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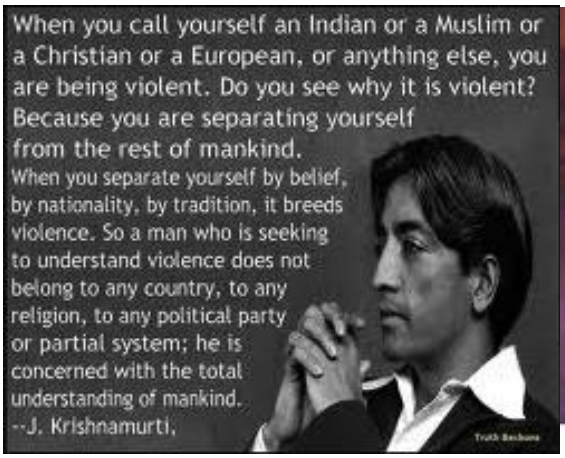

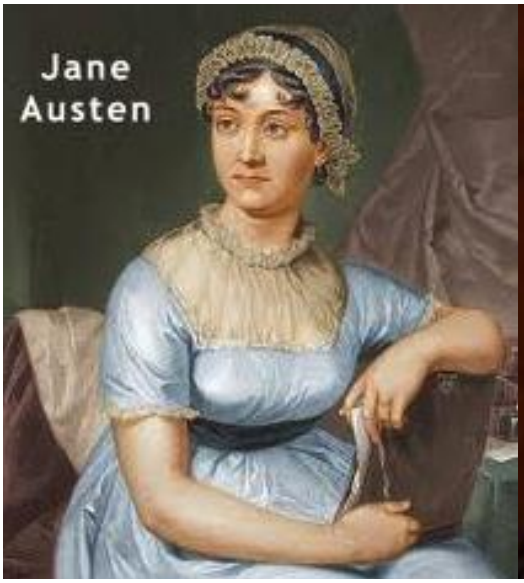

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

UTTARAKHAND OPEN UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Uttarakhand Open University

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I

UNIT 1 BACON

1.1. Introduction

This unit will introduce you to Sir Francis Bacon, one of the most celebrated writers of the Renaissance period. He is popularly known as the "Father of English Essays." Francis Bacon is mainly known for his practical as well as his philosophic essays. In this unit we take up three of his essays, namely, "Of Truth", "Of Marriage and Single Life" and "Of Studies" and, through a study of these essays, analyse Bacon as an essayist and a thinker.

1.2. Objectives

After going through this essay, you will be able to know about the life and works of Sir Francis Bacon. You will also analyse his prose style and through a careful examination of his essays, understand Bacon as an essayist and a thinker.

1.3. Bacon (1561-1626): An Introduction

Francis Bacon was a politician, philosopher and essayist. His father was a famous lawyer and statesman who was the Lord Keeper of the Seal. As a boy, his wit attracted the attention of Queen Elizabeth who called him jestingly "Little Lord Keeper'. He was educated in King's college, Cambridge. He later studied law and was called to the bar in 1582. After the accession of James I in 1603, Bacon rose rapidly in fame and fortune. The same year, he became a knight and married a rich lady. He was made the Attorney General in 1613, Lord Keeper of the Seal in 1617, Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam in 1618, and Viscount St. Albans in 1621.His nosedive decline started the same year when he was impeached on various charges of malpractice. He offered no defence, was fined heavily and was imprisoned for a few years. However, Bacon got a royal pardon in the end. He spent the remaining years of his life in scholarly pursuits and died in 1626.

It is, however, as an essayist and theoretician of scientific methodology that made Bacon a renowned figure. The important works of Bacon are-

(a) *Advancement of Learning* (1604); (b) *De Sapientia Veterum – Wisdom of the Ancients* (1609); (c) *Novum Organum – New Method* (1620); (d) *The New Atlantis* (1626); (e) *Essays* (Three editions in 1599, 1612 and 1625)

Bacon's popularity rests highly on his essays, especially his terse observation in the style of Seneca rather than the fluid meditation of Montaigne. His influence on later generations of English philosophers was laudable.

Comparing Bacon with his predecessors, Hooker, Sidney, Lyly and Roger Ascham, it will be seen how widely he departs from the prolix methods of the day. In rhetorical power, musical cadence, quaint turns of speech, he is equalled by many of his contemporaries, excelled by a few but for a clear and terse writing, he has no peer save Ben Jonson, and even to-day, and his essays are models of succinct, lucid prose.

No man of the age had a greater foresight than he for clear-headed, prudential considerations. Material success and services to humanity were his goals in life. These aims were sometimes in conflict; though he did his best to blend them and when the tussle came, personal considerations won the day. He had a great mind but not a great

soul. He was too fine a man to play for self-aggrandizement only, too sagacious a thinker to truckle to the shallow heads of the day; but he was not great enough to resist temptation. He was both too great and too little to succeed in life. For this reason Alexander Pope rightly calls him "The wisest, brightest and the meanest of mankind."

1.4. Summary and Analysis of "Of Truth"

Bacon begins this essay with a statement made by Pilate, the ancient Roman Governor of Judea. He asked in a jesting manner about the nature of truth, but the fact was that he was not much interested in knowing the meaning of truth (and that is why he did not bother to find out about the truth at the trial of Jesus Christ). He was a man of sceptical frame of mind. There are people who frequently change their opinions. To them, constancy of ideas is a kind of slavery. They avoid having fixed beliefs about anything because to them it seems a type of bondage; they prefer to be totally free in thought as well as in action. The sceptics, an ancient group of philosophers, doubted the validity and truth of every belief. Though they are now dead, they have left behind some followers who are of the same frame of mind. However, these followers do not have the same vitality and vigour of the sceptics.

Bacon says that it is not easy to find truth; one has to devote a lot of time and labour to discover it. Besides, once truth has been discovered, a person becomes bound to follow it. Truth then acts as a restraint upon him and he cannot now keep on changing his views and ideas. Man loves falsehood because truth is like the bright light of the day and can expose the reality of man. It brings to light the deformities and blemishes of human life whereas lies are like candlelight in which the reality is somewhat dimmed and looks more attractive than it really is. Thus people are more attracted to lies. Only those who understand truth realize the value of truth. Truth is the supreme good for human beings. The inquiry of truth may be described as the wooing of it; the knowledge of truth may be described as the presence of it, and the belief of truth may be described as the enjoying of it.

The first thing that God created was light and the final thing that he created was the rational faculty which he bestowed upon man. Having completed His work of creation, God has ever since been illuminating the minds of human beings with his divine spirit. First, God breathed light upon matter or chaos. Then he breathed light into the face of man. And afterwards He has always been breathing light into the faces of those whom he chooses for his special favours.

A man who practises truth is placed much higher than the rest and this peak where he stands is full of peace and tranquillity and from here he can survey the errors and follies of men as they go through their trials but this survey should fill the watcher with pity and not with pride. The essence of heavenly life on this earth lies in the constant love of charity, an unshakable trust in God, and steady allegiance to truth.

Truth is important not only in theological and philosophical fields, but also in day-to-day life. Even those who do not practise truth know that honest and straightforward dealings show the dignity and honourable quality of a man. A mixture of truth and falsehood helps in succeeding materially but such a mixture is like an alloy: it debases while it strengthens. Falsehood brings nothing but disgrace. The ways of crooked and crafty men

are like the winding movement of the snake which is a low animal crawling on its belly. Montaigne says that, in telling a lie, a man is brave towards God, but a coward towards his fellow men.

Falsehood is the height of wickedness and as such will invite the judgment of God upon all human beings on Doomsday and those who have practised lies during their life will be punished.

The present essay of Bacon is highly practical. In this essay, he is describing the challenges that lie in speaking the truth. People usually fear while speaking the truth. Bacon starts this essay with the question of Pilate but he was not very serious on this matter. He was asking it only in a jesting manner. He talks like a philosopher on this topic later on in this essay.

Bacon keeps on shifting his opinion frequently in this essay. The main concern of the essayist is to reveal the pros and cons of this topic. Bacon calls falsehood a paradox of truth. So at many places, he is applying his merits as an expert of comparative study.

Bacon is of the view that truth is shocking but it must be spoken without any hiding and disguise because it gives satisfaction to the heart.

Bacon further says that those who realize that truth is valuable are truly blessed. Those who deal with truth, really lead a life full of joy and entertainment. On the contrary to it, falsehood also gives joy but it but is ephemeral. The soul of the person who lies is always troubled.

Bacon uses many types of allusions and symbols to express his ideas. He says that the first thing created by God was light and the last thing created by God was wisdom. Both of these two things include the element of truthfulness. Thus, it can be said that since the beginning of the world, the world has been revolving around truth.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Who was Pilate? What did he state in a jesting manner?

Q2. Is speaking truth beneficial? Why?

Note: To know the answers to Check Your Progress, please refer to the relevant sections.

1.5. Summary and Analysis of "Of Studies"

"Of Studies" is one of Bacon's philosophical essays. Studies offer many advantages. Studies are a source of joy. Studies delight and entertain us when we are lonely; the pleasure of studies can best be enjoyed by a man leading a life of loneliness and retirement. A man can also make use of his studies for decorating his conversation. The ornamental value of study lies in enabling a man to become a good speaker. Studies increase his ability and shrewdness in the practical business of life also.

Experts can judge only of the details of a business, but planning, general advice, and arrangement of affairs comes best from those who are widely read. However, it is important that a man makes proper use of his study.

Bacon is of the opinion that too much devotion to studies is a waste of time. Those people, who spend too much time in studies, are temperamentally lazy. Making too much use of things one has studied is a sign of pedantry or vain display of learning. If a man's judgment is governed wholly by the rules he has learnt from books, it shows the eccentricity of a scholar. Bacon argues that only a judicious use of study should be made.

Study trains and perfects the natural abilities of a man but it should be perfected and guided by life experience. If it is not so, the study would be bookish and unfit for practical use. Those who have much practical ability, condemn studies. Simple men admire them but they fail to make right use of them. Only wise men can properly use them, and benefit from them for they do not teach their own use. Wise men are those who make a practical use of their studies.

A book should not be read only in order to oppose and refute what is said in it. In more clear words, we can say that one should not approach a book with the idea of criticizing and contradicting its arguments. Nor should he read them in order to obtain material for conversation. A man should think over what he has studied, and in this way improve his judgment. He should not accept the things he has read in books blindly. He should examine it carefully and form his own judgment.

Reading habit develops the personality of a man. It fills the mind with new ideas and thoughts. In this way, it helps in the development of a complete personality of a man. Conversation makes a man alert and quick-witted, for intelligence or wit is developed only by society, so it would be a folly to devote one's self exclusively to books. If a man is in the habit of taking down notes from books, he will become exact and precise in his thinking and talks.

Studies influence a man's character and mould his personality. Different kinds of books have different effects on the reader. History makes a man wise. Poetry develops man's imagination and ingenuity. If a man cannot concentrate and his mind wanders, he should study mathematics. If he lacks discrimination, he should study the religious scholars of the Middle Ages who were great hair-splitters. A man, who is unable to recall references and illustrations to clarify and clinch his arguments, should read law, where precedents are used at every step. Thus every mental defect has a suitable remedy in studies. You should remember that Bacon opines that the study of books is profitable in many ways. Books give us joy and stimulate our thoughts.

Later on, Bacon compares human nature with the natural plants and says that both natural plants and human beings grow with much the same pace if they are not hurt or prevented while developing onward. A plant develops when it is pruned by the gardener. By proper study, the human mind develops in the right direction. It is able to develop well as a result of proper study of books which are bound by the experiences of the learned. Bacon means to say that proper study of books is enriched by the experiences of the learned authors.

In this essay, Bacon says that for reading we need to make a careful selection of books. He classifies books into three categories. The first category of the books is the books that are only to be tasted. The second category is the books that are to be swallowed. In the third category are the books that should be chewed and digested. Bacon says that some books should be read only in parts while there are still others which are to be read very carefully, to be chewed and digested.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Summarize the essay 'Of Studies' in your own words.

Q2. What is the importance of studies in human life?

Note: To know the answers of the questions, please refer to the summary and the essay.

1.6. Summary and Analysis of "Of Marriage and Single Life"

As we all know, Francis Bacon, the chief figure of the English Renaissance, is famous as a statesman, essayist, and philosopher of science. "Of Marriage and Single Life" is one of his well-known essays, which compares marriage with single life in their different aspects, such as character, public service and personal qualities.

Bacon's basic opinion is that marriage is good to both individual and society. A single man believes that a man with wife and children, who are obstacles to both great courses and little trivial, is the slave of fortune. Especially some miser men think children are the bills of charges and will reduce their riches. And foremost reason for remaining single is to remain free, while wife and children appear nothing but bondage. However, a single life has some good aspects. "Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, and best servants." But single life could also make a man indifferent, facile and corrupt as a judge and magistrate, and a coward as soldiers without combat power and perseverance. Marriage makes a man responsible, tender, enthusiastic and warm-hearted. Finally, Bacon points that "wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses". Even though a woman takes a bad husband, marriage offers a good chance for the husband to correct himself.

Analysis

This essay considers "wives" and children (assuming his readers are male) and balances their advantages against their disadvantages in such a way that it is difficult to decide whether marriage is a good or a bad idea. Bad marriages, however, he suggests can be analysed more easily by their effects upon the women in them.

Bacon first states with apparent confidence that 'He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, for they are impediments to great enterprises', a statement that on the face of it is closed and certain.

However, Bacon's essays are also motivated by a sense of exploration, and any resolution of idea is soon left behind. Following the above sentence he departs from the question of whether women and children are impediments and continues:

> Certainly the best works […] have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men; which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest treasures. Some there are, who though they lead a single life, their thoughts do end with themselves, and count future times impertinences.

The word 'certainly', with which this passage begins, is progressively demolished till only uncertainty is left. The argument winds back to contradict itself: men without

children are more likely to endow the future, yet men with them want the future to be good for their offspring, while some single men think anything beyond their own lives irrelevant. All that remains is a suggestion of various truths, none of which is absolute.

Bacon views marriage as bondage. First, "they are impediments to great enterprises". Second, "the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men ..." Notice what else Bacon says about single men: They are "best friends, best masters, best servants ..." However, everything Bacon says about single men and women is not complimentary.

He goes on to say how a wife and children act as "a kind of discipline of humanity". One of Bacon's well known quotes is toward the end of his essay: "Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses".

Check Your Progress

Q1. Critically comment on the essay, 'Of Married and single Life."

Q2. Do you agree with Bacon's views as expressed in this essay?

Note: Please refer to the essay and the summary given above to find out the answers to the questions.

1.7. Let Us Sum Up

In this unit you were given an introduction to the life of Sir Francis Bacon. You also observed his achievements as a writer and as a statesman. The essay also focused on the contribution made by Sir Francis Bacon in the field of English essays. Three of Bacon's essays, namely "Of Truth", "Of Studies" and "Of Marriage and single Life" were taken up for detailed study. Through a careful analysis of these essays, you learned about Bacon's philosophy, writing style and the man he was.

1.8. References

Selby, F.G. ed. Bacon's Essays. New Delhi: Macmillan, 1989. Print.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FrancisBacon

1.9. Terminal and Model Questions

Q1. How can we say that the essays of Bacon reflect a true Renaissance spirit?

Q2. What contribution was made by Bacon to the development of English prose?

Q3. Critically summarise the essay "Of Studies" in your own words.

Q4. Illustrate from the essays of Bacon how they reveal his wide experience and insight.

UNIT 2 ADDISON AND STEELE

2.1. Introduction

In the previous unit you were introduced to Sir Francis Bacon, the 'Father of English Essays.' This unit will take up two eminent prose writers of the eighteenth century, namely, Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. Both Addison and Steele were the pioneers of Periodical Essays. In this unit we will be taking up three essays namely "Sir Roger at Church", "Party Patches" and "Of the Club" by Addison and Steele. Through an analysis of these essays we will be able to understand Addison and Steele as essayists in a better manner and discover for ourselves their contribution in the field of English essays.

2.2. Objectives

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- Trace the development of the periodical essay in England.
- Analyse the life and works of Addison and Steele.
- Understand the writing style of the essayists.
- Examine and analyse the prescribed essays and through it understand the essayists' deeply felt concerns as social reformers.

2.3. The Periodical Essay in the Eighteenth Century

2.3.1. The Periodical Essay – An Introduction

The periodical essay and the novel are the two important gifts of "our excellent and indispensable eighteenth century" to English literature. The latter was destined to have a long and variegated career over the centuries, but the former was fated to be born with the eighteenth century and to die with it.

This shows how it was a true mirror of the age. A. R. Humphrey observes: "If any literary form is the particular creation and the particular mirror of the Augustan Age in England, it is the periodical essay." Generally speaking, it is very difficult to date precisely the appearance of a new literary genre. For example, nobody can say with perfect certainty as to when the first novel, or the first comedy or the first short story came to be written in England or elsewhere. We often talk of "fathers" in literature: for instance, Fielding is called the father of English novel, Chaucer the father of English poetry, and so forth. But that is done, more often than not in a loose and very imprecise sense. This difficulty in dating a genre, however, does not arise in a few cases-that of the periodical essay included. The periodical essay was literally invented by Steele on April 12, 1709, the day he launched his *Tatler*. Before *The Tatler* there had been periodicals and there had been essays, but there had been no periodical essay. The example *of The Tatler* was followed by a large number of writers of the eighteenth century till its very end, when with the change of sensibility, the periodical essay disappeared along with numerous other accompaniments of the age. Throughout the century there was a deluge of periodical essays. The periodical essay remained the most popular, if not the dominant, literary form. Men as different as Pope, Swift, Dr. Johnson, and Goldsmith found the periodical essay an eligible medium to express their deeply felt concerns as writers. As a matter of fact it was, unlike the novel for example, the only literary form which was patronized without exception by all the major writers of the century. It is hard to name a single first-

rate writer of the century who did not write something for a periodical paper. Mrs Jane H. Jack says: "From the days of Queen Anne – who had The Spectator taken in with her breakfast – to the time of the French Revolution and even beyond, periodical essays on the lines laid down by Steele and Addison flooded the country and met the eye in every bookseller's shop and coffee-house." Before tracing the history of the periodical essay in the eighteenth century and assigning causes for its phenomenal popularity, let us consider what exactly a periodical essay is.

2.3.2. What is a Periodical Essay?

What is called the periodical essay was first of all given by Steele as *The Tatler*. Nothing of this type had been attempted before him in England or elsewhere. However, to attempt a definition of the periodical essay is neither easy nor helpful. George Sherburne in *A Literary History of England*, edited by Albert C. Baugh, avers in this connection: "Rigorous definition of this peculiarly eighteenth century type of publication is not very helpful...The periodical essay has been aptly described as dealing with morals and manners, but it might in fact deal with anything that pleased its author. It covered usually not more than the two sides (in two columns) of a folio-sheet. It was usually published independent of other material, as was *The Spectator*, except for advertising; or it might be the leading article in a newspaper."

Reasons for its Popularity

The periodical essay found a spectacular response in the eighteenth century on account of various reasons. Fundamentally this new genre was in perfect harmony with the spirit of the age. It sensitively combined the tastes of the different classes of readers with the result that it appealed to all – though particularly to the resurgent middle classes. In the eighteenth century there was a phenomenal spurt in literacy, which expanded widely the circle of readers. They welcomed the periodical essay as it was "light" literature. The brevity of the periodical essay, its common sense approach, and its tendency to dilute morality and philosophy for popular consumption paid rich dividends. To a great extent, the periodical essayist assumed the office of the clergyman and taught the masses the lesson of elegance and refinement, though not of morality of the psalm-singing kind. The periodical paper was particularly welcome as it was not a dry, high-brown, or hoity-toity affair like the professional sermon, in spite of being highly instructive in nature. In most cases the periodical essayist did not "speak from the clouds" but communicated with the reader with an almost buttonholing familiarity. The avoidance of politics (though not by all the periodical essayists yet by a good many of them) also contributed towards their popularity. Again, the periodical essayists made it a point to cater for the female taste and give due consideration to the female point of view. That won for them many female readers too. All these factors were responsible for the universal acceptance of the periodical essay in eighteenth-century England.

Source: neoenglishsystem.blogspot.com/…/periodical-essays-in-the-eighteenth century

2.4. An Introduction to Joseph Addison

Joseph Addison was born in Wiltshire in 1672. His father was a learned clergyman. He was educated at Lichfield Grammar School, The Charter House and Magdalen College, Oxford. Addison started his literary career as a poet and later moved on to writing essays.

In his early life, he was interested in the service of the church but his friends advised him to take up government service.

We largely associate Addison with the magazines *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. *The Tatler* was launched by Richard Steele in the year 1709 and later in the year 1712, the two friends came out with *The Spectator*. As a periodical essayist, Joseph Addison wanted to place a picture of society before his readers. His second objective was to introduce moral reforms in society and for doing so he adopted the modes of humour and irony.

In *The Spectator*, he explained his objective: "If I meet with anyone in the city, court, or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavours to make an example of it."

Joseph Addison earnestly wanted people to read *The Spectator*. He stated his wish in the following words, "I would earnestly entreat them not to stir out of their chambers till they have read this paper. I do promise them that I will daily instil into them such sound wholesome sentiments as shall have a good effect on their conversation for the ensuing twelve hours."

2.5. Prose Style of Joseph Addison

The essays of Addison are significant for many reasons. First of all, they mirror the social life of England during the eighteenth century. Secondly, by holding a mirror to the age, they act as a catalyst in reforming society indirectly. Thirdly, Addison's essays also laid the foundation of English novel.

Addison can be called a painter of characters, a critic, an entertainer, as well as a novelist. His style is coloured by humour. Even in his criticism, he is gentle, sober, plain, simple and amiable. His statement and descriptions are mild, interesting and lovable. His language is the language of a reformer as well as an entertainer.

Before Addison, there had been a number of great prose writers. Thomas Brown and Milton were writers of great eloquence. Their essays, written in Latinised prose, carried the weight of their learning. The new prose style of Addison was for the common man. He was a journalist and his prose is everyone's prose. It is clear and visual and is intelligible to all. Addison is the creator of the middle style which means that his essays are essays for the middle classes, of the middle classes and by a writer who empathized with the class. Dr. Johnson rightly said, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

Addison's style is familiar, refined, polished and elegant. There is a rare dignity and refinement in his language. These qualities were absent in the writers before him, although they possessed superior eloquence and higher flights. Addison's style is further characterized by flexibility. He has the wonderful quality of suiting his manner to his matter.

2.5.1. Humour and Satire

Addison's essays are known for their humour. Humour in drama appears in four ways, such as through the plot, through particular situation, through the characters and through the dialogues between the characters. In Addison's essays, humour appears through the

description of events and presentation of characters. The aim of Addison's essays was to present a true picture of society. He draws humorous characters and situations to expose the follies of society.

Addison's humour is mild and genial. It is neither biting like Swift's nor painful like Voltaire's. There is no malice in him. He has the power to ridicule but he does not offend anyone. He was a satirist but kept no prejudice for anyone.

As a satirist Addison's tone is always pleasant and genial. His power of ridicule is keen without any malice. Addison's satires are delightful. He found much evil in society and laughed at it. He did not make any bitter remark unless he found it absolutely necessary.

2.6. The Contribution of Addison to English Essays

Joseph Addison has contributed immensely to the development of English prose. His unique contribution to English prose is his middle style, which has been discussed earlier. When we go through the essays of Joseph Addison, we find that they reflect the style of many writers; Addison was eclectic in his approach and borrowed the style of almost all his predecessors. He assumed the character of an essayist, moralist, philosopher and critic, but he blends them altogether in his new capacity of a journalist. Addison was the first essayist who brought philosophy out of the closet and libraries, schools and colleges to dwell at clubs and assemblies at tea tables and coffee houses.

Addison was a moralist, philosopher, a scholar, a Puritan and above all a social reformer, all rolled into one. He made his essays the weapon of social reform and worked with the missionary zeal of a crusader. The greatest and the only goal of Addison was to banish vice and ignorance from society. He made the first serious effort to organize public opinion by clarifying and systematizing the infinite discussions that went on at the clubs and coffee houses. Addison is highly entertaining because he is a very fine storyteller. It will not be an exaggeration to say that Addison represented the mind and culture of his age.

2.7. *Sir Roger at Church*

2.7.1. Summary

The Spectator thinks that a Sunday in a country is always welcomed. The keeping of the Sabbath is the best method to civilize and purify the people. If the people did not meet and turn up to the Supreme Being and join together in their prayer on this day, they would degenerate into savages. Moreover, on this meeting day, people appear in their best, and they can make a figure in the country.

Sir Roger has decorated the interior of his church by putting on texts of his own choice. He encourages his people to come to church regularly by giving each to them a hassock and a common-prayer book. He has also employed a singing master who instructs the people to sing correctly. As a result of this the people are quite eager to sing hymns.

Sir Roger is also very particular in keeping the discipline of his church. He would not allow anyone to sleep in the church. If he catches anyone napping in the midst of a

sermon, he himself wakes him up. Sir Roger's eccentricities come out quite prominently in these church sermons. How he would, for instance, lengthen out some verse of a hymn, even after the song has ended. He would also sometimes utter amen, three or four times to the same prayer.

Sir Roger never allows anyone to disturb the sermon. The other day he interrupted the sermon in order to warn an idle fellow. This sort of odd behaviour on his part does not make him unpopular; on the contrary, the common people think highly of him.

No one leaves the church after the sermon before Sir Roger stirs up. The knight walks down with the country-folk standing on both his sides. He would walk asking them about their relations who had not been present during the sermon.

The Spectator has also heard about Sir Roger's enthusiasm for persons who take serious interest in church-going. Thus he has made a gift of Bible to a boy upon his answering well on a catechizing day. He has also added five pounds a year to the clerk's salary in order to make him encourage the young fellows to be decent in the church.

This sort of complete good understanding between the chaplain and Sir Roger is very remarkable, especially, by the side of the case in the next village. In this village, the squire and the chaplain are in no mood of reconciliation. The parson is always preaching the squire and therefore the squire never comes to pray in the church. The squire has made all his labourers atheists. The parson is threatening to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

The Spectator thinks that this sort of fight between the estate and the church is fatal to the ordinary people. They are accustomed to put their faith in riches as well as in learning. When they are put face to face with such a case, when the rich person is hostile to religion, they naturally hesitate to trust the church.

2.7.2. Critical Comments

Sir Roger is a religious person, and his views on church discipline are coloured by this same god-fearing reason. But Addison points out satirically Sir Roger's odd behaviour in the church. Thus he cries out in the midst of a sermon to instruct a person; or take for instance, that case, where he stands up when everyone else is upon his knees, just to count the congregation. Anywhere else, this sort of conduct would have been looked upon as unbecoming. But these country-folk have little sense of propriety. So instead of condemning the knight's action, they are apt to laud his eccentric behaviour. Sir Roger's idea of church discipline is rather mechanical.

But Addison has respect for the knight's enthusiasm. After all he has succeeded in making his people religious minded. In order to make his point clear, Addison quotes the story of the next village, where the folks have turned into atheists, as a result of the feud between their squire and the parson.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Summarize the essay in your own words.

Note: To check the answer, refer to the summary and the essay.

2.8. "Party Patches"

2.8.1. Summary and Critical Commentary

"Party Patches" is an excellent example of Horatian satire. The goal of *The Spectator* was to give moral correction and guidance. In "Party Patches," Addison points out the laughable political antics of women at the opera, then flatteringly persuades them to act according to the virtues singular to their gender.

The Moral Problem:

In the eighteenth century women were used to put fake moles or patches on their cheeks, and the side on which they placed the mole had political significance. Those who patched on the right were Wigs, and those who patched on the left were Tories. Those who patched on both sides were neutral. In this essay Addison acquaints us with the prevalent customs of his time, one of which was the patches worn by women. Addison says that these patched women take different sides of the theatre, i.e. the Whig supporters sit towards one side and the Tory on the other side of the theatre and the neutral women in the middle. In this essay Addison also lashes out at the feuding political parties who are always in a cat-fight war. The women associated with these parties are also always in a competition which causes them to act below their virtuous nature which is not a good sign.

Metaphors & Comparisons

Mock Battles: Addison lightly mocks the competition between the Whig and Tory supporters by comparing the opera hall to a battlefield. Each party is camped on either side, and the ground to be won are neutral women sitting in the middle. Their epic battles are defined by who had the most supporters on that given night at the opera.

Amazons: the metaphor here is a comparison between the patching women and Amazons. Amazons were mythical tribes of warrior women who lived and ruled parts of South America. The Amazons were considered to be ruthless warriors capable of all the military prowess of men. Addison is satirizing the women's militant aggression towards one another.

Poor Rosalinda: Here is a comic example of a poor young woman who had the misfortune to be born with a natural mole on the wrong political party's side of her face. Not only has it lead her to be accused of supporting the enemy, but it has mislead many suitors who have tried to win her with political talk, only to be shot down.

Tigress: It was rumoured that when a tigress was angry, her spots rose to the surface. The metaphor here means that the angrier these women got over politics, the more they patched their faces.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Critically comment on the essay in your own words.

Q2. What is the significance of the title "Party Patches"?

Note: To check the answers to the above questions, refer to the summary and the essay.

2.9. An Introduction to Richard Steele

Richard Steele was born in Dublin in1672. His father died before he was five years old. He gives a very pathetic account of his father's death and his mother's grief in the essay "Recollection Of Childhood". He describes his own grief in the following words,

> The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father, at that time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the houses meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember, I went into the room where his body lay and my mother was sitting alone by it.

