The Mother
 - Summary
 - Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem
 - 4.2.3. The Poem - Ballad of Pearl May Le
 - Summary
 - Poetic Techniques and devices in the Poem
- 4.3 Self Learning Questions**
- 4.4 Summing Up**
- 4.5 Glossary**
- 4.6 Bibliography**
- 4.7 Questions for Practice**

4.0 - Objectives:

- 1) To acquaint the students with the growth and development of Black American Poetry in English.
- 2) To train the students for a close reading of the texts prescribed.
- 3) To help the students develop the ability to interpret American Literature in the context of world literature.

4.1 - Introduction - The Poet

She was born on June 7, 1917 in Topeka, Kansas to David Anderson Brooks and Keriah Wims. She was the first child to her parents. Her mother was a former school teacher who left teaching who left teaching for marriage and

motherhood. Her father was the son of a runaway slave who fought in the Civil War. Her father had given up his ambition to become a doctor to work as a janitor because he could not afford to attend medical school. When G. E. Brooks was only six weeks old, her family moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she grew up.

Her home life was stable and loving, although she encountered racial prejudices in her neighborhood and in her schools. She attended Hyde Park High school. It was the leading white high school in the city. She eventually attended an Integrated School, Englewood High school. In 1936, she graduated from Wilson junior college. These four schools gave her perspective on racial dynamics in the city that continued to influence her work.

Her enthusiasm for reading and writing was encouraged by her parents. Her father provided a desk and bookshelves. When she was in high school, her mother took to meet Harlem Renaissance Poets - Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson.

Gwendolyn published her first poem in a children's magazine at the age thirteen. When she was sixteen years old, she had compiled a portfolio of around seventy five published poems. She began to write & publish her poems in the Poetry column VIZ. "Lights and Shadows" in the 'Chicago Defender', an African American news Paper. Although her Poems range in style from traditional ballads and sonnets to using blues rhythms in free verse, her characters are often drawn from the poor inner city. During the same period, she also attended Wilson Junior College, from where she graduated in 1936. After publishing more than seventy five poems and failing to obtain a position with the 'Chicago Defender', Brooks began to work a series of typing jobs.

By 1941, Brooks was taking part in poetry workshops. One particularly influential workshop was organized by Inez Cunningham Stark. Stark was an affluent white woman with a strong literary background, and the workshop participants were all African, American. The group dynamic of Stark's

Workshop proved especially defective in emergizing Brooks and her poetry began to be taken seriously. In 1943 she received an award for poetry from the Midwestern Writers Conference. Her first book of poetry 'A Street in Bronzeville', published in 1945 by Harper and Row, brought her instant critical acclaim. She received her first Guggenheim Fellowship and was one of the "Ten Young Women of the year" in Mademoiselle Magazine. In 1950 she published her second book of poetry 'Annie Allen' which won her 'Poetry magazine's 'Eunice Tietjens Prize and the Pulitzer Prize' for poetry, the first given to an African American.

After John F. Kennedy invited her to read at a Library of Congress Poetry festival in 1962, she began her career, teaching creative writing. She taught at Columbia College, Chicago. North eastern Illinois University, Elmhurst College, Columbia University, 'Clay College of New York and the University of Wisconsin- Madison. In 1967, she attended a writer's conference at Fisk University where she said, she rediscovered her blackness. This rediscovery is reflected in her work - 'In the Mecca', a book length poem about a mother searching for her lost child in a Chicago housing project. 'In the Mecca' was nominated for the National book Award for Poetry.

In addition to the National Book Award nomination and the Pulitzer Prize, Brooks was made 'Poet laureate' of Illinois in 1968. In 1985 Brooks became the Library of Congress's consultant in Poetry, a one year position whose title changed the next year to 'Poet Laureate.' In 1988 she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. In 1994, she was chosen as the National Endowment for the Humanities.' Jefferson Lecturer, one of the highest honors for American Literature and the highest award in the humanities given by the federal government. Other awards she received included the "Frost Medal" the "Shelley Memorial Award" and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.' Brooks was awarded more than seventy five honorary degrees from Colleges and Universities worldwide. In 1995, she was

honored as the 'First Woman of the year' by the 'Harvard Black Men's Forum.' On 1st May 1996 Brooks returned to her birth place in Topeka, Kansas. She was the keynote speaker for the Third Annual Kaw valley Girl Scout Council Women of Distinction Banquet and String of Pearls Auction. A ceremony was held in Brook's honor at a local part, located at 37th and Topeka Boulevard.

Brief Personal Lite:-

In 1938, Brooks married Henry Blakely and gave birth to two children. Heary Blakely Jr. who was born in 1940, and Nora Blackly, who was born in 1951. After a short battle with causer, brooks died on December 3, 2000, aged 83, at her southside chicago homa. She is burried at Lincon Cemetry in Blue, Illinois.

4.2 Subject Expiation

4.2.1 Sadie and Maud:- by Gwendolyn Brooks.**Summery of the Poem :****Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem.**

Maud went to college.
Sadie stayed home.
Sadie scraped life
With a fine toothed comb.

She didn't leave a tangle in
Her comb found every strand.
Sadie was one of the livingest chicks
In all the land.

Sadie bore two babies
Under her maiden name.
Maud and Ma and Papa
Nearly died of shame.

When Sadie said her last so-long
Her girls struck out from home.

(Sadie left as heritage
Her fine-toothed comb.)

Maud, who went to college,
Is a thin brown mouse.
She is living all alone
In this old house.

Summary of the Poem:

The Poem is about two sisters- Sadie and Maud. 'Maud went to college/ Sadie stayed home' clearly points out the position of their life. One goes to college and other stays at home. It is the understanding of the people that Maud has a better future than Sadie. Of course, it is the choice of life that they prefer. Sadie enjoyed her life as 'fine toothed comb' makes beautiful hair. She made her life beautiful and utilised everything wherever she went. She enjoyed every moment of life and became happy. It is very clear from the line. "Sadie was one of the livingest chicks in all the land." Life is a flow and every person goes along with that flow. Even staying at Home Sadie didn't stop her flowing of life.

Sadie enjoyed her life and had two babies she had two children outside of marriage. Sadie became the unmarried mother of her two children. Due to this 'Maud and Ma and Papa nearly died of shame.' of course she crossed the social barriers. Sadie proved her success story by enjoying her life. According to Sadie 'Happiness in life' is a successful life. Two girls inherited Sadie's life. She is the symbol of creativity. She scraped life as with fine toothed comb.

At the end of the Poem we find the result of the choice of life. It is Maud who preferred to go to college and make her future bright. But she didn't get success in her life. She appears as a thin brown mouse." This is the condition of Maud. The thin brown mouse is nothing but Maud's pathetic condition. This image of a brown mouse does not suggest a successful mouse, but one that is starving and barely hanging on to life. Finally, Maud is seen living her life all alone in an old house as an unsuccessful being in the world.

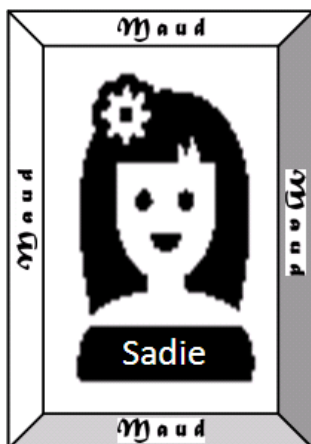
Poetic techniques and devices in the poem :

This poem is an account of life chosen by two sisters - Sadie and Maud. The theme of the poem is nothing but "The success of life." Life is the way that every being has to choose. The choice of life matters most. The success of life depends upon the activeness of a person doing some constructive work of life or

anything that is supporting to better life. Maud selects to go to college and wants to make her future bright. Sadie stays at home. Generally, people think that Maud's life will be better than Sadie. Maud will be an educated girl and live a better life. Gwendolyn Brooks has focused on this theme deliberately. She points out the wrong notion of life considered by people. The Concept of happy life is not related to, "going to college." Moreover the happy life can be possible "by staying at home" too.

Though the poem is short and simple but conveys a great and philosophical message to the whole world. 'The choice of life' and 'The happy life' - are the two things co-related. Sadie makes what society may consider her choice a poor choice, but lives a happy life. Maud, the college graduate, ends up with a bleak and lonely life. What Gwendolyn Brooks reveals through the poem is that Sadie hints at the true source of happiness. In the poem the conventional idea of happy life is stamped out. The idea 'going to college' doesn't bring happiness in Maud's life. Maud's education doesn't bring happiness to her life. Instead, 'staying at home' as an illiterate girl, Sadie lived a very happy life. She enjoyed life by all means. The result of life depends upon our choice of life and the sources of happiness of course there is no clear source of Maud's fault or any explanation for why she ended up with such a bleak future. We only know the fact that she is a college educated girl and living all alone in an old house. The poem seems to be more about Sadie and less of Maud.

The poem appears very simple having 20 lines. These lines are divided into five stanzas having four lines each. Of the 20 lines almost 15 lines are about Sadie's life and 5 lines about Maud. So we know very little about Maud's life and more about Sadie's life. Metaphorically we may say that Sadie is the central figure and Maud is a frame about it. It is not the frame that catches our attention, but it is Sadie the central figure that we look at in the same manner. It is the content or the painting inside the frame that is attractive and interesting. So why, we look at Sadie in this poem as an interesting figure and attractive while Maud appears as only peripheral and doesn't sustain any interest.



At the very outset of the poem the poet uses two separate sentences - "Maud went to college" and "Sadie stayed at home." These two sentences form different impressions about the life of two sisters. In case of Maud, who went to college, there is a possibility of success and of a promising future. On the other hand 'Sadie stayed at

home' indicates her dark future or 'dull life'. Generally, we think of them that Maud will live a happy life and Sadie will be unhappy in her life or Maud will be successful and Sadie as an unsuccessful girl in life. But the poetess has given contrastive result at the end of the poem.

The ironic twist in this poem is that this initial snap judgment ends up completely by surprising the readers. Sadie, who stayed at home, lived an interesting and happy life while Maud lived life all alone in an old house just as a thin brown mouse. It is the story of failure on the part of Maud. Of course, she was planning for future and going to college for that, but the sources of happiness were miles away from her.

At the end of the poem we have sympathy for Maud because she is all alone living a life of thin brown mouse who is on the verge of death. She is almost compared to a thin brown mouse. It doesn't suggest any successful story. Brown mouse is starving and barely hanging on to life. In the last line we see the word "house" instated of "Home" (as in the first stanza)-, indicating lifelessness and desolation. Maud's life is not happy. But for Sadie, we do know that she did right. She went after life with emotions and affections. So the poet calls her the "livingest chits/ In all the land. Actually, the poem ends with a bitter and sad note. One thing is sure that Sadie lived a free and frank life. In that sense, she was an iconoclast. She proved herself as a successful and happy girl by staying at home and not going to college. She proved that ultimately, success is not completely based on going to college, it is not solely based on doing what is expected, but it is more basic than that "Success is simply being happy."

Sadie →	Staying at Home	→	Success is simply being happy
Maud →	Going to College	→	Success depends upon going to college and to be educated

Sadie →	Stamps out old notion of success that 'going to college' brings success in life. By staying at home she becomes successful.		
Maud →	Couldn't become successful even by going to college. at the end lives all alone in an old house as a thin brown mouse		

4.2.2 The Mother by Gwendolyn Brooks:-

Summary of the Poem :

Poetic Techniques and Devices in the Poem.

Abortions will not let you forget.
 You remember the children you got that you did not get,
 The damp small pulps with a little or with no hair,
 The singers and workers that never handled the air.
 You will never neglect or beat
 Them, or silence or buy with a sweet.
 You will never wind up the sucking-thumb
 Or scuttle off ghosts that come.
 You will never leave them, controlling your luscious sigh,
 Return for a snack of them, with gobbling mother-eye.

I have heard in the voices of the wind the voices of my dim
 killed children.
 I have contracted. I have eased
 My dim dears at the breasts they could never suck.
 I have said, Sweets, if I sinned, if I seized
 Your luck
 And your lives from your unfinished reach,

If I stole your births and your names,
Your straight baby tears and your games,
Your stilted or lovely loves, your tumults, your marriages,
aches, and your deaths,
If I poisoned the beginnings of your breaths,
Believe that even in my deliberateness I was not deliberate.
Though why should I whine,
Whine that the crime was other than mine?—
Since anyhow you are dead.
Or rather, or instead,
You were never made.
But that too, I am afraid,
Is faulty: oh, what shall I say, how is the truth to be said?
You were born, you had body, you died.
It is just that you never giggled or planned or cried.

Believe me, I loved you all.
Believe me, I knew you, though faintly, and I loved, I loved
you
All.

It is the poem about a mother who has experienced a number of abortions and now has remorse. She is regretful, yet explains that she had no other choice. It is a heartfelt poem where she talks about how she will not be able to do certain things for the children that she aborted. This poem may be a reflection of what many other women are dealing with.

Summary of the Poem:-

The first Stanza starts off with "Abortions will not let you forget," which sounds like the woman is talking in general terms. She is talking about how future experiences will never take place. Things like "you will never wind up the sucking thumb or Scuttle off the ghosts that come," are some of the many

that will not be done. In a way, the women being told this are reminded of the pain they are going through.

In the second stanza, the woman is talking about her pain and loss. In "I have heard in the voices of the wind the voices of my dim killed children," she is haunted by her own children's faint cries that she hears in her mind. She then makes the transition from telling the reader to explaining to her children why she did what she did. It feels as though she can't control her emotions and finally breaks down. She forgets about the reader and focuses on her children. She is asking for some understanding when she says, "Believe that in my deliberateness I was not deliberate Though why should I whine. "She asks, "whine that the crime was other than mine." She feels that she did what she had to do. She probably couldn't handle having kids at the time because of her situation, whatever it was, so she had an abortion. She probably didn't think it was a crime, but society has made her believe it is and she feels guilty. She tries to brush it off when she says, "Since you are dead", but then admonishes herself by euphemizing the meaning by saying, "or rather, or instead you were never made."

In the third stanza, she picks up where she left in the second stanza, but this time she tries to figure out what she did. She doesn't know what to label what she had done or is probably afraid to label it. "You were born you had body you died," She says blankly. She tries to make excuses for what she did, but her emotions conquer her denial. "Believe me, I knew you, though faintly, and I loved, I loved you All." She knew her children because they were a part of her being that they were in her body. She emphasizes that she loved them to let them (and herself) know that she really loved them although she did what she had to do.

Poetic Techniques and devices in the poem.

Gwendolyn Brooks wrote the Poem 'The Mother' in 1945. This powerful poem about aborting a child has created much debate in our world. Both pro-life and prochoice groups have used this poem to reflect how such a choice can affect a mother. Gwendolyn Brooks really made this literature puzzling it takes a few times to read and fully understand what she means and the message she is implying. This Poem shows many emotions like love, regret hatred, sadness and disappointment', a whole array of feelings related to abortion and the regret of taking an un-born's life.

The Poem starts by stating that one cannot forget the aborting of a child. She remembers these children and the people that they could have become. She regrets not being able to perform motherly duties. She is haunted by the children she aborted and wishes that she could have raised them and regrets that she robbed them of the life that they would have had. She understands that she is at fault and is ashamed that she took their lives, but still loved them. A great critic 'Jennifer Katherine Jones says, "I believe that Brooks is very regretful of her actions and wishes she had chosen differently. But she also believes that she made the right decision at the time." The Statement "Abortions will not let you forgot" alone sets the tone for the Poem. She obviously does not forget what she did and then goes on to describe why she will never forgot it. With the line- "I have heard in the voices of the wind the voices of my dim killed children" shows that she is haunted by her past decision and her dead children. She has done her best to cope with her decision but still suffers. She suggests that she isn't proud of what she did. She chose the word "dim' to describe the act of abortion. It is obvious that she thinks poorly of the event. The line "you will never neglect or beat them" shows that she wouldn't have been able to care for the children if she gave birth to them. It seems that she thinks they would have a better fate being dead than if they were in her care.

The line that most intrigued is "believe that even in my deliberateness I was not deliberate." At first it is thought that she was saying that she wasn't ready to have a child and took the easy way out. Then, after reading the poem several times, it is discovered that she thought that she was helping them out by not having them. Though it is not agreed with her opinion, it is found that it is interesting that through the abortion of the babies, she not only killed them, but a part of herself as well. She is haunted by their loss and can't stop thinking about them. One can't help but wonder what was so horrible about her situation that she couldn't care for her children. There were plenty of orphanages around in the 1940s, why not give that gift of life to a less fortunate couple who are more than ready to be a parent? And would struggling through parenting be worse than dealing with the haunting of the abortions. She is still carrying a huge burden, may be as huge as having children and caring for them.

This poem promotes the thought that it reinforces our opinion as a prolife supporter. We believe that every life is significant, even if it isn't fully formed. Also through knowing several people that cannot bear children, it is found that it is a horrible crime to abandon motherhood. It is through that the suffering of the mother is just because of the crime she committed. We cannot understand how things can be so bad that a mother would kill her own flesh and blood for her convenience. In a way, this poem is a message for future mothers about just how important motherhood is. It is also a message for those considering abortion because it shows the suffering and emotional distress that having an abortion does to a mother.

This poem is about the unfortunate consequences of a mother aborting her children. The suffering that the mother goes through is described in detail and makes the reader feel for her. This poem is puzzling in several ways, so it takes a couple of read- through to completely understand Gwendolyn Brooks' motive for writing the poem. It is an excellent work and influential for all generations. Many teenagers and young adults are faced with a decision when

they become pregnant and unfortunately many chose to abort. To My mind it seems that this poem should be in abortion clinics around the world, in pamphlets, online, everywhere that a Potential mother could be. By reading this poem many would be compelled to change their minds and accept the responsibility of becoming a mother.

4.2.3 Ballad of Pearl May Lee (Gwendolyn Brooks) :-

Summary of the poem

Poetic techniques and devices in the poem.

Then off they took you, off to the jail,
A hundred hooting after.
And you should have heard me at my house.
I cut my lungs with my laughter,
Laughter,
Laughter.
I cut my lungs with my laughter.