Richard Steele was educated at the Charter House and Manton College, Oxford. He founded *The Tatler* in 1709. It, however, lasted for two years only. In 1711, he started another journal *The Spectator* along with his friend Joseph Addison. He wrote many political treatises and edited other journals such as *The Guardian*, *The English* and *The Lover*. Richard Steele was appointed as the Gentleman-in-waiting to the Queen's husband Prince George of Denmark in 1708. In 1709, he edited the Office Gazette. In 1706, he was married to Mrs Margaret Stretch. He married Mary Stretch after the death of his first wife. He published a lot of essays with Addison in *The Spectator*. A few of the popular essays that were published in *The Spectator* are as "Sir Roger in the Club', "The Coverley Household", "The Coverley Lineage", "Sir Roger in Love", "The Coverley Economy", "A Coverley Love Match" and "Farewell To Coverley Match."

Richard Steele was the essayist of the period of transition. He represented the transition from the Restoration to the Augustan Age. Like his friend Addison, he revolted against the Latinized and learned prose of John Milton and Thomas Browne. He made prose simple and the commonplace. The periodical essayists brought the essay from the schools, colleges, closets and libraries down to the clubs and coffee houses. In Steele's own words,

> The general purpose of my essay is to expose the false art of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress and discourse and our behaviour.

2.10. Prose Style of Richard Steele

In his essays, Richard Steele brought accounts of gallantry, pleasure, entertainment, poetry, learning, foreign and domestic news. He recommends truth, innocence, honour and virtue as the chief ornaments of life. *The Tatler* proved to be a moral monitor of the times. Steele did much to inculcate good morals among the people of the age. He adopted the method of gentle persuasion and pleasant irony in achieving his end. The appeal of *The Tatler* in the domestic front as well as to the coffee house was great. *The Tatler* papers became very popular with the masses as they were widely read and liked by them. However, Steele's *Tatler* was later on coloured by his views as a Tory which brought a great setback to the periodical. As a result, the paper was closed down.

Steele's prose is simple and his essays are characterised by simplicity of language. There is clarity of expression, gentle humour and kindliness in his style. He tries to attack the follies and vices of the time and is successful in it to quite an extent. He started his essays

with personal experiences but later on became philosophic in tone. Steele was also a moralist. In the essay "Trumpet Club", he advises old people to be brief in their conversation. He wants them to talk sweetly and meaningfully.

2.11. "Of the Club"

2.11.1. Summary

As promised in the last paper, The Spectator here gives an account of his companions. The first gentleman to be named in this connection is Sir Roger de Coverley, of Worcestershire, of an ancient decent. He is quite well known to folks of Worcestershire. He has some singular views, which have originated from his thinking of this world as all wrong. But he never alienates people by this theory of his; for his good manners always please his friends. Sir Roger was disappointed in love; he was repulsed by a beautiful widow. Before this disappointed Sir Roger was a fine gentleman and was a baronet in the true sense of the term. But after this repulsion he grew careless and since then took little interest in his dress. So his dress may appear rather outmoded. He is fifty-six, but still has a cheerful disposition. In fact, people take him as an intimate comrade, impressed by his affectionate behaviour. He is popular with every class of people. As for his professional aspect, Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum and carries out his duties with great ability.

The next gentleman mentioned is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple. He is a learned gentleman, well versed in the classics. But unfortunately according to the dictates of his father, he had to study the laws of the land. As a result he takes the help of an attorney and usually agrees upon all questions relating to marriage articles, leases, and tenures. He spends his days in devoting his time to Aristotle and Longinus. He is always absorbed in the theories and views of the classical writers, and takes little interest in modern subjects. According to the Spectator, this makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable. He visits the theatre frequently and this is the only business he takes seriously. Before the play actually starts, he drops in at Will's Coffee House to have a chat with his friends.

Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant, is the next member of the Spectator's Club. He is a very industrious and well-experienced person. He has noble and generous notions of trade and commerce. As he is acquainted with trade in all parts of the British seas, he knows a lot. He thinks that trade is the best way to extend dominions. He places no importance on wars. According to him, diligence, in the long run, proves to be more effective than valour. The Spectator thinks that he is a very agreeable companion. His simple, unaffected speech is quite pleasant.

Captain Sentry is the next important person. He is a very courageous person, but is quite modest and humble. He served gallantly as a captain some years back. But he left this service since he could not exhibit his talents. He was, in fact, too modest to make his service sufficiently conspicuous. He admits that any soldier wishing to gain popularity must get over all his modesty. He has quite a lot of experience about military life. The Spectator observes, that he is not overbearing, thought he has been accustomed to command men.

It may appear that the members of the Spectator's Club are interested only in their small world, unaffected by the gallantries and pleasures of the age. But the Spectator hastens to

inform us, there is the gallant Will Honeycomb. This person is quite aged. But as he takes particular care about his dress and appearance, he does not seem to be too old. He is always ready to entertain women. He is helped in this respect by his knowledge of the history of every mode. Most of his information, however, is concerned with the female world. Thus, he can supply people with facts about historical personages and their women friends. This sort of conversation gives quite a gay colour to the company of the Spectator and his friends.

The last but not the least person to be mentioned here is a Clergyman. Though he visits the company very seldom, he lends a new turn to their conversation whenever he joins them. He is a philosopher and is a great, learned person, preserving sanctity in life. But he is unfortunately of a very weak constitution. He has a very interesting manner of speaking on divine subjects. He rarely introduces his subjects. But he observes and knows when the assembled people have an inclination to hear about divine matters. Thus he chooses his moment to speak about his subject.

2.11.2. Critical Comments

This particular essay, giving us an account of the different types of characters who are members of the Spectator's Club, takes its distinction from Steele's prevailing tenderness of heart and wide acquaintance with human life. He loved company, and the quickness of his sympathies made him constantly alive to differences in the personalities of his companions. The characters of Sir Roger, Sir Andrew Freeport, Captain Sentry, Will honeycomb are really artistic creations and belong to poetry and fiction. Of the other qualities of Steele's style as reflected in this essay, we remark cursorily. In command of words he is not equal to Addison; his choice is much less felicitous. We come across Sir Roger in this first essay of Steele. He presents Sir Roger as a jolly country gentleman, "keeping a good house both in town and country"; a lover of mankind, with such a mirthful cast in his behaviour that he is beloved rather than esteemed; unconfined to modes and forms, disregarding the manners of the world, when he finds them in the wrong.

2.12. Summing Up

In this Unit, you were introduced to periodical essays. You read about the life and works of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. You also analysed three of the essays by Addison and Steele and traced their contribution in the field of English essays.

2.13 References

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Joseph_Addison. Web

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Steele. Web

2.14. Terminal and Model Questions

Q1. Write a short note on Periodical essays.

Q2. Discuss Joseph Addison as an essayist.

Q3. Write a note on the prose style of Richard Steele.

UNIT 3 CHARLES LAMB

3.1. Introduction

The last two units acquainted you with three eminent prose writers namely Sir Francis bacon, Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. You read about their prose style and traced their contribution in the field of English prose. In this unit you will be introduced to Charles Lamb, a distinguished essayist of the romantic period who is known in the literary world as "the Prince of English essayists."

3.2 Objectives

After reading this Unit, you will be able to

- Analyse the life and works of Charles Lamb.
- Comment on his development as an essayist.
- Critically analyse two of Lamb's essays.

3.3. A Biographical Sketch of Charles Lamb

Charles Lamb, born on 10th February 1775, was the seventh and youngest child of John Lamb and Elizabeth Field. Of his brothers and sisters, only John and Mary survived childhood.

Lamb was the son of a poor clerk and as his parents could not afford his education, he was sent to Christ's Hospital, a school for poor children. It was here that he met and became friends with S. T. Coleridge. For seven years, Lamb remained at Christ's Hospital. He left school in November, 1789, partly because his infirmity of speech made it impossible for him ever to hope to take orders, as was expected from boys sent on from the school to the University, and partly because the poverty of his family rendered it necessary that he should begin to earn his own living as soon as it was possible.

For a short time, he was employed in the South Sea House, a London based trading company. After some time, he obtained a clerkship in the Accounts Office of the East India Company. Living in London, he naturally kept up his friendships from Christ hospital. His chief intimate was James White. But the object of his greatest admiration was Coleridge, to whose influence we must ascribe his earliest attempts at verse. In one of his visits during his holidays, he fell in love with a young lady whom he calls Alice Winterton in his essays though in his poems, he refers to her as Anna. Some critics say that it was Ann Simmons, who married subsequently a pawnbroker named Bartram, residing in Prince's Street. It is probably to Ann Simmons that Lamb refers in a letter to Coleridge. He says- "My head ran on you in my madness, as much almost as, on another person, who was the more immediate cause of my frenzy." Lamb had spent six weeks in a madhouse at Hoxton, but we have no information as to whether his madness was the cause or the result of the breaking off of his courtship or was it something else.

Shortly after his recovery from madness, Lamb made his first appearance in print, four sonnets being introduced by Coleridge, in a volume entitled *Poems On Various Subject*.

Lamb's father had now fallen into a stage of dotage; his mother was a confirmed invalid and his brother John Lamb was in comfortable circumstances and living apart from them.

In 1796, Lamb's sister Mary too had a severe attack of insanity and in that state, she killed her own mother.

He had no recurrence of his first attack but his sister's life was poisoned by the constant dread and frequent attacks of madness. Mary Lamb was confined for sometime in a madhouse and Lamb's only consolation was the society of his faithful friends. On the death of his father in 1797, Charles Lamb decided to devote the rest of his life to the care of his sister. After sometime, Charles Lamb devoted himself to the study the Elizabethan dramatists who had much effect upon his style, and through his works, upon later English writers and scholars. Lamb's friend Coleridge also encouraged him in developing his career as a writer.

After sometime, he was introduced to Hazlitt. Lamb frequently refers to Hazlitt in his writings but he does not always agree with Hazlitt on literary points. In 1820 Lamb began to write for the *London Magazine* under the name of Elia.

Some of his well-known works are: *Essays of Elia* (1823 and 1835); *Tales From Shakespeare* (1807); *The Old Familiar Faces; Rosamund Gray* (1798); *John Woodwill* (1802)

Charles Lamb died at the age of fifty-nine and was buried in All Saints' Churchyard, London.

3.4 Prose Style of Charles Lamb

It is said of Lamb's style that it was not entirely his own. In the introduction we saw that Lamb did not receive university education, as he did not have the means for it. But as he had deep love for literature, he read voraciously and soaked himself in it. He was especially interested in the prose writings of the seventeenth century literature. Burton, Browne and Fuller were some of his favourite writers; hence their influence is visible in the writings of Lamb. However, it would be unfair to say that Lamb imitated their style. On a careful reading of his essays, one will notice that they have their own characteristics, which often reflected his own idiosyncrasies. Some of the major characteristics of Lamb's essays are as follows:

Familiar Style: Charles Lamb wrote familiar essays. A familiar essay is a short prose composition that focuses on a single subject. It is a loosely constructed essay that uses conversational language to communicate a writer's thoughts in a manner that will interest or entertain the reader. Since familiar essays frequently include details from the author's own life they are sometimes referred to as "personal" essays. As Lamb's essays reflect his whimsicality, idiosyncrasies, and life and are written in a conversational tone, they fall under this category.

Autobiographical element: Lamb's essays are characterised by self-revelation and have a personal note. His life, to quite an extent, is revealed through his essays. In "Christ's Hospital", we learn about his early years. We are introduced to his family in "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple" and "Poor Relations". In "The South-Sea House" we get a glimpse of Lamb's official life. "Dream Children", "Mackery End in Hertfordshire" and "Mrs Battle's Opinions on Whist" present an account of his youthful experiences. Essays like "Imperfect Sympathies" and "A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married

People" acquaint us with his prejudices. Walter Pater rightly observes, "In each and every essay, we feel the vein of his subjectivity."

Humour and Pathos: Another important feature of Lamb's essays is his harmonious blending of humour and pathos. As you have already seen earlier that Lamb's life was a tragic one but instead of complaining, he looked at life as a humourist. It is rightly noted by Compton Rickett,

> Humour with Lamb is never far from tragedy; through his tears you may see the rainbow in the sky; for him humour and pathos are really inseparable from one another, they are different facets of the same gem; or to change the simile, one may say that Lamb's moods, whether grave or gay, are equally the natural effervescence of an exquisitely mobile imagination; whether you call it humour or pathos, depends entirely upon where the light may strike the bubbles.

It is said of Lamb that he gives humorous touches only in order to provide his readers with pleasure and "to save him from weeping." In his essays, he laughs through his tears. He can laugh at his own self and lets others, especially the low-bred, poke fun at him too. An example of this can be seen in his essay, "The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers" in which he says that "he can endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness." In the words of Anthony Burgess, " He is the father of that kind of humour which derives its effects from self-mockery – the author has no ear for music, he slips on an icy sheet, his clothes need mending, the urchins laugh at him, he has no success with women, he makes a fool of himself in society and so on." Many of his essays like "Dream Children", "The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers" and "Poor Relations" are remarkable for the blend of humour and pathos.

Love for the archaic: Lamb says that he wrote "for antiquity." Hence, his essays are rather old fashioned. He revived many obsolete words, words that were found only in the works of Elizabethans. Words like agnise, arride, reluct, indivertible, recognitory find a place in Lamb's essays. The beauty of Lamb lies in the fact that although he makes use of obsolete words, he gives them a new freshness. He uses them with dexterity, which gives his essays a quaint look.

Nostalgia: Lamb lived mostly in the world of memories. He is often transported back in time. In essays like "My Relations", "Dream Children: A Reverie" and "The South Sea House", Lamb skillfully presents scenes from the past, giving the readers a slice of his life. Writers of the past also find an echo in his works. His works are reminiscent of the works of older writers like Sir Thomas Browne and Thomas Fuller, but Lamb's forte lies in his ability to transform everything he touches. Compton Rickett remarks,

> The blossoms are culled from other men's gardens but their blending is all Lamb's own. Passing through Lamb's imagination, they become something fresh and individual.

A blend of fact and fiction: In the essays of Lamb, one can see an excellent blending of fact and fiction. Though most of his essays have references to his personal life, it is difficult to say when Lamb switches from the real to the imaginary world. For instance, in his essay, "Dream Children" what he says of his brother John's health is a fact but the impression he gives of his children, Alice and John, is a result of his mingling of fact with fiction.

To conclude, Lamb's style is characterized by variety. It changes according to moods and sentiments. Fancy, didacticism, loftiness, all can be found in his writings. Hugh Walker says,

> There are essayists like Bacon, of more massive greatness, and others like Sir Thomas Browne, who can attain loftier heights of eloquence, but there is no other than Lamb who has the power to charm.

In Lamb's essays we see a beautiful blending of facts and fiction, humour and pathos. His innermost feelings, which were never allowed to blossom fully, find a subtle yet charming expression in his works and for this reason he is rightly called "the Prince of English Essayists."

3.5. "Oxford in the Vacation"

3.5.1. Summary and Analysis

Lamb, writing under the pen-name "Elia'' avers that the reader finding the name "Elia" at the bottom of this essay must be interested in knowing something about him. In the previous essay of his (titled "The South-Sea House") he had tried to amuse the reader with an account of some whimsical clerks working in the South-Sea House. The reader therefore must be thinking that "Elia" is one of the clerks in that concern and that he must be earning his livelihood with the help of his pen. Lamb confesses that it is really so. Every day from morning till evening, he is busy in the office wrestling with accounts concerning commodities such as cotton and indigo. But after his work is over he goes home with a very keen appetite for literature. His pen then glides over the page with pleasant liberty. So in spite of his despicable profession as a clerk he manages to maintain his " literary dignity."

Lamb regrets that the number of holidays he used to get at Christ's Hospital as a student was much greater than he gets at the South-Sea House. Back then he was very fond of holidays and used to look forward to them. He knew well in advance which holiday was to fall on which day. He used to feel sorry when a holiday fell on a Sunday or two holidays fell on the same day. He desires the civil authorities to consider the point of recommending more holidays for clerks like him. He himself cannot do anything in the matter as he is "plain Elia" with no authority whatsoever.

At this time, he is whiling away a few idle weeks in the academic atmosphere of Oxford. For a man like him who could not receive university education such a change is welcome. He feels now that he is a student there and has attained so many imaginary degrees without taking any examination. Many short-sighted menials have often mistaken him for a senior scholar.

Lamb roams about freely everywhere in the campus. The various halls, groves and gardens and even the kitchens of the university attract him on account of their antiquity. The meanest servant in the kitchen is haloed for him by the imaginary associations of Chaucer's who is supposed to have been a student at Oxford. Antiquity has a very special charm of its own for Lamb. It glorifies a thing however dull and colourless it might be in itself. For instance, The Dark Ages have an attractive dimness of their own.

What Lamb likes particularly in Oxford are its old libraries. He feels as if he were inhaling learning while in them. He looks upon the ancient books with great reverence. Lamb holds the ancient manuscripts in great awe and does not have the courage to touch them. At Oriel, he sees his friend George Dyer spending his time over the books. Dyer was so busy with an ancient manuscript that he himself looked like an old book badly in need of a new cover.

Next, Lamb sets about giving a brief character-sketch of his eccentric, scholastic friend, George Dyer, who often visited the Oxford and Cambridge universities. He spent quite a lot of money on his journeys to these places from his residence in Clifford's Inn which is inhabited mostly by dishonest people connected with the law. However, at a place like Clifford's Inn, every one respected him. Lamb says that recently Dyre has been researching on the past history of the two universities. He has dug out some ancient charts and manuscripts to help him in deciding some important points related to his research. He has a selfless love of knowledge and does not desire to grow rich by it, as is the common attitude among easy-going scholars.

When Lamb met Dyer the latter was startled, for he was completely lost in his own thoughts as usual. Lamb calls Dyre an absent-minded fellow, and gives a funny anecdote. Dyer once made a call at a friend's house and was informed that he was away to the country for a few days. However, he forgot about it and went to pay a visit to his friend. At this he signed the book in the hall meant for those who visited the place in the absence of the master of the house. He wondered in the house of his friend a little and again forgot that he had already signed the visiter's book so he went to sign the book once again. However, when he saw that he had already signed it a little while before, he was determined not to make such mistakes in future.

Dyer is always lost in speculation about one thing or the other. That is why he always feels so startled on being stopped by a friend. After his studies at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Dyer started life as an usher to a roguish schoolmaster who did not pay much of the salary due to him and whenever Dyer hinted at arrears, would come out with an apt sermon about the sin of being greedy. Poor Dyer then would keep quiet for some more days. At this time Dyer earned paltry sums of money by working for publisher's very laboriously. He has also written some poems which have not cut any figure in the market as they are simple and unexciting. Nevertheless he is a great, assiduous scholar.

The essay "Oxford in the Vacation" describes Lamb's experience in Oxford during vacation. It is also memorable for the character sketch of his whimsical friend John Dyre whose scholarship, absent-mindedness, innocence and selfless enthusiasm for learning is vividly portrayed by Lamb. The essay also shows Lamb's love for antiquity, which at times poses some difficulty foe the modern day reader.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Summarize the essay in your own words.

Q2. Draw a character sketch of John Dyre in your own words.

Note: To know the answers, please refer to the essay and the relevant sections.

3.6. "The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers"

3.6.1. Summary

In this essay Lamb states that he has great sympathy for young chimney sweeps. He likes to make friends with them. He regards them as "dim specks, poor blots, innocent blackness, young Africans" for their faces are covered with soot. As a child Lamb enjoyed seeing young chimney sweeps at work and he would often wonder to himself as to how they would get inside the chimney and after cleaning it, how they made their way out.

Lamb has a soft corner for the young chimney sweeps and wants his readers to be kind to them too. He requests the readers to give them a penny or two and if it is starving weather (winter) one should give them at least six-pence.

Lamb observes many people taking a drink – a kind of tea made of sassafras. Mr Read runs a shop for selling this drink, and claims that it is the only Salopian house in the town. Lamb has never tasted this drink but he has seen people of fine taste drinking it with pleasure. He, however, feels that he can never like the drink. The chimney sweeps have a special preference for this kind of drink but Lamb is unable to understand the reasons for it. When the chimney sweeps have money they enjoy this drink, otherwise they remain in front of sassafras shops or stalls inhaling its fragrance for that way they are able to satisfy their sense of smell at least.

Lamb says that Mr Read's claim is not true, for many vendors sell this drink in stalls, under the open sky. Not only the chimney sweeps but the herb women and the gardeners also like this drink. Lamb advises the reader to provide a cup of sassafras to a chimney sweep standing in front of the shop. He says that it is better to provide him with a slice of delicate bread and butter also with it. One should not mind spending two or three pence on feeding the chimney sweep as this would please him. Furthermore, the chimney-sweep would keep the chimney better cleaned and save the reader from much trouble which would otherwise fall upon him.

Lamb is very susceptible to the jeers and taunts of the people but he can tolerate the jocularity of a young sweep. He describes how he once fell down and a chimney sweep laughed at him. He did not mind this and was ready to provide him more fun at his own expense. Lamb does not like the display of white teeth either by gentlemen or ladies but tolerates it in the case of chimney sweeps. The display of white and shining teeth is like "some remnant of gentry not quite extinct, a badge of better days or a hint of nobility". Lamb feels that the practice of having boys as chimney sweeps leads to the kidnapping of children as in the case of Montagu.

Lamb then proceeds to narrate the story of a young chimney sweep who was once found sleeping in one of the splendid state beds in Arundel Castle. Lamb could not find out any reason for that behavior of the sweep and concludes that he was perhaps a duke's son in his previous life who found his way into the bed.

At the end of the essay Lamb describes how his friend, James White used to arrange an annual feast for young chimney sweeps on St. Bartholomew's Fair. The feast was arranged at the pens near Smithfield Market. James White with his friends – Lamb and Bigod – acted as the host. The chimney sweeps were provided with sausages and beer. Besides this, James White entertained them with many witty remarks – many of them not

understood by others and were only understood by the young chimney sweeps. With the death of James White the feasts and the joy of such feasts came to an end.

This is not a personal essay. Here he describes the miserable lot of the chimney sweeps and his sympathy for them. Lamb has tried to mystify the reader by narrating the story of the chimney sweep who slept in one of the beds at Arundel castle. The essay is full of allusions. We also get a glimpse of Lamb's humour and pathos in this essay.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Summarize the essay in your own words.

Q2. Why do you think that Lamb has a soft corner for the young chimney sweeps?

Note: To know the answers, please refer to the essay and the relevant sections.

3.7. Let Us Sum Up

In this unit you were introduced to "the Prince of English Essays", Charles Lamb. You saw how Lamb, fighting poverty and insanity, carved a niche for himself among English essayists. The unit also focused on Lamb's prose style, highlighting his unique contribution to the English essays. You also read and analysed two of Lamb's famous essays, "Oxford in the Vacation" and "The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers", both of which have been taken from *Essays of Elia.*

3.8. References

Lamb, Charles. *Essays of Elia.* London: Macmillan, 1950. Print

Lucas, Edward V. *The Life of Charles Lamb*

3.9. Terminal and Model Questions

Q1. Draw a biographical sketch of Charles Lamb in your own words.

Q2. Write an essay on Charles Lamb as the "Prince of English Essays."

Q3. Discuss the main theme of the essay "Oxford in the Vacation" in your own words.

UNIT 4 J. KRISHNAMURTI: *EDUCATION AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LIFE*

4.1 Introduction

In the earlier Units, you were introduced to some of the finest non-fictional English prose. Most of Bacon's essays are philosophical in content and very condensed in style; Steele and Addison wrote periodical essays with a view to "expanding intellectual interests of the middle classes"; Lamb's essays are subjective in nature and are concerned with human feelings and emotions.

Krishnamurti's book is a long philosophical essay written in lyrical prose and captures the whole spectrum of human life with all its thoughts, feelings and emotions. Rooted in the author's vision, which is a lived experience and not an idea, it transcends the narrow demarcations of the subjective and objective.

Why are you being educated? Why are you reading this Unit? If it is only to pass an examination, then all your education is completely bogus and useless. By asking such questions, Krishnamurti prepares you to see your life and education in a new perspective. Further, many of you would be looking forward to making teaching your vocation; in that case, you should look very carefully at the arguments put forward in *Education and the Significance of Life* before deciding to become a teacher.

4.2 Objectives

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- Contextualise the author and the text
- List the major ideas in each of the eight chapters
- Draw an arrangement of the major arguments
- Analyse the prose style of Krishnamurti

4.3 The Author and the Text

"Understanding of the self is freedom from knowledge".

"The ending of knowledge is the beginning of wisdom".

"Thought cannot solve any human problem, for thought itself is the problem".

—J. Krishnamurti

Look very carefully at the quotes above. The man who is asking you to drop all knowledge and thought is telling you to act from a different source. It is from this selfsame source, much beyond mind, that Krishnamurti has written this book, *Education and the Significance of Life*. All other authors you have read in this Block—Bacon, Addison, Lamb—write from their mind, which is old, very old, and therefore there is nothing new in what they say.

This source, which is Intelligence, is also love and compassion. A speech which is suffused with love is by nature lyrical. The emotion, the pristine purity of essence behind life, can only be communicated by poetry, through the language of imagery and metaphor. Krishnamurti therefore uses a series of evocative images, a variety of patterns

of sound and sense, and a rhythm that matches the mood of his utterance. All this makes him a poet who uses the medium of prose rather than verse.

4.3.1 Jiddu Krishnamurti

Jiddu Krishnamurti was born on May 12, 1895 at Madanapalle in Andhra Pradesh. Being the eighth child of his parents, he was named after Lord Krishna who himself was an eighth child. Since his early childhood Krishnamurti showed a psychic gift of seeing the dead which he probably inherited from his mother.

One evening in 1909 on the Adyar beach, Krishnamurti along with his younger brother was 'discovered' by Leadbeater, the eminent clairvoyant and Theosophist. Within months after the 'discovery', Krishnamurti was put on 'probation' and then 'accepted' by Master Kuthumi, an occult being of great stature. The Masters soon 'communicated' to Leadbeater and Mrs Annie Besant, the President of Theosophical Society, that Krishnamurti was to be the 'vehicle' for the world-teacher, and Maitreya was to inhabit his body which must be accordingly prepared. Mrs Besant soon took over the legal guardianship of Krishnamurti and his brother Nitya, who were given a methodical training in Theosophical tenets and English manners, food, dress and hygiene.

In a year's time, the boy Krishna had so much advanced on 'the Path' that he started teaching a select group of disciples which included George Arundale, a Cambridge graduate and Principal of Central Hindu College, Benares and A. E. Woodhouse, an Oxford graduate and elder brother of P. G. Woodhouse. For this task Krishna used his notes of the teachings he had received from Master Kuthumi. When Mrs Besant saw these notes, she was so impressed that she immediately decided to publish them. The result was Krishnamurti's first book, *At the Feet of the Master*, published first in December 1910 and still in print.

In 1911, an international organisation, the Order of the Star in the East, was formed around Krishnamurti to prepare the world opinion for the arrival of the world-teacher. Same year, Krishnamurti was taken to England for his education, but not only he failed to find entry to any of the English universities, he could not even pass the matriculation examination which he wrote thrice. To make up for this gap in his intellectual training, he was given lessons in elocution and also a wide exposure to European culture.

In 1921, Nitya fell seriously ill and was diagnosed of tuberculosis. For his recovery and treatment, the brothers moved to the salubrious climate of Ojai, California. A month after their arrival in Ojai, a very significant phenomenon started happening to Krishnamurti. Known as 'the Process', it began on 17 August 1922 and culminated in some kind of 'siddhi' or realisation on 20th August. This 'Process', however, once begun was to continue all his life with fair regularity. It found its culmination in 1979 when, according to Krishnamurti's own testimony, "the movement had reached the source of all energy" and "there was nothing beyond this" (qtd. in Lutyens).

There are two records of the Ojai happenings – one by Nitya and the other by Krishnamurti himself. Nitya wrote:

> The place seemed to be filled with a Great Presence and a great longing came upon me to go on my knees and adore, for I knew that the Great Lord of all our hearts had come Himself.... Then the eyes of Rosalind were opened and she saw. Her face changed.... she said to us, 'Do you see Him, do you see Him?' for she

> saw the divine Bodhisattva.... And we who could not see saw the Splendours of the night mirrored in her face.... her being was ablaze with His presence.... In the distance we heard divine music softly played, all of us heard though hidden from us were the Gandharvas. (qtd. in Lutyens)

Krishnamurti described the happenings on 20th August:

> I could feel the vibrations of the Lord Buddha; I beheld Lord Maitreya.... The Presence of the mighty Beings was with me.... I have drunk at the clear and pure waters at the source of the fountain of life and my thirst was appeased. Never more could I be thirsty, never more could I be in utter darkness. I have seen the Light. I have touched compassion which heals all sorrow.... I have drunk at the fountain of Joy and eternal Beauty. I am God-intoxicated. (qtd. in Lutyens)

Three years later, another event of far-reaching consequences took place. While Krishna was on his way to India, Nitya, despite the Masters' assurance to the contrary, died on November 13, 1925. Krishna's sorrow was devastating, and though he was able to recover from it in a remarkably short time, his disillusionment with Theosophy was imminent.