They dragged you into a dusty cell.
And a rat was in the corner.
And what was I doing? Laughing still.
Though never was a poor gal lornier,
Lornier,
Lornier,
Though never was a poor gal lornier.

The sheriff, he peeped in through the bars,
And (the red old thing) he told you,
“You son of a bitch, you’re going to hell!”
‘Cause you wanted white arms to enfold you,
Enfold you,
Enfold you.
‘Cause you wanted white arms to enfold you.

But you paid for your white arms, Sammy boy,
And you didn’t pay with money.
You paid with your hide and my heart, Sammy boy,
For your taste of pink and white honey,
Honey,
Honey.
For your taste of pink and white honey.

Oh, dig me out of my don't-despair.
Pull me out of my poor-me.
Get me a garment of red to wear.
You had it coming surely,
Surely,
Surely,
You had it coming surely.

At school, your girls were the bright little girls.
You couldn't abide dark meat.
Yellow was for to look at,
Black was for the famished to eat.
Yellow was for to look at,
Black for the famished to eat.

You grew up with bright skins on the brain,
And me in your black folks bed.
Often and often you cut me cold,
And often I wished you dead.
Often and often you cut me cold.
Often I wished you dead.

Then a white girl passed you by one day,
And, the vixen, she gave you the wink.
And your stomach got sick and your legs liquefied.
And you thought till you couldn't think.
You thought,
You thought,
You thought till you couldn't think.

I fancy you out on the fringe of town,
The moon an owl's eye minding;
The sweet and thick of the cricket-belled dark,
The fire within you winding...
Winding,
Winding...
The fire within you winding.

Say, she was white like milk, though, wasn't she?
And her breasts were cups of cream.
In the back of her Buick you drank your fill.
Then she roused you out of your dream.

In the back of her Buick you drank your fill.
Then she roused you out of your dream.

“You raped me, nigger,” she softly said.
(The shame was threading through.)
“You raped me, nigger, and what the hell
Do you think I’m going to do?
What the hell,
What the hell
Do you think I’m going to do?”

“I’ll tell every white man in this town.
I’ll tell them all of my sorrow.
You got my body tonight, nigger boy.
I’ll get your body tomorrow.
Tomorrow.
Tomorrow.
I’ll get your body tomorrow.”

And my glory but Sammy she did! She did!
And they stole you out of the jail.
They wrapped you around a cottonwood tree.
And they laughed when they heard you wail.

And I was laughing, down at my house.
Laughing fit to kill.
You got what you wanted for dinner,
But brother you paid the bill.
Brother,
Brother,
Brother you paid the bill.

You paid for your dinner, Sammy boy,
And you didn’t pay with money.
You paid with your hide and my heart, Sammy boy,
For your taste of pink and white honey,
Honey,
Honey.
For your taste of pink and white honey.

Oh, dig me out of my don’t-despair.
Oh, pull me out of my poor-me.
Oh, get me a garment of red to wear.

You had it coming surely.
Surely.
Surely.
You had it coming surely.

Summary of the poem

The poem begins with the episode at home when the authority comes and then takes the person (victim) to the jail. The speaker in the poem becomes very happy. The speaker says, "I cut my lungs with my laughter." The speaker saw the criminal (Sammy) dragged by the police as a rat in the cage. The Sheriff called him a red old thing, the son of a bitch going to hell. The crime on the part of the black Negro boy was to enfold white arms around him. He was accused of raping the white woman, Here the speaker speaks of sexual experience in the words, "taste of pink and white honey." Then there is the description of a school life where blacks and whites are in conflict. "Black was for the famished to eat" and Yellow was for to look at." Once the white girl came by him. There was attraction between the two. The narrator then tells that it was just a trick, an idea to deceive him. There was a fire in him that was winding within. She calls him "nigger" and reminds him of the incident of rape (of course, conspiracy against Sammy). She wants to expose him to the white people who have prejudiced mind against blacks. She says, I'll tell every white man in this town. She tells him to tolerate all the sufferings, sorrows and torturing as he has committed a crime of "taste of pink and white honey." Her heart is full of joy when she hears Sammy boy suffering from pains. Lastly, she expresses her anger against the black boy.

Poetic techniques and devices used in the Poem

"Ballad of Pearl May Lee" is taken from Gwendolyn Brook's famous book called 'Street in Bronzeville'. The book has the credit by two ways. First, it is associated with Modernist Poetry. Secondly, it is related to the Harlem Renaissance. The theme of the book is "victimizing the poor" and 'black

women'. The poem is the best example of racial prejudice. The whites used lynching punishment for Negroes. The Poem clearly shows the hatred of whites against the blacks.

In the Poem we find a black American boy, Sammy, who makes love to a white woman. Of course, it was a preplanned trapping and conspiracy against a poor black boy. The white woman seduced Sammy and accused him of raping and then put into jail. Prior to that he is beaten up severely by them. Even they hung him around a cottonwood tree. The poem is in the form of ballad that uses tone to represent the complex mood of the person. A poem's mood refers to the atmosphere or state of mind that the poem takes on. In this poem Gwendolyn Brooks uses tone to enhance the mood. The mood of the poem is affected by the tone in several ways in order to make the mood inconsistent.

In this poem there is repetition of words, lines and stanzas to emphasize the tone and mood of the speaker in the poem. The episodes change the tone and mood of the poem. It enhances the emotional confusion of the speaker. Every stanza has its own time and place. Of course, it is in the memory of the speaker that sparks different emotions. For example, in the first stanza there is 'mocking and carefree mood'. She is happy as Sammy is taken to jail. The scene of the stanza is at her home. In the next stanza, the background changes. It is actual jail cell. The mood in the first stanza changes. Now it is 'loneliness'. In the fifth stanza we find that the mood of loneliness is changed and turned into 'despair'. This is very clear from the line- "Oh! dig me out my don't despair/ pull me out of my poor me." She feels bad for herself more than she feels bad for Sammy. Her sadness is more of self-pity than any sympathetic feeling for Sammy.

In Seventh Stanza the mood of despair soon turns into anger. She says, "often and often you cut me cold/ and often I wished you dead." Again, this shift from despair to anger occurs with an episodic shift from the present to the past "school days." These episodic shifts are responsible for letting the reader know how the speaker is feeling, depending on what stage in time she looks

back on. The poetess has chosen a very realistic way to represent her reflection about the real social life.

The poem is called a ballad that has some characteristics of a ballad. It is very interesting to know that the poem has shifting moods and tones. In this connection a great critic Maria Mootry says, “Finally, ballads often also close with some kind of summary stanza. This final stanza often continues the incremental nature of ballad repetition, as well as the simplicity with which tragic situations are presented.” The last two stanzas of Brook’s poem are almost identical to stanzas four and five with minor differences. This is what Mootry means by incremental repetition, as a poetic device. This device is commonly used in ballads. Brooks also decided to end her ballad with this simplicity with which tragic situations are presented.” The speaker’s tragic situation consisted of her significant other betraying her and having sexual relations with a white woman. Sammy was then lynched for having “raped” the white women. The way that the ballad ends reaffirms that the speaker feels self-pity and revengeful satisfaction about his destiny. One difference between stanzas four and five and the final stanzas is that the second to last stanza starts with “you paid for your dinner, Sammy boy” instead of “But you paid for your white arms, Sammy boy.” The word “dinner” comes from the stanza fourteen, but throughout the entire poem sex is given a metaphorical food- like diction. A sexual act is explained as a “taste of pink and white honey.” The speaker even refers to herself as “dark meat.” Food is automatically associated with women. Another difference between the two sections of the poem is that the ending stanza has periods after the “surely,” whereas earlier it had commas. The periods make the reader “come to a complete stop, rather than a slight pause”. This gives emphasis to how sure she is that he had it coming. It also makes the reader blatantly aware that the speaker, at her present state of mind, is satisfied with revenge and pities only herself.

The poetess has used simple diction in the poem. The diction represents the mood of the ballad. Generally language of ballad is very simple and meter is also simple. The repetition of words and lines or refrain make the complex very simple. It is one of the special features of ballad. By the repetition of words and lines we also get an idea of intention. We understand the intention of the speaker.

“But you paid for Your White arms, Sammy boy
And you didn’t pay with money
You paid with your hide and my heart Sammy boy
For your taste of Pink and white honey (22- 25)”

In these lines the words “**you**” and “**your**” occur six times in just four lines. Through these words the speaker expresses anger and disgust. In the same manner the hard consonants also express the angry mood of the speaker. For instance,

“Oh, dig me out of my don’t – despair,
Pull me out of my poor- me.
Get me a garment of red to wear.
You had it coming surely,
Surely,
Surely,
You had it coming surely”

In these lines- “**d**”, “**P**”, “**g**” and “**r**” are consonant sounds. They are harder consonant sounds than “l” “m” and “h”. The hard sounds indicate anger and tension of the speaker. The narrative stance in the poem fluctuates. Brooks breaks her speaker into three different types. The difference in her position also adds to the mood of the ballad.

In conclusion we can say that the tone is responsible for the mood of the ballad. There is the mood of self-pity. The mood fluctuates with inconsistency all through the poem. Gwendolyn Brooks has used four important techniques 1) episodic shift in the scene of the poem, 2) The repetition of stanzas at the end of the poem, 3) The use of diction and 4) The change in the speaker’s stance

throughout the poem. These techniques and tone contribute to the overall mood of the poem. Brooks has diction to express the theme of self- pity. In that sense, she is having a great skill as a writer. The poem is an expression and opening of heart with angry emotions.

4.3 Self Learning Questions-

Answer the following questions in one or two sentence

1. Why did Gwendolyn Brooks' father give up his ambition to become a Doctor?
2. When did Gwendolyn Brooks publish her first book of Poetry? What was the title of her book?
3. Why did John F. Kennedy invite Gwendolyn Brooks?
4. Where did Gwendolyn Brooks work as a teacher?
5. When was Gwendolyn Brooks make poet Laureate?
6. What do you understand by the life style chosen by Sadie and Maud?
7. Who is successful in life? Why?
8. Who lives the life of thin brown mouse? Why?
9. What does the life style chosen by Sadie teach us?
10. What is the sorrow of the woman in 'The Mother'?

4.4 Summing up

Gwendolyn Brooks reflects her contemporary life in her poetry. Through her poetry we find the themes of injustice to blacks, sufferings of women, especially, black women and conflicts and racial prejudice against blacks. During the 1940^s and 1950^s women were on the horns of dilemma in case of family life or career. For family life career becomes an obstacle and for career family life creates problems. Once the way of life is chosen there is no turning back. This theme is nicely presented in her famous poem- 'Sadie and Maud'. Sadie stayed at home and Maud went to college. These are the two things that we come across in the poem. This is nothing but the choosing of way of life. One selects the way of family life while other the better career in future.

General attitude of people is that Sadie would suffer in her life and Maud would live a happy life as she goes to college. But at the end of the poem we find adverse effect of 'going to college'. Sadie lived happy life as she enjoyed every moment of life as an unwed mother, having two children. Of course, she died as a young unwed mother. On the other hand Maud wanted to live happy life but lived the life of all alone person like a thin brown mouse in an old house.

In the poem "The Mother" Brooks points out the sufferings of the mother who aborted her children. The past memory of the mother is nothing but the repenting situation in her life, "What is gone? is gone forever. She repents over her action of the past. She dreams of children who do not exist actually. She desires to be a mother who wants her children around her, playing and enjoying all actions of life. But the moment of the past never comes again. Time slips away from us and goes away and never turns back. The poem presents the plight of the mother who has aborted her children due to some reasons.

'The Ballad of Pearl May Lee' expresses anger and hatred against Sammy, the Negro boy of course; the poem is an example of lynching. The black youths were seduced and accused of raping white women. It is nothing but a racial hatred. Blacks are not given the highest position. Whites think that blacks are made to serve their masters. They are downtrodden, made to serve the whites. In the poem Sammy is punished severely and put into jail. Blacks were blamed by hook or crook. In this way Gwendolyn Brooks became successful in presenting the racial crisis through her poetry.

4.5. Glossary:

Scraped	-	To rub with something rough
Tangle	-	Mass of hair
Strand	-	thread
Livingness	-	happy life
Died of shame	-	shameful behaviors
Thin brown mouse	-	weak creature on the verge of death

The Mother:-

Damp small pulp	-	immature child in womb
Scuttle off	-	to run away hurriedly
Luscious	-	delicious
Gobbling	-	to eat greedily
The breast they could never suck	-	the children never sucked the milk Of their mother
Seized	-	to snatch
Tumults	-	uproar, babbling
Deliberate	-	intention
To whine	-	to grumble
Giggled	-	to laugh loudly

Ballad of Pearl May Lee

Hooting	-	loud cry
A dusty cell	-	a dirty place or jail
Gal lornor	-	girl forlornor
Sheriff	-	chief officer of city
White arms to enfold	-	to unit with a white girl/ woman
Taste of pink and white		
Honey	-	sexual experience
Famished	-	to suffer from great hunger
Vixen	-	quarrelsome woman
Wink	-	to close and open one's eye quickly
Fringe	-	ornamental border on a fabric
Buck	-	soft skin
Wail	-	sad cry

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4.7 Question for Practice:-

4.7.1. Answer the following questions in one or two sentence

- 01) Why does the woman repent over her abortions?
- 02) How does the woman express her sorrow and love for her children aborted?
- 03) What were the dreams of the woman that she could not complete regarding her children aborted?
- 04) What does the line "believe that even in my deliberateness, I was not deliberate"?
- 05) What is the crime of Sammy boy?
- 06) What is the tone and mood of the speaker in the poem "Ballad of Pearl May Lee"?
- 07) What is the intention of Gwendolyn Brooks behind the 'Ballad of? Pearl May Lee"?
- 08) What is the meaning of the phrase "taste of pink and white honey"?
- 09) Why does the speaker in the Poem repeat words and lines?

10) What is 'lynching', that we find in the poem 'Ballad of Pearl May Lee'?

4.7.2 Answer the following questions in detail.

- 1) Explain Gwendolyn Brooks as the voice of Blacks.
- 2) How does Gwendolyn Brooks present two sister's life in the Poem? 'Sadie and Maud'? Explain.
- 3) What is the central idea of the Poem 'The Mother'?
- 4) How far is it worth to express sorrow over the aborted children? Explain it with reference to the poem 'The Mother'.
- 5) Discuss in detail, how racial prejudice is presented in the Poem 'Ballad of Pearl May Lee.'
- 6) Explain the tone and mood of the speaker in the poem 'Ballad of Pearl May Lee.'
- 7) Explain 'Ballad of Pearl May Lee' as a ballad.
- 8) What is the intention of the Poet to present Sammy, the Negro boy a victim of lynching? Explain.
- 9) What is lynching? Explain it with reference to the Poem 'Ballad of Pearl May Lee.'
- 10) Explain Gwendolyn Brooks as a Modern American English poet with reference to the poems prescribed.

Unit- 5

American Drama

20th century American drama provides a different face than that of poetry and fiction. Perhaps no modern nation has been so influenced by the theatre drama as has the united state. Hence America is called as the land of show Bizz. The American dramatic scene of - "from minstrel to musical, from Broadway to Hollywood, from Chautauque to Vaudeville are depicted. It has ridden high in vitality, excitement and confidence. American drama always supported new innovations as in the words of Maotsetung- 'A playwright has two obligations, first to make some statements about the condition of man and second to make some statement about the nature of art form with which he is working. In both instances he must attempt change. The playwright must try to alter his society and the forms within which his ancestors have had to work. If this be true then the American drama has always been an expression of the inner-self and the society and has influenced great development throughout the world. American drama is more remarkable for interesting and outstanding themes. The American drama may be said to have the following characteristics.

- 1) It delves into the Psychological traits of a character. The dramatist lets his fancy roam in order to observe an individual soul caught between reality and illusion. The dramas of Eugene Walter O' Neil, Tennessee Williams are studies of human characters viewed from psychological angles. Some other dramatists combined Psychology with social reality, social tensions, political corruptions, conflicts between capital and labor where some of the themes that attracted the audience.
- 2) Another feature of the American drama is its show of harsh reality, though they may be branded un-modern or unrealistic in the present terms. Dramatists like Eugene O Neil, Tennessee Williams preferred to

portray the sociological problems faced by the common man, amid material affluence and intellectual poverty.

- 3) Another important characteristic is to portray the writers protest against the conventional society and to declare his moral concerns. The dramas like 'The Animal Kingdom', 'Paris Bound' are some fine examples.
- 4) High comedy was another characteristic of the American drama where zeal for blunt realism is often seen. Most American comic writings introduced problems of grave nature without giving into sentimentality.
- 5) Naturalistic and expressionistic currents are features introduced to the American drama by such writers like Eugene O'Neil and Tennessee Williams, Yank, the hero of 'The Hairy Ape' and Amanda Wingfield of 'The Glass Menagerie' are the best examples of human beings oppressed by the capitalistic and technological society. The theme of the story is more psychological than sociological.
- 6) Realistic aim and orientation are some other qualities of American drama as seen in the dramas of Arthur Miller, Edward Albee and others.
- 7) American dramatists introduced unconventional techniques to reach out to the audience. Very often they portray characters bigger than life and twice unnatural. 'The Glass Menagerie' for example is an attempt to escape from the responsibility of dealing with reality.
- 8) The assertion of human individuality seems to be the most inspiring theme of many of the dramatists. Their dramas were the statements of the declaration of Independence and to attack the hollowness in American society.

The growing interest in man as an individual has developed various themes that only American society either believes in or understands. American dramatists have particular defect that their characters are not universal as in Shakespeare or Shaw. They are the products of Americanism. In general, the

American theatre provides existing drama on the one hand but on the other hand its universal appeal has been very limited and narrow. Yet American drama has given us such classic dramatists like Miller, O'Neil, Williams and Albee.

American Novel

The Development of American Novel:-

The emergence of American novel is mainly highlighted in the First National Period (1800- 1860) of American History. In this period the great literary figures like Washington Irving, James Cooper came to light as novelists. They are as if beginners of American novel and watering the plant to grow it more and more.