For many therefore it came as no surprise when, on August 3, 1929, Krishnamurti formally dissolved the Order of the Star and returned all property and everything else belonging to the Star organization back to their original donors. From now on he was on his own. On this occasion he delivered one of his most quoted speeches, which contains the most comprehensive summation of his teachings till date:

> I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect.... Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organised.... The moment you follow someone you cease to follow Truth. ... I am concerning myself with only one essential thing: to set man free. I desire to free him from all cages, from all fears, and not to found religions, new sects, nor to establish new theories and new philosophies....My only concern is to set men absolutely, unconditionally free. (qtd. in Lutyens)

4.3.2 Contextualising the text

Krishnamurti found his Vision under the pepper tree at Ojai in August 1922. Seven years later when he dissolved the Order of the Star in August 1929, the Vision had taken roots and he had completely freed himself from the network of falsity that had grown around him from his Theosophical upbringing. "I know my destiny and my work," he had told Leadbeater, and from now on he moved like one possessed of a mission. Every day of his life henceforth was given to that work and there was nothing of the personal any more. He travelled all over the world – to Europe, India and America – year after year speaking to groups, gatherings and individuals, pointing out the mess they had made of society, the world and their own lives, and offering them the vision of a way of life of which he himself was the shining exemplar. Presidents, prime ministers, authors, professors, scientists, gurus, monks, sannyasis, celebrities, friends, associates and commoners – all came to him seeking counsel.

He opened schools in India, England and America to save young souls from getting lost in the growing insanity of a violent world. He gave a great deal of his time and energy

talking to teachers and students of these schools, trying to figure out the practical and psychological implications of Right Education that could make man healthy, sane and whole again.

As a young Theosophical neophyte, Krishnamurti is credited to have written two small books: the second of which—*Education as Service*—was published by The Rajput Press, Chicago in 1912. Mrs Besant's opening sentence in her introduction to the book, if not clairvoyant, has certainly proved prophetic:

> In long past lives the author of this little book had much to do with educational work, and he seems to have brought over with him an intense interest in education.

Education was to remain the one lifelong passion for Krishnamurti. In 1922, after a visit to an American University he longed to create something similar in India.

Next year, one finds him touring America to raise funds for Indian education, possibly for a school in Madras. Two years later in 1925 he discovered the site of Rishi Valley where he dreamed of founding a university. In 1926 he was able to procure some 300 acres of land where Rishi Valley School, the first of his educational projects, opened in 1928. He founded three more schools in India during his lifetime—Rajghat School at Benares, 'The School' at Chennai, and The Valley School at Bangalore. He also founded one school in England in 1969—the Brockwood Park School, and one in America in 1975 – the Oak Grove School at Ojai.

Every year for weeks and months, he stayed in these schools and held regular discussions with teachers and students, exploring theoretical and not-so-theoretical issues related to right living and education. In December 1985, only a few weeks before his death, he held his last discussion with teachers at Rishi Valley. No teacher in the history of spiritual tradition ever gave so much of himself, and so passionately, to bringing about the right kind of education in which the young ones could flower in love, goodness and holistic living.

It is not surprising therefore that the first of Krishnamurti's published books—brought out by an international commercial publishing house—should be on education. *Education and the Significance of Life* was published in 1953 by Harper & Row in America and Gollancz in England. It should be remembered that Rishi Valley School by the time of this publication was 25 years old, and all through its growth Krishnamurti had deeply been involved with almost every aspect of education, theoretical as well as practical. *Education and the Significance of Life* is a small book and presents a concise statement of Krishnamurti's vision of holistic education. It is also one of the few books that Krishnamurti actually wrote, most others being the published versions of his talks and discussions.

Krishnamurti's first published book was on education and so was his last. In 1978 he started writing a series of fortnightly letters to the schools he had founded in India, England and America. For five years, till November 1983, he successfully posted a new letter to his schools almost every fortnight. The purpose of these letters, the last of his written words, was to reiterate the unique nature and function of these schools for which alone they were created and owed their existence. The second of the two volumes of *Letters to the Schools*, issued in book form in 1985, was the last of his published work to appear during his lifetime.

Krishnamurti was only 16 when Mrs Annie Besant had remarked that he had much to do with educational work in many of his past lives. That no one in the living history has done so much for education as Krishnamurti remains an incontrovertible fact.

EXERCISE 1

1. Write a short note on Krishnamurti's life.
2. In what manner is *Education and the Significance of Life* central to the life and work of Krishnamurti?

4.4 Reading the Text

Education and the Significance of Life (1953) was the first of Krishnamurti's books brought out by an international commercial publishing house. Until now, Krishnamurti's talks and discussions had been issued by Star Publishing Trust, a subsidiary of the organization built around Krishnamurti. Brought out in the form of small booklets, rather than full-length books, these were circulated and sold to people attending Krishnamurti's lecture camps.

Education and the Significance of Life is also unique in another way: it is the only 'book' Krishnamurti ever 'wrote'. He wrote poems, essays, made meditative-autobiographical notes for his journal, but never before or again did he write a book. It was not in his nature to write a sustained book-length argument on a single subject. He denied knowledge, memory and tradition, the triple foundation for any scholastic endeavour. His consciousness was a vast emptiness and it contained no material with which to construct an intricate elaborate structure. Such a consciouness could only respond to things in the now that surfaced either in self-assertion or else to deny, contradict or question that emptiness. His was a nature best suited to meditative reflections, rather than to intellectual argumentative treatises.

A natural gift of suggestiveness, of pointing out something without saying too much, made him a poet and not a thinker of the abstract. It explains why his literary corpus is mostly in the form of poems, essays and short prose pieces and why it includes just a lone book.

Education and the Significance of Life is therefore necessarily a poet's vision. It succeeds so long as the poet is content to share his insights in a loosely connected series of images and observations; so long as he is content to show us a way out from the maddening jungle of our existence; so long as he holds true to his dictum that there are no methodologies, whatsoever, that there is the 'Other', the limitless free sky but no human pathways to it. It fails when the author attempts to make it a treatise by erecting a somewhat superimposed structure by adding distantly related sundry subjects.

Krishnamurti is not a speculative thinker, a theorist of abstractions, and therefore *Education and the Significance of Life* proposes no theory of education as such. Most theories are approaches to some distant goal, some idealistic Utopia. They are rooted in illusion, in unreality. On the other hand, a poet's vision springs from the mysterious heart of life, from his observation of things that escape the common man's purview. This vision constitutes a revelation of the deeper layers of reality and is therefore real in itself.

Krishnamurti's view of education is rooted in his vision of Life. This vision, as is always the case with Krishnamurti, is tethered in the inescapable actuality of our everyday world. It is not a flight of the alone to the Alone, but a movement that slowly rises from the earth and envelops the whole of existence with a sense of benediction. It is a sacred vision of Reality that Krishnamurti offers and education seems the one door that leads to it.

4.4.1 Education and the Significance of Life

The book opens with the author's observation of the world in a tone lyrical, a rhythm soft and words richly graphic. It brings an expansive sense of space with a tinge of sadness and meaninglessness obtaining in the ways of our living:

> When one travels around the world, one notices to what an extraordinary degree human nature is the same, whether in India or America, in Europe or Australia. This is especially true in colleges and universities. We are turning out, as if through a mould, a type of human being whose chief interest is to find security, to become somebody important, or to have a good time with as little thought as possible.

It is the tone of a storyteller, of a teacher talking affectionately to his students, of a traveller come home to tell tales from the other side of the world. It is pure literature, and whether one agrees with it or not, understands or half understands or misunderstands, one is in for a long journey with the author.

The very first observation, "to what an extraordinary degree human nature is the same," is startling to those who understand. How many of us have not come home from abroad with tales of how everything is so extraordinarily different out there! And here is one, a frequent traveller, who says 'it is all the same'. He talks about Man not men; he has watched mankind as one and not as made of many kinds. To us who are burdened with our little selves, the world outside of 'me' is not-self, separate from 'me', and therefore so utterly different.

The next sentence zooms in on young men and women in colleges who constitute the future of humanity. The scene is uncomfortably bleak, for these are thoughtless, bogus little people, a generation of types and not of individuals. But they are not responsible for what they are; it is we, of the older generation, who are responsible for creating that mould through which they are being churned out as finished products. When shall we open our eyes to see the necessity of breaking the mould and setting free the life imprisoned in these robotic shells? How much has been packed in so few words. The poet suggests and throws images at us to look at and decipher. Explanations are carefully avoided.

These young men and women who are always on the lookout "to become somebody important, or to have a good time with as little thought as possible" are symptomatic of a rotten world, a violent, selfish, greedy society we have created. This vast sea of mediocrity all around has come into being because our education, both at school and at home, breeds a race of conformists. From a very young age we teach our children to worship success, to get top ranks in school, to slog for the next promotion at the workplace, to hunt for a rich and successful husband or wife. This worship of success is inevitably dogged by fear of failure. Fear in any form breeds a feeling of insecurity which in turn leads to a maddening search for security, to various insurance policies and safe deposits for securing physical wellbeing, and to prizes, medals and honours or just a pat

on the back for the illusion of psychological security. Fear and the accompanying feeling of insecurity block any flowering of Intelligence. This results in a gradual deterioration into an ever-worsening state of mediocrity.

Society in turn rewards mediocrity with money and medals, for it needs unintelligent beasts to run its ugly engines for exploitation of man and nature and to maintain its dark reign of utter falsehood. It hates genius and intelligent beings and does all it can to crush them at every stage, for being in constant revolt against all its systems they pose the greatest threat to its ugly face and dark designs.

There is always some kind of discontent behind every revolt. One is the discontent of the beast when it is denied its share of food, things and pleasure, which leads to a physical, violent form of revolt. Then there is the deeper psychological revolt that comes with the birth of intelligence, with perception of the false as false, with growing discontent with false values, warped ideologies and sinister structures of society. This intelligent revolt

> ...comes with self-knowledge through the awareness of one's own thought and feeling. It is only when we face experience as it comes and do not avoid disturbance that we keep intelligence highly awakened; and intelligence highly awakened is intuition, which is the only true guide in life.

Modern education emphasises on producing efficient professionals and therefore creates individuals who are shallow, ruthless and devoid of long vision. It creates specialists in whom a part is emphasised to the neglect of the whole. Fragmentation of being leads to dissociation of sensibility, to borrow a phrase from Eliot, which further leads to endless conflict, destruction and misery. Is this all for which we are being trained – to die in a psychological hell or on a battlefield or on the gallows?

The author suggests a release for the individual but puts our educational models in the dock: "Though there is a higher and wider significance to life, of what value is our education if we never discover it?" In order to discover the true significance of life we need to move out from our present state of fragmentation to a state of unity and integration. In Indian mythology there are two aspects of the Goddess, Diti and Aditi: Diti stands for division and is the mother of daityas, demons; Aditi, the indivisible, is the mother of gods, devas. We must learn to move from Diti to Aditi, from fragmentation to integration, if there is to be any hope of release from the self-destructive tendencies of mankind.

The author is categorical in his stand that only the right kind of education can be of help here: it is the only way-out from this chaos. The true function of right education is to create intelligent and integrated individuals who will not only be free in themselves from this chaos but will also be able to lead humanity back to sanity and wholeness of health:

> The function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and therefore intelligent. ...Intelligence is the capacity to perceive the essential, the what is; and to awaken this capacity, in oneself and in others, is education.

4.4.2 The Right Kind of Education

The second chapter "The Right Kind of Education," is not only the longest—nearly one third of the whole—but forms as well the core of the book. As suggested earlier,

Krishnamurti is not an academic tract writer who would arrange his ideas methodically in sections and subsections. Like a poet he teaches by suggestion and arranges his short linear thoughts circularly, much like a metaphor that leaps to join the earth and sky. A discussion of major ideas therefore leaves out much of his inspired prose which is sheer poetry and such a joyous element in the total reading experience.

The opening paragraph begins by pointing out the true nature of knowledge and education and sets the tone of what is to follow. It makes clear that Ignorance is the absence of self-knowledge and has nothing to do with book learning. Understanding comes from self-knowledge, "which is awareness of one's total psychological process," and not from reading books or listening to the learned, for "the learned man is stupid when he relies on books".

> Thus education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered.

There is no pretentious mysticism here, just a statement of fact. While Krishnamurti addresses the contemporary angst and speaks in a modern idiom, the Source from which he speaks is the eternal, timeless One. The statement that "within each one of us ... the whole of existence is gathered" is not any different from the ancient wisdom, '*Aham Brahmasmi*'.

How has this world come to such a pass where it has become a self-devouring monster? Is the mind of man any different from the world it has created? Isn't the contemporary mind a finished and polished product of our educational system? We have seen how society rewards mediocrity and conformism. Krishnamurti looks at the reasons why education has passed into the control of governments and organized religions:

> Governments want efficient technicians, not human beings, because human beings become dangerous to governments - and to organized religions as well. That is why governments and religious organizations seek to control education.

By 'human beings' the author obviously means the integrated, intelligent and questioning individuals who are in constant psychological revolt against all those who profit by perpetuating a reign of falsehood—governments, organized religions, media, and business houses. The author also seems to suggest that the fragmented, unintelligent minds who lead a mechanical, robotic existence are hardly human.

Before it can be seen what constitutes the right education, one needs to understand what is so terribly wrong with our present system of education. The author begins with the most obvious, and his simplicity in demolishing the whole edifice of modern education in a single sentence is just breathtaking: "What we now call education is a matter of accumulating information and knowledge from books, which anyone can do who can read". Once he has done this, he moves on to unearth the demons hidden in the foundations so that we do not raise another modified structure in its place again.

There is something fundamentally wrong in our approach to education: "we send our children to school to learn some technique by which they can eventually earn a livelihood". We all want our children to become technocrats: the IIT's and IIM's remain the most prestigious institutes in the country. Surely, we need doctors and engineers, and technology has its uses, but learning of technique does not give us an understanding of life. In making the teaching of technique the primary function of education we relegate

the beauty and mystery of life to a secondary status. This is our sin and hubris against Nature, for which we pay dearly. We forget that technique is inherent in Nature and Life and when these are comprehended in totality, when the Whole is known, the knowledge of the part comes as a gift, as a logical consequence. But knowledge of the part will never make us whole; will never bring us any closer to that which is love, which is sacred and unnameable. Perhaps one could live with this deprivation but there is a more horrifying scenario: "The man who knows how to split the atom but has no love in his heart becomes a monster". Only a poet could have said this, and not any analytical thinker.

The only reason why children are encouraged to go for technical and professional education is that it brings them economic security – they can earn a lot of money and have good time. Krishnamurti throws a simple question at this point, one that can make us uneasy for the rest of our lives:

> ... when we have become engineers, physicians, accountants—then what? Is the practice of a profession the fulfilment of life? Apparently with most of us it is.

There is no bitterness, no complaint: just compassion, and sadness born of understanding.

Another reason why we pursue technical proficiency is that apart from an assured livelihood, it gives us a sense of psychological security: it strengthens the self, makes us 'somebody', desired and sought after, useful and respectable. But the specialist is a terribly fragmented being, neurotic in his approach to life, endlessly caught in conflict. Possibly not physically fit enough to be sent to the battlefront to kill human being with his own hands, he is nevertheless more sinister than the soldier for he is the one who prepares the instruments of war.

For the preparation of war, our educational factories produce another demoniac creature: the Idealist. Since the day Plato stumbled upon the realm of ideas without a clue as to what lay beyond them and constructed the first utopian model for the Western world, *The Republic*, the Western mind has continuously been in chase for that chimera. Two thousand years after Plato, Thomas More coined the word Utopia and imagined a communist city-state, which became quite a fantastic reality in years to come. But ideals always peter out whether after a season or a century, because they have no roots in the holistic vision of man's actuality. In the meanwhile, we go on killing each other in the name of a thousand religious, political and other ideals. Krishnamurti points out what is involved in the movement of idealism:

> When we are working together for an ideal, for the future, we shape individuals according to our conception of that future; we are not concerned with human beings at all, but with our idea of what they should be.... If we begin to understand the individual directly... then we are concerned with what is. Then we no longer want to transform the individual into something else... to be aware of what we are, we must stop struggling after something which we are not.

Idealism offers an escape from actuality and thus removes the ground in which the integration of the individual can take place. The idealist too—like his counterpart, the specialist—is a fragmented being. He is a dreamer of insubstantial phantasms, totally disconnected from his earth. Perhaps more dangerous than the specialist, he holds a wider appeal, offers a larger escape. His claims are in the future, always unverifiable. Neither idealism, nor the overemphasising of technique and specialisation can have therefore any place in right education.

If we stop teaching the accumulation of information which we call knowledge and scholarship and which in any case is sheer nonsense and utterly useless; if we stop the individual from getting obsessed with technique and therefore specialisation; if we block the escape routes of idealism to dreamy and dangerous nothings; we are left with the immediacy of Presence and are free to deal with the actuality of man – his fears, ambitions, wounds and sorrow that he has inherited from a thousand years of incorrect living. As we clean the festering wounds and exorcise the demons, as we regain our right relationship with people, things and Nature, there comes the possibility of our becoming whole and of the birth of love in our heart.

Krishnamurti refuses to give a methodology for right education— "There is no method by which to educate a child to be integrated and free"; but he does offer a roadmap:

> Education in the true sense is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness. That is what we should be interested in, and not in shaping the child according to some idealistic pattern.

Most of our problems arise from our wrong relationship with people, things, ideas and Nature. A wrong relationship can be corrected only when there is right understanding, and "only love can bring about the understanding of another". It is a fact of fundamental importance that "without love no human problem can be solved".

Love and goodness can flower only in individual freedom, and freedom comes in the understanding of one's psychological structures by a constant observation of the ways of self. Society gives tremendous importance to discipline, by which it hopes to impose some kind of order on the chaos inherent in its various systems. But discipline has no place in right education. Discipline demands obedience and conformity to authority and breeds fear. Fear distorts the perception of actuality and thereby blocks the awakening of intelligence. We impose discipline only when we have no love in our hearts. Discipline cannot be a means to bring about freedom: "Freedom is at the beginning, not at the end". It is intelligence which brings order, and not discipline.

Together with governments, the organized religions too have sought to control education. Moral education, as practised in most schools, is nothing but a garb for religious preaching. Religions by imposing their systems of beliefs, rituals and superstitions take away from the individual his freedom to discover Truth for himself. On the other hand, a holistic education which aims to make the individual whole is the true religious education in its highest sense. Religion "is a state of tranquillity in which there is reality, God; but that creative state can come into being only when there is self-knowledge and freedom".

4.4.3 Intellect, Authority and Intelligence

These first two chapters form the core of the book. The remaining ones either elaborate or else apply these basic tenets to related subjects. Chapter three begins by reiterating the bogusness of modern education. When we look around we find that "the so-called educated are not peace-loving, integrated people". They are highly confused, conformist, fearful and frustrated people. "Being frustrated, we seek escape through sex, drink, politics or fanciful religion". Such a condition has come about because

> Modern education, in developing the intellect, offers more and more theories and facts, without bringing about the understanding of the total process of human

> existence. We are highly intellectual; we have developed cunning minds, and are caught up in explanations.

The development of intellect at the cost of other faculties leads to a state of ignorance. "Ignorance is lack of knowledge of the ways of the self". Because we do not understand the meaning of our lives, do not know our business on this earth, we are always insecure, fearful and look for guidance from others. This creates authority of leaders, both political and religious.

> The following of authority is the denial of intelligence. To accept authority is to submit to domination, to subjugate oneself to an individual, to a group, or to an ideology, whether religious or political; and this subjugation of oneself to authority is the denial, not only of intelligence, but also of individual freedom.

Only in complete, absolute freedom, the intelligence can flower. Intelligence is the capacity to see things as they are, not as they are projected by priests, politicians, media and our elders. "Intelligence is much greater than intellect, for it is the integration of reason and love". The awakening of intelligence brings about an inward revolution which radically changes our values and perception. Only such a change can create a new social order.

If only one or two individuals change, how is it going to affect society? Perhaps this is one of the most frequently asked questions. Krishnamurti answers:

> Now, some may ask, "What can a single individual do that will affect history? Can he accomplish anything at all by the way he lives?" Certainly he can. You and I are obviously not going to stop the immediate wars, or create an instantaneous understanding between nations; but at least we can bring about, in the world of our everyday relationships, a fundamental change which will have its own effect.

4.4.4 Education and World Peace

The next chapter, "Education and World Peace," looks at the violent and self-destructive nature of the present civilization and points out how a wrong system of education is responsible for this monstrous world-order.

> To discover what part education can play in the present world crisis, we should understand how that crisis has come into being. It is obviously the result of wrong values in our relationship to people, to property and to ideas.

Through the propaganda of newspapers, textbooks and ritualistic celebrations of certain dates in history, we are conditioned to a frenzied feeling of patriotism. "Nationalism, the patriotic spirit, class and race consciousness, are all ways of the self, and therefore separative." It leads to a perpetual conflict within and without, till "we are ready to kill or be killed for our country, race or ideology". Anyone who can kill a human being for the sake of an idea in his head is surely a madman, a monster. How many people all over the world are killed every day because they are Negroes, Asians, Tamils, Hindus, Muslims or Christians? What kind of thought process created a Hitler?

In our relation to property, we are taught to be more and more acquisitive—*ye dil maange more*. Defending the national boundaries, trade-routes and the sea is the same as

defending your little patch of land. The revolt of the landless, the downtrodden and the poor against the rich, the corrupt and the feudal classes is the result of a wrong education that teaches us to worship success and makes us ambitious and competitive.

> The child is neither class nor race conscious; it is the home or school environment, or both, which makes him feel separative. In himself he does not care whether his playmate is a Negro or a Jew, a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin; but the influence of the whole social structure is continually impinging on his mind, affecting and shaping it…. Here again the problem is not with the child but with the adults, who have created a senseless environment of separatism and false values.

Only the right kind of education that brings about an integration of our psyche, makes us see the oneness of mankind, makes us feel the earth as our home, *vasudhaiv kutumbkam* can restore sanity and peace in our lives.

4.4.5 The School

The education being given on a mass scale is no education. It can produce doctors, engineers, managers and administrators; but it cannot produce right kind of human beings.

> A school which is successful in the worldly sense is more often than not a failure as an educational centre. A large and flourishing institution in which hundreds of children are educated together, with all its accompanying show and success, can turn out bank clerks and super-salesmen, industrialists or commissars, superficial people who are technically efficient; but there is hope only in the integrated individual, which only small schools can help to bring about.

"Only through the careful study and understanding of the difficulties, tendencies and capacities of each child," a child can be groomed to flower in goodness and beauty. For that we need small schools. But small schools are expensive; because they can accommodate only a small number of students and require a fairly large number of good educators. From where will the money come? The people who are in money-making business hardly love their children and have no time to ponder over the value of education.

> If parents really cared for their children, they would build a new society; but fundamentally most parents do not care, and so they have no time for this most urgent problem. They have time for making money, for amusements, for rituals and worship, but no time to consider what is the right kind of education for their children.

The next problem is to find right kind of teachers. To Krishnamurti,

> …those who teach merely to earn a salary can obviously have no place as teachers. To regard education as a means of livelihood is to exploit the children for one's own advantage.

The right kind of teacher "is not merely a giver of information; he is one who points the way to wisdom, to truth"

4.4.6 Parents and Teachers

The next chapter therefore moves to the problem of teachers and parents.

> The right kind of education begins with the educator… for what he is, that he imparts. If he has not been rightly educated, what can he teach except the same mechanical knowledge on which he himself has been brought up? The problem, therefore, is not the child, but the parent and the teacher; the problem is to educate the educator.

It is only when one is passionately in love with life, goodness, and the beauty of earth, that one is ready to become a teacher. It is out of love for life, that one dreams of a generation of children who will be free of jealousy, greed, violence, hatred and war. It is to materialise such a heaven on earth that one becomes a teacher and dedicates one's whole life to it.

It does not matter if he has all these weaknesses in himself. What is important is that he is willing to uncover them one by one and thus get rid of the whole baggage that impedes the flowering of goodness and integration. With such an openness and spirit he is a friend to his student, and both walk together, hand in hand, in their mission to remove the demon that plagues mankind.

Because he is concerned with every little problem of his student, the teacher will speak to the parents about it. In this way, he also starts educating the parent. When the three join together and become one in their aim, a radical transformation of all three becomes a possibility.

Do not ask for a methodology of teaching. It is a very personal discovery. It cannot be taught, and cannot be given to anyone.

> For the true teacher, teaching is not a technique, it is his way of life; like a great artist, he would rather starve than give up his creative work. Unless one has this burning desire to teach, one should not be a teacher.

4.4.7 Sex and Marriage

The next chapter, "Sex and Marriage" addresses what seems to be of topical interest with young students. The author points out the insufficiency of the institution of marriage:

> As long as there is no deep understanding of the whole process of desire, the institution of marriage ... cannot provide the answer to the sexual problem. Love is not induced by the signing of a contract, nor is it based on an exchange of gratification, nor on mutual security and comfort. All these things are of the mind, and that is why love occupies so small a place in our lives.... When there is love, sex is never a problem - it is the lack of love that creates the problem.

4.4.8 Art, Beauty and Creation

It has been argued that Krishnamurti is essentially a poet and artist. It is no surprise therefore that *Education and the Significance of Life* should conclude with a chapter on "Art, Beauty and Creation". The author's definition of creativity confirms that as an artist

he belongs to the tradition of Vedic rishis who spoke of the poet as the hearer of Truth. Krishnamurti maintains that the state of creativity is simultaneous with the coming into being of Truth:

> To be creative ... is to be in that state in which truth can come into being. Truth comes into being when there is a complete cessation of thought.... When the mind is utterly still without being forced or trained into quiescence, when it is silent because the self is inactive, then there is creation.

Style, for the author, is not a technique that needs to be cultivated. It comes as a built-in process with the creative energy: "if there is joy, if there is the creative fire, it will find a way to express itself, one need not study a method of expression". Similarly, one has to be on guard in seeking inspiration, because mind has an extraordinary capacity of creating illusions. "Inspiration comes when we are open to it, not when we are courting it".

Krishnamurti also cautions the 'gifted' artist. There is nothing personal about the gift or capacity: it comes from a Source beyond the self. But when we make it personal, are proud of our talent and capacity, it strengthens the ego and its craving for adulation. "A true artist is beyond the vanity of the self and its ambitions". What then is the false artist? When there is a separation between one's instinctual life, one's mode of daily living, and what one writes or paints, then we have an art that is superficial, false and of no significance at all. It is only when there is no separation between what one is and what one creates "that our life becomes integrated and art an integral expression of ourselves".

Krishnamurti also probes into the nature of those who profess to be connoisseurs of art. For most of us, art, like drink, drugs or fanciful rituals, offers escape from the actuality of a shallow, strife-torn daily existence.

> Since our hearts are withered and we have forgotten how to be kindly, how to look at the stars, at the trees, at the reflections on the water, we require the stimulation of pictures and jewels, of books and endless amusements.

It is this inner poverty that drives us to collect things, including art objects. Since the inner singer has turned mute and visits no more our hearts, we look to the outer singer, the human artist, to awaken us from a living death, to make us sensate once again. If the child when he is still in school can be awakened to "the joy there is in seeing, not only the beauty that man has created, but also the beauty of nature," then art and artists will find their rightful place in life.

4.5 Technique and Style

The traditional approaches considered the diction and structure of sentences to determine whether a prose style was grand, mean or plain. Simplifying the classical theories of rhetoric, Northrop Frye made a primary distinction between the demotic style which made use of ordinary speech and the hieratic style which used literary devices to distinguish itself from common tongue. In recent years, with the introduction of discourse analysis, the focus has shifted to measuring the effectiveness of a style with regard to its subject matter and target audience. Francis-Noël Thomas and Mark Turner, for example,

propose an analysis of style in terms of an author's assumptions concerning a series of relationships:

> What can be known? What can be put into words? What is the relationship between thought and language? Who is the writer addressing and why? What is the implied relationship between writer and reader? What are the implied conditions of discourse? (qtd. in Abrams)

Cuddon, in discussing the nature of style, suggests a simpler and more straightforward approach to the matter:

> Style defies complete analysis or definition because it is the tone and 'voice' of the writer himself; as peculiar to him as his laugh, his walk, his handwriting and the expressions on his face. The style, as Buffon put it, is the man.

That an author was an autonomous entity beyond the confines of theories and rules of composition is born by the fact that many of the styles have come to be known by the characteristics of an individual writer – Ciceronian, Senecan, Miltonic or Johnsonese.

Krishnamurti's own approach to the subject is quite similar. According to him, any cultivation of technique or style, though necessary on occasions, was fundamentally detrimental to the wholeness of man. It merely emphasised the superficial and led one away from more serious concerns. For him, the content was of greater importance and style was simply a natural and secondary outcome of it. The content, which is joy and love, forms the core of the creative fire, but technique is rather a mundane affair:

> Learning a technique may provide us with a job, but it will not make us creative; whereas, if there is joy, if there is the creative fire, it will find a way to express itself, one need not study a method of expression. (*Education and Significance*)

Elsewhere, he is more forthcoming on the subject:

> The expression is according to creation; the style is according to what you have to say. If you have something to say, that very thing creates its own style. But if one is merely a technician, then there is no vital problem. (*Commentaries II*)

The subject matter of Krishnamurti's utterance requires the vehicle of poetry for its expression, because often in its origins it is much beyond the ranges of mind and intellect. On the other hand, his target audience, which comprises a highly intellectual generation of young and old, requires an elaborate, logical exposition of ideas. Krishnamurti faces an impossible task. Aware of the limitations of the precise word, he never forgets to exhort his audience to see beyond the word, to realise that however adequate the expression, the word is not the thing. Quite early in the *Notebook* he makes the point very clear:

> Formulation and words about all this seem so futile; words however accurate, however clear the description, do not convey the real thing.

How does Krishnamurti accomplish the impossible? What are the strategies he adopts? Mary Lutyens very aptly points out that there are "many who regard him as a poet as well as a philosopher" (Foreword to *Krishnamurti to Himself*). Krishnamurti was a poet in his essence, and a philosopher only by compulsion. In varying situations, he uses a variety of techniques and styles of expression but none that escape the inherent flight of his poetic speech.

Krishnamurti's first book, *Education and the Significance of Life*, is a philosophical tract that explores the most fundamental issues of education. Though the insights do not come from a rational putting together of ideas inherited from centuries of human history, their exposition is certainly in the manner of a most rigorous logician. The whole argument is divided into neatly separate parts which are further arranged in somewhat linear order. Each separate idea is treated in short pithy paragraphs that take up a single thread in a long line of argument. The sentences are short and contain a complete idea – "Conformity leads to mediocrity" – or else they consist of two short clauses balanced against each other:

> A consistent thinker is a thoughtless person, because he conforms to a pattern; he repeats phrases and thinks in a groove. We cannot understand existence abstractly or theoretically. To understand life is to understand ourselves, and that is both the beginning and the end of education.

The interrogative sentences are also used with good effect, regularly and at intervals, to break the monotony of lengthy arguments. The device helps to facilitate an active participation of the reader:

> Of what value is it to be trained as lawyers if we perpetuate litigation? Of what value is knowledge if we continue in our confusion? What significance has technical and industrial capacity if we use it to destroy one another? What is the point of our existence if it leads to violence and utter misery?

Education and the Significance of Life was undoubtedly meant to be the blueprint for Krishnamurti's two schools in India – Rishi Valley and Rajghat, but it also addressed generally a wider public: students, teachers, parents and all those who were interested in right kind of education.

Exercise 2

1. Critically analyse the opening of *Education and the Significance of Life*.
2. Why does the author find the modern education a total failure?
3. What is the role of parents and teacher in education?
4. Comment on Krishnamurti's views on marriage.

4.6 Summing Up

In this Unit we have learned how

- To contextualise the text with the life and work of the author
- To account for the failure of modern education
- To present the arguments put forward in this book
- To analyse the technique and style of the book
- To distinguish the right education from the wrong ones

4.7 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Exercise 1

1. Refer to 4.3.1
2. Refer to 4.3.2

Exercise 2

1. Refer to 4.4.1
2. Refer to 4.4.1 to 4.4.6
3. Refer to 4.4.6
4. Refer to 4.4.7

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4.10 Terminal and Model Questions

1. Critically examine how the modern education has failed on every front.
2. Write an essay on Krishnamurti's views on the right kind of education.
3. What are the qualities of a good teacher? Why does the author say that those who teach for a salary and merely provide theories and information cannot claim to be a teacher in true sense?
4. Why does the author lay so much emphasis on love, goodness and integration?

UNIT 5 MANOJ DAS: THE DUSKY HORIZON

5.1 Introduction

In this Block we are going to study three stories, one each from India, Britain and America. The usual trend is to study the works of Western literature first, and then to apply their standards to native literature which as a consequence suffers unethical diminution and appears second or third grade. Reversing the trend, we shall first study an Indian author, placing him in his proper context and tradition, and then move on to study the western stories.

Manoj Das is an authentic Indian author, rooted deeply in the tradition of Panchatantra and the Mahabharata. Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar puts his stories in the same class as those of Premchand, Tagore and Mulk Raj Anand.

You will notice that it is not only the content—the theme—but also the way of his storytelling that makes Manoj Das authentically Indian.

5.2 Objectives

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- Critically analyse as to what it is that makes an Indian author genuinely authentic.
- Examine the discernible influences behind the creative inspiration in Manoj Das.
- Bring out the Indian elements in The Dusky Horizon.
- Connect at a deeper level to your own roots.

5.3 The Author and the Text

> *At one stage I felt inspired to write in English, because I was haunted by the feeling—if I do not sound presumptuous—that much of the Indo-Anglian fiction that claimed to project the Indian life and situation was not doing justice to its claim. I thought that I could present through English a chunk of genuine India. Well, right or wrong, one is entitled to one's faith in oneself.*
>
> —Manoj Das, *The Times of India*, 18 May 1980

Manoj Das writes about an India which to many of his readers would appear as belonging to a bygone age. But to many of you, who have known the enchanting picturesque Himalayas, this India would appear as real and alive today as it was a thousand years ago. Manoj Das's writings are a protest against much of what is being written about India by many of our modish contemporary writers. Such writings as are in fashion these days are purposely created to entertain a western readership. They offer either an exotic image of India, or else the squalor, poverty, degradation, superstition and backwardness of Indian people which so comfortably fits in the developed nations' picture of a developing or underdeveloped country. A case in example would be a film like Slumdog Millionaire.

But this is a false image of India; false, because it is exaggerated, stretched beyond proportion, and therefore a distorted image.

Someone who loves India, who knows this land as mother, knows her differently. He knows the soul of this nation, even while he knows as well the follies and foibles of her people. This is Manoj Das.

5.3.1 Manoj Das

Manoj Das was born on 27 February 1934 in an affluent home in rural Orissa. The landscape where he grew up had natural lakes, the sea and a vast evergreen meadow. It instilled in him a deep love for Nature which remains a constant quiet theme in all his writings. His mother had a gift of poetry and was an excellent storyteller. From her, he learned his Ramayana and Mahabharata much before he learned the alphabets.

Creative writing came to him 'as naturally as leaves to a tree', to quote a famous phrase from Keats. His first collection of poems was published when he was in class ten, and the first collection of short stories when he was in class eleven. The title-story in this collection, the very first short story written by him, "Samudrara Kshudha" is still considered a classic in Oriya prose. At fifteen, he launched *Diganta* which in later years became a trend-setting literary journal in Orissa.

While in college, he had a short-lived but fiery romance with communism. He was elected the president of students' union, courted repeated arrests as leader of powerful political agitations, and attended the Afro-Asian students' conference in Indonesia as a member of the AISF delegation from India. It was here that he came to know about the real face of Stalinist Russia and became totally disenchanted with communism. Behind his involvement with social and political reforms, there was a deep urge to do something about the human lot which was so full of inequality, misery and pain.

Manoj Das married a princess, began a career in teaching and publishing, but destiny soon led him to Sri Aurobindo in whose philosophical vision he saw all his doubts dissolve. During a visit to Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1963, he had an overwhelming mystical experience. He resigned his teaching position, and along with his wife joined the Ashram.

By this time he was already a well-known name in Oriya literature: he received the Orissa Sahitya Akademi Award for fiction 1965. It was around this time that he decided to "present through English a chunk of genuine India". His first collection of short stories in English, *A Song for Sunday and Other Stories*, appeared in 1967. Since then, he has published three novels – *Cyclones*, *The Tiger at Twilight* and *The Escapist* – and more than a dozen collections of short stories in English. He was the editor of *The Heritage* (1985-89), a prestigious monthly from the house of *Chandamama*, and has been a regular columnist for The Statesman and Hindustan Times. Among his non-fictional works, *My Little India* (National Book Trust), *Chasing the Rainbow* (Oxford University Press), and *Myths, Legends, Concepts and Literary Antiquities of India* (Sahitya Akademi) deserve special mention. He is currently working on a comprehensive biography of Sri Aurobindo, which is being serialized in *Mother India*, an Ashram journal.

That he is regarded so highly by our cultural and intellectual elite is proved by the fact that he has won almost every major literary award in this country: Sahitya Akademi

(1972), Orissa Sahitya Akademi (twice, in 1965 and 1989), Sarla Award (1980), Saraswati Samman (2000), Padma Shri (2001) and Padma Bhushan (2020), to mention only the better known. Three state universities in Orissa have awarded him D.Litt. (*honoris causa*). In 2007 the Sahitya Akademi bestowed on him its highest honour, the Fellowship, "reserved for the immortals of literature".

5.3.2 *The Dusky Horizon*: a commentary and outline

I

The beginnings of storytelling in Indian literature date back to the days of the Upanishads and Puranas. By the time Kathasaritsagara and Daskumarcharita appeared, the art of storytelling in India had matured into a rich and complex tradition. Most of these writings contain a number of intertwining tales woven around a central narrative. At times allegorical and didactic, these tales quite often are deeply symbolic in nature.

Manoj Das's tales are steeped in this ancient literary tradition, and *The Dusky Horizon* is no exception. At the centre of the story is a misguided adventure of three little village boys—Hatu, Navin and the narrator—who take their newly found friend, an eleven year old city girl, Lily on a trek to the village hillock. The misadventure ends in the accidental fall and death of Lily.

When the story opens, the narrator, who is in his eighties, has been reading a fairy tale about a sweet little girl and an ogre living on a hill. The story somehow reminds him of Peacock Hill – the hillock in his village, the legend of an ogre living there, his childhood days in the village, his friends, and the fateful evening leading to Lily's death. As the narrator begins reminiscing about the days gone by, we move into a world of childhood sensibility and imagination. It is the Indian countryside, seventy years ago, which would be around the year 1900, because the story was first published in 1969. The child-narrator also brings in tales he had heard from his father, and the tragedy of Jagatbandhu fifty years before Lily's episode, which further take the narrative a few decades back to 1850's.

The Dusky Horizon therefore is the story of a small Indian village and its growth through the last one hundred and twenty years. The characters and events are reflective of the consciousness of this village evolving through time. Since no mention is made of the name or a precise location of the village, it acquires a universality of character and becomes every village in India. The author seems more interested in exploring the spirit of Indian villages and therefore of India, rather than locating it in a particular region, north, east or south.

But why should the village or the countryside, and not the metropolis, be a more authentic representation of the national spirit? Is the madness of a modern Indian city—as portrayed for example in Mohan Rakesh's *Adhe-Adhure*—Indian or Western in its psychological origins? Don't you think Eliot's *Shantih, Shantih, Shantih*—'The Peace which passeth understanding'—in *The Waste Land*, and not Rakesh's *Adhe-Adhure*, points to the core of Indian psyche? Why is Shanti Parva, the twelfth Book in the *Mahabharata*, the longest and the most significant? At the end of the drama of life and all its upheavals, there reigns supreme an all-pervading peace. This is the crux of Indian literature, and the core of Manoj Das's writings, including *The Dusky Horizon*.

II

Since the Peacock Hill and the legend of an ogre living there are central to the action, the author proceeds by telling intricately woven stories about the legend. The world is a wondrous place to a child, and to an old man, a scene of mystery and insoluble riddles. Here, the narrator at eighty remembering his days as a child is both. The story as a perfectly chiselled narrative opens with this sense of wonder:

> Where do all the butterflies go during a storm? I wondered in my childhood and have continued to wonder over the decades past.
>
> And birds caught up in a gale always saddened me. The sight of their pell-mell flight would bring to my mind a kind of modern poetry—its crazy violence against rhythm.
>
> And if a sudden gust sent a handful of dead leaves spiralling up, I felt myself shot up too and gone with them!

The narrator finds it strange that he should be thinking of storms, birds and dead leaves while reading a fairy tale that begins: "Atop the hill on the horizon lived a certain ogre, quite afraid of the world". Maintaining an ambivalent tone, he tells when he was a child, some of his friends did claim to have seen an ogre or two, though he himself had only heard about them. The ogre always wore black looks, sprouted sparks through his eyes and nostrils, and ate little naughty children for his breakfast. The ogre living at the Peacock Hill was also said to be a fugitive from the law who had murdered ten or twenty people "for the sake of the lady he loved".

The legend acquired quite a new twist when a young village lad, a prodigy and scholar of history, disappeared on the Peacock Hill. The narrator's father had told him the story. "Like the tulsi plant giving out its holy fragrance from its very first sprouting, this lad had shown signs of his distinctiveness right from his childhood". While still in school he had started practicing *pranayam* and *tratak* and was the first boy from the village to go out for higher studies. In college, he conducted a methodical research and came to conclusion that the fugitive on the Peacock Hill was no other than Nana Sahib of the Sepoy Mutiny fame. Nana was said to be carrying a fabulous treasure with him and also carried a Rs. 10,000 reward on his head to be given to any one who revealed his whereabouts to the British government. The lad was in a dilemma whether to befriend Nana and inherit the treasure or report the matter to officials, win the reward, and hope for even winning the knighthood, eventually. He was quite disappointed when the District Collector told him, "Baboo! Please leave the poor old Nana in peace." Now he was left with no option but to befriend Nana. But when, after having spent a few days on the Peacock Hill, he came back, people found him more worked up. He had discovered that the hill contained rich ores of precious metals. He was willing to share his findings with any one for a profit margin. Finally, Bird & Co., a reputed British mining company, agreed to send an Englishman to conduct a preliminary survey of the hill. After the survey, the Englishman told the lad's father:

> There is something wrong with your boy's head. You should arrange for his treatment. And, confidentially, nothing would be a better cure than giving him a wife. He will forthwith stop exploring the hills.

The boy continued loitering on the Peacock Hill for a few weeks, then disappeared without leaving any trace. Two speculations about his disappearance gained ground. Some said, the ogre was a wizard engaged in secret rites and must have sacrificed the lad

at the altar of his deity. The others said, the Yaksha guarding the wealth of the hills must have taken the lad captive. By the time the narrator grew up, "the Yaksha had been reduced to an ogre once again."

III

"The epoch-making downfall of Shri Jagatbandhu Das", which occurred nearly half a century before the narrator's birth, is the next background tale recounted with equal humour and pathos. Jagatbandhu, the only son of the village zamindar and a brilliant medical student, was quite a revolutionary in his ideas for his times. He was the most eligible bachelor in the area, but he refused all marriage proposals made by the distinguished gentry from the neighbourhood. Therefore, quite understandably, when he decided to take for his bride a Christian girl, his decision wrought havoc on the established social order.

Gallant and optimistic of making significant social changes, when he arrived with his bride in the village, he was immediately ostracised by the villagers who showed an exemplary solidarity in their decision. For his punishment, he was not only made to stay with his bride in the cowshed, he was also refused such basic amenities as water from the village pond. In the cowshed, his wife fell seriously ill. At last, one midnight, his father approached the couple with blankets, fruits and milk. The nobility of character in Jagatbandhu could no longer withstand the crudeness of rustic psyche: "Father! I've reconciled myself to your heartlessness, but I'm afraid your cowardice and hypocrisy will drive me mad".

He leaves the village next morning for good. His father, heartbroken for being misunderstood, dies soon after. Jagatbandhu's wife also dies after some time, but not before leaving him a son. The son grew up, married, and leaving behind a daughter, died along with his wife.

> Jagatbandhu continued to live amidst an abundance of deaths. To see him was to feel the impact of a full three-act tragedy. He wore a long gown, a round khaki cap and thick glasses. His face looked blurred behind the puffs of smoke from his cheroot. I suspect he wished to hide himself. We saw very little of him anyway, for he rarely visited the village.

IV

Half a century later since the day when he had arrived with his Christian bride, Jagatbandhu revisits the village, this time with his granddaughter, Lily. The world had drastically changed during the intervening period. The village now had a post office, a government dispensary and the houses adorned photographs and colourful portraits brought from the neighbouring towns. The village elders had become wiser and Jagatbandhu's past was no longer taboo. The village boys however were not ready to receive in their midst a cultural foreigner like Lily.

> Firstly, she was a girl. Secondly, she wore a frock at eleven, by which age all our sisters in the village had outgrown their first sarees.
>
> Then, she was in the habit of surveying us from top to toe through her gold-rimmed glasses without the slightest regard for our budding maleness.

> Moreover, she knew English and had several other dubious qualities which went with that.

In the 1960s, the staid cultural setting of the countryside often felt threatened by the rapid spread of urban values making deep inroads in Indian society. Gyanranjan's celebrated Hindi story "Rachna Prakriya" offers a different treatment of the same theme. It would be interesting to read the two stories together. In Gyanranjan's story, a city-woman's entry into the slow-paced life of a small town creates quite a turbulence in the lives of many young men. By placing the conflict in the world of children, Manoj Das not only avoids murk and violence but succeeds as well in offering a wider harmony of reconciled values.

The narrator and his friends Hatu and Navin do offer a show of violence to Lily. But responding with compassion and understanding, which she must have inherited from her grandfather, Lily is able to win over the boys as friends. In the process, there has been some complication. The narrator's moral stature somewhat goes up and this makes the group-leader Hatu feel belittled. Hatu therefore is on the lookout to settle accounts and regain his authority.

One day, responding to Lily's generosity, the boys decide to show her the only tourist attraction in the village, the Peacock Hill. As the group nears the hilltop, the weather gets rough. Everyone can sense a storm brewing and suggests an immediate return. But Hatu overrules the collective voice and pushes them to continue their trek.

> We had hardly spent fifteen minutes when the wind suddenly turned cold and cruel. The trees raised a terrific chorus of a thousand hissing voices and waved their branches frantically, signalling us to flee immediately. We huddled under a big tree….
>
> Soon came lightning and thunderclaps. I had never seen such dazzling flashes nor heard such deafening sounds before. The rain falling like cascades followed them.

In the chaos that follows, Lily loses her glasses and without them becomes near-blind. There is no time to look for the glasses and she is told to hold the narrator's hand and walk along. On the narrow and slippery path, with everyone scared and fighting to save their own skins, Lily soon loses contact with the group. When they reach the safer ground they discover that Lily is missing. Jagatbandhu arrives looking for Lily, and a search party, with the boys carried on the shoulder of older men, goes into a desperate rescue operation. Lily is found to have fallen from a treacherous precipice and Jagatbandhu is the first to notice her dead body.

The next day Lily is buried at the spot where she had fallen, and Jagatbandhu leaves the village one final time. The ogre or the dark spirit that ruled the village had claimed its last victim. Jagatbandhu's punishment is full and final.

> Once before too he had left our village, in a somewhat similar situation, half a century ago. But then he had in him the spirit of a rebel, the dream of leading a life free of everything rotten he was leaving behind.
>
> It was so different today…. Later in life, often when I had an occasion to pray to God, I said, 'Grant me, Lord, that never again should I see a man as lonely as Jagatbandhu!'

V

"The fairy tale lay in my lap, I don't know for how long, while Lily dominated my mind as the full moon dominates the sky". In the fairy tale, the ogre is freed from his disabling curse by compassionate waters flowing from the little girl's heart. The narrator decides to seek out the pseudonymous author of the fairy tale who turns out to be no other than Navin, his childhood friend and companion on that ill-fated expedition. Next day, the two friends pay a visit to Peacock Hill where, to their surprise, they find a hermit who has been planning to build a shrine to a goddess at the very spot where Lily had been buried.

> 'Hatu is doing penance in his own way. You paid your tribute to Lily by recreating her as the charming heroine of your fairy tale. But what about me?' I asked, and to my own great surprise, began to weep.
>
> 'If only I could weep like you! It is not so easy at eighty, you know!' said Navin with a sigh.

As in the older tradition of storytelling, Manoj Das provides a well-rounded ending to *The Dusky Horizon*. One feels as if one had been listening to a tale told by some wise old grandmother, a tale whose significance emerges only slowly.

Exercise 1

1. Write a short paragraph about the life of Manoj Das.
2. Do you agree with the view that the story has a well-rounded ending?
3. Discuss how the story revolves around the Peacock Hill.

5.4 Analysing the Story

In all its appearances, *The Dusky Horizon* is a simple tale that entertains us with equal measure of the comic and tragic, of humour and pathos. But appearances can often be deceptive. Behind the simplicity of narrative is hidden an exquisite richness of theme and a masterly craftsmanship of style. When you analyse a story, you keep your eyes open to both what is being told and how it is told.

Raja Rao in his famous Foreword to *Kanthapura* tried to lay the foundations of Indian storytelling in English:

> After language the next problem is that of style. The tempo of Indian life must be infused into our English expression…. And our paths are paths interminable…. We have neither punctuation nor the treacherous 'ats' and 'ons' to bother us – we tell one interminable tale. Episode follows episode, and when our thoughts stop our breath stops, and we move on to another thought. This was and still is the ordinary style of our story-telling.

What Raja Rao says is not a credo of a particular school of thought, but a self-existent truth residing in the heart of every Indian. In Manoj Das the same truth finds expression, though in a manner quite different from Raja Rao. Perhaps a similar style has found its way in some modern Indian criticism as well, in Sisirkumar Ghose, for example.

5.4.1 Theme: what is it about?

Theme would be the dominant idea behind a narrative. Most Indian tales in ancient texts have a multitude of themes and meanings. Idea, which is what a theme is, is the delineation of a pattern. Indian mind was quick to realise that all patterns are ephemeral and fleeting. Hence, the world—material or subtle and psychic—was termed Maya. How can you look at a thing and fixing your gaze say this is what it is? Allow the slightest shift in time or space—and they exist in more than one dimension—and the world wears a new robe.

And yet, there is something unchanging behind the ever-fleeting Change. To quote T S Eliot:

> At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
> Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
> … Except for the point, the still point,
> There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

Only the artist who rises above the flux can communicate that which is beyond time, and also simultaneously in time but not of time. Ever-illusive and ever-present as the supreme Mystery, the Thing is there: people have called it by different names—love, compassion, truth… the list is endless.

The Dusky Horizon is a tale teeming with patterns, ideas and themes. As vast, rich, diverse and colourful as life itself, more than anything else it is about Life, about our earthly existence.

But how do we locate the central theme, even if it be for the sake of a critical reading? The clue lies in the fairy tale the narrator has been reading. The fairy tale is about an ogre and his redemption by a sweet little girl. The Dusky Horizon is about the redemption of Peacock Hill. It is about the lifting of a curse, a darkness surrounding the hill, the village and its people. It is about the dusky horizon opening out to the light of the day.

The wizard of the Peacock Hill demands sacrifice, his pound of flesh, before he will consent to let go the curse. *The Dusky Horizon* is about the tragic fate of Jagatbandhu Das and the series of heroic sacrifices he makes at the altar of fate.

It is also about the world of children: their innocence, laughter, sadness, pain and pranks; their being oblivious of any other world than their own two feet wide range of colourful spectrum. It is about the confrontation of cultures, about a civilised city girl coming in contact with rustic boys untouched by modernity and new thought. It is about the darkness and crudity of Indian villages and their primeval simplicity as well, about the madness attending an unevolved mind seeing too soon the light of rationality, about the limitations of rational thought in the face of vast mystery of life. It is about a mature all-inclusive perception of life, a humour of serene laughter that can embrace even the darkest patches in the sky.

The Dusky Horizon is about so many things. To read it as a *sahridaya* is to exclaim 'oh, yes' and 'so what?' at the same time.

5.4.1.1 The Redemption of Peacock Hill

The clue to the central theme, we said, was to be found in the fairy tale.

> 'Atop the hill on the horizon lived a certain ogre, quite afraid of the world,' stated the novella, beginning on a somewhat unusual note.

Read together the title "The Dusky Horizon" with the phrase "the hill on the horizon", and the word 'dusky' gets associated with 'the hill'. According to Oxford Dictionary, 'dusk' comes from the Old English word 'dox', meaning dark; the change in form occurred in Middle English when -x came to be replaced by -sk. There is something decidedly dark or semi-dark about the locale. Next, mark the expression, 'quite afraid of the world'. Fear and darkness go together. The dark not only inspires fear but is also the womb of fear. Fear creates insecurity and consequently leads to every kind of violence.

> Although I have passed all my days since my early youth in cities where darkness meant only the lights turned off, I have never forgotten the grandeur of rural darkness, awfully alive, like a surging flood throbbing with impulses and emotions of its own, which, in my childhood, used to assume its most impressive and terrifying stance on the Peacock Hill.

The first thing we hear about the ogre of Peacock Hill is that he had killed ten or twenty people – the grannies stretched the number to one hundred and one – for the sake of the lady he loved. Love, we are told, saves people, not kills them. Love liberates, while darkness imprisons. Love is the destroyer of darkness; therefore the dark opposes love. It is the darkness that kills not love. Who killed Jagatbandhu's bride? Has Jagatbandhu ever harmed anyone? Can this rock-like figure of towering courage even harm a fly?

> But, alas, no sooner had Jagatbandhu qualified as a doctor than he fell in love with a Christian nurse. For at least a fortnight from the day of that ominous news reaching our village, the solemn ones among our elders were seen walking the roads with their heads hung and their faces pulled long like rotten cucumbers.
>
> They straightened their heads only when the progressive and ever-optimistic Jagatbandhu, appearing in the village with his bride, was not only obliged by his father to take shelter in their cowshed but was also completely ostracized by the villagers, who showed exemplary unity on this issue.

The village elders who judge and pronounce sentence on Jagatbandhu's love are 'solemn' and 'like rotten cucumbers'. One meaning of the word 'solemn' is 'not cheerful or smiling'; 'rotten' of course suggests decay and death. These people have been condemned to darkness; they have lost the capacity of joy, of living. The ogre on the Peacock Hill is no other than the darkened psyche of these village elders. The ogre ate Jagatbandhu's bride for breakfast, his son and daughter-in-law for lunch, and now at supper awaits his granddaughter, Lily.

The lover, in contrast, is 'progressive and ever-optimistic'. It is love that gives us hope and makes us move forward. It is a flower that opens slowly and takes time to bloom: Jagatbandhu's love finds its full flowering in the third generation, in his granddaughter, Lily. Navin's portrayal of his heroine in the fairy tale is not just a metaphor for Lily; it is her subtle psychic being as revealed to the narrator and Navin, her childhood companions. Why else should the narrator quote the heroine's character from the fairy tale in such detail and the rest of it in bare outlines?

> At first, the girl's playmates were a few squirrels and butterflies. When she grew up a little, several hares befriended her. Later she got to know a herd of

> antelopes. These friends imparted to her the art of lightning quickness in her movements. A swarm of bees were her early music teachers; but soon they placed her in charge of a flock of cuckoos who, when they had taught her all they knew, guided her to a gorge amidst a row of caverns deep in the forest where the wind composed extraordinary symphonies, with a murmuring brook contributing to the melody.
>
> Stars taught her the alphabet and she learnt love from the rainbow, smiles from the flowers, aspirations from the sunrise, sadness from the sunset and dreams from the moonlight.

She surely reminds of Wordsworth's Lucy.

In the fairy tale her silent tears and "beneficent influence dissolved the curse that lay upon [the ogre] and he was transformed into a charming lad". In *The Dusky Horizon* Lily's 'beneficent' action and influence transform the crude, dark-souled village boys into charming lads.

The reception given to Lily by the village boys—Hatu, Navin and the narrator—is reminiscent of the silent punishment meted out to her grandmother by the village elders half a century ago. In their "holy mission against the aggressive urban femininity" the boys launch a series of attacks on Lily.

> As she passed this way the other day, looking at things through her glasses with that insufferable vanity, Hatu followed her stealthily and when quite close, gave out such a terrific scream that her spleen could have burst like a watermelon…. The little smarty had put on a dazzling new frock. Navin passed by her at great speed, in the process emptying a shell-full of babul juice on it.

What sin has she committed to deserve such treatment, except that her aesthetically awakened senses desire her to dress well and her mind delights in observing the rich feast of nature laid out before her eyes?

When the boys put into motion their third attack with the narrator perched at a vantage point to smash her glasses with his catapult, Lily is more than ready for them. She catches the attacker by hand and drags him into her house. In genuine consternation, she demands: "Whom did you want to aim at—Grandpa or myself? And why? What harm have we done to you?" No sooner has she confronted the darkness than the darkness begins to dissolve into light. "I did something terribly embarrassing before I was aware of it. I burst into tears." It is the repentant tears that begin the work of transformation. When, instead of being punished and handed over to the police, as he feared, he is treated with consideration, affection and 'toffees', the narrator takes no time to realise that Lily "is an angel despite her specs". Not only are the boys treated with a sumptuous breakfast, they are also taught a lesson or two in good manners and proper dressing up. The effect is charismatic:

> I had suddenly stopped being impressed by Hatu's glib talk and trickery. Lily's charm, manners and speech had started widening my horizon.

Surely, the dusk has begun to lift up from the horizon!

But the darkness is too deep in human nature, and in Hatu it finds its last citadel. Hatu can distort and malign goodness. He feigns drunkenness after a cup of tea at Lily's house,

implicating thereby that Lily was a drunkard because she drank tea! Next day, when she desires to go for a stroll on the riverside, it is Hatu again who resists and blocks the proposal with forces of darkness: that there is a rabid dog out there; that snakes have been seen visiting one another's holes; that there was a ghost of a young widow who was seen washing her baby in the river on moonlit nights. Since there were no such things in actuality, didn't such phantoms emanate from Hatu's darkened soul?

As we noted earlier, once again it is Hatu who is squarely responsible for Lily's death. When everyone else would have turned and gone back to safety on sensing a storm brewing, Hatu, acting as an agent of darker forces, leads Lily to her sacrifice and death.

Christ-like she pays with her blood for the sins of Peacock Hill and brings redemption to her fallen companions. She had prophesied that Navin "should grow into a writer or a poet", and he lives to fulfil that prophesy and redeems himself by writing about her. She had given the narrator a gift of tears and he has kept it intact even in his eighties. The last to be redeemed, because the most darkened, is Hatu. Only in his last days—he is well over eighty—he is seen atoning for his sins by planning to build a shrine for a goddess at the exact spot where Lily had been buried seventy years ago!

5.4.1.2 The Tragedy of Jagatbandhu

'The Redemption of Peacock Hill' was one way of reading the story. But if you isolate a single theme, blow it out of proportion, that would be a misreading of the text. However important or central, a part can never be the whole. All great art, like life, must ever remain an unfathomable mystery, a storehouse of infinite riches. As you look closer, you discover many more patterns in a given text, and that makes your experience of it much richer.