Washington Irving gave vent to the truth and realism in his writing. His stories dealt with local colors. He had a sense of humor. Then we find great literary figure James Cooper (1789-1851) as the first of the great American novelist. He used his art to acquaint all mankind with facts of American life and American ideas. He is the creator of the 'democratic historical novel' as contrasted with the more aristocratic novel of Walter Scott. His famous novel 'The spy' (1821) depicts the adventurous life, a revolutionary life. In his novels 'The Pioneers' (1823), 'The Pilot' (1823) and 'The Last of the Mohicans' (1828) deal with the sea life or sailing with adventurers.

American novelists struggled to display the American background; of course Brocken Brown, James Cooper and Herman Melville followed the old patterns of novels. Their plots of the novels were adapted material with considerable skills to display the American landscape. The characters reveal the area of awareness.

Nathaniel Hawthorne concentrated on the subjects like urban poor class, corruption in social norms, prostitution, old fashioned middle class business man, business adventures, social conflicts, the settlement workers and the

treatment of the negro slaves. His novels particularly 'The Scarlet Letter' (1850), 'The House of the Seven Gables' (1851), 'A Wonder Book' (1852), 'Tanglewood Tales' (1853), etc. expose the above themes. He finds his themes in the past of America.

In the second National Period we find particularly Herman Melville as a great novelist. He wrote novels like 'Moby Dick', 'Billy Bud', 'White Jacket', etc. In these novels he expressed the struggle and conflict between the good and the evil. For e.g. in 'Moby Dick' - Captain Ahab represents the evil and the White Whale the good. In 'Billy Bud' Claggart, the evil officer and Billy Bud the good are in conflict. The second theme that we find in his novels is man's Struggle against the unknown and his determination to conquer nature. It is the truth came into light through his novels. Sinclair Lewis also exposed the social picture of American society. His novel 'The Jungle' deals with a victims of society, exploitation of farmers or destroying the farmers' lives. This is the cry of the novelist against the injustice with the poor farmer community.

Mark Twain emerged as a wonder struck novelist on American soil. He also attracted the attention of the whole world. He is one of the better known figures in the history of American fiction. His humor is typically American. His famous novels 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' (1885), 'Tom Sawyer' (1876) depict the life of adventure. John Steinbeck wrote the only novel "The Grapes of Wrath" that achieved the success as a great novel. In this novel he deals with the plight of the farmers, their sufferings and their exploitation in a great deal.

In the Modern Age, American novel emerged with a new face. The American novel was beginning to show a sign of new vitality during the second decade of the century though it was not until the twenties that its real resurgence came. Sinclair Lewis got Nobel Prize for Literature. It was the decade of the great novelist like Earnest Hemmingway. He got Nobel Prize in 1954. In his

novels 'Our Time' (1924), 'The Sun Also Rises' (1926), 'Men without Women', (1927) and 'Farewell to Arms' (1929) he dealt with the themes like horror of war, peace of mind. His novels give the message to the whole world that war is useless. Another novelist, William Faulkner who wrote a classic novel 'The sound and Fury' in which he pointed out the uselessness and pessimistic view of life.

The post war novels are the affected novels. We find the effects of war on these novels. There are social changes and frustrations reflected through the novels. The idea of hero in this novel is changed. The old idea of hero is abandoned and the neurotic, un-heroic individual became the hero of the new novel. This is seen more particularly in the novels of John Updike. He is the noteworthy writer of the new generation. Robber Penn Warren and Saul Bellow are the other able practitioners of the novel form. Warren in his serious quest of the nature of the self represents the more thoughtful currents of the novel in recent American literature. Warren recognizes that the self is in society, that society is based on moral values; search for understanding is part of man's nature and an integral part of the self.

Saul Bellow has been one of the more successful novelists also using the search for identity, the meaning of the self, in a world of uncertainty and fluctuating magnitude. Some critics are now calling Bellow "This generation's leading novelist." He has also worked on the contemporary themes. His novels have timeliness, as did those of Sinclair Lewis in the 1920s. 'Dangling Man' (1944), 'The Adventures of Magic March' (1953) are his leading novels.

Both Warren and Saul Bellow achieved a great success in presenting the picture of contemporary society. Warren's novel 'World Enough and Time' is about the tragic and historical story that belongs to the 19th century murder case. Another novel "Band of Angels" has the theme of freedom. 'The Cave' is having the theme of 'search of indentify.' In the same manner Saul Bellow's

fifteen novels search the new meanings of life. According to him life is an experience.

J. D. Salinger emerged as a new writer on American Soil. He is best known for his only novel 'The Catcher in the Rye (1951). He came across Hemingway and was impressed a lot. Hemingway once said about Salinger "Jesus he has a helluva talent."

Ralph Ellison worked on the themes of fusing realism and surrealism, energy of mind, a passionate apprehension of ideology and social facts. William Styron, a Southerner writer came to light as a novelist. His novel 'Lie Down in the Darkness' is the story of a young southerner child. The novelist presents the theme of love, death and tragic life. His another novel 'The long March' deals with the themes of rebellion, conformity, while the novel 'Set This House on Fire' focuses on the quest for responsibility, European existentialism. The novelist like James Jones in his novel 'From Here to Electricity' focuses light on themes of loyalties & brutalities of soldiers.

American novel developed a lot with new concepts, techniques and forms. Their themes are suitable to the time in which they are born. Current issues, problems and ways of the world are depicted boldly in these novels.

Unit 6
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
Edward Albee

Contents

6.0 Objectives

6.1 Introduction - to the playwright

6.2 Subject Explanation

6.2.1 Background of the Play

6.2.2 Characterization

6.2.3 Act wise summary of the play

6.2.4 Plot of the play

6.2.5 Setting of the Play

6.2.6 Themes of the play

6.2.7 Devices used in the play

6.3 Self learning Questions

6.4 Summing Up

6.5 Glossary

6.6 Bibliography

6.7 Questions for Practice

6.0: Objectives:

- 1) To acquaint students with the development of American Literature
- 2) To acquaint students with the American Dramatist and the Theatre of the Absurd
- 3) To acquaint students with the essential features of Edward Albee as Absurd dramatist

6.1: Introduction to the playwright:

Edward Franklin Albee III (Born: 12th March 1928) is an American [playwright](#). He is known for his works such as *The Zoo Story*(1958) ,*The Sandbox*(1959) *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*(1962) etc. His works are considered well-crafted and often considered as unsympathetic examinations of the modern condition. His early works reflect his mastery and Americanization of the Theatre of the Absurd. It has found its peak in the works by European playwrights such as [Samuel Beckett](#), Eugene Ionesco, and Jean Genet. Younger American playwrights such as Paula Vogel, credit Albee's daring mix of theatricality and biting dialogue with helping to reinvent the post-war American theatre in the early 1960s. Albee continues to experiment in his works such as *The Goat: or Who is Sylvia?* (2002).

6.2: Subject Explanation:

6.2.1 : Background of the play.

‘*Who’s Afraid of Virginia of Virginia Woolf?*’ is a play. It is piece of literature that can only be fully appreciated in the live presentation before the audience. More specifically it is tragicomedy as it is a blending of tragedy and comedy. In this play serious subject matter is combined with dark humor. It is in typical style of absurdist plays. Absurdist tragicomedies rarely end happily but ending of ‘*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*’ is an exception to it. The characters George and Martha are trapped in the endless cycle of illusion.

“Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?” is Edward Albee’s first full length play. It consists of three Acts. It was a grand success with its production in 1962 in New York. It has motivated much controversy amongst the critics, readers and audience. It covers the period from 2.00 am to dawn. It is serious but far away from the sober. Both the couples

involved in drinking continuously. Due to the excessive drinking almost three of the four characters can't stand on their feet. The play is a combination of reality with absurdity and imagination. It symbolizes the machine made love, life, and creative activity in the world.

6.2.2: Characters:

George:

George is Martha's husband. He is forty-six-years-old and a professor of history who has accumulated a record of academic poorness. He married Martha a daughter of the college president. Early in his career he failed to live up to the overwhelming expectations of his wife and her father. Both of them hoped that George would succeed him. Martha is fond of saying George as a bog in the History Department. After many years he is not yet even in the chair of the Department.

Honey:

Honey is a twenty-six-year-old blond girl, "rather plain." Like her husband, Nick she is also from the Midwest. She is striving with her husband to make their way in new surroundings. Honey is not depicted as particularly bright, but she is capable of executing her will. She is afraid of bearing a child. George suspects that she has avoided pregnancy without Nick's knowledge. The circumstance of her marriage to Nick is a false pregnancy. It is a source of discomfort for both of them.

Martha:

Martha is an energetic woman in her fifties. She is rude, loud and dominating in her manner towards George. Martha had dreams of power. She feels that her dreams were defeated because of the lack of ambition in George. Despite her persistent ridicule of George she is very sensitive towards her criticisms by George for her heavy drinking, sometime lustful behavior and her "loud" laugh.

Nick:

Nick is blond and good looking, around thirty-years-old. He is a young Biology professor. He is ambitious. He represents a threat to George with his good looks, sexual energy and his willingness to prostitute himself for professional advancement. In short, Nick seems capable of achieving the promise.

6.2.3 Act wise summary of the play:

The play begins very early in the morning at 2.00 am in the house of George and Martha. George is an Associated Professor of History in an established College in Carthage. The age of George is forty-six and his wife Martha is six years older than him. Martha is a daughter of the president of College. She married George as she hoped him finally to get success in the position of the president of the college. George's failure in his career and getting the position of the president of college is one of the grievances of Martha against him. Being husband and wife both George and Martha are unhappy, frustrated and miserable. So they find comfort in hurting each other.

ACT-I 'FUN AND GAMES'

In the opening scene, George and Martha have come back to their home after attending a party at Martha's father's house. Both are in a drunken condition and find solace in verbal attack at each other about the minor things. Then George proposes Martha to go the bed. But instead of following his proposal she surprises him by telling him that she has invited a couple she met at her father's party to their house. Honey a tender slim-hipped girl and her husband is a lecturer in Mathematics. Actually Martha does not know the exact name of Honey's husband. She get confused to know that Nick (Honey's husband) is not a teacher of Mathematics but of Biology. Martha informs George that she has invited them because her father has suggested being nice to them in particular.

George does not like it so they start quarreling with witty remarks at each other. Nick and Honey arrived when they were quarreling.

At the ringing of door-bell, George warns Martha to be careful and not to mention their imaginary son before the guest. Actually George and Martha are childless and their imaginary son is the understanding between the couple. The idea of imaginary son helps them to compensate their childlessness. On the very next day their imaginary son is going to become twenty-three. Though Martha was warned by George she does not pay any attention to it. George opens the door welcomes the couple (Nick and Honey) in an irritable manner. The young couple senses the atmosphere and signifies them to come at their home at some other time. But Martha insists on their stay and changed the topic by asking their preference to drink.

George serves drink to Martha, Honey and Nick. Though they have taken enough drink at the earlier party they go on drinking. Guest (Nick & Honey) praises the earlier party and the host (Martha's Father). Martha likes it so she supports them but George openly shows his dislike for Martha's father. It irritates Martha so she humiliates George in front of the guest. She says that George is failure. Neither he achieved success in academic career nor did he use the position of her father to achieve success. At this moment Honey wants to go for the toilet so George tells Martha to accompany her at the same time he warned Martha not to mention about their imaginary son. Martha gets angry and threatens George that she will mention whatever she wants and likes.

Martha and Honey goes for the toilet. George and Nick are free to talk with each other. They discuss about their age and physique. During their discussion George tries to personalize his talks so Nick replies harshly and wants to leave after the arrival of his wife. Nick is not interested to involve in others affair so George changes the topic of their

discussion and make fun of biologist. Later they talk about the children and George came to know that Nick and Honey are also childless. George states here that being a slim-hipped woman Honey is incapable to bear child.

Honey comes back from the toilet and informs Nick that Martha and George have a son. George becomes angry to know it as he has warned Martha not to mention about their imaginary son. He asked Honey what Martha was doing upstairs. Honey tells him that she is changing her dress. Here George quickly realizes that Martha is not changing dress for him but to look sexually attractive for Nick.

Martha comes down. She is looking very attractive. While flirting with Nick she starts insulting her husband. She makes fun of George in front of the guest. She says that George couldn't achieve anything in his life. She calls him 'a bog' and 'a flop' in the department of History. Then she narrates their boxing match and her blow in which George falls in the huckleberry bush. George describes this incident as a reason for his becoming 'a bog'. George takes revenge on Martha. He fires Chinese parasol on her from a shot barreled shotgun. As a result the tension between husband and wife turns into the laughter.

Again Martha turns towards Nick. She praises his body seductively. Honey was not getting her intention so supports and says that Nick has a very firm body. George warns Martha for not to cross the limits. But she continues her interest in Nick's body. Again irritated George ridicules of biologist and makes fun of Martha's father. He calls him a big white mouse with tiny red eyes. Martha criticizes George. She blames that George hates her father because of his inadequacies. She tells the guest that George lacks in proper personality, aggressiveness and administrative skills. It annoys George so he smashes a bottle of liquor.

Just after that Honey feels nauseous so rushes towards bathroom for vomiting. Nick and Martha follow her and the first act ends.

ACT-II 'WALPURGISNACHT

In the opening scene of the second act George is sitting in a sitting room Nick come back there after some time. Nick shares with George that Honey is sick because of excessive drinking. He also shares the secret of his marriage with Honey, her hysterical pregnancy. He also discloses that they are still childless.

Then George starts criticizing his father in law so Nick also tells about his father in law. Nicks father in law was a clergyman. He made a lot of money during his career. So he was very rich when he died. He also admits that Money was the other reason for marrying with Honey. George also shares the information about his father in law with Nick. He tells George that his father in law is defrauding the college. He further adds that after the death of Martha's mother her father married with a rich old lady. The death of that rich old lady makes Martha and her father very rich.

Then George tells Nick about one of his classmates who shots his mother accidently and kills his father in a car accident.

All the talks with George convinced Nick that George is only talker. So he admits that any how he wants to be successful in his academic career. Even he is ready to commit adultery with the influential faculty wives and he offers to start with seducing with Martha. Then George feels dismayed with him.

George and Nick are drinking in the sitting room. Martha and Honey come back there. Martha blames George for the sickness of Honey. Then she has started talking about their son. George makes her cautious about that but she ignores him. It has increased the hostility amongst them. Both of them blame each other for being a irresponsible

parent. Then Martha makes fun of unpublished novel of George. Here George Martha to keep mum but she reveals that the story of his novel is autobiographical and it has nothing to do with the boy who has shot his mother accidentally and killed his father in a car accident. George gets angry. He attacks on Martha and grab her throat. Suddenly Nick comes for her rescue and throws George on the floor. Here George is humiliated completely.

George takes sportily and controls over his anger by saying that the game 'Humiliate the Guest' is over and put the idea to play some other game. His suggestion of playing the game 'Hump the Hostess' didn't find any response. So he proposes to play the game 'Get the Guests'. Martha quickly realizes his intention and tries to stop him. But George doesn't listen to her.

Now George informs the guests that he has written one more novel. He also adds that Martha does not know about his second novel and starts telling the story of that novel. The story of George's second novel seems to be a story of Nick and Honey. He tells about the hysterical pregnancy of Honey and Nick's marriage with Honey was an emergency to avoid that scandal. He also adds that Honey's father earns money dishonestly and money is also one of the reasons for Nick's marriage with Honey. Here Nick and Honey realizes that the story of the novel is based on their life so Nick warns him to stop telling story. But George wants to complete the game 'Get the guests' so he insists on completing the story. On hearing the story Nick beg apology from his wife Honey for informing their past to George. Here Honey feels humiliated so she becomes hysterically sick and runs towards bathroom for vomiting. On this situation Nick threatens George and follows his wife.

Now George and Martha are alone in the sitting room and they express their hatred for each other. George holds Martha responsible for

the situation as she has mentioned the kid. Here George suggests her to live in the limits but here also Martha ignores his suggestion and declares a war against him. She calls him nothing and humiliates him. She calls their twenty-three years of married relations as shattered. Martha threatens George to finish him. Here George replies that he will beat her in any game. Both of them declare war against each other. Just then Nick arrives and asks for some ice. As there was no ice in the basket George goes out to bring some ice.

Martha starts flirting with Nick as they are alone. She asks Nick to kiss her but he hesitates to kiss her. Martha removes the fear of George from Nick's mind and tells him that not to worry about George. Nick begins to touch her. Just then George appears and sees them touching but he quickly exit unnoticed and starts singing loudly. After hearing a song Martha and Nick separates and George reappears with ice. He pretends to be happy and expresses his interested in the reading. George's interested in the reading disappointed Martha so she warns him that if he goes on reading she will keep amused with Nick. George pretends to be indifferent. Martha and Nick go out for adultery. Before leaving she warns George that she will make him feel sorry for his did.

At the end of this scene, Martha starts to seduce Nick in George's presence. George reacts calmly, simply sitting and reading a book. As Martha and Nick walk upstairs he is unable to control over his anger. So he throws a book which hits on the door and results into the wide ringing of the bell. Then Honey appears to complain about the disturbance in her sleep due the wide ringing of the door bell. When she appears she is in a semi-slumber so she opens the secret of her fear for pregnancy. Here George is angry for Martha's behavior and decides to punish her by killing their imaginary son. He wants to deprive Martha from the only comfort in her life. In this way George wants to take revenge on Martha.

It's a kind of punishment to destroy Martha. The second act ends before Honey arrives.

ACT-III 'EXORCISM'

The opening scene of the third act is a long soliloquy of Martha. She is disappointed because of Nick's failure in the intercourse as he was drunk. Martha humiliates him and asks him to act as her houseboy as he is ambitious. Here Nick feels humiliated and wants to go out. Then George appears in with the bunch of snapdragons. Martha again insults Nick and tells him to prepare a drink for her hubby but George stops her and enquired about her amusement with Nick. Martha answered him that Nick was too drunk to do anything. George becomes unhappy to know this then he talks about his voyage to Mediterranean. Nick was unable to understand their communication.

Then George asks Nick to bring Honey back out for the final game "Bringing up Baby." George and Martha have a son, about whom George has repeatedly told Martha to keep quiet over the course of the night, but now George talks about their son. Martha pleads him not to talk about their son but he goes on talking. George accuses Martha being irresponsible parent while Martha accuses him for being a shabby father.

At the end of the tale, George informs Martha that the door bells heard earlier was a boy from Western Union he brought a telegram. Then he discloses the tragic message of the telegram that their son has been died in the car accident. Martha screams after hearing the news and says "You can't do that!" and collapses. They make hated arguments between them. Now Nick realizes that George and Martha never had a son and George has decided to "kill" him because Martha broke their rule and speak about their son to others.

Nick and Honey departs, realizing the cause of their shameless activities. Marta is a shattered woman. The play ends with George

singing a song "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?" for Martha, while Martha replies, "I am, George... I am." Here at the end of the play George assures Martha better life without illusion that is accepting the truth of being a childless couple.

6.2.4 Plot of the Play

For the analysis of plot in this three-act play at the end of Act One, the main character is drawn in complete conflict. During Act Two she is excessively away from her goals. At the end of Act Three the story is resolved.

In this play each act has its own title. Act One is "Fun and Games" a notion that takes on a sinister twist almost immediately. Act Two is "Walpurgisnacht," or "Night of the Witches." In European folklore it refers to a night when witches gathered for orgies. In this act, George and Martha's games become most vicious and hurtful. Act Three is "The Exorcism," which suggests the characters (particularly Martha) having to put illusions to rest and finally face reality.

Act I

In this first act George and Martha welcome their young guests Nick and Honey for a night of insult, humiliation and shattered illusions. The action of the play is moved by George and Martha's endless need to attack each other. George constantly jabs at Martha about her age and alcoholism. Martha flirts with Nick and brings up the taboo subject her son with George. The act peaks when Martha humiliates George by relating all the details of his failure to become the Head of the History Department. At the end of the act the tension arises when George breaks a bottle and Honey leaves to be sick in the bathroom.

Act II

In the second act, George and Martha are right back at each other's throats. It's even worse than before. Martha really amps up her flirtation with Nick by dancing slow and sexy with him. Meanwhile she decides to share the sad story of the failure of George's novel with the guests. George responds by attacking Nick with a vicious game he calls "Get the Guests." Martha's final assault is to take Nick upstairs to have sex. George acts like he doesn't care, but as he hurls a book across the room at the end of the act we know the war is far from over.

Act III

In the third act George returns for the final battle. He strikes Martha by exposing the fact that their son is imaginary. It hurts them both. By the end, George has won the war of wills that has moved the play. George and Martha dismiss their guests. They are left alone with no more illusions behind which they can hide.

6.2.5 Setting of the play:

In this play Albee gives no description in his stage directions as to what George and Martha's living room might look like. Martha gives us a pretty big clue George talks a little about it. We also know that George is only an associate professor and therefore doesn't make a lot of money. All these things lead us to imagine that the room is pretty shabby and probably reflect the decaying state of George and Martha's marriage. We also know that the house is on the campus of a small New England college. It shows that they are both firmly under the thumb of Martha's father, who is the president of the University. It's also interesting that Albee describes it specifically as a small college. George calls the town they live in "New Carthage.". It's certainly a historical allusion from Albee. Rome was at war with a city-state named Carthage. George also makes reference to it. Rome eventually obliterated Carthage, leveling the

city, killing everybody in it, and sowing salt into the soil so that crops could never grow again. The fact is that George calls his town New Carthage which could mean several things

6.2.6 Themes of the play:

Reality vs. Illusion

Throughout the play illusion is inseparable from reality. It is difficult to tell which stories of George and Martha are true or fictional. Particularly it is about their son and George's past. It is the illusion of the son that sustains their unstable marriage. At the end of the play, George "kills" the illusion when Martha has brought it too far into reality. The lives of Nick and Honey are based on illusion. Nick has married with Honey for money and not for love. While he seems to be strong and forceful, he is impotent. The illusions of Honey surround the details of the pregnancy. The illusions of Nick and Honey have just started while George and Martha have been thriving in them for years together.

History vs. Biology

The academic departments of George and Nick are at New Carthage College set up. George is an associate professor in the History Department, while Nick is a new member of the Biology Department. Old, tired, and ineffective George exemplifies the subject History. He notes that no one pays attention to the lessons of History. As a representative of science Nick is young and vital. In the words of George, he is the "wave of the future" Through the arguments of Nick and George about Biology and History the play demonstrates two clashing worldviews. George's lack of success in the History Department and inability to rise power as successor to the president of the college contrasts with Nick's plans and seeming ability to move ahead – first taking over the Biology Department and then the College. George criticizes the inability in Biology to create a race of identical test tube

babies like Nick. While Nick is ruthlessly willing to take any necessary means (including sleeping with faculty wives) to get ahead reveals the absence of morality and frightening uniformity in a future determined by science. The play demonstrates the underlying powerlessness of science through Nick's impotence and in George's perseverance, the unexpected staying power of History.

The American Dream

The play explores the illusion of an American dream that masks a core of destruction and failure. While writing this play during the Cold War, Albee was representing public to question the patriotic assumptions of the 1950's. George and Martha in the play refer to patriotic namesakes George and Martha Washington. Albee uses unhappy marriage of George and Martha symbolically as a microcosm for the imperfect state of America. When George and Martha's marriage is revealed to be a sham based on the illusion of an imaginary son, the viewer is led to question the illusions that similarly prop up the American dream. Nick and Honey is a conventional American dream couple. They are also revealed in pretending happiness. They too secretly take advantage of situation to lie with each other. Nick's name is a direct reference to the Soviet premiere Nikita Khrushchev, and his threat to George and Martha's marriage is a references to the Cold War chaos of America.

The Christian Allegory

Subtle references to Christianity, particularly to Catholic rites and rituals, abound in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* For instance, Martha refers to her son as a "poor lamb," making him a Christ symbol – for Jesus is also known as the Lamb of God. The doorbell chimes that sound as the end of the second act echo the chimes that sound during a Catholic mass. Albee even names the third act of the play "The Exorcism." It refers to George's attempt to kill the "son" and thus exorcise illusion

from his marriage. The killing of the “lamb” can also be seen as a sacrifice necessary to save George and Martha’s marriage. George calls the proceedings “an Easter pageant” referencing the day the Lamb of God was sacrificed to save the world and the scene even takes place early on a Sunday morning.

Love and Hate

In the portrayal of George and Martha’s marriage Albee seems to make the not-uncommon literary assertion that love and hate are two parts of a single whole. From their hurtful mockery it clearly appears that George and Martha hate each other. In fact they say it openly and even pledge to destroy each other. There are moments of tenderness which contradict this hatred. George even tells Nick not to believe in what he sees. Some of George and Martha’s arguments are for show, for the challenge of arguing, and the remaining are to hurt each other. However, Martha’s declaration that George is really the only one who can satisfy her suggests that there is a positive aspect to their marriage. Though George and Martha fight each other they also need each other to maintain the illusions that keep them going.

Versions of Reality:

The central message of “*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*” is that human beings must learn to live without illusion. Throughout the play the characters indulge in battle to protect their own versions of reality while tearing down each other’s. At the end of the play all of the characters are laid bare to the cold hard truth of their lives. Marriage is an illusion because it can easily dissolve in the name of divorce which can be death of an illusion. In case of “*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*” no character has chance to escape from illusion since all remain married at the end. George and Martha’s relationship is made healthier with the

exorcism of the imaginary son. Now they can face the world and each other honestly.

Visions of America:

Albee's play, "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" was first performed in the early 1960s. It was a reflection of its time. The interpersonal battles between the characters of the play reflect the Cold War tensions which weighed down America. It touches on everything from the death of the American Dream to fears of nuclear holocaust. The ending of the play suggests hopefulness for America.

Theme of Marriage:

The play tells us the story of two couples who come together for a friendly after-party drink. They are all desperately trying to destroy one another. By the end of the play the deep flaws of both marriages have been revealed. The play ultimately shows how weak is the line between love and hate. Hate and love are so closely wound together with George and Martha. At the end of the play the relationship of George and Martha's seems more promising than Nick and Honey's relationship.

The Absurd:

The play, "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" is often cited as one of the chief examples of American absurdism. In this play main tenants of philosophy are on full display. It makes reader to think about the stripping of illusions and the overall meaninglessness of life. The play argues that people must come to terms with absurdity of their existence before they lead honest lives. In this play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Albee uses an outwardly realistic framework to explore absurdist ideas.

Theme of Power:

The action in play develops through restless battle of George and Martha's. Albee seems to use the struggle for power between husband and wife as a metaphor for the larger Cold War struggles that the world was facing at the time of the play. Martha's main method at gaining power is the humiliation of her enemies. The characters that strives the hardest to gain power are the ones who ultimately feel the most powerless.

Theme of Dissatisfaction:

All characters in the play are eventually revealed as being horribly dissatisfied in their marriages and careers. Their disappointments and failures tend to make them bitter and seem to drive many of their actions. The state of the characters is perhaps a comment on the growing dissatisfaction of many Americans during 1960s. Martha's dissatisfaction with George lies more in the fact that he actually loves her, than the fact that he's failed in life. George and Martha's dissatisfactions are reflected in their conflicting descriptions of their imaginary son.

Theme of Sex:

In, "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" sex and infidelity are mostly used as weapons. The characters commit sexual acts as way of gaining power over each other. In few instances characters try to become intimate in order to connect with each other. In these attempts their intimacy is short lived however. As everything else in the play sex also is a tool for battle. In "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" sex is linked with power than intimacy. Martha is almost infidelity in the last act of the play it makes George to kill their imaginary son.

Theme of Drug and Alcohol:

The characters begin the play a little tipsy and keep drinking until dawn. Some seems to have real alcohol problems while others drink just to avoid the horrible tensions of the evening. The ever present theme alcohol

seems to be another example of how people hide from the world. For the characters, being drunk is just another illusion another way to avoid the uncomfortable truths of their lives. Martha expresses power over Nick by forcing him to drink in Act III. George enables Martha's alcoholism because it gives him power over her.

6.2.7 Devices used in the play:

*** Games**

The title of the first act is "*Fun and Games*" That in itself is deceptive, for the games that George and Martha play with their guests are not the expected party games. Rather, their games of "*Humiliate the Host*", "*Get the Guests*", and "*Hump the Hostess*" involve the characters deepest emotions. George's characterization of these emotionally destructive activities as games and assumption of the role of ring master reveal that all the events of the evening are part of a power struggle between him and Martha in which one of them intends to emerge as victor. Verbal teasing of Martha and George and is also characteristic of their ongoing game playing. Years of marriage have turned insults into a finely honed routine. By characterizing these activities of games Albee does not suggest that they are meaningless. Albee likens game playing to war and demonstrates the degree to which George and Martha are committed to destroying each other. George and Martha in fact declare "*all out war*" on each other. What begins as a game and a diversion goes up over the course of the play until the characters try to destroy each other with themselves.

The play consists of three Acts. Each Act has at least one major game played by Martha and George such as "*Humiliate the Host*," "*Get the Guests*," or the Death of the Son. Each game starts with some kind of provocative verbal jeering, in the process of which verbal gamesmanship is assumed by the "players." The so called gamesmanship here refers to

the verbal game in which the two “players” use jeering, jesting, and slandering to expose and humiliate each other in front of the outsiders. The game begins with a sarcastic dialogue of one kind or another. Gradually, it turns into a slandering of each other which leads to a tit-for-tat attack against each other until a certain crisis is reached. Then there is the resolution of the crises toward the end of each game. This is the cycle designed by Edward Albee. The question is why Albee wants to put on the stage a kind of family jeers, jest, and pun and let them take in the form of game? The answer should be that the game-form enables the protagonists to show their real thoughts and feelings to each other both playfully and seriously. The play is designed not for fun, but for psychic needs, for the purpose of endurance of life or marriage. It is obvious that like many couples in real life Martha and George have some conflicts and debates in their life that are not enough to crash down their marriage they need to release them so as to continue their normal life. To release their tensions in the form of game has two advantages. First, the game form softens the adversary of the two sides. Whatever is said and done in the game should not be taken too seriously since it is a game. So when the games are over, the two “rivals” can resume their normal life. Second, the nature of the game allows the players to be as whimsical, as unrestrained, and as irresponsible as she or he wants, as is the case with Martha who in the games, makes the best use of these permissions and plays them at her will and for her purposes. As a matter of fact the whimsical playing of the game enables Martha as well as George to discharge their fully charged emotional tensions. As a result, the games turn into a kind of catharsis which gives Martha and George the opportunity to release their long time stagnant frustration. Through the catharsis the players purge themselves of the illusion, and bring them back to the reality of life.

*** The Title:**

Albee never tells us what the exact meaning of the title is. There is no one named Virginia Woolf in the play. This all leads us to ask just who this Virginia Woolf person is. What does she have to do with the play? Was Albee random? Probably not. Let us try to find out.

Virginia Woolf was a famous writer. She is famous for her stream of consciousness style. Woolf tried to show the emotional truths churning behind the eyes of her characters. Like Albee she is also a product of the upper class. For this play writing of Woolf leads some to think that "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" is just another way of asking who's afraid to live without illusion?

In his interview in a *Paris Review* interview Albee confirms that, "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf mean who's afraid of the big *bad* wolf...who's afraid of living without false illusions "The meaning of the title could go beyond its specific reference to Virginia Woolf. It might represent a concept of meaningless life. Therefore everything we do to create meaning in our lives is ultimately absurd. The title has come from a joke. It is a parody of "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" from Disney's *The Three Little Pigs*. Some unknown person sang the parody at the party that the characters attended earlier, and it was apparently very funny. In any case, the title is a joke for the audience as they don't know its meaning.

*** Symbolism, Imagery, Allegory**

- Babies

This play is full of baby images. It appears that Albee slips one in at least every other page. First of all, George and Martha call each other *baby* all throughout the play. Martha also calls Nick that a few times too. George and Martha also often refer to Nick and Honey as if they were

children. We should also point out that Martha sometimes talks to George in a baby talk by begging for a drink. The reason for all this baby imagery becomes pretty clear when we learn that both couples have had imaginary children. The play ends with the death of an imaginary son of George and Martha while Nick married Honey because she had a hysterical pregnancy. She swelled up as if she were pregnant, but it turns out it was all in her mind.

* **Religious Ritual**

- **Pagan Rituals**

The second Act of the play is called "Walpurgisnacht." That's a big word and refers to a festival that occurs on April 30th in many European countries. Though the holiday is now named after the Catholic St. Walpurgis, its rituals and meanings are of pagan origin and it is more closely associated with pagan ritual than Catholicism. It makes a lot of sense that Albee would name his second act after a holiday with such strong pagan origins. For starters, the act definitely begins to feel a bit like a wild, sexually liberated pagan festival when Nick and Martha begin dancing and making out. But when Martha reveals the sad story of George's novel, we realize that George is most likely responsible for the death of both of his parents.

- **Christian Rituals**

Throughout the play there are several Christian symbols as well. The **chiming of doorbell** is much like the chiming of bells at a Catholic mass. Also, the entire play takes place on a Sunday. George also shows off his Catholic chanting skills when he intones *Kyrie Eleison* and the *Dies Irae*, both part of the *Requiem*. Act III is called "The Exorcism," which is the Catholic practice that supposedly evicts demons or evil spirits from a person or home. The spirit in question in Act III is George and Martha's imaginary son. All this Christian imagery appears to be

centered on the death of this imaginary son. During the play Martha refers to the boy as *Poor lamb* as Jesus is sometimes called the Lamb of God. In a way, George and Martha's son is sacrificed just like Jesus. Son's death is the only way to find salvation for George and Martha. George refers it to an *Easter pageant*.

The fact that Albee uses Christian symbolism in an absurdist play is deeply ironic. After the son is sacrificed George and Martha certainly don't feel the love of a caring God around them. On the contrary, they've lost their last illusion and now they have to face the absurd meaninglessness of life. The play seems to focus on loss of illusion as a tough but ultimately necessary thing.

6.3 Self Learning questions:

- ❖ Explain the significance of the title, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.
- ❖ Why do Martha and George decide to tear each other apart in front of Honey and Nick?
- ❖ How does religion, pagan and Christian, function in the play?
- ❖ Why do you think George tells the story about his childhood friend who accidentally killed both of his parents? What implications could it have thematically?
- ❖ What is the significance of everyone drinking so much?
- ❖ Why is it important that George is a history professor, whereas Nick is a biologist? How do these two disciplines relate to their characters?
- ❖ A great deal of what goes into a play is visual rather than simply literary. How would you set up the stage if you were directing this play? What costumes would you use for the characters? What actors would you cast in the parts?

- ❖ What significance does Honey's weakness and vomiting have?
Why would Albee create her to be so often sick?

6.4 Summing Up:

In 1962, America was still in a the mindset of the 1950s. People worked, built, and multiplied all in the name of the American Dream. For many Americans this meant acquiring a happy stable family, a happy stable house, and (if you were a man) a happy stable job. The American Dream was one of Albee's favorite themes. (One of his early plays is even titled *The American Dream*.) In this play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Albee seems to challenge audience's notions of what it meant to be an American. George and Martha are named after George and Martha Washington, making them symbolic of America as a whole.

Nick and Honey appears like the poster children for the American Dream. They are an attractive, young couple. Nick is ambitious and seems destined for success. Honey seems to be polite and supportive. In course of the play the illusion of their perfect marriage cracks and falls away. We learn that Nick only married Honey for money and because he thought she was pregnant. We see him cheating her with Martha. Honey drinks herself to avoid all the unpleasantness around her. Here again Albee seems to set symbolic couple of the American Dream and then corrupts the whole image.

Albee wrote *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* during the period of Cold War in America and U.S.S.R. America's commitment to democracy and capitalism was the ideological opposite of the Soviets' communism. While American's valued individual liberty, the Soviets thought individuals should be more concerned about what was good for the whole. The spirit of the Cold War appears large in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* The vicious verbal battles between the characters, could

be seen a symbolic of the war as whole. This is perhaps most clearly shown when George and Nick are fighting about genetics. In this battle George seems to come to represent American Democracy while Nick represents Soviet Communism. George and Nick's names are also symbolic of American/Soviet tensions. George is named after George Washington, making him symbolic of America. Nick could be named after Nikita Khrushchev the Soviet leader, so he could represent the U.S.S.R. Dialogue in the play "I will not give up Berlin!" is a direct reference to cold war tension. The divided city was a symbol of the ideological divisions of the world. By using the word Berlin, Albee weaves all these shades of meaning into the scene.