The story of Jagatbandhu draws as much attention as the story of Peacock Hill. His is a tale of living amidst so many deaths. Dying—the loss of all that is dear to us—is part of living. Death is a fact of life, and cannot be wished away. To understand death is to understand life. By coming to terms with his personal sorrow and moving on, Jagatbandhu asserts the finality of Life, not the supremacy of death.

As he grew up, life was all rosy for Jagatbandhu. He was "the only son of a reasonably affluent father, handsome and a medical student to boot". He couldn't have asked for more. Young and robust in spirit, he sported with life and refused to be chained down by conventions. Being the most eligible bachelor in the neighbourhood, he not only said no to every proposal brought forward for his wedding, he said it in a manner that must have hurt the pious sentiments of many an elder.

> Before some of them the proud Jagatbandhu would feign lunacy, while before others he would behave like one inflamed with an insatiable greed for dowry. When in a serious mood, he would confide to the appalled parents that he had managed to banish or neutralise the planets in his horoscope, which had conspired to bring about his marriage.

But not all the stars in his horoscope could be neutralised. The cruel face of Fate that doles out our portion of sorrow and tests our manhood waited for him at the very next turning of the road. He falls in love and marries someone outside his class, caste and religion, a Christian nurse. He has rebelled against all conventions of society and must be

punished. When he comes home with his bride, the treatment meted out to him is not just severe, it is inhuman, to say the least. Insulted and humiliated, he is made to live in a cowshed.

> In the cowshed, Jagatbandhu's wife took ill. Nobody came to their aid. The young man was even forbidden the use of the village ponds and had to fetch water from the river himself. Respectable men from several nearby villages, umbrellas stuck under their arms, came to steal glimpses of Jagatbandhu's plight. And, of course, those among them who tried to catch his attention with meaningful coughs were the fathers of girls earlier refused by him.

What is noteworthy here is the heroic spirit of Jagatbandhu. Anyone of a lesser moral stature in his situation would have surely run away. Jagatbandhu, being a qualified doctor, had all the means to settle down in any of the cities. But he refuses to leave. Why should he? He has not committed a sin. He holds his ground till the day when his father pays him a stealthy visit at midnight and he sees that his father is a coward and hypocrite. Suffering he can endure, but not moral turpitude. He leaves the village next morning.

Suddenly, in one stroke of fate, he has lost all which men call precious—his father, home, affluence and zamindari. Soon, he loses his wife and in years to come also his son and daughter-in-law. He lives through a seesaw game of life and death. When his wife dies, she leaves him a son; when his son and daughter-in-law die, they leave him a daughter. In the midst of death he is forced to nurse life. Life is a strange teacher.

Half a century later, when he returns to his village with his granddaughter, we do not see much of him. Twice, we catch glimpses of him, and both the time he is seen smiling: "Jagatbandhu once entered our room and threw an affable smile at us"; "Lily, with a winning smile, told Jagatbandhu… he replied, returning the smile." A man who can smile with such spontaneity has certainly retained his grip on life.

The last time when we see him with Lily's dead body in his lap, the scene is heart-rending. He "sat like a statue. None dared to disturb him." Has this been too much even for him? He is heard of no more.

5.4.1.3 Conflict of Cultures: Evolution of Society

What are the two cultures that are in conflict in *The Dusky Horizon*? And why are they in conflict? Perhaps the story is more about the process of growth, about the evolution of society and human mind. In the process of modernisation, there is always the duality of the old and the new. The new makes slow inroads, and the old offers a determined resistance.

Culture is always about values, ideas and beliefs that sustain and inspire a group. When the city and the village meet in *The Dusky Horizon*, it is the coming of two value systems face to face. The two visits of Jagatbandhu to his native village are two confrontations of cultures separated by half a century of time. In the first instance, the resistance was much more intense, and also more savage. By the time Jagatbandhu's granddaughter visits the village, the villagers have a fairly prepared ground for accepting the new, if not altogether welcoming it.

5.4.1.3.1 Rational Mind and Mystery of Life

That such a preparedness in time shows a progression of human mind is illustrated in the narrative about the ogre. In the story of the madcap scholar of history, we see a primitive mind in the early stages of its growth, not yet ready to assimilate the advent of the rational thought. The new throws the old off balance which leads to the unfortunate disappearance of the scholar. By the time the narrator grows up, the rational thought has gained a fair ground. His analysis of the legend of Peacock Hill is quite acceptable, even if at places a little far-fetched.

> It must have been long before I was born, at a time when there was no restriction on gathering wood from the forest. One winter evening, on their way home after the day's work, some woodcutters saw a column of smoke coiling up above a clump of trees. On reaching the spot, they discovered a stranger—to be identified later as the ogre—huddling over a fire….
>
> The stranger's eyes must have reflected the flames, thereby giving an impression that they spouted sparks. His scream, combined with the howling wind, must have sounded eerie and blood-curdling.

Surely, this is no more than a plausible but unverifiable theory. But this is how the rational thought takes its stand against ignorant superstition and in the process tries to colonise the human mind by driving away all sense of mystery.

In the face of mystery, the author seems to take an ambivalent stance, suggesting thereby that the modern is not merely the rational. Here is another tale. Hatu has been trying to frighten Lily with stories about ghosts, when Lily recounts a real-life event. One day, Jagatbandhu with his baby granddaughter had gone to a fair in the suburb, when on an impulse he decided to get photographed.

> However, when the picture was ready, the photographer observed, 'I don't understand why the lady's picture should come so indistinct.'
>
> 'But there was no lady with me unless you refer to this big venerable one!' commented the gentleman showing the child.
>
> 'Who then was standing behind you, holding on to your chair?' asked the surprised photographer, and showed the picture to the gentleman who, as soon as he looked at it, shrieked and almost fainted. The phantom figure was his dead daughter-in-law, that is to say, my mother. Grandpa was the gentleman and I was the baby he held.

5.4.1.3.2 Modernisation of Villages

Fifty years ago, when Jagatbandhu was seen leaving the village with his sick bride, the nearest bus stop was "several miles away". The world has taken long strides since then. With better transportation services available, many of the well-to-do villagers now take their families for an outing to towns and cities. This has provided them a wider exposure to the new world. They often come back home with "family photographs with flowery frames" and "colourful portraits of gods, goddesses and King George the Sixth". The gentle irony suggests how the rustic mind is still quite primitive because it fails to make

much distinction between gods, goddesses and King George. In another example, "one bespectacled gentleman subscribed to a weekly and carried a bundle of the back numbers of the periodical wherever he went".

The material development is not necessarily a cultural growth. The gifts of civilisation have arrived but the mind that can understand and make use of them is still lagging behind. Civilisation without culture—which is of mind—only makes us laughing stocks. The village has been given a post office and a government dispensary, but see what the villagers make of it:

> At the dispensary, not only did those running high temperatures press the thermometer under their armpit… but also others with pains from a cut or boil pleaded with the doctor's assistant—whose designation was Compounder but who was called Kuru-Pandav—to be treated with that magic glass stick. They felt great relief when obliged.

The new is also looked at with suspicion. For example, there is the case of Natbar who had contracted the bad habit of drinking tea while he was serving in a city for some time. Back in village he became notoriously known as Natbar the tea-drinker. The villagers unconsciously equated tea with alcohol, so much so that when Natbar's daughter did not bear a child after years of marriage, the womenfolk were quick to conclude that her barrenness was due to "a congenital defect in her system resulting from her father's addiction to tea". But now even Hatu will dare to drink tea. The world has certainly changed for the villagers.

> In such a changed climate, there was no question of boycotting Jagatbandhu any longer. He was, rather, treated with some reverence.

5.4.1.3.3 The Two Cultures

The boys, of course, had no such reverence for Lily. She was an intruder who threatened the proud self-sufficiency of their little world. They regarded her with suspicion and fear and met her with their childlike aggression. She knew English, which they suspected brought all the bad habits with it. When the narrator is caught red-handed with a catapult by Lily, he tells us of his fear: "We were under the impression that the townsfolk summoned the police even to drive flies from the tips of their noses".

Lily proves to be quite an eye-opener to most of them. The modern mind—which undoubtedly comes with English—has not only made her civilised, it has also given her a high culture of spirit. She is compassionate, understanding and forgiving. She treats her tormentors with affection and natural kindness. She offers them food, teaches them to dress properly, even cleans Hatu's running nose with her handkerchief. She widens their mind by telling stories from books she had read, and teaches them how to play a game of Ludo. She can quickly spot a quality in them and is appreciative of it. When Navin, moved to ecstasy by the beauty of the setting sun, mumbles, "All gold, all gold, the rippling river and the fields beyond", she is quick to respond with admiration, "You should grow into a writer or a poet".

Hatu, of course, represents the darker side of villagers' psyche. He is arrogant, boastful, stupid and crude; he tells lies and creates fear by distorting and painting everything dark. He is least impressed by Lily and her high culture.

5.4.2 Plot: how the story builds

Plot is basically how the narrative unfolds. It is not the telling of a story in a sequential order—as in a textbook on history or a newspaper report—but telling it for a particular emotional and aesthetic effect. The arrangement of events, episodes and scenes defines the primary plot structure, but much more important is the culminating emotional impact on the reader, the *Rasa*. This is achieved by the manner of telling: with how much detail an episode is told, and how much of it is withheld. The withholding is part of the author's intent, for it leaves gaps which the reader is asked to fill with his own imagination. It opens the text and invites the reader to a greater participation, so that in the end the experience is as much his as it is the author's.

The Dusky Horizon opens with some simple questions, for example, "Where do all the butterflies go during a storm?" This is how children wonder while looking at the wide world. The reader is being encouraged to get back that sense of wonder which he had once as a child. Soon we are told that the narrator has been reading a fairy tale about an ogre and a beautiful little girl. What is a fairy tale? What is fantasy? Do the characters and events in a fairy tale mean anything? Do they make sense? Are they of any value? Before these questions can settle in your mind, the narrator is quick to confide that as a child he had had heard about an ogre living in his village. All right, you say, let us hear about this ogre. And the narrator shows you the legend of the ogre from every possible side—as a child, and also as a rational adult. We are also told that this ogre eats little naughty children for breakfast.

As you are wondering saying, 'What a childish yarn!', the narrator starts telling what happened to Jagatbandhu Das in his village some 120 years ago. How can people do what they did to this man? Are these people any different from the ogre? Suddenly we know why we were told about Jagatbandhu Das. He is returning to his village with his granddaughter.

What will happen now? Have the people changed in these fifty years? The three village boys and Jagatbandhu's granddaughter become friends, and we see a whole rural Indian landscape about the year 1900. The children go trekking to Peacock Hill, where the ogre was supposed to have been living in some fantastical unreality. As they are returning, the girl slips down from the hill and is killed. Suddenly, you don't know if the ogre was real or not. To make you more confused, the narrator has already told you the authentic story of the girl's mother being spotted as a ghost.

If you are still wondering what to make of this accident and death, the narrator closes the tale by telling what an impact this experience had on the lives of the three children. It drastically changed the course of Hatu's life, who is seen camping as a hermit on the Peacock Hill, when the story ends.

It is a powerful, well-constructed plot that amply succeeds in bringing alive what Hamlet must have meant when he said,

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

We shall never again be able to sleep in the self-satisfied cocoon of rational thought, even though all our questions have been rationally answered by an elaborate and flawless plot.

EXERCISE 2

1. Write a short note on the significance of the title.
2. Critically analyse the consequences of the meeting of two cultures.
3. Write a note on the tragedy of Jagatbandhu.
4. How does the plot move to achieve its final emotional impact?
5. What's the significance of the hermit on the Peacock Hill?
   a. He is the reincarnation of the ogre
   b. He is Hatu
   c. He completes the concluding theme
   d. He adds one more wonder to the story

5.4.3 Characterisation:

Characterisation is intrinsically woven in the plot construction. If plot is the sequencing of events, then events flow from characters and constitute them. In the foregoing analysis, we have already dealt with all the characters in a fairly detailed manner. What follows is merely a listing of points that need to be discussed, supported by suitable textual evidence, while attempting a character analysis of any of these.

Jagatbandhu as a heroic figure symbolises the grandeur of human spirit. With eyes fixed across the horizon, he marches ahead towards future unhampered by the baggage of a dead past. Even after paying with so many deaths as the price for his adventure, his spirit remains undefeated. Silent and smiling, he has spent his days nurturing life. Here is a human spirit that negates the supremacy of death.

Lily is the mother spirit of life whom Jagatbandhu has offered his life's devotion. She is pure, innocent, loving, and as adventurous as her grandfather. She will dare anything, even death. Devoid of any ill-will even towards those who have treated her unkindly, she is a kindly and caring teacher and companion to her friends.

Among the boys, the narrator is a weakling and sickly child who has all his life faced ridicule from his friends. Lily's love and understanding transform him into a self-confident and goodly creature who grows into a successful man of the world in his later life. Navin, whom we later meet as the accomplished author of the fairy tale, is, like any artist, a silent background figure. It is Hatu who draws most out attention. He is a bully with a darkened psyche. It is he whom Lily redeems with her death.

5.4.4 Style and Technique

The narrative throughout is liberally peppered with a gentle irony and humour which is so characteristic of Manoj Das's style. Even his authorial comments draw but a smile from his readers. Take, for example, the following comment with which he closes a rather longish narrative about the legend of the ogre:

> Had our people's imagination been tempered by a little more empathy, they would not have let the ogre seethe in the sun and soak in the rain and shiver in the cold all alone, but would have found an ogress to keep him company.

The whole episode about the scholar of history is a gentle ridiculing of rational thought and an unenlightened academic world. The style is that of a comic book, where the figures are a little exaggerated without ever appearing unreal.

Manoj Das is a master craftsman when it comes to portraying the world of children. Even a little unobtrusive stroke of his pen is packed with a whole experience behind it. Take a simile, as an illustration: the children sat "with faces drawn as if it were the eve of the school opening after a vacation". Or see with what humour he can look at the children's world of vanity, pride and hurt:

> Hatu, being the leader, had the prerogative of making such arbitrary comments. Even so, I felt a bit humiliated. My father had lately acquired a bullock cart and had also become the secretary of our primary school. I had expected Hatu to take note of the elevation in my status brought about by such developments.

The author can also use a comic scene to bring out even what is dark in his characters: for example, when Hatu acts out the drunkenness after having a cup of tea.

A very important aspect of Manoj Das's style is its authentic Indianness. Like any story in the *Puranas* or *Panchatantra*, his stories have a solid beginning, complete with all necessary background details and a satisfying well-rounded ending of a grandmother's tale. There are also, as in the Puranic tradition, a number of little tales woven around the central narrative. The rhythm successfully captures the slow and relaxed movement of Indian life that looks at appearances in an undisturbed, nonchalant manner, convinced that all eventually is *maya*. The idiom, quite often, will borrow a term from Indian life rather than caring for a chaste Englishness of expression. For example, the young scholar's promising life is like 'the tulsi plant', and the village elder's faces are drawn 'like a rotten cucumber'.

EXERCISE 3

1. Write in your own words a short character sketch of the following:
   a. Jagatbandhu Das
   b. Lily
   c. The Boys
2. Wite a short note on Manoj Das's style.

5.5 Summing Up

In this Unit we have learned how

- to make use of critical commentary while writing a summary
- to identify the major and minor themes and see them as parts of an artistic whole
- to analyse a plot as leading to a desired emotional effect.
- to identify the characteristics of an Indian style of storytelling.

5.6 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Exercise 1

1. Refer to 5.3.1; you can also find a detailed biography of Manoj Das at www.worldofmanojdas.in
2. Refer to 5.3.2
3. Refer to 5.3.2

Exercise 2

1. Refer to 5.3.2
2. Refer to 5.4.1.3
3. Refer to 5.4.1.2
4. Refer to 5.4.2
5. C

Exercise 3

1. Refer to 5.4.3 for basic clue, and for greater details to the commentary and themes.
2. Refer to 5.4.4

5.7 References

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5.9 Terminal and Model Questions

1. Among the many themes, which one to you appears central in The Dusky Horizon?

2. Discuss the history of the village, its growth and evolution, as told or suggested by the story.

3. Critically analyse the character of Lily. Do you think she is more of a symbol than a person?

4. Bring out the significance of the title in The Dusky Horizon.

UNIT6: JOHN GALSWORTHY "THE APPLE-TREE"

6.1. Introduction

In the first block you were introduced to non-fictional prose and read the works of some of the finest English essayists of all times. Block two deals with Short Story, a relatively new, however an important sub-genre of prose. In this block you will be reading three absorbing stories by three eminent authors from different parts of the world; we have selected for you Galsworthy's "The Apple Tree", Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and Manoj Das' "The Dusky Horizon*"*. We are sure that these stories will be transporting you into realms that will truly be enchanting and delighting you. We begin with Galsworthy's "The Apple Tree", which is one of the most loved and also one of Galsworthy's favourite short stories.

6.2. Objectives

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss John Galsworthy as a writer
- Appreciate "The Apple Tree" as one of the finest and most anthologised love story
- Interpret a literary work at various levels

6.3. John Galsworthy: The Man and the Writer

John Galsworthy was born in Kingston Hills, Surrey, England, to solicitor John Galsworthy and Blanche Bailey Galsworthy. His parents were aristocrats and owned a large estate at Kingston-upon-Thames. Galsworthy attended Harrow and New College, Oxford, trained as a barrister and was called to the bar in 1890. Although Galsworthy was apprenticed to law, he chose not to practice law, but to satisfy his wanderlust. He travelled widely. His travels widened his horizons as through them he came in contact with myriads of people, ideas, and places, which later on provided raw materials for his writing. In one of his travels, he met Joseph Conrad and the two became life-long friends. In the year 1895, Galsworthy began to court Ada Nemesis Pearson Cooper who was the wife of his cousin, Major Arthur Galsworthy and after her divorce from his cousin, married her on 23 September 1905.

Galsworthy's first published work was a collection of short stories called *From the Four Winds* which came out in the year 1897. This and several other works that followed, including his first full-length novel, *Jocelyn*, were published under the pen name John Sinjohn. Galsworthy used his own name for the first time in the year 1904 for *The Island Pharisees.*

Till the first quarter of the twentieth century, Galsworthy mainly wrote novels on social themes. His works chiefly mirrored the social and moral issues of contemporary society. Novels such as his opus *The Forsyte Saga* sequence, *A Modern Comedy*, *The White Monkey*, *The Silver Spoon*, and *Swan Song*, are all imbued with social themes.

Galsworthy was severely criticised by his contemporary novelists such as D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf who used the Stream of Consciousness technique to focus on the

inwardness of human experience in their novels. To them Galsworthy who stayed away from complicated psychological mindscapes appeared "artistically an obstructive conservative, severely limited to a vision of the outside of social phenomenon to a merely social definition of human beings." Galsworthy could never resurrect his reputation as a novelist from such and many other scathing and many other attacks. Nonetheless, undeterred, he continued to write, both novels and plays. Soon his plays started gaining popularity and he became a leading dramatist of his times.

Galsworthy was enormously influenced by Ibsen's Realism and wrote plays which became vehicles of social reforms. Like his novels, his plays also focused on class conflicts, societal problems and moral dilemmas. Galsworthy is credited with restoring the long lost morality into the English theatre. He is also viewed as one of the first writers of the Edwardian Era who "challenged some of the ideals of society depicted in the preceding literature of Victorian England". His first play *The Silver Box* which came out in the year 1906, is a three-act comedy that exposes the double standards of the Victorian judicial system. In *Strife*, a three act play which came out in the year 1909, Galsworthy surveys the confrontation of capital and labour. His most famous play *Justice*, (1910) led to prison reforms in England. Galsworthy's reaction against the First World War found its expression in *The Mob* (1914). *The Skin Game* (1920), his last important play, also deals with social themes such as break-down of the conventional class structure.

Like Shaw, Galsworthy also considered Stage as a medium of reformation. Besides social themes, Galsworthy also championed the cause of women's rights. He portrayed women from real life in his works to give voice to their concerns. For instance, he forges the character of Irene in *The Forsyte Saga* on his wife Ada Pearson.

Galsworthy was a social evangelist whose sole mission in life was to eradicate disparity of every kind. All his life he worked relentlessly for a better society. Besides taking up social, moral and women's issues, Galsworthy also crusaded for prison reforms, animal welfare and censorship reforms. David Daiches pays tribute to Galsworthy's philanthropy in the following words, "His humanity and social observation exceeded his creative and imaginative power as a literary artist."

Besides writing, Galsworthy provided his services in the First World War by working as an orderly at a hospital in France. He was elected the first President of the International PEN literary club in 1921. In the year 1932, Galsworthy was awarded the Noble Prize in literature "for his distinguished art of narration which takes its highest form in *The Forsyte Saga*". However, around that time Galsworthy had developed a malignant brain tumour and his days were numbered. As Galsworthy was confined to bed due to his illness, he was unable to attend the award ceremony and died six weeks later of a stroke at his London home. As per his wishes, Galsworthy was cremated and his ashes scattered over South Downs.

6.4. Summary of "The Apple Tree"

The story opens on a beautiful spring day on the silver-wedding anniversary of Frank Ashurt and Stella Halliday. The couple had plans to celebrate the day at Torquay, the sea-side resort town in Devon. On the way to Torquay, the couple halts at some place in the beautiful countryside of Devon. Accidently, Stella's eyes fall on a desolate grave on the

moor. She calls Franks attention to it. On seeing the grave, "…a sudden ache beset his (Frank's) heart; he had stumbled on just one of those past moments in his life…whose wings had fluttered into the unknown." Frank had a feeling of *déjà vu* and past memories begin to stir-up in his mind. Stella, who was a painter, begins to sketch the landscape while Frank, a Cambridge alumnus, takes out from his pocket, a copy of Murray's translation of the "Hippolytus" and reads "The Cyprian". After he had finished reading it, he felt a strong urge to explore the lovely countryside. "Surely there was something familiar about this view, this bit of common, that ribbon of road, the wall behind him…" Soon he is finds himself transported back in time by twenty five years, and the innocent countenance of Megan Davis, the rustic girl whom he had once loved so dearly, starts to dance in front of his mind's eye and he makes a trip down memory lane.

Twenty-five years ago Frank had bumped into Megan, a Welsh country girl, when he and his friend Robert Garton, on their way to Chagford, had to halt in a small Devon village because Frank who had injured his knee, was unable to walk any further to Chagford which was seven miles away from the village. Megan who happened to pass that way offered help by making arrangements for their stay at her aunt Mrs. Narracombe's farm house.

Right from the first meeting, Frank was enamoured of Megan's natural beauty. For him it was love at first sight and he discovered that it was likewise with Megan too. Soon the two became lovers and exchanged vows of love under the Apple Tree that grew in Mrs. Narracombe's farm. After some days of courtship, Frank started making plans of elopement with Megan and Megan too acquiesced. As Frank had no money to elope, he plans to go to Torquay to withdraw money and also to buy Megan some new fashionable clothes. At Torquay, Frank meets his old friend Phil Halliday. Phil takes Frank to his house and introduces him to his three sisters- Stella, Sabina and Freda. Frank was awestruck seeing the opulence of the Hallidays. He also seemed to be infatuated to the oldest Halliday sister, Stella, who was about seventeen years old and started delaying his return to Megan. The more time Frank spent with the sophisticated Hallidays, the more class consciousness he grew and soon he began having doubts about his feelings for Megan. When he was with the Hallidays, he often questioned himself, "I love her! But do I -really love her? Or do I only want her because she is so pretty, and loves me? What am I going to do?" and soon, he realised that it was not the rustic Megan but the stylish Stella Halliday whom he wanted to marry. "For there was no hiding it- since the time he had met the Hallidays he had become gradually sure that he would not marry Megan…And suddenly he seemed to see Stella's calm eyes looking into his, the wave of fluffy hair on her forehead stirred by the wind." Every time Megan's innocent face came in front of Frank's eyes he conveniently managed to ward her off by reminding himself that she was "a simple child not yet eighteen" and convinced himself that it would be a *sin* to think of making her his mistress. He also assured himself that in a week's time or two, Megan too would forget about him altogether. After clearing his conscience he married Stella on the last day of April the following year.

However, time rolled on, and twenty five years later, on the silver-wedding day of Stella and Frank, destiny intervened and hurled Frank in front of the memories of the country lass he had so conveniently forsaken. At the very spot where the couple had laid out their lunch, Frank found himself reminiscing about Megan and all of a sudden there arose a longing in his heart to pay a visit Mrs. Narracombe. Thinking about Megan, Frank approached the farm gate and saw the low stone house and imagined Megan to be waiting

for him under the Apple tree. "And an ache for lost youth, a hankering, a sense of wasted love and sweetness, gripped Ashurst by the throat." And he began to wonder what must have become of his long lost love. Then all of a sudden, Frank retracted his steps back towards the point where he had left his wife, for he feared that he might come across some old acquaintance.

On reaching the crossroads, Frank is drawn to the desolate grave which had become nothing more than "a narrow green mound". He stops an old grey-bearded labourer and starts enquiring about it from him. On being asked, the old fellow begins narrating the tragic love story of a farm girl named Megan Davis. He also told Frank how pining away hopelessly for her lover, Megan had committed suicide on that spot and her last desire was to be buried under "some" Apple- tree. On hearing Megan's poignant story, Frank is devastated. He walks past the old man then coming to the place where they had spread lunch, he lay down on his face "And before his eyes, dim with tears, came Megan's face with the sprig of apple blossoms in her dark, wet hair."

6.5. Character Analysis

6.5.1. Megan Davis

Megan Davis was a Welsh country girl who lived with her aunt Mrs. Narracombe, who owned a sprawling country farm. Megan was a child of Nature and dwelling in Nature's midst was its epitome too. The moment Frank sees her, he is smitten by her natural beauty.

> The wind, blowing her dark frieze skirt against her legs, lifted her battered peacock tam-o'-shanter; her greyish blouse was worn and old, her shoes were split, her little hands rough and red, her neck browned. Her dark hair waved untidy across her broad forehead, her face was short, her upper lip short, showing a glint of teeth, her brows were straight and dark, her lashes long and dark, her nose straight; but her grey eyes were the wonder-dewy as if opened for the first time that day.

Megan was a simple country lass and like Mother Nature was bountiful too. In the beginning of the story, when Frank Ashurst and his friend Robert Garton are looking for an accommodation for the night, she readily offers them help. Through her charming and caring ways she makes a niche for herself in Frank's heart and he too sees her as an angel among "the inanimate and inactive things of the farm."

Megan was so full of goodness and innocence that she could only blossom in pristine country surroundings. Imagining her in the plastic environs of the city was beyond comprehension. Frank realizes this when he reaches Torquay and sees the city girls there. He felt that Megan was too innocent to be transplanted into a city and thought to himself that "Megan, his Megan- could ever be dressed save in the rough tweed skirt, course blouse, and tam-o'-shanter cap he was wont to see her in." and "The notion that he was going to make her his mistress –that simple child not yet eighteen- now filled him with a sort of horror, even while it still stung and whipped his blood. He muttered to himself: "It's awful, what I've done-awful!" Megan was "the living unearthly beauty of the apple blossom" who would soon wilt in the city. And so for the sake of this child of Nature, he parted ways with her.

Was Megan just a fragile country lass who would have withered away in the city? Well, this was just Frank's side of the story. Megan on the other hand was not just a fragile country lass but a girl who possessed extraordinary qualities. Unlike Frank, she was passionately in love with him but hesitated in expressing her feelings to him and only dared to kiss his pillows when she made bed in his room. When she was caught in the act of "this pretty devotion" by Ashurt, "she went so pale, closing her eyes, so that the long, dark lashes lay on her pale cheeks; her hands, too, lay inert at her sides."

As she and Frank were poles apart in every respect; she a Celt, he a Saxon, she a plain country girl, him a sophisticated Cambridge graduate, she felt unworthy of his love. Nonetheless, she was truly devoted to Frank and had dreamed of spending her life with him. She once told him that she would die if she could not be with him and when Frank abandoned her for the sophisticated Stella Halliday, she lived up to her words, took her own life and chose to be buried under the Apple-tree where their love had blossomed.

One can find a striking resemblance between Galsworthy's Megan Davis and Wordsworth's Lucy. Although, Wordsworth never revealed the identity of Lucy, but both Lucy and Megan represent all those pure, innocent and naive daughters of Nature whose goodness so often becomes a bane for them.

6.5.2. Frank Ashurst

Frank Ashurst is Megan's lover and Stella's husband. He is a handsome and cultured man who looked like a bearded Schiller and had "large remote gray eyes which sometimes filled with meaning and became almost beautiful…"

Frank came from a privileged background. His late father was a professor and he himself was an alumnus of the Cambridge University. Being a well-educated man, he has a taste for finer things in life. He reads Murray's translation of "Hippolytus", appreciates Theocritus and feels contented "just looking at the sunrise, blue sky, listening the birds singing, murmuring of the stream…"

As the story opens, Frank, along with his friend Robert Garton, is shown going on a tramp. As their journey was long and Frank had suffered a knee injury, the two friends decide to halt in a nearby village for the night. While Frank and Robert sat by the river, taking rest, a young country lass happened to pass that way, and on learning from them that they needed shelter for the night, takes them to her aunt's house where the two friends had a comfortable stay.

This was Frank and Megan's first meeting and it was love at first sight for both of them. Frank was captivated by Megan's innocence and simplicity and soon proposes to her that they elope together. However, he was fickle-minded and as soon as he sees the sophisticated Stella Halliday, he forgets the rustic Megan Davis and immediately starts regretting his impulsive decision to marry her.

Indeed, Frank Ashurst stands in stark contrast to Megan Davis and the two are no match to each other. Megan is an embodiment of the noblest virtues whereas Frank is a selfish, unscrupulous and an arrogant bloke. It was for his own selfishness that he made himself believe that the best thing that he could to save "Megan's virtue" was to ignore her and this is exactly what he did when poor Megan came all the way from her village to Torquay in search of him. After discarding Megan for her "virtue's" sake, he cleared his conscience and breathed a sigh of relief, safely assuming that she too would forget about

him in a week's time or two, for after all, with them, "what was it- a few kisses." Finally, he marries the rich and glamorous Stella Halliday, who was his equal, for tying a knot with a girl beneath his class would have been below his dignity.

As mentioned earlier, Galsworthy painted picture of contemporary society through his works. Galsworthy, unlike Shakespeare, focused on issues and not characters. Usually his characters are not round and do not evolve over the course of the story. They are types who are representatives of their respective classes and Galsworthy portrays them with an aim of conveying profound messages to the audience. Like most of the Galsworthian characters, the protagonists of our story too can be seen as victims of the horrendous class-struggle which had plagued the Victorian society. Frank Ashurst represents the Machiavellian Bourgeoisie who ruthlessly exploited the Proletariat on every front and walked away scot-free.

6.6. Significance of the Title

The Apple Tree is a story that can be interpreted at various levels. On the surface, it is a story of unrequited love of a country lass named Megan Davis.

The Apple tree forms the most dominant motif around which the entire plot revolves. Not only does the Apple tree witness the exchanging of vows between the two lovers, Frank and Megan, but when Megan had been abandoned by Frank, it stood by her side, firm as a rock and like a benevolent guardian, providing hope and succour to her. Finally when hope petered out of Megan, she ended her life and wished to be buried under the Apple-tree which was so dear to her.

The Apple tree is considered to be a sacred tree in both the oriental and occidental mythologies. For instance, in Norse mythology, apples are associated with eternal youth and fertility. And Galsworthy choose the symbol aptly to draw a parallel between this tree of eternal youth and Megan, who by embracing death at a tender age remains young forever.

The story has Biblical connotations too. The Apple tree under which Frank and Megan's love blossomed and spread its fragrance, reminds us of the legendary Apple tree that grew in the Garden of Eden. Was the Apple tree the forbidden tree, the tree of Temptation that took a toll on the lives of the two lovers, or did Galsworthy who can be viewed as an iconoclast in many ways, chose to subvert the myth? Frank and Megan's love story, like that of Adam and Eve's, was a blissful one until Temptation in the form of a glamorous city life knocks on the door of Frank Ashurst and he, falling a prey to it, loses his Paradise.

Furthermore, the epigraph of the story, "The Apple-tree, the singing and the gold", has been taken from the lines spoken by the Greek chorus in Euripides' *Hippolytus,* an ancient Greek tragedy based on the myth of Hippolytus. It points out to the fact that there is no achievable Elysium life, which Galsworthy also suggests in his tale when he says:

> No getting out of it- a maladjusted animal, civilized man! There could be no garden of his choosing, of " the Apple-tree, the singing and the gold," in the words of that lovely Greek chorus, no achievable Elysium in life, or everlasting

> haven of happiness for any man with a sense of beauty- nothing which could compare with the captured loveliness in a work of art…

Yes, this earth is a labyrinth of "blood and mire" which takes away beauty from things and if we seek permanence, we need to seek it in the through art.

After reading the story, one starts holding Frank responsible for Megan's fate. However, the mythical connections of the story get more pronounced as we come to the end of the story. In the concluding paragraph of the story Galsworthy states:

> So had his virtue been rewarded and "the Cyprian" goddess of love taken her revenge! And before his eyes, dim with tears came Megan's face with the sprig of apple blossoms in her dark wet hair. 'What did I do that was wrong?' he thought. 'What did I do?' But he could not answer. Spring, with its rush of passion, its flowers and song- the spring in his heart and Megan's! Was it just Love seeking a victim! The Greek was right, then-the words of the "Hippolytus" as true to-day!

Who is the "Cyprian" goddess of love who sought her revenge? Euripides refers to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, as the Cyprian as Aphrodite was also known by Cyprus, the city of her birth. Legend has it that Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, the king of Athens, who had sworn chastity, holds Artemis, the goddess of chastity, in reverence over Aphrodite, the goddess of love. Aphrodite sees this as an insult and she swears to take revenge on Hippolytus. Aphrodite chooses Hippolytus' step-mother Phaedra as her bait for the purpose and makes her fall in love with Hippolytus. However, Hippolytus, who has sworn chastity, does not reciprocate Phaedra's love. Dejected in love Phaedra commits suicide. However, before committing suicide, she writes a note falsely accusing Hippolytus of raping her. When Theseus, Hippolytus' father and Phaedra's husband, reads the note, he is infuriated. He immediately heads to his father, the sea god Poseidon and calls upon him to punish Hippolytus for the heinous crime. Poseidon had earlier promised to grant Theseus three wishes and Theseus seizes this opportune moment and approaches Poseidon with his request, Poseidon grants Theseus his wish and Hippolytus is banished from Theseus' kingdom. Hippolytus pleads his innocence but to no avail. He spends the remainder of his days in exile, leading a wretched existence. Theseus is happy to see his son suffer until truth is revealed to him. On discovering the truth, Theseus is devastated and seeks his son's forgiveness. Hippolytus forgives his father and then dies.

Legend has it that Aphrodite, the Cyprian, for whom the Apple tree is sacred, till date continues to be on the prowl, seeking revenge on innocent lovers.

After finding out this mythical connections of the story, do you think it would be right to blame Frank for Megan's fate? Do you not find any resemblance between Frank and Hippolytus? Is there any Cyprian in the story who goes about wreaking havoc on the lives of young lovers? With whose help does she execute her plan?

6.7. Let Us Sum Up

In this unit you have learned:

- how to attempt biographical sketch of a writer

- how to summarise a story
- how to interpret characters in a story
- how to interpret themes in a literary piece

Check Your Progress

1. How had Frank Ashurst and Stella Halliday planned to spend their silver wedding anniversary?

2. Describe the first meeting of Frank Ashurst and Megan Davis.

3. Why did Frank change his mind about marrying Megan?

4. Do you consider Frank responsible for Megan's tragic fate? Give reasons to support your answers.

6.8. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Refer to Section 6.4.

2. Refer to Section 6.4.

3. Refer to Section 6.4.

4. Refer to Sections 6.5. and 6.6.

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6.10. Suggested Reading

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6.11. Terminal and Model Questions

1. Write a note on Galsworthy's achievements as a novelist and a dramatist.
2. Attempt a character-sketch of Megan Davis.
3. Discuss the significance of the title, "The Apple-tree, the singing and the gold."

UNIT 7 ERNEST HEMINGWAY: *SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO*

7.1 Introduction

In this unit we will study one of Hemingway's most popular stories and try to analyse some of the major themes dealt in it. First published in the August, 1936 issue of *Esquire*, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" has been called Hemingway's short story masterpiece. He wrote the story after his first safari to Africa and was so fascinated by the place that he told reporters he wanted to go back as soon as he had enough money. A wealthy woman read his remarks and offered to finance the trip for Hemingway, his wife Pauline, and herself. Hemingway turned her down, but he wondered what the trip would have been like if he had gone, and the story was born from that notion.

7.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to

- Appreciate Hemingway as a writer
- Analyse the major themes involved in the story
- Read the biographical element in the story
- Explain the characters and setting of the story

7.3 About the author

Ernest Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois. His first published works appeared in the Oak Park High School newspaper and the school's literary magazine. After graduation, he worked as a reporter covering the police and hospital beat for the Kansas City Star. The allure of World War I appealed to him, and he enlisted with the Red Cross as an ambulance driver. Not long after he arrived in Italy in 1918. He was severely wounded when a bomb exploded near the front line where he was delivering canteen supplies. After a lengthy recovery during which he wrote short stories and received many rejections from magazine editors, he began writing features for the *Toronto Star* newspaper.

In 1921 Hemingway married Hadley Richardson and moved to Paris as a European correspondent for the *Toronto Star*. The couple traveled throughout Europe skiing and hiking, and Hemingway's enduring fascination with bullfighting began when he attended his first bullfight in Spain.

In 1923 his first book, *Three Stories and Ten Poems*, was published as a very thin volume in Paris. Hemingway's *In Our Time*, a collection of short stories published in the United States in 1925, caused critics to take notice of his terse modern style. The following year his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, a barely disguised fictional recounting of his summer of drinking and attending bullfights in Spain with friends, was published.

In 1927 Hemingway divorced his wife and married Pauline Pfeiffer. During this marriage, he went on his first African safari and found big game hunting to his liking. He

returned to Spain to report on the civil war, and based his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* on his war experiences.

In 1940 he divorced his second wife and married Martha Gellhorn. Later he returned to Europe as a war correspondent during World War II. Here he met Mary Welsh, who became his fourth wife after his divorce from Gellhorn.

Hemingway's charismatic personality (which later was diagnosed as manic-depressive), his sporting exploits, his extensive travel, his womanizing, and his persistent drinking made him a celebrity. He was more a news item than his books, although they were bought steadily by an admiring public. Most of his books were based on his own experiences, so critics saw his books as holding keys to the writer's own character.

In 1952 Hemingway published *The Old Man and the Sea*, which won the Pulitzer Prize. Two years later, while on safari in Africa, he survived two plane crashes, but with serious injuries that plagued him the rest of his life. Also in 1954 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his contribution to literature.

During the turmoil of the civil war in Cuba, Hemingway left the island and settled in Ketchum, Idaho, where he had vacationed and hunted small game. After treatment at the Mayo Clinic for major depression, he returned to his Idaho home and shot himself dead on July 2, 1961.

7.4 Summary

Two people are waiting within sight of Kilimanjaro for the arrival of a plane to take them to civilization. The main character, Harry, a dissipated writer, has gangrene in his leg from a thorn scratch which he had neglected. With him is Helen, his wife, whom he hates but whom he had married for money. The price he paid for the money was the sacrifice of his talent as a writer.

Harry knows that he is dying and as he waits he recalls his war experiences where there had been a background of snow. Later he remembers Constantinople and the Bosphorus, Paris as it was in his writing days, women of all types, war and death, his grandfather's house, the Black Forest. He had meant to write it all down but instead he had married Helen and her money.

As he grows weaker, he senses the approach of death, which seems to be symbolized by the passing of a hyena, more and more bold. Death comes closer until the dying man can feel its weight on his chest.

Then it seems to him that the plane arrives and he is taken aboard. The plane flies higher and higher until he realizes that it is taking him to the clean beauty of the snows of Kilimanjaro.

The hyena wakes Helen, who looks at her husband and sees that he is dead.

7.5 Characters

Harry, the writer, and his wife Helen are the main characters in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro".

Harry is an ambiguous, complex and round character and gets revealed at the end of the story. Two different aspects of Harry are seen in the story: the disillusioned man who is near death and has to cope with his guilt and the "other Harry", adventurous, vital, self-reliant, who seems to have been part of the action wherever he could find it.

Harry's dialogues with Helen, specially at the beginning of the story, reveals the first Harry: a man who is extremely irritated. He knows the end is near and inevitable feelings of loss and defeat make him suffer. To make up for all his suffering, Harry puts the blame on Helen. He becomes sarcastic, aggressive and even cruel as he attempts to convince them both that the fault was Helen's money. He sarcastically apologizes for his evil-smelling leg and then he says he has always faked his love for her.

> "Don't you love me?" Helen asks.
> "No." said the man. "I don't think so. I never have."

He calls her a "bitch" all the time and even execrates the notion of love. "Love is dunghill", says Harry, "And I'm the cock that gets on it to crow." Afterwards he apologizes and says, "I've never loved anyone else the way I love you." Saying that he loves her relaxes him from his guilt, in a certain way.

Little by little Harry's hostility is abandoned. He stoically resigns himself to the fact that he must die. It is here, by means of interior monologue, that emerges another Harry, perhaps the real one: ashamed, afraid, with a desperate need to understand himself and justify or compensate for his present situation.

He then realizes how wrong it was to blame Helen: "Why should he blame this woman because she kept him well? He had destroyed his talent ..."

He tries to evade reality, dreaming of the past. He dreams of moments of courage and joy that could have been good ideas for his books. On the other hand, he also dreams of moments of horror and tragedy in war time.

But suddenly comes his final dream. He reaches the summit of Kilimanjaro, leaving his failures and personal ruin behind on the plains.

Helen, as seen by her husband, is presented mostly in a negative perspective. She is a death symbol for him. Harry considers that his wife's wealth has deprived him of life far more than gangrene will. Helen and her money are for him agents of destruction, like the vultures and the hyena.

When Harry speaks to her, he calls her a silly fool, a bore, a bitch but he admits that she remains physically interesting and desirable. "She was still a good-looking woman, she had a pleasant body ... she was not pretty, but he liked her face ..." and he says that "she had a great talent and appreciation for the bed."

Helen is a flat character as she does not change throughout the story. Psychologically "she had been acutely frightened of being alone" but as she marries Harry she "had built herself a new life", while "he had traded away what remained of his old life" in a reference that Helen is a symbol of his destruction and the corruption of his talent.

Another image of Helen presented in the story contrasts with the one given by Harry. Ironically, while she is for him a death symbol, she appears by her words and actions to be a positive illustration of life. She is presented as a maternal figure: she struggles to make him comfortable, she proposes reading to him, worries about his rest, has broth made from meat she herself shoots.

Helen gives Harry moral encouragement. She says: "You can't die if you don't give up." She keeps on telling him that the rescue plane will soon arrive and remarks that the vultures and the hyena are common nuisance at any African camp site and not harbingers of his death.

In contrast to the character of Harry, Helen is a person who dislikes looking for the hidden dimensions of people and things and has little interest in dreaming of the past or fearing the future. This deep contrast between Helen and Harry stresses their basic inability to communicate with each other.

7.6 Narrative and Themes

7.6.1 Action and Point of View

"The Snows of Kilimanjaro" has little action in the sense of physical movement (or plot). The action is essentially in Harry's mind and the movement is the advance of death. Harry has three physical signs of the approach of death. Firstly he feels death as a rush, "not a rush of water or of wind; but of a sudden evil- smelling emptiness". Secondly death approaches with "a puff, as of a wind that makes a candle flicker and the flame go tall". Finally death is personified as Harry describes its approach: "... death had come and rested its head on the foot of the cot and he could smell its breath"

The story may well be described as a study of what happens in the mind of a person (Harry), dying and regretful, contrasted with the limited viewpoint of another (Helen) who does not feel or fear so much the coming death.

The narrative is presented at two levels: Harry's dialogues with Helen and his streams of consciousness. The dialogues are interspersed with sequences of interior monologue where the main character, Harry recalls certain episodes from his youth and from his life before Helen.

Partially through the dialogues and partially through Harry's thoughts, we are shown how he perceives his situation both physically and morally and how he remembers his entire life. Harry's words and thoughts relating to the present, to his final hours with Helen and to his life with her, together with his final dream constitute the framework of the plot.

The sequences of interior monologue are moments of heightened consciousness which reveal all the things Harry should have written about, but never has. "There was so much to write", the dying writer realizes, and his last thoughts are moving recollections of some of the many things that will now go unwritten.

This consciousness that he is dying before his work is done represents Harry's psychological conflict which leads us to the central theme of the story: guilt.

7.6.2 Harry's Psychological Conflict

The death of a writer before his work is done was one of Hemingway's theme of reflection. This is mainly because the time available is so short and the temptations not to work are so strong. Harry, the dying writer, has succumbed to the temptation of not working and when he becomes aware of the approach of death he begins to realize the true pain of death: not physical pain but that which results from guilt. He hopelessly remembers his wasted time and all the material he had accumulated for writing but had put off using indefinitely, and which is now lost forever. He tries to rationalize away these painful thoughts about unfinished work by doubting whether he had ever had any real talent.

> Now he would never write the things he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well. Well, he would not have to fail at trying to write them either. Maybe you could never write them, and that was why you put them off and delayed the starting. Well he would never know, now.

Physical death is honourable and he doesn't fear it. But as he dies physically he loses forever any chance to retrieve his work, to start writing again. He doesn't care that he is about to die but he can't accept the fact that his work will be left unwritten. So it is spiritual death that haunts him and not physical death. What makes him torture himself is not the knowledge of his approaching death but the awareness of all the literary riches he hasn't written about and which will go with him underground.

Another obsession of Harry's is the deep sense of his loss of artistic integrity. Having given up his talent in favour of a luxurious way of life by marrying a rich woman and then growing into complete dependence on it, he had died artistically long before his physical death. He knows that he has traded his former integrity for "security and comfort", destroying his talent. So he accuses himself conscious that he is the only one responsible for the destruction of his talent by worshipping a false god: money and luxury.

7.6.3 Death

Death is related to the central theme of the story: the death of a writer before his work is done, and the description of how it feels to die is probably the most original feature of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro".

Like Hemingway, Harry, the writer in the story, has been obsessed for years with curiosity about the idea of death. Now that it is close he has lost all curiosity about it, feeling only a "great tiredness and anger" over its inexorable approach. "For this that now is coming, he had very little curiosity. For years it had obsessed him; but now it meant nothing in itself." The real sensations of death strike Harry three times: first, like a rush, not of water or wind, but of emptiness; second, like a puff of wind; third, like a weight upon his chest.

Certain perceptions accompany the approach of death: daylight fades into a dark night, afternoon heat is replaced by dreams of snow, conscious thoughts melt into fantasy and visions, vultures fly around the camp, a hyena wails.

Present from the beginning of the story is the odour of carrion due to the gangrene. It is an important sign of the approach of death.

Harry is a man of action, a hunter, but ironically he is dying merely of a thorn scratch received while taking pictures. Thus his death becomes a horrible mockery of life. This kind of death is considered to be a defeat for the one who dies, a consequence of his failure. At first Harry reacts with hostility and cynicism to the approach of death. He harasses Helen, deriving some bitter satisfaction from it. By anger, his pride is asserted and he is able to hide his fears. Besides that he uses something more effective: evasion.

Alcohol is a way to evade reality but it is when he recalls his past life that Harry really compensates for actual desperation and death is temporarily forgotten. When he returns to the reality of the present, he is able to face fate, even with indifference: "Now he would not care for death." Harry can look bravely on all its face: a hyena, vultures. He even thinks that death is not there: "It went in pairs, on bicycles, and moved absolutely silently on the pavements." And in the end death is finally defeated when, in his last fantasy, he is taken to the top of Kilimanjaro, a promise of immortality.

7.6.4 Setting

The setting of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is the final afternoon and evening in the life of a writer named Harry, dying of gangrene in a camp near the edge of the Tanganyika plains country.

The Tanganyika plains are situated in Africa, land of heat and light. This is the place Harry has chosen to find illumination for the darkness in his soul and inspirational warmth to melt his frozen talents. Ironically, Africa becomes his graveyard.

The most important element in the setting is the contrast between the mountain and the plains. The symbolism which entangles in the mountain and the plains prevails over a merely descriptive analysis of setting.

The ultimate landscape, of course, is that of Kilimanjaro, rising majestically far above the plains. It represents a synthesis of the story. It is a physical and ultimate sign that the world of purity, innocence and aspiration prevails over the world of corruption and misery.

Before he dies, Harry transcends the plains, the forests, the hills, even the clouds; it is then that he sees the top of Kilimanjaro in a moment of ecstasy. The world of the damned, the world where men worship money and comfort is symbolically abandoned at last; Harry discovers the "House of God" on the archetypal holy mountain.

7.7 Summing up

In this unit we discussed how Hemingway presents Harry's psychological conflict: from his awareness of the approaching death, bringing up feelings of failure and waste, to his stoical submission to his terrible fate and up to his final overwhelming victory over death, when he marvellously reaches the summit of Kilimanjaro, the holy mountain, leaving his fate behind on the plains, hence, achieving immortality.

As it is stated in the last paragraph of *Ernest Hemingway and his World*:

> The Hemingway code of courage, the Hemingway hero and his stoic holding on against odds, have exerted an influence beyond literature. He reminds us that to engage literature one has first to engage life.

7.8 References

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7.9 Model and Terminal Questions

1. Write a detailed note on Hemingway's life.
2. Analyse the plot and action involved in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro".
3. Explain how the approach of death changes the attitude of Harry towards life.
4. What do you think about the role of location in the development of the central theme of the story?
5. Analyse the characters of Harry and Helen.

SEMESTER II

UNIT 1 JANE AUSTEN *EMMA*

1.1 Introduction

In this Block we are going to study two well-known British novelists: Jane Austen and Charles Dickens. Jane Austen belongs to the Romantic period, without being least affected by the Romantic Movement. Dickens was through and through a Victorian. Jane Austen's novel *Emma* is considered to be her most well written works.

1.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Understand Jane Austen as a novelist
- Know her life and writings
- Analyse the major themes of her works
- Discuss the major themes and characters of Emma

1.3 Introduction to the Novel

The novel is only one of the many possible prose narrative forms. It shares with other narratives, like the epic and the romance, two basic characteristics: a story and a storyteller. The epic tells a traditional story and is an amalgam of myth, history, and fiction. Its heroes are gods and goddesses and extraordinary men and women. The romance also tells stories of larger-than-life characters. It emphasizes adventure and often involves a quest for an ideal or the pursuit of an enemy. The events seem to project in symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors of the human mind and are, therefore, analogous to the materials of dream, myth, and ritual. Although this is true of some novels as well, what distinguishes the novel from the romance is its realistic treatment of life and manners. Its heroes are men and women like ourselves, and its chief interest, as Northrop Frye said, is "human character as it manifests itself in society."

Development of the Novel

The term for the novel in most European languages is *roman*, which suggests its closeness to the medieval romance. The English name is derived from the Italian *novella*, meaning "a little new thing." Romances and *novelle*, short tales in prose, were predecessors of the novel, as were picaresque narratives. *Picaro* is Spanish for "rogue," and the typical picaresque story is of the escapades of a rascal who lives by his wits. The development of the realistic novel owes much to such works, which were written to deflate romantic or idealized fictional forms. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605-15), the story of an engaging madman who tries to live by the ideals of chivalric romance, explores the role of illusion and reality in life and was the single most important progenitor of the modern novel.

The novel broke from those narrative predecessors that used timeless stories to mirror unchanging moral truths. It was a product of an intellectual milieu shaped by the great seventeenth-century philosophers, Descartes and Locke, who insisted upon the importance of individual experience. They believed that reality could be discovered by the individual through the senses. Thus, the novel emphasized specific, observed details.

It individualized its characters by locating them precisely in time and space. And its subjects reflected the popular eighteenth-century concern with the social structures of everyday life.

The novel is often said to have emerged with the appearance of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Moll Flanders* (1722). Both are picaresque stories, in that each is a sequence of episodes held together largely because they happen to one person. But the central character in both novels is so convincing and set in so solid and specific a world that Defoe is often credited with being the first writer of "realistic" fiction. The first "novel of character" or psychological novel is Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740-41), an epistolary novel (or novel in which the narrative is conveyed entirely by an exchange of letters). It is a work characterized by the careful plotting of emotional states. Even more significant in this vein is Richardson's masterpiece *Clarissa* (1747-48). Defoe and Richardson were the first great writers in British literature who did not take their plots from mythology, history, legend, or previous literature. They established the novel's claim as an authentic account of the actual experience of individuals.

1.4 Jane Austen

Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at Steventon rectory. In 1783, according to family tradition, Jane and Cassandra were sent to Oxford to be educated by Mrs Ann Cawley and they moved with her to Southampton later in the year after suffering from typhus. Austen received the remainder of her education by reading books, guided by her father and her brothers James and Henry. George Austen apparently gave his daughters unfettered access to his large and varied library, was tolerant of Austen's sometimes risqué experiments in writing.

Austen began to write poems, stories, and plays for her own and her family's amusement almost as early as 1787. Austen later compiled fair copies of 29 of these early works into three bound notebooks, now referred to as the *Juvenilia*. Among these works is a satirical novel in letters titled *Love and Friendship*, in which she mocked popular novels of sensibility.

Austen attempted her first full-length novel — *Elinor and Marianne* which was published in 1811 as *Sense and Sensibility*. She began work on a second novel, *First Impressions*, in 1796 and completed the initial draft in August 1797 when she was only 21. The novel was later known as *Pride and Prejudice*.

During her time at Chawton, Jane Austen successfully published four novels, which were generally well-received. Through her brother Henry, the publisher Thomas Egerton agreed to publish *Sense and Sensibility*, which appeared in October 1811. Reviews were favourable and the novel became fashionable among opinion-makers. The edition sold out by mid-1813. Austen's earnings from *Sense and Sensibility* provided her with some financial and psychological independence. Egerton then published *Pride and Prejudice*, a revision of *First Impressions*, in January 1813. He advertised the book widely and it was an immediate success, garnering three favourable reviews and selling well. By October 1813, Egerton was able to begin selling a second edition. *Mansfield Park* was published by Egerton in May 1814. While *Mansfield Park* was ignored by reviewers, it was a great

success with the public. All copies were sold within six months, and Austen's earnings on this novel were larger than for any of her other novels.

Early in 1816, Jane Austen began to feel unwell. She ignored her illness at first and continued to work and to participate in the usual round of family activities. She died in Winchester on 18 July 1817, at the age of 41. After Austen's death, Cassandra and Henry Austen arranged with Murray for the publication of *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* as a set in December 1817. Henry Austen contributed a *Biographical Note* which for the first time identified his sister as the author of the novels.

1.5 Emma: Summary

Emma Woodhouse, a precocious twenty-year-old resident of the village of Highbury, imagines herself to be naturally gifted in conjuring love matches. After self-declared success at matchmaking between her governess and Mr Weston, a village widower, Emma takes it upon herself to find an eligible match for her new friend, Harriet Smith. Though Harriet's parentage is unknown, Emma is convinced that Harriet deserves to be a gentleman's wife and sets her friend's sights on Mr Elton, the village vicar. Meanwhile, Emma persuades Harriet to reject the proposal of Robert Martin, a well-to-do farmer for whom Harriet clearly has feelings.

Harriet becomes infatuated with Mr Elton under Emma's encouragement, but Emma's plans go awry when Elton makes it clear that his affection is for Emma, not Harriet. Emma realizes that her obsession with making a match for Harriet has blinded her to the true nature of the situation. Mr Knightley, Emma's brother-in-law and treasured friend, watches Emma's matchmaking efforts with a critical eye. He believes that Mr Martin is a worthy young man whom Harriet would be lucky to marry. He and Emma quarrel over Emma's meddling, and, as usual, Mr Knightley proves to be the wiser of the pair. Elton, spurned by Emma and offended by her insinuation that Harriet is his equal, leaves for the town of Bath and marries a girl there almost immediately.

Emma is left to comfort Harriet and to wonder about the character of a new visitor expected in Highbury—Mr Weston's son, Frank Churchill. Frank is set to visit his father in Highbury after having been raised by his aunt and uncle in London, who have taken him as their heir. Emma knows nothing about Frank, who has long been deterred from visiting his father by his aunt's illnesses and complaints. Mr Knightley is immediately suspicious of the young man, especially after Frank rushes back to London merely to have his hair cut. Emma, however, finds Frank delightful and notices that his charms are directed mainly toward her. Though she plans to discourage these charms, she finds herself flattered and engaged in a flirtation with the young man. Emma greets Jane Fairfax, another addition to the Highbury set, with less enthusiasm. Jane is beautiful and accomplished, but Emma dislikes her because of her reserve and, the narrator insinuates, because she is jealous of Jane.

Suspicion, intrigue, and misunderstandings ensue. Mr Knightley defends Jane, saying that she deserves compassion because, unlike Emma, she has no independent fortune and must soon leave home to work as a governess. Mrs Weston suspects that the warmth of Mr Knightley's defence comes from romantic feelings, an implication Emma resists. Everyone assumes that Frank and Emma are forming an attachment, though Emma soon

dismisses Frank as a potential suitor and imagines him as a match for Harriet. At a village ball, Knightley earns Emma's approval by offering to dance with Harriet, who has just been humiliated by Mr Elton and his new wife. The next day, Frank saves Harriet from Gypsy beggars. When Harriet tells Emma that she has fallen in love with a man above her social station, Emma believes that she means Frank. Knightley begins to suspect that Frank and Jane have a secret understanding, and he attempts to warn Emma. Emma laughs at Knightley's suggestion and loses Knightley's approval when she flirts with Frank and insults Miss Bates, a kind-hearted spinster and Jane's aunt, at a picnic. When Knightley reprimands Emma, she weeps.

News comes that Frank's aunt has died, and this event paves the way for an unexpected revelation that slowly solves the mysteries. Frank and Jane have been secretly engaged; his attentions to Emma have been a screen to hide his true preference. With his aunt's death and his uncle's approval, Frank can now marry Jane, the woman he loves. Emma worries that Harriet will be crushed, but she soon discovers that it is Knightley, not Frank, who is the object of Harriet's affection. Harriet believes that Knightley shares her feelings. Emma finds herself upset by Harriet's revelation, and her distress forces her to realize that she is in love with Knightley. Emma expects Knightley to tell her he loves Harriet, but, to her delight, Knightley declares his love for Emma. Harriet is soon comforted by a second proposal from Robert Martin, which she accepts. The novel ends with the marriage of Harriet and Mr Martin and that of Emma and Mr Knightley, resolving the question of who loves whom after all.