6.5 Glossary:

Absurd: wildly illogical ridiculous

Tragicomedy: play with a mixture of tragedy and comedy

Accumulate: build up

Blond: fair haired

Exerting: put forth, apply

Relentless: persistent

Sinister: evil, disturbing, threatening

Orgies: wild party with indiscriminate sexual activity, excessive indulgence in an activity

Jabs: hit

Taboo: forbidden

Amps: amplifier

Obliterated: wipe-out

Tempestuous: passionate, emotional, turbulent

Thriving: flourishing, prosperous

Exemplify: demonstrate

Dialectic: investing the truth by discussion and logical argument.

Virile: vigorous or strong, sexually potent.

Sham: pretense, facade

Prop-up: support

Turmoil: disorder, chaos

Liturgy: prescribed form of public worship

Chimes: door bells

Vitriolic: bitter, hurtful

Banter: teasing, mockery

Holocaust: large scale destruction

Tenuous: weak, tenancy

6.6 Bibliography:

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4. A.D. Chaudhari : Contemporary British Drama, 1976.
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7. Martin E. : Absurd Drama (London : Penguin Books), 1965

6.7 Activities:

- 1) Read some other plays of Absurd theatre along with the play's by Edward Albee
- 2) Trace the history of Modern American Drama
- 3) See the video of 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?'
- 4) Compare the contemporary dramatist.

Unit 7

The Catcher in the Rye-J. D. Salinger

Contents

7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction - to the novelist

7.2 Subject Explanation

7.2.1 Background of the Novel

7.2.2 Plot of the Novel

7.2.3 Characters of the Novel

7.2.4 Themes in the Novel

7.3 Self learning Questions

7.4 Summing Up

7.5 Glossary

7.6 Bibliography

7.7 Questions for Practice

7.0: Objectives:

- 4) To acquaint the students with the growth and development of the Modern American Novel.
- 5) To understand new techniques of American Novel.
- 6) To help the students develop the ability to interpret American Literature in the context of World Literature.
- 7) To train the students for a closed reading of the text prescribed.

7.1: Introduction to the Novelist:

J.D. Salinger : was born on January 1, 1919 in New York city. His father, Sol Salinger was born in Cleveland, Ohio. He is said to have been the son of rabbi. But he drifted sufficiently far from Orthodox Judaism. To become an importer of hams and to marry the Gentile, Scotch- born Marie Jillich. Of course, Marie changed her name to Mariam to fit better

with her husband's family. Salinger grew up in a fashionable neighborhood in Manhattan and spent his youth being shuttled down various prep-schools before his parents finally settled on the Valley Forge Military Academy in 1934. He graduated from Valley Forge in 1936 and attended a number of colleges including Columbia University but did not graduate from any of them.

While at Columbia, Salinger took a creative writing class in which he excelled. Of course he maintained his interest from his teenage years. He published his first short story in 1940. He continued his habit of creative writing although he joined army and fought in Europe during World War II. After that he came back to America and wrote many short stories and published them in magazines respectively. Salinger published his only full length novel 'The Catcher in The Rye' in 1951. This creative work placed him on the top of American writers of his style. Then he started to write short stories about the Glass Family. These short stories are called 'Glass Stories' a series of stories. For example, 'A Perfect Day for Banana Fish', 'Franny', 'Zooey' and 'Raise High the Roof-Beam Carpenters'. In 1953 Salinger published a book 'The Catcher in The Rye : Nine Stories' 1953, 'Franny and Zooey' (1961). 'Raise High the Roof-Beam Carpenters' and 'Seymour : An Introduction (1963) in 1965. He published another Glass Story 'Hapworth 26, 1924'. It was criticized by some critics. He withdrew himself from the public life. This reclusiveness made Salinger more famous and transformed him into a cult figure.

Salinger also composed a class song for the boys of 1936, exhorting his co-students to 'Cherish now these fleeting days. The few while you are here'. He was remembered by the cadets who were with him at Valley Forge Academy, for his hard work. His teachers believed him to be a silent student, thoughtful and always anxious. The staff sergeant in command of his B company said that Salinger was 'A long

way from the rebellious, non conforming adolescent that he describes in his only novel 'The Catcher in the Rye'.

7.2: Subject Explanation:

7.2.1 : Background of the Novel.

Near the end of 'The Catcher in the Rye, Holden Caulfield imagines moving out west and pretending he's a deaf-mute. He wants to avoid "goddam stupid useless conversations with anybody. If anybody wanted to tell me something , they'd have to write it on a piece of paper and shove it over to me. "Anyone who knows the barest details of J. D. Salinger's life will feel a little shiver of recognition when reading this quote. After a promising start as a story writer for magazines, and with four slim, though widely popular, works of fiction published, the young Salinger left New York City and moved to a house in Cornish, New Hampshire. Within a year, he'd built a high fence around the yard, hung up a bunch of No Trespassing signs, stopping giving interviews, and has never since published another book of short story.

Up until his willful disappearance from the literary world in the mid - 1960, Salinger was one of America's most promising young writers. Born in 1919 in New York City, Salinger was a quite boy, of whom a family friend was said, "No one in the family knew where he was or what he was doing. He just showed up for meals". At age thirteen, when Salinger was asked in a school interview what subjects he was interested in, he replied drama and tropical fish. It's interesting to note that throughout his childhood, J. D. loved one of the professions Holden Caulfield hates most, acting. Salinger was not a distinguished student, and was kicked out of several schools, until he ended up at a military academy, where the discipline seemed to do him well. It was here that Salinger started to write, staying up late and writing stories by flashlight under the covers.

Salinger was persistent about writing, keeping at it even while his father sent him to Europe to learn the family business, the import-export trade. After his return Salinger made his second try at college, having flunked out of New York University a few years earlier. Not too long into his stay at Ursinus College, Salinger dropped out again, in 1939. By this point Salinger was determined to turn all his energy to being a writer, and within a year he had his first story published, in the prestigious *Story Magazine*.

Holden Caulfield, who stepped out of Salinger's pages and into the conservative world of President Eisenhower and Joseph McCarthy, is widely thought of as one of the first characters to capture the restless spirit of American youth. His appearances in 1951 cleared the way for other famous young American Rebels: James Dean, Elvis, the main characters of films like "The Graduate" and "Dead Poets Society", and characters in books like *A Separate Peace*, *The Basketball Diaries* and *Rule of the Bone*.

Holden's character was many years in the making. In 1941 Salinger had a story accepted, as was his dream, by the *New Yorker*, which also had a main character named Holden Caulfield. Holden's next appearance was in a 90-page novelette finished in 1946, which, Salinger was unhappy with and did not publish, even though it had been accepted by a publisher. By the time the Holden made it into the current version of *Catcher*, he'd evolved from a slightly pathetic character to one with a very American sort of attitude, which explains, at least in part, the way the book rocketed to success. It was made a Book-of-the Month Club selection in 1951, noting that, "to anyone who has ever brought up a son, every page of Mr. Salinger's novel would be a source of wonder, delight and concern" (French 49). The book has had a spectacular history. By 1997 it had sold 15 million copies in the USA, 60 million worldwide. It is

on the banned book list of many libraries and school districts. And it has been discovered in the breast pocket of several famous murderers, including the man who shot John Lennon.

As for the fate of Salinger, the few interviews he's given in the last thirty years have led more to speculation about his sanity than anything else. Gestures that might have suggested artistic integrity, such as when he sued for the right to declare that his books could not remain in print unless each edition featured only the text between two plain covers (no author bio or photograph, no praising blurbs), seem-after a series of lawsuits to keep his stories out of anthologies, to keep his life from biographies, to keep his work from making it to the screen- a bit like paranoia. Presently, Salinger is arguably less famous for his writing than he is for his personality, which periodically crashes forth in a new lawsuit or a bitter public comment.

When Holden Caulfield talks about his desire to be a deaf mute, he thinks that people will soon get tired of the effort it takes to communicate with him, "and then I'd be through with having conversations for the rest of my life. Everybody'd think I was just a poor deaf-mute bastard and they'd leave me alone" (1998-99) citation form. If this is an autobiographical desire, it's not been realized. Salinger has people curious, especially because he's made it known that he's been writing steadily since he left the world of publication. As he toils away with his pen and paper in a little concrete bunker on his property, we can only imagine what writings, if any, he will choose to leave us when he dies.

7.2.2: Plot Summary

'The Catcher in the Rye' is the story of Holden Caulfield's turbulent last few days before his Christmas vacation. During these days, Holden leaves Pencey Prep, a boy's school he's been kicked out of, and takes off for a few nights alone in New York City. Holden tells the story as a

monologue, from some sort of a mental facility where he's recovering from the stress of the experience he retells.

Holden's tale begins at Pencey, which he despises for its prevailing "phoniness" Holden finds a lot of people and attitudes unbearably phony. It's the day of the big Pencey football game, something that Holden has little interest in. In lieu of watching, Holden takes a walk to the house of his history teacher, old Mr. Spencer. This isn't a particularly satisfying visit, nor is his last evening at Pencey, during which he hangs around with a coarse and dully guy named Ackley and later gets beat up by his own roommate, a ladies' man named Stradlater. The idea of Stradlater taking one of Holden's old friends, Jane Gallagher, out on a date, and the thought of suave Stradlater making the moves on his innocent friend drives Holden to his fists. After the fight, Holden decides to get up and leave Pencey immediately. He finished packing and leaves campus in the middle of the night.

A train takes Holden to New York City, where his family has lived all his life. Here, he checks into the derelict Edmont Hotel, a place that provides him with several adventures including an evening dancing with three dull tourist girls and a clumsy encounter with a prostitute. Holden sends the prostitute away without services rendered, and although he pays her for her time, it's apparently not enough. For this, Holden gets his second pummeling in as many nights, at the hands of Maurice, the hotel's elevator man/pimp.

Holden spends a total of two days in the city, and these days are largely characterized by drunkenness and loneliness. He meant up with an old acceptance name Carl Luce and has a date with an off-and-on girlfriend, Sally Hays, but both experiences leave him more miserable than before. Finally, Holden sneaks into his parent's apartment to visit his kid sister Phoebe, who's about the only person he seems to be able to

communicate with. After this, Holden feels a little better, and he heads off to the apartment of his Ex-English teacher, Mr. Antolini. The comfort Holden hopes to find there is upset when he wakes up in the middle of the night to find Mr. Antolini petting his head in a way that seems "perverted".

After this gets awfully depressed. His distress with the phoniness and stupidity of the world focuses as he spends his last afternoon wandering around the city. What bothers him most is that the world seems to have no sanctuary from the phony or perverse in it anymore - it's a cruel place to grow up. This becomes all the more real for Holden as he wanders around his little sister's school building and keeps finding swear words scribbled on the walls. Holden begins to envision himself as a guardian of children, someone who will protect their innocence. This hope is crystallized in a vision of himself as 'The Catcher in the Rye' - a sort of guard at the edges of a field where children can run free and play, a guardian who can keep these kids from falling, in their exuberance, over the field's edges.

Though Holden tells his little sister he's going to move out West, this doesn't pan out. Instead, after a little fight with Phoebe, Holden ends up accompanying her to the park and watching as she rides the merry-go-round, stretching from her wooden horse to reach a prized brass ring. As he watches with a combination of fear and joy, Holden seems to have decided that there can be no catcher, that all you can do is hope kids develop in the harsh world on their own.

Holden never does give a thorough assessment of his prognosis since his hospitalization. But if his voice in the novel's last few pages is any indication, his time recovering has left him calmer and with more perspectives, but still lonely and without direction.

7.2.3 Characters in the Novel :

Major Characters

Holden Caulfield: Holden is six feet two and has grown six and half inches in the last year. He's a heavy smoker and wears his hair in a crew cut. People mistake him for being 13 even though he's 16 and has a headful of gray hair. Holden's appearance is that of an adolescent who's not just too young or too old for his age, but somehow both at ones. Holden has just failed out of Pencey Prep. The only subject he passed was English, as he reads a lot on his own. The novel follows Holden's last few days at Pencey and the events that happen afterward, which lead to his hospitalization and psychoanalysis. The catcher in the Rye is the story of Holden Caulfield during these crucial days, as told by Holden.

Mr. Spencer : Holden's history teacher at Pencey Prep. He is at home in a bathrobe, suffering from a cold when Holden visits him for the last time. Holden wants to say goodbye to Mr. Spencer, but then regrets his choice when Mr. Spencer grills him about his future.

Robert Ackley : Holden's next door neighbor in his dorm at Pencey Prep, he is a brash and annoying guy. Holden simply puts up with Ackley's disgusting habits and bad behavior. Ackley says he hates just about everyone, but he honestly dislike Stradlater, Holden's roommate, and will leave the room whenever he shows up.

Stradlater : Holden's roommate at Pencey Prep. Holden called him a 'secret slob' because, although he is handsome and well kept his razor is rusted and cruddy. Stradlater often walks around without a shirt on and is popular with the girls. When he goes on a date with Jane Gallagher. Holden becomes extremely agitated, because Stradlater is extremely forward with his dates.

Jane Gallagher : A girl who used to live near Holden and played checker with him two summers ago. She danced ballet and had trouble

with her 'booze hound' father – She had a 'lousy childhood' according to Holden, who cares for her a great deal. When Holden finds out Jane is going on a date with the sexually-experienced Stradlater, he becomes agitated.

Phoebe Caulfield : Holden's younger sister. Phoebe is a smart kid. And she and Holden mutually adore and respect each other. Holden thinks about phoebe many times during his time in New York City, and finally risks getting caught by his parents to sneak into their apartment and visit her. When Holden says he's leaving to go West, Phoebe packs her bags and demands to come along. For some reason, this seems to convince Holden that neither of them needs to be running away.

Allie Caulfield : Holden's younger brother by two years, Allie died of leukemia, which distressed Holden to the point that he punched out all the windows in the garage. Allie had bright red hair and written poems all over his baseball mitt so he would have something to read on the field. Holden remembers him as extremely kind and intelligent.

Mrs. Morrow : The mother of Ernest Morrow (a Pencey Student). Holden has a long conversation with her on the train as he leaves Pencey for good. Holden tells Mrs. Morrow a number of lies about how great her son is, even though Holden thinks Ernest is a bastard.

Sally Hayes : Holden's girlfriend, or at least a girl he's had a few dates with, at the beginning of the story. By the end of the story, she's presumably not his girlfriend anymore. Holden finds Sally cute, but a bit phony. He goes on a disastrous date with Sally when he's in the City, but is so lonely and physically attracted that he asks her to run away with him.

Carl Luce : A rather affected older boy that Holden knew from one of his old schools, Holden calls Luce and asks him to have a few drinks with him in the city. Luce concedes, but clearly finds Holden silly

and immature, and he leaves Holden in the bar after advising it might be helpful for him to see a psychoanalyst.

Mr. Antolini : A favorite ex-English teacher of Holden's. Holden calls Mr. Antolini after his lousy time with Luce, and Mr. Antolini takes him in for the evening. He seems kind and concerned, and gives Holden some advice about keeping his head up. Holden flees Antolini's apartment in the middle of the night, however, after he wakes up to find the teacher patting his head, fearing it is some 'perverted' move.

Sunny : A young prostitute that Holden buys some time with at the Edmont Hotel. Holden is too overwhelmed by Sunny's humanity and his own virginity to go through with the act.

James Castle : An often-tested boy from one of Holden's old schools who committed suicide.

Minor Characters

D. B. Caulfield : Holden's older brother, a writer in Hollywood. Holden admired D. B.'s first book of short stories, *The Secret Goldfish*, but he is unhappy with D. B. for selling out to make movies in Hollywood.

Ossenburger : An alumnus of Pencey Prep and the penultimate phony as far as Holden is concerned.

Mal Blossard : A friend of Holden's at Pencey Prep. Mal, Holden and Robert Ackley go into town together one Saturday night.

Rudolph Schmidt : The pseudonym by which Holden introduces himself to Mrs. Morrow. Schmidt is a janitor at Pencey.

Faith Cavendish : A girl whose phone number Holden's gotten from a friend she's rumored to be loose, and Holden gives her a call his first night in the city, but they never meet up.

Lillian Simmons : One of D. B.'s old flings. Holden sees Lillian at a bar in the city with a Navy boyfriend.

Bernice, Marty and Lauren : Three women from Seattle that Holden meets in the Edmont Hotel bar.

Ernie : An overly polished and pretentious piano player at a bar where Holden spends his evening.

Maurice : The elevator man at the Edmont Hotel. Maurice is also Sunny's pimp.

The nuns : Holden has a notice conversation with two nuns/teacher at a coffee shop.

Horowitz : A crazy cab driver that Holden gets talking about the wintertime fate of the center Park ducks.

Places

Pencey Prep : The high school Holden is kicked out of at the beginning of his story. This is the third private school Holden has attended. Pencey Prep is, according to Holden, full of phonies.

Ossenburger Memorial Wing : Holden's dorm at Pencey Prep. Named after a gift-giving alumna who Holden believes to be a huge phony.

Holden's red hunting hat : Holden buys a red hunting hat in New York for a dollar after he loses Pencey's fencing equipment. The hat has a very long peak, and Holden wears it backwards, with the peak aiming behind him. He puts this hat on when he's under a lot of stress and ends up giving it to his sister Phoebe near the end of the story.

Allie's left-handed baseball mitt : Allie wrote poems in green ink on his baseball mitt so he'd have something to read while waiting around in the outfield. Holden writes a descriptive essay about this mitt for Stradlater's homework assignment, but rips it up after Stradlater complains about the topic.

Ice skates : Holden's mother sent these up to Pencey Prep a few days before Holden is kicked out of school. They're the wrong kind.

Holden wanted racing skates and these are for hockey. But the thought of his mother going to the store, asking the salesman 100 questions, then mailing the skates to him makes him sad about letting his parents down again.

Edmont Hotel : The seedy hotel where Holden spends an eventful night. Here he meets some women in the hotel bar and is visited by a prostitute.

Central Park Lagoon and its ducks : Holden is very curious, throughout the story, about what happens to the ducks of the Central Park lake when wintertime comes and the lake freezes.

The record : Holden buys his sister Phoebe a record he's sure she'll love. The song is called 'Little Shirley Beans' when he gets drunk, however, Holden drops the record and shatters it.

Wicker Bar : The bar where Holden meets Carl Luce. After Luce leaves, Holden stays on and gets drunk by himself.

Ernie's : The piano bar where an affected man named Ernie plays the piano. Holden goes here for a few drinks, but leaves after he's patronized by one of his brother D. B.'s old girlfriends.

Catcher in the Rye : Holden starts thinking about the catcher after he hears a little boy singing a song: "If a body catch a body coming through the rye." (pg. 115) In his imagination, Holden constructs a story and a job for this catcher – he'll stand at the edge of a field where children are innocently playing and catch them if they get too close to the edge.

7.2.4 Themes in the Novel.

There are various themes in the novel. They are

1. Alienation as a form of self-protection
2. The painfulness of growing up
3. The phoniness of the adult world

4. Loneliness
5. Relationship, intimacy and sexuality
6. Lying and deception

As the novel progresses, we begin to perceive that Holden's alienation is his way of protecting himself. Just as he wears his hunting hat to advertise his uniqueness, he uses his isolation as proof that he is better than everyone else around him and therefore above interacting with them. The truth is that interactions with other people usually confuse and overwhelm him, and his cynical sense of superiority serves as a type of self protection.

According to most analyses, 'The Catcher in the Rye' is a bildungsroman, a novel about a young character's growth into maturity. While it is appropriate to discuss the novel in such terms, Holden Caulfield is an unusual protagonist for a bildungsroman because his central goal is to resist the process of maturity itself. Instead of acknowledging that adulthood scares and mystifies him, Holden invents a fantasy that adulthood is a world of superficiality and hypocrisy ('Phoniness'). While childhood is a world of innocence, curiosity and honesty, "phoniness" which is probably the most famous concept. It is his catch-all for describing the superficiality, hypocrisy, pretension, and shallowness that he encounters in the world around him.

Holden's loneliness, a more concrete manifestation of his alienation problem, is a driving force throughout the book. Relationship, intimacy and sexuality are also recurring motifs relating to the larger theme of alienation. Lying and deception are the most obvious and hurtful elements of the larger category of phoniness. Holden's phoniness relies mostly on scorn for people who think that they are something they are not or who refuse to acknowledge their own weakness. But lying to others is also a kind of phoniness, a type of deception.

UNIT - 8
‘To Kill a Mockingbird’: Harper Lee

CONTENTS:

8.0 Objectives.

8.1 Introduction to the Author.

8.2 Subject Explanation

8.2.1 Literary Movement

8.2.2 The Features of ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’.

8.2.3 Background of the text ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’.

8.2.4 Summary of the Novel

8.2.5 Plot structure.

8.2.6 Major Themes.

8.2.7 Characters.

8.3 Self learning questions

8.4 Summing Up

8.5 Glossary

8.6 Bibliography

8.7 Activities for self learning

8.0 Objectives:

- To recognize how ethical principles, values can help the students to live a successful and meaningful life.
- By applying laws of life the students can learn to evaluate characters and situation.
- To enable the students to learn Harper Lee’s classic novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- The reading of the novel will help the students to develop thoughts about characters, events and the plot.
- The Students will be able to understand the importance of seeing things from multiple perspectives.

8.1 Introduction to the Author:

Harper Lee:

‘Nelle’ Harper Lee was born on 28th April 1926, is an American author who was the youngest of five children of Amasa Coleman Lee and Frances Cunningham Finch. She is known for her 1961 Pulitzer-Prize winning novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* which deals with the issues of racism that the author observes as a child in her hometown of Monroeville, Alabama. Her father was a lawyer who served in the state legislature from 1926-1938. She was mainly educated in a public school in Monroeville, after that she attended Huntingdon

College, a private school for women in Montgomery for a year and then transferred to the University of Alabama. After graduation Lee studied at Oxford University.

Harper Lee was aware of the racial injustice and ugly prejudices that simmered in small towns like Monroeville she moved to New York in 1949 and worked as a ticket agent for Eastern Airlines and for the British Overseas Air Corporation. In New York she wrote several essays and short stories but none were published. Lee quit working and in 1957. She submitted the Manuscript to J. B. Lippincott Company. The editors encouraged Lee to rewrite it. With the help of Lippincott editor Tay Hohoff *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published in 1960. The novel became instant popular success and has been translated into ten languages. Lee's book went on to become one of the most successful novels in American history. More than 30 million copies of the novel have been sold. Lee dropped 'Nelle' from her pen name because she did not want it to be mispronounced.

8.2 Subject Explanation :

8.2.1 Literary Movement – Southern Gothic:

Harper Lee is most famous Southern Gothic author. Southern Gothic Literature is focusing on character's social and moral shortcomings in the American South. It reached its heights in 1940-1960s. Southern Gothic Literature is often disturbing but realistic. It relies on usual, disturbing, supernatural or ironic events. It bears grotesque characters or situations (often linked to racism, poverty, violence and moral corruption). Tennessee Williams's *Street Car Named Desire* William Faulkner's *A Rose for Family* (1930) are the masterpieces in Southern Gothic Literature.

8.2.2 The Features of 'To Kill a Mockingbird':

The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* takes readers to the roots of human behavior from innocence to experience, kindness to cruelty, love to hatred along with humor and pathos. Harper Lee always considered her book to be a simple lover story. Today it is regarded as a masterpiece of American Literature. Harper Lee wrote *To Kill a Mockingbird* during the beginning of the Civil Rights era (from about 1955 to 1958). Throughout the South blacks and whites were segregated. The novel is set in the Deep South and is searing portrayal of race and prejudice told through the eyes of the little girl. The novel is a universal tale of how understanding can triumph over old and evil mindsets; the novel has a courageous and powerful political message about the downtrodden lives of African Americans in 1930s America.

8.2.3 Background of the text 'To Kill a Mockingbird':

The action of the novel:

To Kill a Mockingbird takes place in the fictional small Southern town of Maycomb in the 1930s. The first person narrator is Scout Finch, who is five when the story begins and eight when it ends. Harper Lee decided to set the novel in the Depression era of the 1930s. She wrote the novel during a very tense time racially in her home state of Alabama. Alabama was very much in the news at this time with the Montgomery bus boycott, Martin Luther King's rise to leadership and Catherine Lucy's attempt to enter the University of Alabama graduate school. The main character Scout is based on Lee's own childhood, Dill is most like as based on her childhood friend and neighbor Truman Capote. There are many parallels between the trials of Tom Robinson in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the Scottsboro trials. Lee provided her readers with a historical background for current events of the time and in doing so she exposed the deeply rooted history of the civil rights struggle in the south.

Introduction to the Text:

To Kill a Mockingbird was honored with many awards including Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1961 and was made into a film in 1962. She published no other work of fiction but this novel continues to have a strong impact on successive generation of the reader. The novel won great critical acclaim including Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1961 and was voted "Best Novel of the Century" in a poll by the Library Journal.

8.2.4 Summary:

Chapter-1:

The story is narrated by a young girl named Jean Louse Finch who is called by her nickname Scout. She is growing up in hot and tired Alabama town. Scout remembers the summer that her brother Jem (Jeremy) broke his arm. She begins by remembering her family history. Scout provides introduction to the town of Maycomb, Alabama, her hometown, her father Atticus Finch (attorney and state legislator) and Calpurnia, their "Negro" cook and house keeper, Dill (Charles Baker Harris) and various people. Scout does not remember her mother because she died when Scout was two years old. Simon Finch was the first of her ancestors to come to America, practiced medicine and died a rich man.

In the summer of 1933 Scout is almost six and Jem is nearly ten. Dill stays for the summer with his aunt Miss Rachel Haverford who owns the house next to the Finches. Dill quickly becomes the chief playmate of the Finch children. Arther "Boo" Radley lives inside the weathered home. His father has imprisoned him and no one had seen Boo for the past twenty years. Boo's Brother Nathan lives in the house with Boo. Dill is fascinated by Boo and convinces the Finch Children to help him.

Chapter-2:

The summer is over and September arrives. Dill returns to his family in Meridian. Scout eagerly waits for her first day of school. The readers also meet Scout's teacher Miss Caroline Fisher who doesn't have any considerations for the country ways of Maycomb and makes life quite miserable for Scout. Walter Cunningham, a boy in Scout's class has not brought lunch. Miss Caroline offers her a quarter to buy lunch telling him that he can pay her back tomorrow. Scout attempts to explain that Walter's family is so poor that he will never be able to pay the teacher back, however the teacher fails to understand and slaps Scout's hand with a ruler.

Chapter- 3:

When Jem finds out that the boy doesn't have any food to eat he invites Walter Cunningham over for lunch. At the Finch house Atticus and Walter discuss farm condition. Scout horrifies to see Walter puts molasses all over his meat and vegetables. She criticizes Walter. Calpurnia calls her into the kitchen, scolds her, and slaps her, telling her to be a better hostess. Back at school there is a big scene when Miss Caroline screams upon seeing a louse crawl off of the head of Burris Ewell in the class. Miss Caroline asks him to go home to take bath. Burris Ewell, before leaving the class insults the teacher and makes her cry.

Chapter- 4

The school year passes slowly for Scout. She finds school boring and wishes the teacher would allow her to read and write. After school one day, while passing through Radelys place she notices something in the Knothole of one of the oak trees. After investigating, she finds two pieces of chewing-gum. Carefully, she decides to chew them up. Jen makes her spit out. During their walk home on the last day of school Scout and Jem find some coins in the tree.

Dill arrives to spend the summer. Jem suggests playing a new game called "Boo Radley". Jem plays Boo. Dill plays Mr. Radley and Scout plays Mrs. Radley. One day Atticus catches them playing the game and asks if their game has anything to do with the Radley s, Jem lies.

Chapter- 5:

Jem and Dill have become closer friends and Scout finds herself often excluded from their play. Scout spends more time with her next door neighbor Miss Maudie Atkinson, a widow with a talent for gardening and cake-baking. She tells Scout that Boo Radley is still alive. Miss Maudie explains that the Radleys believe all pleasure is a sin against God and stay inside most of the time reading the Bible.

Meantime, Jem and Dill plan to give a note to Boo inviting him out to get ice-cream with them. Jem tries to deliver the note with the fishing pole but Atticus catches them and orders them to “stop tormenting that man”.

Chapter- 6

On Dill’s last night in Maycomb, Jem and Dill plan to a pie into one of the windows at the Radley house. When Scout starts to protest, they threaten her to send her home. Mr. Nathan Radley thinking them intruder, fires a shotgun. The children run as fast as they can back home. They escape under the fence by the schoolyards but Jem’s pants gets caught on the fence and has to kick them off in order to free him. When they return home the children hear that Mr. Radley was shooting at a “White Negro”. Jem decides to get his pants late that night Scout pleads him not to go, but he does it any way when he gets back, he does not say a word but lies in the bed trembling.

Chapter- 7:

Jem is “Moody and silent” after the pants incident. The new school year starts. Jem tells Scout that he found the pants mysteriously mended and hung neatly over the fences as if someone was expecting him to come back and get them. When they come home from the school that day they find another present hidden in the knothole: a ball of gray twine. The next treasure they discover in the Radley’s then two figures carved in soap to ensemble Scout and Jem followed in turn by chewing-gum, a spelling bee medal and an old pocket watch.

Jem and Scout decide to write a ‘thank you note’ to whoever is leaving the gifts. They write a note and leave it in the oak-tree. The next day they are horrified to discover that someone has filled their hole up with cement. When Jem asks Mr. Radley (Nathan Radley, Boo’s brother) about the knothole, the following day Mr. Radley replies that he plugged the knothole because the tree is dying.

Chapter- 8:

Winter arrives in Maycomb and it is unexpectedly harsh. Mrs. Radley dies and Atticus goes to the Radley house to pay his respect. That night Atticus wakes Scout and Jem. Miss Maudie’s house is on fire. The neighbours help her to save the furniture. Miss Maudie’s house burns to the ground. In the confusion, Atticus notices that Scout has a blanket wrapped around her shoulder. They realize that Boo Radley just has slipped the blanket over to Scout. Jem reveals the whole story of the knothole, the presents and the mended pants to Atticus Scout is amazed that she was so close to Boo and didn’t even know it. Miss Maudie is cheerful the next day despite having lost her house working in her yard and talking about expanding her garden.

Chapter- 9:

A boy at school, Cecil Jacobs teases Scout saying that her father “defends niggers”. Scout nearly starts a fight with Cecil. Later she asks Atticus what the phrase means. He explains her that he has been asked to defend Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white girl Mayella Violet Ewell. The Ewells were the lowest family in Maycomb society. Atticus says the people think him ought not to defend Tom because he is black. It is a case he cannot hope to win but he tells Scout that he must argue it to uphold his sense of justice and self respect.

At Christmas time Atticus’s brother, Jack comes to stay with Atticus for a week during the holidays. For Christmas Jem and Scout both get air rifles and are extremely happy. On the Christmas day Atticus takes his children a rumbling old house in the country where Atticus’s Sister Alexandra and her husband live. One night Francis, Alexandra’s grandson calls Atticus a “nigger-laver”. Scout curses him and beats him up. Later scout overhears Atticus telling Jack that all-white Jury would never give justice to black Tom Robinson though he is innocent.

Chapter- 10:

Jem and Scout lament the fact that “Atticus was feeble; he was nearly fifty”. In addition Atticus wears glasses because he is nearly blind in one eye. Scout is slightly ashamed of her father because it seems he can’t do anything noteworthy. Atticus tells Scout and Jem they can shoot their air guns at tins cans but it is a sin to kill a mockingbird.

“Mockingbird doesn’t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy But sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin to kill a Mockingbird”

The neighborhood excitement starts up again in February when a mad dog appears wandering down the main street towards the Finches house. Atticus returns with Heck Tate, the sheriff of Maycomb. Heck brings a rifle and asks Atticus to shoot the animal. Scout and Jem watch in amazement as their father, whom they have never seen hold a gun in his life takes aim and shoots the dog square in the head from the amazing distance. Miss Maudie tells the children that their father used to be known as “One-shot Finch”, the best dead shot in the County.

Chapter- 11:

On their way to meet Atticus after work, Scout and Jem have to pass by Mrs. Dubose’s house, an old lady who always shouts at Jem, and Scout, a mean, elderly women confined to a wheel chair. The day after Jem’s birthday he and Scout go to the town to spend the birthday money. Mrs. Dubose starts insulting Atticus’s decision to defend Tom Robinson. On the way home in a sudden fit of anger, Jem suddenly takes a baton from Scout and destroys all the Mrs. Dubose’s Camilla bushes. They return home and gloomily await Atticus’s

return, knowing that they will be in trouble. Atticus comes home and makes Jem to go to Mrs. Dubose's house and apologize to her in person. Jem returns from Mrs. Dubose's house explain that as a punishment Mrs. Dubose wants him to read out loud to her every afternoon. Scout chooses to accompany Jem. Shortly after, Jem is relieved from his loud reading. Mrs. Dubose dies. Only then Atticus tells the children that Mrs. Dubose was very sick and was addicted to morphine and that the reading was part of her successful effort to overcome the addiction. Atticus gives Jem a box that Mrs. Dubose had given her maid for Jem, in it lies a single white camellia.

Chapter- 12:

As summer begins, Jem is now too old to be bothered by his little sister. Unfortunately, Dill doesn't arrive that summer. He sends a letter saying that his mother has remarried and he has a new father and will stay with his family in Meridian. Atticus has to leave for two weeks for an emergency session with the state legislature.

Calpurnia decides to take the children to her church that Sunday. Maycomb's black church is an old building. At the church a black woman, Lula, criticizes Calpurnia for bringing white children to the church, but the congregation and Reverend Sykes welcome them. During the service, Reverend Sykes takes up a collection for Tom Robinson's wife –Helen who cannot find work now because her husband has been accused of rape. Scout cannot understand why anyone would believe the Ewell's word. When they arrive home they discover Aunt Alexandra sitting on the porch, waiting for them.

Chapter- 13:

In order to bring a more feminine atmosphere in to the household and give Scout a role model Atticus invites his sister Alexandra, to stay with them. She receives a fine welcome by the ladies of the town. Alexandra is extremely proud of her ancestors and spends much of her time discussing the characteristics of the various families in Maycomb. She begins trying to instruct the two on how to be a proper Finch but neither both Scout and Jem have no interest in becoming a little gentleman and a little lady. However Jem and Scout lack the pride that Aunt Alexandra expects. She orders Atticus to lecture them on the subject of their ancestry

Chapter- 14:

Aunt Alexandra tries to convince Atticus to fire Calpurnia but he refuses on the ground that she's done an excellent job of running the house and raising the children and the children love her. That night Scout goes to bed and steps on something soft, warm and round which she thinks is a snake. She calls Jem and to their surprise they discover Dill hiding there. Dill has run away from home because his mother and new father did not pay enough attention to him and he

spends most of his days alone. The children bring him some food and then Jem convinces him that they have to tell Atticus. Atticus allows Dill to sleep there but also tells him that he has to inform Dill's aunt where he is. Dill's mother gives him permission to spend the summer in Maycomb and the children begin to enjoy their time together.

Chapter- 15:

As Tom Robinson's trial approaches Atticus worries about the safety of his client. One evening Mr. Heck Tate, the sheriff comes knocking at the door with a group of men comes to inform Atticus that Tom Robinson is to be moved to the Maycomb Jail and that there may be a trouble. The following evening at about 10 'o clock Atticus takes his car into the town Jem, Scout and Dill go to look for him in town.