1.6 Analysis of Major Characters

1.6.1 Emma Woodhouse

The narrator introduces Emma to us by emphasizing her good fortune: "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition," Emma "had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." But, the narrator warns us, Emma possesses "the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself." Emma's stubbornness and vanity produce many of the novel's conflicts, as Emma struggles to develop emotionally.

Emma makes three major mistakes. First, she attempts to make Harriet into the wife of a gentleman, when Harriet's social position dictates that she would be better suited to the farmer who loves her. Then, she flirts with Frank Churchill even though she does not care for him, making unfair comments about Jane Fairfax along the way. Most important, she does not realize that, rather than being committed to staying single (as she always claims), she is in love with and wants to marry Mr Knightley. Though these mistakes seriously threaten Harriet's happiness, cause Emma embarrassment, and create obstacles to Emma's own achievement of true love, none of them has lasting consequences. Throughout the novel, Knightley corrects and guides Emma; in marrying Knightley, Emma signals that her judgment has aligned with his.

Austen predicted that Emma would be "a character whom no one but me will much like." Though most of Austen's readers have proven her wrong, her narration creates many ambiguities. The novel is narrated using free indirect discourse, which means that,

although the all-knowing narrator speaks in the third person, she often relates things from Emma's point of view and describes things in language we might imagine Emma using. This style of narration creates a complex mixture of sympathy with Emma and ironic judgment on her behaviour. It is not always clear when we are to share Emma's perceptions and when we are to see through them. Nor do we know how harshly Austen expects us to judge Emma's behaviour. Though this narrative strategy creates problems of interpretation for the reader, it makes Emma a richly multidimensional character.

Emma does not have one specific foil, but the implicit distinctions made between her and the other women in the novel offer us a context within which to evaluate her character. Jane is similar to Emma in most ways, but she does not have Emma's financial independence, so her difficulties underscore Emma's privileged nature. Mrs Elton, like Emma, is independent and imposes her will upon her friends, but her crudeness and vanity reinforce our sense of Emma's refinement and fundamentally good heart. Emma's sister, Isabella, is stereo-typically feminine—soft-hearted, completely devoted to her family, dependent, and not terribly bright. The novel implicitly prefers Emma's independence and cleverness to her sister's more traditional deportment, although we are still faced with the paradox that though Emma is clever, she is almost always mistaken.

1.6.2 Mr Knightley

Mr Knightley serves as the novel's model of good sense. From his very first conversation with Emma and her father in Chapter 1, his purpose—to correct the excesses and missteps of those around him—is clear. He is unfailingly honest but tempers his honesty with tact and kind-heartedness. Almost always, we can depend upon him to provide the correct evaluation of the other characters' behaviour and personal worth. He intuitively understands and kindly makes allowances for Mr Woodhouse's whims; he is sympathetic and protective of the women in the community, including Jane, Harriet, and Miss Bates; and, most of all, even though he frequently disapproves of her behaviour, he dotes on Emma.

Knightley's love for Emma—the one emotion he cannot govern fully—leads to his only lapses of judgment and self-control. Before even meeting Frank, Knightley decides that he does not like him. It gradually becomes clear that Knightley feels jealous—he does not welcome a rival. When Knightley believes Emma has become too attached to Frank, he acts with uncharacteristic impulsiveness in running away to London. His declaration of love on his return bursts out uncontrollably, unlike most of his prudent, well-planned actions. Yet Knightley's loss of control humanizes him rather than making him seem like a failure.

Like Emma, Knightley stands out in comparison to his peers. His brother, Mr John Knightley, shares his clear-sightedness but lacks his unfailing kindness and tact. Both Frank and Knightley are perceptive, warm-hearted, and dynamic; but whereas Frank uses his intelligence to conceal his real feelings and invent clever compliments to please those around him, Knightley uses his intelligence to discern right moral conduct. Knightley has little use for cleverness for its own sake; he rates propriety and concern for others more highly.

1.6.3 Frank Churchill

Frank epitomizes attractiveness in speech, manner, and appearance. He goes out of his way to please everyone, and, while the more perceptive characters question his seriousness, everyone except Knightley is charmed enough to be willing to indulge him. Frank is the character who most resembles Emma, a connection she points out at the novel's close when she states that "destiny … connect[s] us with two characters so much superior to our own." Like Emma, Frank develops over the course of the novel by trading a somewhat vain and superficial perspective on the world for the seriousness brought on by the experience of genuine suffering and love. He is a complex character because though we know we should judge him harshly in moral terms, we cannot help but like him more than he deserves to be liked.

1.6.4 Jane Fairfax

Jane's beauty and accomplishment immediately make her stand out, but we are likely to follow Emma's lead at first and judge Jane uninteresting on account of her reserve. As Jane gradually betrays more personality and emotion, she indicates that she harbours some secret sorrow. Eventually, she and Emma push the cloudy confusion behind and become friends. The contrast between Jane's delicate sense of propriety and morality and the passionate nature of her feelings is much more dramatic than any of the conflicts that Emma experiences. Jane's situation too is much more dire than Emma's: if Jane does not wed, she must become a governess, because she lacks any money of her own. The revelation of Jane's secret engagement to Frank makes Jane seem more human, just as Knightley's humanity is brought out by his love for Emma.

1.7 Themes, Motifs and Symbols

1.7.1 Marriage and Social Status

Emma is structured around a number of marriages recently consummated or anticipated, and, in each case, the match solidifies the participant's social status. In Austen's time, social status was determined by a combination of family background, reputation, and wealth—marriage was one of the main ways in which one could raise one's social status. This method of social advancement was especially crucial to women, who were denied the possibility of improving their status through hard work or personal achievement.

Yet, the novel suggests, marrying too far above oneself leads to strife. Mr Weston's first marriage to Miss Churchill had ostensibly been a good move for him, because she came from a wealthy and well-connected family (Mr Weston is a tradesman), but the inequality of the relationship caused hardship to both. He marries Mrs Weston just prior to the novel's opening, and this second marriage is happier because their social statuses are more equal—Mrs Weston is a governess, and thus very fortunate to be rescued from her need to work by her marriage. Emma's attempt to match Harriet with Mr Elton is also shunned by the other characters as inappropriate. Since Harriet's parentage is unknown, Emma believes that Harriet may have noble blood and encourages her to reject what turns out to be a more appropriate match with Robert Martin. By the time it is revealed that Harriet is the daughter of a tradesman, Emma admits that Mr Martin is more suitable for her friend.

The relationship between marriage and social status creates hardship for other characters. Frank Churchill must keep his engagement to the orphan Jane Fairfax secret because his wealthy aunt would disapprove. Jane, in the absence of a good match, is forced to consider taking the position of a governess. The unmarried Miss Bates is threatened with increasing poverty without a husband to take care of her and her mother. Finally, the match between Emma and Mr Knightley is considered a good one not only because they are well matched in temperament but also because they are well matched in social class.

1.7.2 Portrayal of Women's Existence

The novel's action gives us a strong sense of the confined nature of a woman's existence in early-nineteenth-century rural England. Emma possesses a great deal of intelligence and energy, but the best use she can make of these is to attempt to guide the marital destinies of her friends, a project that gets her into trouble. The alternative pastimes depicted in the book—social visits, charity visits, music, artistic endeavours—seem relatively trivial, at times even monotonous. Isabella is the only mother focused on in the story, and her portrayal suggests that a mother's life offers a woman little use of her intellect. Yet, when Jane compares the governess profession to the slave trade, she makes it clear that the life of a workingwoman is in no way preferable to the idleness of a woman of fortune. The novel focuses on marriage because marriage offers women a chance to exert their power, if only for a brief time, and to affect their own destinies without adopting the labours or efforts of the working class. Participating in the rituals of courtship and accepting or rejecting proposals is perhaps the most active role that women are permitted to play in Emma's world.

1.7.3 The Obstacles to Open Expression

The misunderstandings that permeate the novel are created, in part, by the conventions of social propriety. To differing degrees, characters are unable to express their feelings directly and openly, and their feelings are therefore mistaken. While the novel by no means suggests that the manners and rituals of social interaction should be eliminated, Austen implies that the overly clever, complex speech of Mr Elton, Frank Churchill, and Emma deserves censure. She presents Mr Martin's natural, warm, and direct manner of expressing himself as preferable to Mr Elton's ostentatious and insincere style of complimenting people. Frank too possesses a talent for telling people exactly what they want to hear, and Knightley's suspicions of Frank's integrity are proven valid when it turns out that Frank has been misleading Highbury and hiding his true feelings for Jane. The cleverness of Frank's and Emma's banter gets them both into trouble by upsetting Jane, about whom Emma says indiscreet and unfair things. Emma and Frank's flirting at the Box Hill party hurts both Knightley and Jane. Moreover, Emma forgets herself to the extent that she cruelly insults Miss Bates. Austen seems to prefer Knightley and Martin's tactful tacitness to the sometimes overly gregarious commentary of Emma, Mr Elton, and Frank, and, as a result, the author gives the latter characters' contrived speech a misleading influence on the story as a whole.

1.7.4 Motifs

Visits

The main events of the novel take place during visits that the characters pay to each other. The frequency and length of visits between characters indicates the level of

intimacy and attachment between them. Frank's frequent visits to Hartfield show his relationship with Emma to be close, though in hindsight we recognize that Frank also continually finds excuses to visit Jane. Mr Knightley's constant presence at Hartfield indicates his affection and regard for Emma. Emma encourages Harriet to limit a visit with the Martin family to fifteen minutes, because such a short visit clearly indicates that any former interest has been lost. Emma is chastised for her failure to visit Miss Bates and Jane more often; when she takes steps to rectify this situation, she indicates a new concern for Miss Bates and a new regard for Jane.

Parties

More formal than visits, parties are organized around social conventions more than around individual attachments—Emma's hosting a dinner party for Mrs Elton, a woman she dislikes, exemplifies this characteristic. There are six important parties in the novel: the Christmas Eve party at Randalls, the dinner party at the Coles', the dinner party given for Mrs Elton, the dance at the Crown Inn, the morning party at Donwell Abbey, and the picnic at Box Hill. Each occasion provides the opportunity for social intrigue and misunderstandings, and for vanities to be satisfied and connections formed. Parties also give characters the chance to observe other people's interactions. Knightley observes Emma's behaviour toward Frank and Frank's behaviour toward Jane. Parties are microcosms of the social interactions that make up the novel as a whole.

Conversational Subtexts

Much of the dialogue in *Emma* has double or even triple meanings, with different characters interpreting a single comment in different ways. Sometimes these double meanings are apparent to individual characters, and sometimes they are apparent only to the alert reader. For example, when Mr Elton says of Emma's portrait of Harriet, "I cannot keep my eyes from it," he means to compliment Emma, but she thinks he is complimenting Harriet. When, during the scene in which Mr Knightley proposes to Emma, Emma says, "I seem to have been doomed to blindness," Knightley believes she speaks of her blindness to Frank's love of Jane, but she actually refers to her blindness about her own feelings. One of our main tasks in reading the novel is to decode all of the subtexts underlying seemingly casual interactions, just as the main characters must. The novel concludes by unravelling the mystery behind who loves whom, which allows us to understand Austen's subtext more fully.

1.7.5 Symbols

The Riddle

Also known as charades, riddles in the novel take the form of elaborate wordplay. They symbolize the pervasive subtexts that wait to be decoded in characters' larger social interactions. In Chapter 9, Mr Elton presents a riddle to Emma and Harriet. Emma decodes it immediately, as "courtship," but she decodes it wrongly in the sense that she believes it is meant for Harriet rather than herself. This wordplay also makes an appearance during the Box Hill party, when Mr Weston makes an acrostic for Emma.

The Word Game

Similar to the riddle, a word game is played in Chapter 41 between Emma, Frank, and Jane. It functions as a metaphor for the partial understandings and misunderstandings that exist among Emma, Frank, Jane, and Mr Knightley. As Mr Knightley looks on, Frank

uses child's blocks to create words for the ladies to decode, though these words mean different things to each of them. Frank makes the word "blunder," which Jane understands as referring to a mistake he has just made, but whose meaning is opaque to Emma and Knightley. He then makes the word "Dixon," which Emma understands as a joke on Jane, and which baffles Knightley. In truth, everyone "blunders" in different ways that evening, because no one possesses complete enough information to interpret correctly everything that is going on.

Tokens of Affection

A number of objects in the novel take on symbolic significance as tokens of affection. Mr Elton frames Emma's portrait of Harriet as a symbol of affection for her, though Emma misunderstands it as a symbol of affection for Harriet. Harriet keeps court plaster and a pencil stub as souvenirs of Mr Elton. When the engagement between Jane and Frank is briefly called off, she returns his letters to symbolize her relinquishment of his affection.

1.8 Summing up

In this unit we discussed Jane Austen's Emma. We discussed her life and achievements and through that we can analyse the age in which she was writing. The anonymous publication of her novels during her life can shed some light on the social conditions of her times. The themes dealt in her novel also present a clear picture of the society. The unit has dealt with various aspects to understand the author and the text.

1.9 References

Booth, Wayne. *The Rhetoric of Fiction.* New York: Penguin, 1991.

WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG

1.10 Model and Terminal Questions

1. Discuss Jane Austen's achievements as a writer of novels.
2. Give a detailed analysis of the novel Emma.
3. Analyse the character of Emma Woodhouse.
4. Why do think Austen published her novel anonymously?
5. What light does the work shed on the social conditions of the age?
6. Analyse the status and condition of women based on your reading of the text.

UNIT 2 CHARLES DICKENS

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

2.1 Introduction

The current unit will introduce you to one of the most famous British novelists Charles Dickens and his work *Great Expectations*. The unit will deal with major themes and analysis of the major characters.

2.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Understand the genre of novel
- Describe Dickens as a writer
- Analyse the major characters
- Analyse and explain the major themes dealt in the novel

2.3 Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Dickens. His father, a clerk in the Naval Pay Office, was sent to prison for debt. Young Charles was only twelve years old when he was sent to work at Warren's Blacking Factory, while the rest of his family joined his father in the Marshalsea Prison. During this time, Charles lived alone in a lodging house, ashamed and frightened. These early experiences became a source of creative energy and a reason for his preoccupation with themes of alienation and betrayal. These early experiences also made him self-reliant, a trait which would later turn him into a hard-working and dedicated writer.

Dickens returned to school after the financial difficulties were over. When he was fifteen, he went to work as a clerk in a law firm. Later he became a free-lance reporter, first reporting on dull law cases and then the more exciting parliamentary debates. These experiences helped shape his social consciousness. In 1830, he fell in love with Maria Beadwell, the daughter of a banker. The relationship was short-lived, since Dickens was not considered a good match for her, by her parents' standards. He then met and married Catherine Hogarth on April 2, 1836.

Dickens' first published story appeared in 1835. He also started writing under the famous pseudonym "Boz", with the first sketches published in 1836. His success as a writer truly began with the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1836-37), now known as *The Pickwick Papers.* Its popularity allowed him to embark on a full-time career as a novelist. He wrote *Oliver Twist* in 1837, followed by *Nicholas Nickleby, The Olde Curiosity Shop,* and *Barnaby Rudge.* Dickens also had a social conscience. He visited Canada and the United States in 1842 and advocated international copyright laws and the abolition of slavery. His *American Notes* appeared in October of that year and, along with the novel *Martin Chuzzlewit,* did not portray America flatteringly.

Dickens' enormously successful *A Christmas Carol* was published in 1844. From 1844 onward, the family spent a lot of time abroad, especially in Italy, Switzerland, and France. *The Chimes, The Cricket on the Hearth,* and *Pictures from Italy* belong to this period. He published *Domby and Son* in 1846, and began the serial *David Copperfield* in

1849. He published *Bleak House* in 1852, *Hard Times* in 1854, *Little Dorrit* in 1855, and collaborated with W. Collins on a play, *The Frozen Deep*, in 1856. He also founded and became the editor of the weekly *Household Words* and opened a theatrical company. In 1859 he began to edit *All the Year Round*, a weekly magazine. A serialization of *A Tale of Two Cities* appeared in this weekly in 1859. *Great Expectations* began to appear in 1860 and ended in 1861.

Dickens, being a much loved author, started the public reading of his works in 1853; this activity continued until 1870, when he gave his final public reading. He suffered a stroke on June 8, 1870, at Gad's Hill, the estate he had bought. He died on June 9, 1870. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and his unfinished work, *The Mystery of Edward Drood*, appeared in September.

Dickens, who addressed social issues and historic events with penetrating insight, is regarded as the greatest British author of all times. The power of his novels, which are rich, diverse, and intense, lies in his ability to report accurately and to transform the ordinary into something magical. His concern for modern society is evident in all his novels. He emerges as a social reformer with a deep compassion for the working class. His works, which are complex, deep, and perceptive, are also marked with melodramatic intensity and humour. Many of his themes and images are recurrent. The image of a corrupt judicial system, especially the condition of prisons, occupies a central spot in both *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit.* At times, Dickens exposes the humorous face of a sadly comic world with which he has gradually become disillusioned. He presents the failures of both business ethics and revolutionary zeal. In *A Tale of Two Cities,* he depicts both the excitement and the chaos of revolution.

Charles Dickens was a prolific writer of quality works that have remained popular through the years for their intensity and social conscience. In spite of his lack of formal education, he reveals in his novels a mastery of the English language and a sophisticated depth of thought that has endeared him to many generations of students and readers.

2.4 *Great Expectations*: Summary

Pip, a young orphan living with his sister and her husband in the marshes of Kent, sits in a cemetery one evening looking at his parents' tombstones. Suddenly, an escaped convict springs up from behind a tombstone, grabs Pip, and orders him to bring him food and a file for his leg irons. Pip obeys, but the fearsome convict is soon captured anyway. The convict protects Pip by claiming to have stolen the items himself.

One day Pip is taken by his Uncle Pumblechook to play at Satis House, the home of the wealthy dowager Miss Havisham, who is extremely eccentric: she wears an old wedding dress everywhere she goes and keeps all the clocks in her house stopped at the same time. During his visit, he meets a beautiful young girl named Estella, who treats him coldly and contemptuously. Nevertheless, he falls in love with her and dreams of becoming a wealthy gentleman so that he might be worthy of her. He even hopes that Miss Havisham intends to make him a gentleman and marry him to Estella, but his hopes are dashed when, after months of regular visits to Satis House, Miss Havisham decides to help him become a common labourer in his family's business.

With Miss Havisham's guidance, Pip is apprenticed to his brother-in-law, Joe, who is the village blacksmith. Pip works in the forge unhappily, struggling to better his education with the help of the plain, kind Biddy and encountering Joe's malicious day labourer, Orlick. One night, after an altercation with Orlick, Pip's sister, known as Mrs Joe, is viciously attacked and becomes a mute invalid. From her signals, Pip suspects that Orlick was responsible for the attack.

One day a lawyer named Jaggers appears with strange news: a secret benefactor has given Pip a large fortune, and Pip must come to London immediately to begin his education as a gentleman. Pip happily assumes that his previous hopes have come true—that Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor and that the old woman intends for him to marry Estella.

In London, Pip befriends a young gentleman named Herbert Pocket and Jaggers's law clerk, Wemmick. He expresses disdain for his former friends and loved ones, especially Joe, but he continues to pine after Estella. He furthers his education by studying with the tutor Matthew Pocket, Herbert's father. Herbert himself helps Pip learn how to act like a gentleman. When Pip turns twenty-one and begins to receive an income from his fortune, he will secretly help Herbert buy his way into the business he has chosen for himself. But for now, Herbert and Pip lead a fairly undisciplined life in London, enjoying themselves and running up debts. Orlick reappears in Pip's life, employed as Miss Havisham's porter, but is promptly fired by Jaggers after Pip reveals Orlick's unsavory past. Mrs Joe dies, and Pip goes home for the funeral, feeling tremendous grief and remorse. Several years go by, until one night a familiar figure barges into Pip's room—the convict, Magwitch, who stuns Pip by announcing that he, not Miss Havisham, is the source of Pip's fortune. He tells Pip that he was so moved by Pip's boyhood kindness that he dedicated his life to making Pip a gentleman, and he made a fortune in Australia for that very purpose.

Pip is appalled, but he feels morally bound to help Magwitch escape London, as the convict is pursued both by the police and by Compeyson, his former partner in crime. A complicated mystery begins to fall into place when Pip discovers that Compeyson was the man who abandoned Miss Havisham at the altar and that Estella is Magwitch's daughter. Miss Havisham has raised her to break men's hearts, as revenge for the pain her own broken heart caused her. Pip was merely a boy for the young Estella to practice on; Miss Havisham delighted in Estella's ability to toy with his affections.

As the weeks pass, Pip sees the good in Magwitch and begins to care for him deeply. Before Magwitch's escape attempt, Estella marries an upper-class lout named Bentley Drummle. Pip makes a visit to Satis House, where Miss Havisham begs his forgiveness for the way she has treated him in the past, and he forgives her. Later that day, when she bends over the fireplace, her clothing catches fire and she goes up in flames. She survives but becomes an invalid. In her final days, she will continue to repent for her misdeeds and to plead for Pip's forgiveness.

The time comes for Pip and his friends to spirit Magwitch away from London. Just before the escape attempt, Pip is called to a shadowy meeting in the marshes, where he encounters the vengeful, evil Orlick. Orlick is on the verge of killing Pip when Herbert arrives with a group of friends and saves Pip's life. Pip and Herbert hurry back to effect Magwitch's escape. They try to sneak Magwitch down the river on a rowboat, but they are discovered by the police, who Compeyson tipped off. Magwitch and Compeyson

fight in the river, and Compeyson is drowned. Magwitch is sentenced to death, and Pip loses his fortune. Magwitch feels that his sentence is God's forgiveness and dies at peace. Pip falls ill; Joe comes to London to care for him, and they are reconciled. Joe gives him the news from home: Orlick, after robbing Pumblechook, is now in jail; Miss Havisham has died and left most of her fortune to the Pockets; Biddy has taught Joe how to read and write. After Joe leaves, Pip decides to rush home after him and marry Biddy, but when he arrives there he discovers that she and Joe have already married.

Pip decides to go abroad with Herbert to work in the mercantile trade. Returning many years later, he encounters Estella in the ruined garden at Satis House. Drummle, her husband, treated her badly, but he is now dead. Pip finds that Estella's coldness and cruelty have been replaced by a sad kindness, and the two leave the garden hand in hand, Pip believing that they will never part again.

2.5 Analysis of Major Characters

2.5.1 Pip

As a bildungsroman, *Great Expectations* presents the growth and development of a single character, Philip Pirrip, better known to himself and to the world as Pip. As the focus of the bildungsroman, Pip is by far the most important character in *Great Expectations*: he is both the protagonist, whose actions make up the main plot of the novel, and the narrator, whose thoughts and attitudes shape the reader's perception of the story. As a result, developing an understanding of Pip's character is perhaps the most important step in understanding *Great Expectations*.

Because Pip is narrating his story many years after the events of the novel take place, there are really two Pips in *Great Expectations*: Pip the narrator and Pip the character—the voice telling the story and the person acting it out. Dickens takes great care to distinguish the two Pips, imbuing the voice of Pip the narrator with perspective and maturity while also imparting how Pip the character feels about what is happening to him as it actually happens. This skilfully executed distinction is perhaps best observed early in the book, when Pip the character is a child; here, Pip the narrator gently pokes fun at his younger self, but also enables us to see and feel the story through his eyes.

As a character, Pip's two most important traits are his immature, romantic idealism and his innately good conscience. On the one hand, Pip has a deep desire to improve himself and attain any possible advancement, whether educational, moral, or social. His longing to marry Estella and join the upper classes stems from the same idealistic desire as his longing to learn to read and his fear of being punished for bad behaviour: once he understands ideas like poverty, ignorance, and immorality, Pip does not want to be poor, ignorant, or immoral. Pip the narrator judges his own past actions extremely harshly, rarely giving himself credit for good deeds but angrily castigating himself for bad ones. As a character, however, Pip's idealism often leads him to perceive the world rather narrowly, and his tendency to oversimplify situations based on superficial values leads him to behave badly toward the people who care about him. When Pip becomes a gentleman, for example, he immediately begins to act as he thinks a gentleman is supposed to act, which leads him to treat Joe and Biddy snobbishly and coldly.

On the other hand, Pip is at heart a very generous and sympathetic young man, a fact that can be witnessed in his numerous acts of kindness throughout the book (helping Magwitch, secretly buying Herbert's way into business, etc.) and his essential love for all those who love him. Pip's main line of development in the novel may be seen as the process of learning to place his innate sense of kindness and conscience above his immature idealism.

Not long after meeting Miss Havisham and Estella, Pip's desire for advancement largely overshadows his basic goodness. After receiving his mysterious fortune, his idealistic wishes seem to have been justified, and he gives himself over to a gentlemanly life of idleness. But the discovery that the wretched Magwitch, not the wealthy Miss Havisham, is his secret benefactor shatters Pip's oversimplified sense of his world's hierarchy. The fact that he comes to admire Magwitch while losing Estella to the brutish nobleman Drummle ultimately forces him to realize that one's social position is not the most important quality one possesses, and that his behaviour as a gentleman has caused him to hurt the people who care about him most. Once he has learned these lessons, Pip matures into the man who narrates the novel, completing the bildungsroman.

2.5.2 Estella

Often cited as Dickens's first convincing female character, Estella is a supremely ironic creation, one who darkly undermines the notion of romantic love and serves as a bitter criticism against the class system in which she is mired. Raised from the age of three by Miss Havisham to torment men and "break their hearts," Estella wins Pip's deepest love by practicing deliberate cruelty. Unlike the warm, winsome, kind heroine of a traditional love story, Estella is cold, cynical, and manipulative. Though she represents Pip's first longed-for ideal of life among the upper classes, Estella is actually even lower-born than Pip; as Pip learns near the end of the novel, she is the daughter of Magwitch, the coarse convict, and thus springs from the very lowest level of society.

Ironically, life among the upper classes does not represent salvation for Estella. Instead, she is victimized twice by her adopted class. Rather than being raised by Magwitch, a man of great inner nobility, she is raised by Miss Havisham, who destroys her ability to express emotion and interact normally with the world. And rather than marrying the kind hearted commoner Pip, Estella marries the cruel nobleman Drummle, who treats her harshly and makes her life miserable for many years. In this way, Dickens uses Estella's life to reinforce the idea that one's happiness and well-being are not deeply connected to one's social position: had Estella been poor, she might have been substantially better off.

Despite her cold behaviour and the damaging influences in her life, Dickens nevertheless ensures that Estella is still a sympathetic character. By giving the reader a sense of her inner struggle to discover and act on her own feelings rather than on the imposed motives of her upbringing, Dickens gives the reader a glimpse of Estella's inner life, which helps to explain what Pip might love about her. Estella does not seem able to stop herself from hurting Pip, but she also seems not to want to hurt him; she repeatedly warns him that she has "no heart" and seems to urge him as strongly as she can to find happiness by leaving her behind. Finally, Estella's long, painful marriage to Drummle causes her to develop along the same lines as Pip—that is, she learns, through experience, to rely on and trust her inner feelings. In the final scene of the novel, she has become her own woman for the first time in the book. As she says to Pip, "Suffering has been stronger than all other teaching. . . . I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape."

2.5.3 Miss Havisham

The mad, vengeful Miss Havisham, a wealthy dowager who lives in a rotting mansion and wears an old wedding dress every day of her life, is not exactly a believable character, but she is certainly one of the most memorable creations in the book. Miss Havisham's life is defined by a single tragic event: her jilting by Compeyson on what was to have been their wedding day. From that moment forth, Miss Havisham is determined never to move beyond her heartbreak. She stops all the clocks in Satis House at twenty minutes to nine, the moment when she first learned that Compeyson was gone, and she wears only one shoe, because when she learned of his betrayal, she had not yet put on the other shoe. With a kind of manic, obsessive cruelty, Miss Havisham adopts Estella and raises her as a weapon to achieve her own revenge on men. Miss Havisham is an example of single-minded vengeance pursued destructively: both Miss Havisham and the people in her life suffer greatly because of her quest for revenge. Miss Havisham is completely unable to see that her actions are hurtful to Pip and Estella. She is redeemed at the end of the novel when she realizes that she has caused Pip's heart to be broken in the same manner as her own; rather than achieving any kind of personal revenge, she has only caused more pain. Miss Havisham immediately begs Pip for forgiveness, reinforcing the novel's theme that bad behaviour can be redeemed by contrition and sympathy.

2.6 Themes

2.6.1 Ambition and Self-Improvement

The moral theme of *Great Expectations* is quite simple: affection, loyalty, and conscience are more important than social advancement, wealth, and class. Dickens establishes the theme and shows Pip learning this lesson, largely by exploring ideas of ambition and self-improvement—ideas that quickly become both the thematic center of the novel and the psychological mechanism that encourages much of Pip's development. At heart, Pip is an idealist; whenever he can conceive of something that is better than what he already has, he immediately desires to obtain the improvement. When he sees Satis House, he longs to be a wealthy gentleman; when he thinks of his moral shortcomings, he longs to be good; when he realizes that he cannot read, he longs to learn how. Pip's desire for self-improvement is the main source of the novel's title: because he believes in the possibility of advancement in life, he has "great expectations" about his future.