They finally find him sitting in front of the Maycomb jail, reading a news paper as they are about to return home but suddenly a line of cars pulls up and a group of men get out and surround the porch for a demand that Atticus refuses. Things get serious when Scout, Jem and Dill rush into the crowd to Atticus's defense. Atticus orders the children to go home but Jem refuses to leave. Scout recognizes one man from the crowd, Mr. Cunningham, Walter's father and as she tries to make conversation with him the entire group falls silent. All of the men stare at her. She innocently begins to talk to Mr. Cunningham about how Walter is a good boy and asks him to say "hello" to his son. Mr. Cunningham, suddenly ashamed asks the men to disperse and go home in their cars. Finally it's Mr. Cunningham who calls off the Mob and makes everyone go home.

Chapter- 16:

The next morning the trial is set to begin. The whole County begins to file into the town to watch Tom Robinson's trial. Jem and Scout explain the background and tendency of everyone that passes. Everyone makes the appearance in the courtroom. Jem, Scout and Dill wait for most of the crowd to enter the courthouse so that they can slip in the back and thus prevent Atticus from noticing them. They can't find a seat in the courtroom so Reverend Sykes offers them seats in "the Colored balcony" which they gladly accept.

The children notice Mr. Dolphus Raymond drinking liquor from a paper bag (a healthy eccentric who owns his land on a river bank, lives near a County line; who is white and has married a black woman and that he has "mixed" children). Jem says that these children are "sad" because they don't feel accepted by black people or by white people. Finally, readers are introduced to Judge Taylor, who the children earlier discovered much to their surprise appointed Atticus to defend Tom Robinson.

Chapter- 17:

The trial begins. The prosecutor, Mr. Gilmer questions Heck Tate. Tate tells that he was summoned by Bob Ewell to come to his house on the night of November 21st. Bob told him that his daughter Mayella had been raped. When Tate went there he found Mayella bruised and beaten and she told him that Tom Robinson had raped her. Tate says that he found Mayella on the floor, very beaten up and that Mayella claimed Tom Robinson had taken advantage of her and beaten her. Atticus asks question whether anyone called a doctor. Mr. Tate says “no”. Atticus asks where Mayella had been beaten and Mr. Tate says that her right eye and entire right side of the face was bruised and she had scratches all around her neck. Bob Ewell is the next witness who is poor, undefeated and mean-spirited. Bob testifies that on the evening he was coming out of the woods he heard his daughter yelling. When he reached the house he saw Tom Robinson was raping her. Robinson fled and he summoned up Tate. Atticus, in his cross examination asks why no doctor was called and he brings it to the notice of jury that Bob is left handed man would be more likely to leave bruises on the right side of Mayella’s face. (Atticus asks Mr. Ewell to write his name on an envelope. In doing so it is revealed that Mr. Ewell is left handed)

Chapter- 18:

Mayella is the next to take the stand. Mayella is a reasonably clean nineteen-year-old girl also obviously terrified of the situation. She says that she called Tom Robinson inside the fence that evening and offered him a nickel to break up a dresser for her. She claims that she went inside for the money and Tom followed her, pushed her to the floor and took the advantage. Atticus cross examines her whether she screamed and why her screams didn’t bring the other children running. Atticus asks her to identify the man who raped her and Mayella points to Tom. Atticus asks Tom to stand. Everyone sees that his left arm is 12 inches shorter than his right arm due to the accident in his youth when the arm got stuck a cotton gin. Atticus begins to ask her if it was really her father that beat her up but she refuses to say and accuses Tom Robinson. Atticus pleads with Mayella to admit that there was no rape, that her father beat her, she burst into tear refusing to answer anymore question. The prosecution rests and Atticus calls only one witness – Tom Robinson.

Chapter-19

Atticus calls Tom Robinson. Tom tells the true story and says that Mayella is lying. Tom testifies that he always passed the Ewell house on the way to work and that Mayella often asked her to do chores for her many times, she offered money but he refused payment knowing that the family had no money.

Atticus asks about the event of 21st Nov. of that year. Tom says that when he was passing the Ewell house as usual Mayella asked him to come inside the

house and shut the door behind him and said that she had sent the children to the town to get ice-cream. Tom starts to leave but she asks him to take a box down. As Tom reached the box Mayella grabbed him around his legs scaring him so much that he jumped down. She then hugged him around the waist and asked him to kiss her. As she struggled her father appeared at the window calling Mayella a whore and threatening to kill her. Tom runs away in fear.

Mr. Gilmer aggressively asks Tom question addressing him “boy”. Mr. Gilmer tries to get at Tom’s motivations for helping Mayella. Tom makes a fatal error when he admits under cross examination that he, a black man, felt sorry for Mayella Ewell. In those days a black man feeling sorry for a white woman or even saying it may as well be a crime. Dill begins to cry and Scout takes him out of the courtroom. Dill complains about the rude treatment given by Mr. Gilmer to Tom while questioning him. As they walk Scout and Dill encounter Mr. Dolphus Raymond, a white man married black woman and having mixed children.

Chapter 20 :

Mr. Dolphus Raymond always carried his drink in a paper bag and tends to sway in his walk. When running from the court house Dill and Scout run into Mr. Raymond and he offers Dill a sip of his drink. Dill takes a sip and discovers Mr. Raymond is hiding a bottle of Coca-Cola. Mr. Raymond explains that he pretends to be drunkard to hide the fact that he simply prefers black people to white. Scout and Dill return to the courtroom. Atticus explains that the case is very simple because there is no medical evidence. The physical evidence suggests that no Tom Robinson but Bob Ewell beat Mayella. The lonely, unhappy Mayella has broken a rigid and “time honored code” of the society by attempting to seduce a black man and then concealed her shame by accusing him of rape after being caught. In his final remarks Atticus speaks directly to the Jury earnestly reminding them that “all men are created equal”. As his speech comes to close, Scout and Jem see Calpurnia moving toward the front of the court.

Chapter 21 :

Calpurnia brings a note telling Atticus that the children Scout and Jem are missing but Mr. Underwood tells him that the children are in the courtroom sitting in the color balcony. Atticus tells the children to go home and to have supper. Calpurnia scolds the children all the way home but Atticus says that they can return to hear the Jury’s verdict.

The children eat quickly and return to find Jury is still out and the courtroom is still full. Jem is confident of the victory of the victory while Dill has fallen asleep. After eleven that night Jury enters. Everyone is silent and still. Not a single member of Jury looks at Tom and Scout takes it as a bad sign. Judge Taylor polls the Jury. They take nine hours to decide. Finally they come

back with a verdict: “Guilty”. Atticus whispers something to Tom, and then exits the courtroom. All the black people in the balcony rise to their feet to honor Atticus as he passes them. That night the children have difficulty in falling asleep as they can’t understand how the Jury could have missed the obviousness of Tom’s innocence.

Chapter 22:

The next morning Atticus explains that there is a good possibility for the case to be appealed in a higher court. Calpurnia reveals that the black community has left amount of food on the back porch to tell Atticus “thank you” for defending Tom Robinson in spite of the verdict. Upon seeing the generosity Atticus’s eyes fill with tears. Jem complains that his illusions about Maycomb have been shattered .He thought the people of Maycomb were the best but having seen the trial he does not think so anymore but Miss Maudie appreciate Atticus points out the people including Mr. Tate; the sheriff, the black community and the Judge: Mr. Taylor who offered Atticus the case helped in trying to give justice to a black person. She adds that Jury’s staying out so long for deciding Tom as a guilty which is an achievement in itself and a sign of progress in racial relationship. As the children leave Miss Maudie’s house, Miss Stephanie runs over to tell them that Bob Ewell saw Atticus by the post office, spat in his face and swore revenge.

Chapter 23 :

Bob Ewell’s threatening Atticus frightens the children. Atticus educates the children on the ways of the world. Aunt Alexandra tries to teach Scout to be a lady. Meanwhile Tom Robinson has been sent to another prison seventy miles away. Atticus tells Jem that in an Alabama court of law a white man’s word always beats a black man. Atticus reveals that one man on the Jury was in favor of Tom, wanted to acquit him. It was one of the Cunninghams who defended Tom’s innocence. Jem notices that there are four different kinds of people in Maycomb (four groups of society who look the other down). Jem seems very frustrated with society and adds that Boo Rudely does not come out of his house because he does not want to leave it.

Chapter 24 :

Aunt Alexandra invites Scout to attend her Missionary Society meeting. Scout helps Calpurnia and tries to join the ladies in conversation. Suddenly Atticus appears and calls Alexandra to the kitchen. There, in the presence of Scout, Calpurnia and Miss Maudie he tells Alexandra that Tom Robinson attempted to escape and was shot seventeen times. He requests Calpurnia to accompany him to go to Tom’s house to tell the Robinson family of Tom’s death.

Chapter 25 :

Atticus and Calpurnia are driving out to see Tom's wife along with Jem and Dill. Apparently when Tom's wife sees Atticus and Calpurnia she seems to faint falling to the ground in a heap. Scout is very upset that the news of Tom's death was so insignificant to the town's people. Scout is struck by the hypocrisy of many of the Maycomb residents. Mr. Underwood in his editorial condemns the people of Maycomb who are responsible for Tom's death as the murder of saying that Tom's death makes "one down and about two more to go".

Chapter 26 :

School starts again with Jem in the seventh grade and Scout in the third. Scout has lost her fear of Radley place. One day in class her teacher starts talking about Adolf Hitler and Scout discovers that her teacher Miss Gates hates Hitler. Scout remembers that she overheard Miss Gates making racist remarks about African- Americans after Tom's trial. Scout questions Jem about the hypocrisy of Miss Gates. He becomes very furious and tells Scout never to mention the trial to him again.

Chapter 27 :

Scout relates a few events recently occurred in Maycomb. It would appear that Bob Ewell has not forgotten his grudge against some of the Maycomb's citizens. Mr. Bob Ewell holds down a job for a few days in Work Projects Administration but then is fired from WPA for laziness. The Judge Taylor in his home hears someone prowling around when he goes to investigate he sees a shadow creeping away. Tom Robinson's old boss Link Deas gives Helen a job but Bob Ewell makes it very difficult for her to safely walk to work. She has to go a mile out of her way to avoid the Ewell place. One day Link over- hears warning Bob Ewell that that he will have him arrested if he does not leave Helen alone. After that she has no further trouble.

Chapter 28 :

It's really a dark on the way to school and Ceil Jacob jumps out and frightens Jem and Scout. In the mean time Scout prepares for Halloween night presentation at her school and she plans to wear a bulky pig costume. While returning home from the school Scout remembers that she left the shoes backstage. She is thinking of returning to get them but Jem stops her because he hears a strong noise. They are almost at their home, near the dark shadow of the tree by Radley's house and trying to walk faster. Jem hears something unusual and Scout hears scream. Scout calls for Jem but get no answer other than heavy breathing. Scout cannot see what is happening due to the darkness. The man whom they are struggling with grab Scout begins to struggle her when suddenly he is jerked backwards and thrown to the ground. The noise of struggling has ceased. She stumbles forwards home and sees in the light of the street lamp a

man carrying Jem toward her house. Aunt Alexandra calls for doctor and Atticus calls for the sheriff.

Alexandra tells Scout that Jem is only unconscious, not dead. After examining Jem Dr. Reynolds informs that Jem has a broken arm and a bump on his head. The man who carried Jem home is in the room but Scout does not recognize him. Afterwards, a search of the area by the local officials carries out. Heck Tate appears and tells Atticus that Bob Ewell is lying dead under a tree with a knife stuck under his ribs.

Chapter 29 :

At the Sheriff's request Scout recounts what happened. She tells everyone what she saw and heard. Mr. Tate notes the mark that Mr. Ewell's knife made in Scout's costume and points out that Mr. Ewell meant to seriously harm or kill the children. Heck Tate tells them that scout's costume probably saved her life. She also recognizes that the stranger the man who pulled Ewell off her and saved both children's life is Boo Radley. He is pale with torn clothes and thin pinched face and colorless eyes.

Chapter 30 :

Scout, Atticus, Boo and Heck Tate move the front porch. Atticus thinks that Jem must have killed Bob Ewell but the sheriff tells Atticus that he intends to report that Ewell fell on his own knife but Atticus thinking that Jem killed Bob Ewell does not want his son to be protected from the law. The sheriff corrects him saying Ewell falls on his own knife; Jem didn't kill him. The sheriff remains adamant, saying that he is not protecting Jem but he is protecting Boo Radley; it was Boo Radley who actually killed Bob Ewell. Atticus deeply moved by this revelation asks Scout if she understands. Scout explains that having it another way would be like shooting a mockingbird. Heck Tate explains the reason behind protecting Boo is Tom Robinson died for no reason and now the man responsible is dead and it is because he knows all the ladies of Maycomb county would be by Boo's house bringing cakes to thank him and Boo does not want to be dragged into the focus. They finally agree that Ewell did fall on his own knife, a decision Scout fully understands.

Chapter 31 :

Scout takes Boo upstairs to say Goodnight to Jem and then walks home alone with him. She leads him home and he goes inside his house and shuts the door. The narrator speaking as an older Scout says she never saw him again, she returns to Jem's room and Atticus reads aloud to her until she falls asleep.

8.2.5 Plot structure:

To Kill a Mockingbird is divided into two parts. The first part extends from chapter 1 to 11 and the second part extends from chapter 12 to 31. The story of *To Kill a Mockingbird* is told in first person narration by Scout. The

plot is straight forward. The structure of the novel is chronological. The first part of the novel starts in early summer of 1933 when Dill arrives and the children try to get Boo to come out. In the early summer of 1934 Boo leaves gift in oak tree. The first part of the novel includes Boo's leaving gifts for the children, hole is filled with cement, and Tom is arrested for the accusation of rape. In the winter of 1934 Miss Maudie's house burns. Atticus agrees to defend Tom at the time of Christmas. The second part of the novel starts with the arrival of Aunt Alexandria. She arrives when the children are visiting the church with Calpurnia. In the summer of 1935 the trial begins when children sit in the balcony of black people. The sheriff (Heck Tate) testifies along with Bob Ewell and Mayella Ewell. At the end Tom Robinson testifies. The Jury unanimously declares Tom 'guilty'. The trial scene concludes with Bob's threatening to Atticus. On 24th August the news of Tom's death arrives. Bob attacks on both the children (Jem and Scout) when they are returning from the school. But the children are saved and at the end of the scene. Bob is found dead. It was Boo who saved the lives of the children by killing Bob Ewell.

By the end of the novel all the secrets are revealed leaving the readers with clear understanding of what has happened and why. This is 1930s America when the monster of racism was lurking in America. The conflict starts when Atticus Finch believes in the principle of nature that all the men are created equal, therefore, though the people in Maycomb are against him Atticus agrees to defend a black man, Tom Robinson on the charges of raping a white woman. The climax starts at the time of Trial; the colour of the skin is given more importance than the truth of the words. The Jury unanimously decides Tom as a 'guilty'. In the denouement Mr. Ewell tries to strike the children and gets killed. The news of Tom's death arrives meanwhile when he tries to escape from the prison. The novel concludes with Boo Radley who saves the children from Mr. Ewell and finally the characters see Boo Radley as a real person.

In *To Kill A Mockingbird* it reveals that Boo Radley and Tom Robinson have much in common. Both are harmless human beings. Boo for being a freak and Tom for being black, both the innocents are persecuted by the society.

The novel *To Kill Making bird* is a well-knit and well-structured novel with both the parts skillfully interlinked through characters and events. The novel awakens our imagination and enlarges our humanity.

8.2.6 Major Themes:

01. Good and Evil:

At the beginning of the novel Scout and Jem approach life innocently believing in the goodness of all people, assume that people are good because neither Jem nor Scout has ever seen evil. Atticus teaches, instills the sense of morality in the children as well as the town by defending a black man falsely accused of raping a white woman. The innocent people like Boo Radley and

Tom Robinson are not prepared for the evil they encounter. Scout tries to maintain her faith in humanity but Jem is disillusioned and his faith in justice and humanity is damaged when the Jury announced Tom as 'guilty'. At the end of the novel when Bob Ewell tries to kill both the children, they faced true evil. Boo Radley saves them who embody true goodness and in this way goodness prevails at the end of the novel.

02. Moral Education:

The theme of moral education is powerfully explored through the relationship between Atticus and his children. In the school Scout is confronted with moral hypocrisy of her teachers who were unsympathetic to the needs of children. Atticus instills the sense of morality in his children by answering truthfully to whatever questions they ask. The children receive the majority of their education at home. At the end of the novel Scout understands that life experiences are the true teachers.

03 Social Inequality :

The novel deals with social snobbery prevalent in the society. The black people are not allowed to enjoy the social status of white people. Atticus does not believe in it, so he has a black housekeeper in his house and he allows children to attend Calpurnia's church. Scout does not understand why Tom is convicted as a guilty in spite overwhelming evidence of his innocence. Scout tries to understand the social structure. Atticus teaches his children to maintain respect for humanity and life in general.

04.Courage :

There are many examples of courage in this novel. Mrs. Dubose fight against her morpheme addiction, Atticus, acknowledges the evil in people, being white man he tries to defend a black and he faces a lot of disapproval from the community. Atticus defends Tom in the court although he knows that it is completely useless since Tom is Negro. This shows great courage in Atticus's character. There are different examples of physical and moral courage. Mr. Heck Tate stands up against Atticus and refuses to convict Jem. Atticus kills the rabid dog with a single shot and courageously faces the mob outside the jailhouse.

05.Racism:

Racism is a major theme of this novel. The novel is a straight forward criticism of racism and evil. Aunt Alexandra and many other characters believe in the importance of social class. Stephanie Crawford shows her racial prejudice by passing cheap remarks over Atticus for defending a black man. The black people in Maycomb are not allowed to mix up with white and are not given any educational or financial opportunities. Tom Robinson is declared guilty because he is a Negro also shows that Maycomb's Jury is racially prejudiced against the African- Americans. Scout and Jem cannot accept the fact that Maycomb is

raciest. This highlights their innocence. By defending a black man in court, Atticus draws criticism and people call him 'nigger lover'. Mr. Raymond, a white man who married a black woman and has mixed children pretends to be an alcoholic by carrying around a paper bag with a bottle of Coca-Cola inside in order to let the town excuse his choice to marry a black woman.

8.2.7 Characters:

Scout (Jean Louise) Finch:

The narrator and protagonist of the story Scout lives with her father (Atticus), her brother (Jem) and their black cook (Calpurnia) in Maycomb. She begins her story at almost six years old. She believes in goodness of the people and humanity. She is unusually good, thoughtful, confident and intelligent. She is a rebellious tomboy who has fierce disposition towards anybody who challenges her. She beats up Dill when he is not paying attention to her and kicks a member of the mob when he grabs Jem. Atticus tells her not to fight any more. Scout is not interested in dolls and dresses. As novel proceeds, Scout too gains maturity. She eventually develops a more grown-up perspective that enables her to appreciate human goodness without ignoring human evils.

The child Scout complains "Our father didn't do anything, he never went hunting, he did not play poker, and he sat in the living room and read". The story takes place over the course of three years. The adult Scout can better understand the impact of so many events than the child living through them. Scout is a Tomboy but she does come to recognize that being a lady has some value in the society. She is a good neighbour. She says, "But neighbors give in return. We never put back into the tree what we took out of it; we had given him nothing and it made me sad". In her behavior she displays her sensitivity. Thus, Scout is an adorable character, with a great potential for values in her personality.

Atticus Finch:

A lawyer in Maycomb, Scout and Jem's father Atticus has instilled in his children his strong sense of morality and justice. He treats his children as adult honestly answering any question they have. He is a highly respected and responsible citizen of Maycomb County. Atticus teaches his children to compromise with the situation.

He is a widower with a dry sense of humour. He is committed to racial equality. For Jem, Atticus is a role model; Jem's maturity is largely due to Atticus's conduct at home. When he agrees to defend Tom Robinson, a black man charged of raping or white woman he exposes himself and his family to the anger of the white community. In the courtroom he politely proves that Bob Ewell is a liar; he respectfully questions Mayella about her role in Tom's crisis. He is a typical Southern gentleman; he is always courteous towards ladies. He does not possess the usual faults of Maycomb citizens; of prejudice, arrogance

and hypocrisy. Atticus runs his family like a judge, he has a clear set of rules he expects his kids to follow, but he believes in listening the explanation of children over many issues.

Atticus feels that the justice system should be colour blind. He knows before he begins that he is going to lose the case still he accepts it because he knows that Tom is an innocent man. Atticus believes in religious tolerance and he wishes his children would learn this too.

Jem Finch (Jeremy Atticus Finch):

Scout's brother and constant playmate who is nearly 10 at the beginning of the story Jem is quieter and more reserved than his sister and has very high standards and expectations for people. Four years older than Scout, he gradually separates himself from her games but he remains her close companion and protector throughout the novel. Jem represents the idea of bravery in the novel. But as the story progresses Jem learns about bravery from Atticus facing a mad dog, from Mrs. Dubose fight with addiction. Jem's character undergoes a consistent change as the novel proceeds, from immaturity to mature though not entirely.

Jem is compassionate to Boo Radley and Tom Robinson. When Tom Robinson's verdict comes as "guilty" everything changes for Jem. The Tom Robinson trial makes Jem lose his faith in humanity. Jem has a sharp mind to understand the reason why Atticus was pointing out the side of Mayella's face which has been injured. By the end of the novel he gains considerable maturity when Maudie gives a slice of the cake to Jem.

Boo Radley:

An intelligent child emotionally damaged by his cruel father, Boo provides powerful symbol of goodness, leaving little presents for the children (Scout and Jem). Boo Radley and Tom Robinson are the 'mockingbirds', good persons injured by the evils of society share many similarities in spite of the fact that one man is white and the other is black. The novel's title is a metaphor for both Boo Radley and Tom Robinson.

As a young boy Boo Radley had been a good-natured, pleasant boy but due to his childhood mischief, his cruel father sentenced him to a life time confinement to their house. The children have never seen him so they do not believe him as a real person. A prisoner in his home, he stabbed his father with scissors once and no one has seen him since. Throughout the book he lives with his brother.

Basically, Boo is a harmless person craving for love and affection extends a hand of friendship towards children by placing gifts for them in the knothole. After the trial of Tom Robinson, Jem and Scout start to have different understanding of Boo Radley. The ugly side of humanity - Bob Ewell tries to kill the children; Boo comes out to save children by stabbing Bob. Heck Tate is aware of Boo's stabbing Bob Ewell; he insists that Ewell fell on his own knife

(rather than dragging Boo into court) Tate decides to “let the dead bury their dead”.

Tom Robinson:

An important symbol of innocence, Tom is a black man who stands falsely accusation of raping Mayella Ewell. Tom is physically handicapped, like a bird with a broken wing but his real disability lies in his race (black). He is a young, harmless hardworking black. His left hand had been injured in an accident. He was a married person having three children working in the farm of Link Deas.

Tom Robinson often used to help Mayella by doing small household chores for her. One evening she asked Tom to come inside the house and fix the door. She asked him to lift a box down from a dresser. When Tom jumped down she hugged him around his waist and asked him to kiss her. The father arrived home when she was struggling. Bob, calling her whore threatened her to kill, Tom fled. At the trial Tom said that he felt sorry for Mayella.

Tom felt sorry for Mayella as one human being for another but it was impossible for the citizens of Maycomb to imagine a black man feeling sorry for a white woman. Tom did his best but as a black man living in a white world he is doomed from the start. Unfortunately Tom tried to escape from the prison and is shot to death in the process.

Bob Ewell:

Bob Ewell, a drunken, mostly ‘unemployed member of Maycomb’s for three generations’. He is a brutal father of his eight motherless children living in extreme filth and shabbiness. He drinks away all the money he gets from the relief checks. Ewell has no ambition of improving either his life or the lives of his children. He submits poor innocent black man to death without any qualm.

Bob Ewell is rude to everybody. In accusing Tom Robinson of raping his daughter he believes the town should consider him as a hero for saving the white women of Maycomb from a dangerous black man. He sees his daughter hugging Tom around his waist, calling her whore he threatens her to kill, yet at the trial he is defending his daughter by going to court and accuse Tom of raping his daughter to raise his family’s stature. Atticus proves Bob and his daughter liars by the end of the trial. Even after winning the case, he continues to torment Tom’s widow Helen.

He threatens Atticus and other people as he felt he was humiliated. For taking revenge he attempts to kill the children with a large kitchen knife. Boo Radley stabs Mr. Ewell and saves the children. The readers feel no sympathy for him at his death at the hands of Boo Radley.

Mayella:

Mayella Ewell is Bob Ewell's unhappy, lonely and abused daughter. She attempts at keeping the house clean and looking after her younger brothers and sisters. Tom Robinson is the only person who behaves decently with her otherwise she never receives love or affection in her life. She can't attend school because she has to take care of her younger sibling.

Mayella was often taking the help of Tom and Tom always helped her out of sympathy for her. One day she calls Tom and tries to hug and kiss him. Her father comes home and abuses her. But she accuses him of raping her. Tom runs away in fright. She is probably afraid of her father and her guilt is 'kissing a black man' is difficult for her to accept in the trial. She never reappears in the novel after the trial scene.

Charles Baker "Dill" Harris:

A friend and neighbour to the Finch children, a little older than Scout, Dill is a confident boy with an active imagination. Throughout the novel he represents the childhood innocence, becomes fascinated with Boo Radley. He tends to be an escapist in difficult situations, spends summer with his aunt who lives next door to the Finch family. Dill does not know his father. He often pretends to be something he is not. He can see the Maycomb community from a different perspective.

Calpurnia:

Calpurnia is a bridge for the Finch children between the white world and her own black community works as a cook and house-keeper for the Finches. She works like a motherly figure for Scout.

Aunt Alexandra:

Alexandra is a perfect Southern lady is Atticus's sister who has strict and traditional ideas of how society works. She is a strong-willed woman with a fierce devotion for her family. Scout compares her to Mount Everest. Even her clothing is tight and restrictive. She is extremely critical of Atticus's parenting style. She is active in Missionary society which appears as much a social club as a religious organization.

Miss Maudie Atkinson:

A kind, careful and witty neighbour of the Finches, Maudie loves gardening. She is a sharp-tongued widow and an old friend of the family. She shares Atticus's passion for justice. Miss Maudie has a delightful sense of humour. She treats the children in an adult manner much like Atticus does.

Heck Tate:

The sheriff of Maycomb who is ultimately an honest man and a major witness in Tom Robinson's trial Heck always tries to protect the innocent (like Boo and Tom) from danger. Though he is aware of the fact that Boo kills Bob Ewell, Tate saves Boo by declaring that Mr. Ewell falls on his own knife.

Mr. Dolphus Raymond:

A white man who marries a black woman and has mixed children Dolphus prefers living among blacks. He reveals that he pretends to be an alcoholic by carrying around a paper bag with a bottle of Coca-cola inside in order to let the town excuse his choice to marry a black woman.

Nathan Radley: Boo Radley's elder brother. He plugs up cruelly the knot hole in which Boo leaves presents for the children.

Mr. Walter Cunningham: A poor farmer and a part of the mob who seeks to hurt Tom at the jail. He is deeply moved by Scout's friendly words. He displays his goodness by asking the mob to disperse at the jail.

Walter Cunningham (Jr.): The classmate of Scout who attends first grade with Scout and the son of Mr. Walter Cunningham.

Mr. Underwood: The publisher of Maycomb's newspaper, he respects Atticus for defending innocent Tom.

Link Deas: Tom Robinson's employer who praises Tom for the integrity of his character.

Helen Robinson: Wife of Tom.

Judge Taylor: The judge of Tom's trial is a good, sensible man who manages a strict courtroom.

Mr. Gilmer: Lawyer for the Ewell family in Tom Robinson's case.

Uncle Jack: Atticus's brother and a doctor by profession. The Finch children (Jem and Scout) are very fond of Uncle Jack.

Mrs. Dubose: A mean, sick and very old woman who lives near the Finch family. Atticus admires Mrs. Dubose for the courage with which she battles her morphine addiction.

8.3 Self Learning Questions

1. Why does the Radley place fascinate Scout, Jem and Dill?
2. Why does Jem not want anything to do with Scout at school? Is his behavior typical of an older child?
3. Who is Calpurnia? What is her place in the Finch household?
4. What superstitions do the children have in connection with the Radley house?
5. Why do the children make Boo's story into a game?
6. Describe Miss Maudie Atkinson? How typical is she of Maycomb's women? What do the children think of her?
7. When Atticus asks Scout about the blanket around her shoulders, what does Jem realize?
8. How well does Atticus feel he should defend Tom Robinson? Is it usual for (white) lawyers to do their best for black clients in Alabama at this time?
9. Scout and Jem have "mixed feelings" about Christmas? What are these feelings and why?

10. Scout says that “Atticus was feeble”. Do you think that this is her view as she tells the story or her view when she was younger? Does she still think this after the events recorded?
11. Atticus tells his children that “it's a sin to kill a mockingbird”. What reason does he give for saying this?
12. Why does Heck Tate not want to shoot Tim Johnson?
13. Explain in your own words what Atticus thinks of insults like “nigger-lover”. How far do you agree with him?
14. Why, in Atticus's view, was Mrs. Dubose “a great lady”?
15. Atticus says that Mrs. Dubose is a model of real courage rather than “a man with a gun in his hand”. What does he mean? Do you think he is right?
16. Comment on Jem's and Scout's visit to First Purchase church.
17. What new things does Scout learn here about how the black people live?
18. How does Aunt Alexandra involve herself in Maycomb's social life?
19. What sort of person is Dolphus Raymond?
20. What do we learn indirectly of the home life of the Ewell family in this novel?
21. What do you learn from Bob Ewell's evidence?
22. How does Mayella react to Atticus's politeness? Is she used to people being polite?
23. What made Tom visit the Ewell's house in the first place?
24. In your own words explain Mayella's relationship with her father.
25. Why does Dolphus Raymond hide Coca-Cola in a bag?
26. What, according to Atticus, is the thing that Mayella has done wrong?
27. Explain, in your own words, Atticus's views on people's being equal.
28. Why does Bob Ewell feel so angry with Atticus? Do you think his threat is a real one, and how might he try to “get” Atticus?
29. What is your opinion of the Maycomb ladies, as depicted in this novel?
30. Explain briefly how Tom was killed? What is Atticus's explanation for Tom's attempted escape? Do you agree with Atticus?
31. How does Maycomb react to the news of Tom's death?
32. What does Heck Tate give as the reason for the attack?
33. Do you think the sheriff's explanation or Atticus's is the more likely to be true?
34. Why does Heck Tate insist that Bob Ewell's death was self-inflicted? In what way is this partly true?
35. Is Heck Tate right to spare Boo then publicity of an inquest? Give reasons for your answer.
36. How does the writer handle the appearance, at the end of the story, of Boo Radley?

37. At the end of the novel, Atticus reads to Scout. Comment on his choice of story. Does it have any connection with themes earlier in the novel and in its ending?

8.4 Summing Up

Scout narrates the story herself looking back in retrospect an unspecified number of years after the events of the novel take place Scout narrates in the first person telling what she saw and heard at the time and augmenting this narration with thoughts and assessments of her experiences in retrospect. Although she is by no means an omniscient narrator. She has matured considerably over the intervening years and often implicitly and humorously comments on the incidents she displayed in her thoughts and action as a young girl. Scout mostly tells of her own thoughts but also devotes considerable time to recounting and analyzing Jem's thoughts and actions.

The childhood innocence with which Scout and Jem begin the novel is threatened by numerous incidents that expose the evil side of human nature, most notably the guilty verdict in Tom Robinson's trial and the vengefulness of Bob Ewell. As the novel progresses, Scout and Jem struggles to maintain faith in the human capacity for good in light of those recurring instances of human evil.

8.5 Glossary

Acrimonious: bitter and caustic in temper, manner, or speech.

Aggregation: a group or mass of distinct things or individuals.

Akimbo: body position -- hands on hips, elbows bent outward

Amanuensis: an assistant who takes dictation or copies something already written; secretary.

Ambidextrous: able to use both hands with equal ease.

Apoplectic: on the verge of having a stroke

Arbor: an outdoor area shaded by trees

Asafetida: strong smelling substance made from parsley that is often used in folk medicine

Beadle: [Obs.] a messenger of a law court.

Big Mules: political term referring to modern Alabama power brokers.

Changelings: a child secretly put in the place of another

Church: to bring (esp. a woman after childbirth) to church for special services.

Climber [Informal]: a person who tries to advance socially or in business.

Cootie: [Slang] common head lice.

Edification: instruction or education

Entailment: legal issue regarding inheritance

Fey: strange or eccentric

Feral: savage; wild.

Foot-washing Baptist: rural missionary Baptists who essentially take the Bible literally.

Hookah: a kind of water pipe associated with the Middle East, with a long flexible tube for drawing the smoke through water in a vase or bowl and cooling it.

Hookworms: a disease caused by hookworms, characterized by anemia, weakness, and abdominal pain: the larvae enter the body through the skin, usually of the bare feet.

Lavation: the act of washing.

Lineaments: any of the features of the body, usually of the face, esp. with regard to its outline..

Morphodite: comic slang pronunciation of hermaphrodite, a term used to describe a human or animal combining both the male and female sexual characteristics and organs.

Palliation: the lessening of pain or severity without actually curing; alleviation.

Plaited: braided

Providence: the care of God

Rivy: a toilet; esp., an outhouse.

Ruttin': slang for having sexual intercourse

Snipe: hunt practical joke in which the victim is made to sit in the woods with a bag and two sticks in an attempt to capture a creature that doesn't exist.

Solicitor: in the U.S., a lawyer serving as official law officer for a city, department, etc.

Spurious: not true or genuine; false; counterfeit.

Scrip stamps: paper money of small denominations issued by government agencies for temporary emergency use; particularly common during the Great Depression

Shinny: slang term for whiskey

Smockin': decorative stitching that gathers fabric

Switches: small thin twigs or branches

Temerity: foolish or rash boldness; foolhardiness; recklessness.

Tight: [slang] drunk.

Tollable: Mayella's pronunciation of "tolerable"

Trousseau: the new clothes a woman brings to her marriage.

Umbrage: offense or resentment.

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8.7 Activity for self- learning -: Multiple choice questions on ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’:

1: What does Scout's cousin, Francis Hancock, call Atticus?

- a. A liar
- b. A coward
- c. A "nigger-lover"
- d. A cockroach

2: Who tells Jem that he cemented the knothole because the tree in his yard is dying?

- a. Nathan Radley
- b. Tom Robinson
- c. Bob Ewell
- d. Jem

3: How does Tom Robinson die?

- a. He kills himself.
- b. He is murdered by his accuser's father.
- c. He is killed trying to escape.
- d. He dies after many years in prison.

4: Where is the novel set?

- a. Alabama
- b. Georgia
- c. Mississippi
- d. Louisiana

5: What is Scout dressed up as when she and Jem are attacked?

- a. A witch

- b. A chicken
- c. A ham
- d. A princess

6: Who saves Jem and Scout during the attack?

- a. Atticus
- b. Bob Ewell
- c. Calpurnia
- d. Boo Radley

7: Mr. Cunningham disperses the lynch mob based on the actions of

- a. Atticus.
- b. Jem.
- c. Scout.
- d. Boo Radley.

8 Another meaningful title for this novel could be:

- Scout Grows Up
- The South Shall Rise Again
- The Courage of Atticus Finch

9. Atticus taught his children not to kill a mockingbird because it:
is one of God's special creatures
sings beautifully and harms no one
brings good luck to those who truly listen to it

10. Harper Lee contrasts the poor Cunninghams with the:

- Ewells
- Radleys
- Robinsons

11. Atticus continually tries to make Scout:

- stop daydreaming and focus on reality
- put herself in other people's shoes
- exhibit a more mature behaviour

12. A unique facet of the Atticus-Scout relationship is that:

- they share a common vision of humanity
- he will accept criticism from her
- he never talks down to her

13. 'The bravest person I ever knew' was Atticus' description of:

- Aunt Alexandra

Mrs. Dubose
Reverend Sykes

14. An important insight into the characters of Jem and Scout is seen when they:

Sit in the black section of the courtroom
Ask their father's forgiveness for their prejudice
Challenge their bigoted teacher in defense of Atticus

15. In the eyes of some blacks, Tom's fault was that he:

Tried to cross the colour barrier
Showed pity for a white woman
Upset the black-white balance in Maycomb