Ambition and self-improvement take three forms in *Great Expectations*—moral, social, and educational; these motivate Pip's best and his worst behaviour throughout the novel. First, Pip desires moral self-improvement. He is extremely hard on himself when he acts immorally and feels powerful guilt that spurs him to act better in the future. When he leaves for London, for instance, he torments himself about having behaved so wretchedly toward Joe and Biddy. Second, Pip desires social self-improvement. In love with Estella, he longs to become a member of her social class, and, encouraged by Mrs Joe and Pumblechook, he entertains fantasies of becoming a gentleman. The working out of this fantasy forms the basic plot of the novel; it provides Dickens the opportunity to gently satirize the class system of his era and to make a point about its capricious nature. Significantly, Pip's life as a gentleman is no more satisfying—and certainly no more moral—than his previous life as a blacksmith's apprentice. Third, Pip desires educational

improvement. This desire is deeply connected to his social ambition and longing to marry Estella: a full education is a requirement of being a gentleman. As long as he is an ignorant country boy, he has no hope of social advancement. Pip understands this fact as a child, when he learns to read at Mr Wopsle's aunt's school, and as a young man, when he takes lessons from Matthew Pocket. Ultimately, through the examples of Joe, Biddy, and Magwitch, Pip learns that social and educational improvement are irrelevant to one's real worth and that conscience and affection are to be valued above erudition and social standing.

2.6.2 Social Class

Throughout *Great Expectations*, Dickens explores the class system of Victorian England, ranging from the most wretched criminals (Magwitch) to the poor peasants of the marsh country (Joe and Biddy) to the middle class (Pumblechook) to the very rich (Miss Havisham). The theme of social class is central to the novel's plot and to the ultimate moral theme of the book—Pip's realization that wealth and class are less important than affection, loyalty, and inner worth. Pip achieves this realization when he is finally able to understand that, despite the esteem in which he holds Estella, one's social status is in no way connected to one's real character. Drummle, for instance, is an upper-class lout, while Magwitch, a persecuted convict, has a deep inner worth.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember about the novel's treatment of social class is that the class system it portrays is based on the post-Industrial Revolution model of Victorian England. Dickens generally ignores the nobility and the hereditary aristocracy in favor of characters whose fortunes have been earned through commerce. Even Miss Havisham's family fortune was made through the brewery that is still connected to her manor. In this way, by connecting the theme of social class to the idea of work and self-advancement, Dickens subtly reinforces the novel's overarching theme of ambition and self-improvement.

2.6.3 Crime, Guilt, and Innocence

The theme of crime, guilt, and innocence is explored throughout the novel largely through the characters of the convicts and the criminal lawyer Jaggers. From the handcuffs Joe mends at the smithy to the gallows at the prison in London, the imagery of crime and criminal justice pervades the book, becoming an important symbol of Pip's inner struggle to reconcile his own inner moral conscience with the institutional justice system. In general, just as social class becomes a superficial standard of value that Pip must learn to look beyond in finding a better way to live his life, the external trappings of the criminal justice system (police, courts, jails, etc.) become a superficial standard of morality that Pip must learn to look beyond to trust his inner conscience. Magwitch, for instance, frightens Pip at first simply because he is a convict, and Pip feels guilty for helping him because he is afraid of the police. By the end of the book, however, Pip has discovered Magwitch's inner nobility, and is able to disregard his external status as a criminal. Prompted by his conscience, he helps Magwitch to evade the law and the police. As Pip has learned to trust his conscience and to value Magwitch's inner character, he has replaced an external standard of value with an internal one.

2.7 Summing up

In this unit we discussed Charles Dickens, and also analysed the major characters and themes of *Great Expectations*. The various perspectives discussed will help you to understand the text and develop a method of analysing novels.

2.8 References

Booth, Wayne. The Rhetoric of Fiction. New York: Penguin, 1991.

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2.9 Model and Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the theme of crime and punishment in the novel Great Expectations.
2. Discuss Charles Dickens as a novelist.
3. Analyse the character of Pip. Do you think there is an autobiographical element in his character?
4. What picture can you draw about the society from the novel? Explain.

UNIT 3 D. H. LAWRENCE

3.1. Introduction

In an earlier unit you were introduced to novel, a form of writing most suited to the modern age. You were also introduced to two major novelists of the Romantic and the Victorian ages, namely Jane Austin and Charles Dickens. Jane Austin is one of the most widely read Romantic fiction writers of all times and Dickens is still remembered as the creator of some of the world's most memorable characters like David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, Pip and Mr Pickwick, to name a few. In this unit you will be reading D.H. Lawrence, a writer who truly represents the modern age and whose novels mark a watershed in the "great tradition" of the English novels.

3.2. Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Comprehend the salient features of the Modern Age
- Discuss Lawrence as a psychological novelist
- Understand his major works in a nut shell

3.3: Historical Background:

The psychological, economic and philosophical background and intellectual complexity of the Enlightenment mark upon the inception of modern or postmodern and pre modern or feudal orthodox world. Notwithstanding, one may study the world which stands before enlightenment or with the commencement of enlightenment and it is the enlightenment principles which may expound the modern age.

Modern age, which is characterised by more than one feature, records the arrival and some significant contributions of some major. Among such novelists, D.H. Lawrence holds a remarkable place. The salient features of the modern age may also characterise the literary creation of D.H. Lawrence. These may include at first the graphic mapping of the uncanny unconscious, subconscious and the conscious which brings the reality of the world at the interiority of the mind, or in other, the reality becomes internal and cognitive rather than external and empirical. Secondly, it brings the spatio-temporal reality together. In fact, it records the temporal reality in terms of *duree* or unit of time or moment by bringing the special and general concept of relativity together. Thirdly, it represents the reality in its multiplicity, fragmentariness and in contingency and universal felicity. It also establishes a democratic culture in expression and representation. All that has been kept unsaid and reserved must get its clear and open expression. As a result, the discourse about sex and sexuality became quite common and democratic. Finally, it expresses a dialogic imagination. The works of D.H. Lawrence exhibit various features which exemplify the modern age. In addition, the age of D.H. Lawrence is also characterised by the growth of industry and technology. This growth led to the phenomena of the growth of capitalism and market or exchange economy. The increasing dominance of capitalism in the entire sphere of Western imperialist world along with industrial proliferation brought money into the centre of human existence. Money and monetary transactions became the primary concern and motive of the world. Capital and money indeed proved instrumental in the advancement and empowerment of human society. But they also affected human life to an extent that all human relations, emotions

and the predicament of human existence became the prime concern of the age. It brought the human relationship to the level of a nexus between money-commodity relationships which further brings a situation of alienation or estrangement. In money-commodity relationship, all sorts of relationship are viewed in terms of body or material existence in which the relationship is void of all kinds of emotional tie.

The literary history of the modern age is observed through semiotics and signification of psychological, economic, scientific, political and cultural realities. The remarkable contribution of William James with his *Principles of Psychology* and the ineluctable marks of Sigmund Freud with his *Interpretation of Dream* and theories of Sexuality foregrounded the psychological realities of the modern age. The external world became merely a cover and the internal world became more meaningful. Freud's psycho-analysis theories shook the foundation of the world. According to him, man has got a sub-conscious. The subconscious is a storehouse of all our suppressed and repressed desires. Freud was of the view that all suppressed actions of man can re-appear in the form of dreams. He relates these suppressed thoughts to have a bearing of sex-instincts. In fact, it may not be an exaggeration to say that they have paved the way for the readers of the modern age to believe in internal world rather than the external one. These psychological principles have allowed the novelists of the modern age to peep into the uncanny and unfathomable world of human mind.

It was William James who described that the human mind is never static and it is always in a flux. It is continuous but can have a continuous change too. It is all a matter of consciousness. This consciousness is the sum total of all our experiences. The statement of William James seemed to bring a significant change in narrative technique and pattern of novels written in this age. The novels that came to be written in this age followed the features of 'streams of consciousness'. You would be curious to know what made James so significant. James in his book *The Principles of Psychology* wrote:

> For there it is obvious and palpable that our state of mind is never precisely the same.... Experience is remoulding us every moment, and our mental reaction on every given thing is really a resultant of our experience of the whole world up to that date.

The stream of consciousness familiarised readers with what was going inside the human mind. The interest in the hidden self of man became a matter of concern. The various moods, temperaments, related experiences and observations gained more momentum. The major novelists who followed the technique of stream of consciousness in their works are Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, E. M. Forster, Marcel Proust, and Lawrence. The pioneers of this new technique believed that all reality lies in the consciousness.

The stream of consciousness technique dealt with the psychological analysis of mind as a river in storm. This brought an element of modernity in the novels written in this period. Modern novels and the phenomena of modernism, which promoted 'streams of consciousness', affirmed that consciousness flows directly from the unknown and unexplored world of psychology. Thus, the psychological interpretations shape and reshape the historical accounts of the modern age.

The arrival of Karl Marx and Engels after Hegel, Herder and Kant redefined history through historical materialism and through the existing realities of class consciousness. Marx and Engels believed that the history of the world is the history of class-struggle,

which is primarily triggered off by economic difference. This economic difference is fundamentally controlled and constructed by those who control capital, who are none but capitalists. They control infrastructure as they possess the base or capital and other ideological and state apparatuses are under their ambit. Their control on base, infrastructure and on ideological and state apparatuses enables them to exploit the surplus labour, use value, alienation and the process of reification.

The scientific discovery and the technological innovations entailed deeply upon the shaping of modern age and the complex epistemological and ontological realties of modernism. The arrival of Einsteinian physics in the form of the special theory of relativity and the general theory of relativity as opposed to the basic principles of the classical mechanics brought the relative realities. It established the fact that the reality of the universe is relative and cannot be absolute and hence it must be viewed in its multiplicity. The condition of the plurality of reality characterises the modern age which can be exemplified by Einstein's belief in a space-time continuum. Einstein's basic hypothesis of converting matter into energy or e=mc2 has brought about a remarkable paradigm shift in understanding the realities of physical universe. Nietzsche through his nihilism explains the fact that there is not a or the particular way of explaining and attaining realities or logos. D. H. Lawrence in his "Why the Novel Matters" explains:

> We should ask for no absolutes, or absolute. Once and for all and forever, let us have done with the ugly imperialism of any absolute. There is no absolute good, there is nothing absolutely right. All things flow and change, and even change is not absolute.

The cultural realities of Lawrence's age is associated with attempts to render human subjectivity in ways more real than realism: to represent consciousness, perception, emotion, meaning and the individual relation to society through interior monologue, stream of consciousness, tunnelling of de-familiarization, rhythm, and irresolution. Further, the elements of religious scepticism, deep introspection, technical and formal experimentation, cerebral game-playing, linguistic innovation, self-referentiality, misanthropic despair overlaid with humour, philosophical speculation, loss of faith and cultural exhaustion all exemplify the firmament of the cultural currents of the age in which Lawrence has dwelled for years. The phenomena of industrialization, urbanisation and secularisation which are characterised by disintegration, reformation, fragmentation, contingency, incredulity to meta-narrative, ephemerality and insecurity have defined the crisis and crux of the modern age or the age of the *avant garde.* The synchronic realities of the modern age have prompted the modernist writers to integrate the seeming polemic realities or the binary opposition of the tradition and modernity – Cartesian dualism, internal and external and body and blood. It is a common belief that the situation of integration may infuse in the existing predicament of nihilism. Jurgen Habermas argues that the project of modernity is yet unfinished because it continues to attempt its own self-redefinition through many instances and utterances of identification and projection. The age, indeed, establishes an aesthetic and cultural reaction to late modernity and modernisation which is marked by a clear movement towards increased sophistication, studied mannerism, profound introversion, technical display, self-scepticism and general anti-representationalism. These characteristics of the age also exposed the reader and the writers to the world of political realities.

Virginia Woolf's observation that in or around December 1910 the human character changed is worth noting that the culmination of the change of human character has profoundly been rooted in the political upheaval in and around European continent. The political enterprise of imperialism, French Revolution, American Revolution, Russian or Bolshevik Revolution, Nazism, Fascism, the First World War and the Second World War have entrenched deeply upon the political map of the world and have changed the history of the western world. They have experienced the nightmare of history and have realised the futility and anarchy of the modern world.

3.4: Life, Parentage and Career of D. H. Lawrence

David Herbert Lawrence was born in 1885 at Eastwood, located in Nottinghamshire. He was the fourth child of his parents – Arthur Lawrence and Lydia. Lawrence's father was an uneducated coal miner who didn't have even the basic writing ability. Throughout his life, Arthur Lawrence remained a miner and hence couldn't bring much prosperity to his family. Though, he was very gracious among his friends, he often felt lonely and also enjoyed drinking at times.

Lawrence's mother Lydia was completely different both in her background as well as in her temper. Since she came from a middle class family and her father being an engineer, she was exposed to the comforts of life. She had been cheated in love during her youth. She met Arthur in a club and got fascinated towards him because of his dancing ability and musical voice. Initially attracted towards each other because of youth, Arthur and Lydia soon became disillusioned as their tastes differed and reality surfaced between them. Life for them became an endless quarrel and Lydia often got worried about the future of her children. She often thought that the company of Arthur would spoil the career of their children and hence she often forbade them from imitating the dialect of their father.

D.H. Lawrence initially did his schooling from 1898 to 1901 in Nottingham High School. The home atmosphere of D.H. Lawrence fell heavy upon him. After leaving school, he came across Jessie Chambers whose company provided him some moments of relief. Jessie's father lived two miles north of Eastwood and hence it became easier for Lawrence to walk to their premise and spend time. Both Lawrence and Jessie benefited from each other's company. While they studied various writers of English, Lawrence taught Jessie how to read French. Jessie discovered the artist in Lawrence and taught him painting. This provided the budding novelist with the felicity of self-expression.

Then he joined as a student-teacher from 1902-1906. Later he entered Nottingham University College for a two-year course and soon he joined a manufacturer of surgical goods in Nottinghamshire. He got dissatisfied with the world around him soon and again accepted a teaching assignment at Davidson Road School at Croydon, London. This was the time when Lawrence's artistic ability and his flair for writing were taking roots.

Lawrence started writing poems in the beginning. Some of his poems were published in *The English Review*. Jessie had been quite instrumental in sending Lawrence's poems to the editor of *The English Review*. His mother never approved of her son's growing intimacy with Jessie. While the budding artist met several impediments and turmoil, the

sudden death of his mother made him restless. He became very harsh and the continuous tension brought a vacuum in his life. He got disengaged from Jessie and left his teaching too. After an attack of pneumonia in 1911, Lawrence gave up teaching to become a professional writer.

Lawrence met Professor Ernest Weekly in 1912 where he met Frieda, wife of Ernest Weekly, with whom he eloped within a few weeks and thereafter they kept on moving from one place to another. However, Lawrence continued with his literary creations writing fundamentally about human relations, love, marriage, body, and blood where he propagates that the relationship between man and woman is one long battle – a form of conflict but not a natural expression of harmony. He further articulates the fact that there is a continuum between attraction and repulsion in one's life.

Lawrence's first novel *The White Peacock* was published in 1911 and in 1913 his *Bildungsroman* novel, *Sons and Lover* was published. In these novels the tyrannical impact of industrialization, urbanisation, and economic growth have been exemplified and illustrated. The crumbling form of relationship and weakening of relationship has also been portrayed. From 1914-1918 Lawrence was deeply influenced by the First World War which deeply engraved upon his uncanny mind and impelled him to wonder in the world. His novels particularly *The Rainbow, Woman in Love, Kangaroo, and Lady Chatterley's Lover* profess his principle of life- force that may ennoble the people to lead a meaningful life in the world which bears the marks of some devastative wars. The writings of D.H. Lawrence, because of their novelty and newness established him as one of the most prolific and versatile writers of the modern age. His writings include travel books, short stories, translations, historical work, and literary studies. The frank assertion of Lawrence in terms of his depiction of body in his works, at times, also made him face harsh criticism. You will note that some of his works were banned too. While his novels brought him more popularity, his critical opinions also evoked great response among readers and critics.

Lawrence's major works are listed below:

Novels: *The White Peacock* (1911); *The Trespasser* (1912); *Sons and Lovers* (1913); *The Rainbow* (1915); *Woman in Love* (1920); *The Lost Girl* (1920); *Aaron's Rod* (1922); *Kangaroo* (1924); *The Plumed Serpent* (1928); *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928)

Short Stories (collection): *Lone Among the Haystacks; England My England; The Woman Who Rode Away; The Prussian Officer; The Princess; The Mortal Coil*

Travel-Books: *Twilight in Italy; Sea and Sardinia*

Miscellaneous Prose: *Phoenix and Phoenix II; Psychoanalysis and the unconscious; Fantasia and the unconscious*

3.5: The Novels of D. H. Lawrence

By now you might have become acquainted with the corpus of Lawrence's writings. It is quite difficult to discuss everything about Lawrence in one unit yet a brief discussion of his novels will familiarise you with Lawrence's mind and art. In addition, since you have

to read *Sons and Lovers* as part of your course of study, it becomes quite imperative to get introduced to Lawrence's other novels too.

The White Peacock (1911)

The White Peacock was published in 1911. Lawrence started the novel in 1906 and then rewrote it three times. The early versions had the working title of *Laetitia.* Lawrence's first novel is set in the Eastwood area of his youth and is narrated in the first person by a character named Cyril Beardsall. One of Cyril's friends, George Saxton who comes of a farming family, falls in love with Cyril's sister Lettie. This affair continues for years. But Lettie ultimately marries a wealthy young man Leslie Tempest. This development causes much unhappiness to all concerned. Although George also earns a lot of money, he takes to drinking and his personality disintegrates. Lettie also does not find true happiness. She loses herself in her children and the surface values of society. The novel, thus, deals with the unhappy relationship existing between the two sexes. Thus, the novel involves themes such as the damage associated with mismatched marriages, and the border between town and country. The novel includes some notable description of nature and the impact of industrialization on the countryside and the town.

The Trespasser

The Trespasser, the second novel by D. H. Lawrence, published in 1912, is not an entirely original work. It is an adaption of a novel by Helen Corke. The novel expresses the theme of the failure of contact and the lack of warmth between people. It is the description of the frustration of the failure of love affair between Siegmund and Helena. The love affair fails precisely because of sexual coldness on Helena's part and partly because she needs him only as a dream and not as a person. Siegmund leaves her, comes home and commits suicide. Since, the novel does not have any deep roots in Lawrence's personal experience, its quality is rather uneven. In parts it is extremely good, but in other parts it is grossly bad. However, the description of the sunny, salty landscape in the Isle of Wight where this love affair takes place is just fascinating and bears testimony to the poetic genius of Lawrence.

Sons and Lovers

Sons and Lovers, originally titled *Paul Morel*, was published in 1913. It is largely autobiographical. Mrs Morel, a lady of cultivated and refined taste, married to a miner, Walter Morel, is very unhappy with her marriage. When her sons grow up, she selects them as lovers. After the death of the elder son William, she is strongly attached to Paul Morel. The attachment has a very disastrous effect on the mental health of Paul who fails to establish satisfactory relationships with any woman. Paul has an affair with Miriam, a young girl living on a farm in the neighborhood. She awakens the artist in him; but on account of the mother-pull so strongly operative in Paul, and Miriam's own sexual inhibitions, the two fail to achieve harmony. Paul then goes for Clara Dawes, the new woman, married but separated from her husband, earning her own living. For a while they are passionately in love but the consummation of their love brings only momentary satisfaction. The relationship soon breaks down. Meanwhile, the mother is dead, and Paul is left in despair. However, the novel ends with a rejection of despair and a determination to face the unknown future.

The Rainbow

The Rainbow (1915) delineates the fulfilling nature of marriage. On the one hand it explains the altering nature of human relationships and on the other describes the impact of modern civilization on human sensibility. The novel traces the history of three generations of the Brangwens who have been living on the Marsh farm. Tom continues to be living there whereas other Brangwens move to the city and acquire bourgeois manners. In the due course Lydia comes to stay with Tom and finally they marry. Tom also develops a strong affection for Anna, who develops a very strong bond of love with him. However, when she grows and attains physical growth she falls in love with Will, Tom's nephew and finally Anna and Will marry in which Anna finds a great fulfilment in child-bearing. Anna and Will get a daughter named Ursula. When Ursula grows up she revolts against her mother's confined existence which is limited by child-bearing and the cares of the family. She seeks love through which she can find mere animal fulfilment. Ursula falls in love with Skrebensky and they passionately love each other but in the meantime Skrebensky leaves for war and when he comes back from the war they attempt their passion again. However Ursula leaves him. Skrebensky also leaves for India where he marries the daughter of colonel. Now, Ursula realizes that she already has conceived a baby and hence tries to unite with Skrebensky but he already has married and hence declines her offer. Ursula however, feels that her lover will come out of 'Eternity to which she herself belonged'. As a sign of hopeful and bright future, she sees a rainbow and understands its promise.

Women in Love

Woman in Love (1920) is a sequel to *The Rainbow*, and represents Lawrence's philosophy of life. The novel expresses the love relations of Ursula and Gudrun with Rupet Birkin and Gerald Crich. Birkin is an integrated human being who has integrated the consciousness of the blood and the body. Ursula and he find fulfilment in each other. The two together hold out the theory that the sexes must fulfil each other but if the woman attempts to dominate, the mystery of life is travestied and conjugal happiness is jeopardized. Birkin deplores the misery of modern civilization occasioned by the old male principles of domination. He also believes in a life of pure sensation. Crich's approach to life if purely mental, and so is of Gudrun. They fail to experience the satisfying fullness of sensual life. And through her desire to dominate Gerald Crich, Gudrun ultimately destroys him. In the novel, the novelist rejects Christianity as it perpetuates the conflict between mind and spirit but he advocates a new philosophy of life which is based upon the cosmic harmony between the blood consciousness of man and nature. The novel also questions the institution of marriage and deplores the dehumanizing process of industrialization.

Aaron's Rod

Aaron's Rod (1922) explores the theme of homosexual relations between Aaron and Lily which does not prove very satisfactory. Aaron however marries but the marriage does not continue for long and hence he comes back to Lily. But once again he realizes that men do not respond easily to the emotional demands from men and that the real solution of his problem lies in the singleness in relation only. He clings to his flute as a symbol of his creative life. He meets his wife again, who is reproachful at first but later responds to him

with sexual and emotional appeal. But he resents being dominated by her. It motivates him to go on for the single life, on 'sheer finished singleness'.

Kangaroo

Kangaroo (1923) a thought adventure novel with a setting in Australia deals with the theme of marriage and the relationship between man and man. Somers and his wife Harriet visit Australia where they know no one. Somers is not satisfied with his writing and he wants to do something with living people whereas Harriet thinks his writing is enough doing. They make friends with a typical Australian couple Jack and Victoria Calcott. Jack desires intimate friendship with Somers but gets no response. Jack is involved in a political movement headed by a Jewish lawyer in Sidney known as Kangaroo. Somers is impressed by him but he does not want to surrender either to him or to his movement. The love hate relationship between the two is very dramatically worked out in the novel. Kangaroo is enraged by his unresponsiveness, threatens and orders him to leave the country. Somers, absolutely terrified, walks about in the streets. Kangaroo is shot in a clash with another labour leader Struthers. Somers' visits him on his death-bed but turns down his appeal for love. All is over, and Somers and Harriet leave Australia. Thus marriage is found unsatisfactory on account of the woman's desire to dominate; the relationship with other men proves unsatisfactory for want of emotional response; and the political action Somers tries fails to satisfy him since he realizes that it does not change men.

The Plumed Serpent

The Plumed Serpent (1926) discusses the nature of religion. On the one hand it expresses Lawrence's dissatisfaction with Christianity and glorifies the old primitive religion of Mexicans, and on the other it suggests the preoccupation of the author with the great cosmic laws underlying the sex relationship to which all other aspects of life are linked. He felt that if the entire social system can be made to depend upon an integral sex relationship, all the ills of the society can be removed.

Lady Chatterley's Lover

Lady Chatterley's Lover (1929) narrates the story of Mr Clifford who has badly been wounded in the war and has lost his sexual potency which allows his wife Mrs Chatterley to fall in love with Mellors, his gamekeeper. Mellors loves her passionately and quenches her sexual dissatisfaction and finally they marry. The novel can be read as an allegory. Sir Clifford symbolizes the degenerate post war while Mellors is the natural man who holds within him the possibility of *renewed* vitality. Lady Constance is the feminine consciousness that rejects what is sterile and devitalized and goes for a new life. The novel also presents an antithesis between instinct and intellect and shows how a man can realize a fuller life by subordinating his intellect to his instinct.

A brief introduction to Lawrence's novels reveals the themes that make the master artist immortal. You will come across a detailed description of Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, which, according to many critics, has autobiographical echoes.

3.6: REFERENCES

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3.7: MODEL AND TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Give a historical background of the age of D.H. Lawrence.
2. What are the salient features of modernity?
3. What do you understand by the term ‘stream of consciousness’?
4. Discuss the early life of D.H. Lawrence.
5. Name the major novels of Lawrence.
6. What were the major themes that Lawrence depicted in his works?

UNIT 4 D. H. LAWRENCE: *SONS AND LOVERS*

4.1: Introduction

You have already read briefly in the previous unit about Lawrence's life, career and the theme of his major novels. In this unit, you will read more about Lawrence's master piece *Sons and Lovers.* The unit provides chapter wise summary, themes of the novel, characterization and elements of autobiographical echoes as witnessed by readers and critics of Lawrence.

4.2. Objectives

After going through the novel you will be able to:

- Understand Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* in a nutshell
- Analyse the characters of the novel
- Discuss the major themes of the novel
- Trace *Sons and Lovers* as an autobiographical novel

4.3: Summary of the Novel

Sons and Lovers is one of the classical novels emanating from the mighty pen of D. H. Lawrence who occupies a seminal space in the firmament of the modernist novelists who have represented the uncanny and confounding terrain of human psychology, human relationship, marriage, sex and sexuality. The novel was published in 1913 portraying the autobiographical details of Lawrence's life and hence Richard Aldington remarks 'When you have experienced *Sons and Lovers,* you have lived through the agonies and ecstasies of the young Lawrence striving to win the freedom from his old life'. *Sons and Lovers* is perhaps the first English novel with an authentic working class background. It is a study of the relationships of the high-minded and sensitive Mrs Morel with her sons, and those of the younger son Paul with his mother and two lovers. Mrs Morel comes from an ancient but improvised family which has a long history of Dissent, and which had fought against Charles I during the Civil wars, and she possesses rigid standards of truth and prosperity. Her husband, on the other hand, is a miner descended from a French refugee and an English barmaid, and he is reckless, idle and unprincipled. Mrs Morel shrinks from his unfeeling drunkenness and occasional violence, and invests her emotional resources in her two elder sons, William and Paul. When William dies of pneumonia, she turns to Paul, and encourages his intellectual sensitivity and artistic nature as a compensation for her own frustrated hopes.

However, the relationship with her sons suffers a setback when Paul first becomes friendly, then emotionally involved with Miriam Lievers, the shy daughter of a local farmer. Mrs Morel opposes this attachment with vigour, and Paul finds himself suffocated by both his mother's opposition and Miriam's romantic demands. For the sensual release that he demands, Paul turns to Clara Dawes, a married woman, and Mrs Morel can cope more easily with this relationship, because its carnal nature does not interfere with her emotional possessiveness. As Paul is promoted at the surgical goods factory, and as he begins to get noticed as a painter and designer, so he finds that Clara affords him no more gratifying release than did Miriam, and his affair with Clara cools. Paul encounters her husband Baxter Dawes, and the two have a vicious fight which

serves to reunite Dawes and Clara and to release Paul from his obligation to her. The fight is paralleled by Mrs Morel's fight for life against a painful cancer. When her pain becomes unbearable, Paul laces her night-time milk with a fatal dose of morphia to ease her mother's passing. After her death, the despair of life that Paul feels is gradually turned into an affirmation of the importance of the continuing struggle.

The story of the novel runs through fifteen chapters, in which each chapter lights upon the specific aspects of the growth of the narrative and the plot of the novel.

4.3.1: The early married life of the Morels

The first chapter opens with the depiction of the situational realities in which Walter Morel and Gertrude Morel come in contact with each other and fall in love which finally ties them together in the knot of marriage. When Gertrude Morel meets Walter Morel at a Christmas party, she feels:

> "He had that rare thing, a rich, ringing laugh. Gertrude Coppard had watched him, fascinated. He was so full of colour and animation; his voice ran so easily into comic grotesque, he was so ready and so pleasant with everybody. Her own father had a rich fund of humour, but it was satiric. This man was different: soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gambolling".

This fascinating, amicable and passionate attitude of Walter Morel attracted Gertrude towards him. She realizes that Mr Morel is a responsible and a social human being who is well aware of his responsibility. He appears to have come from a well–to-do family. All these attracted Gertrude towards Mr Morel and finally they married and began a new phase of their life. All went well without any complain and notice until one day Mrs Morel realized that her husband is a perpetual drunkard and whatever he earned, he consumed all in his drinking. Gradually, she realized the condition of economic destitution of her family, which indeed, resulted into a constant struggle, fight, skirmish and feud. It indeed vitiated the entire atmosphere of the family. Mrs Morel gradually started moving away from her husband but closer towards her sons.

4.3.2: The birth of Paul, and another Battle

The journey of Mr and Mrs Morel's life becomes tough because of the result of Mr Morel's reckless attitude. He appears to be completely mechanical, devoid of all emotion and sensibility, and therefore, he treats his wife without any sentiment and empathy. For him, his wife is merely a body which may satisfy his sexual urge in his absolute drunken condition and finally will reproduce another child. Mrs Morel is now pregnant for the third time in which she suffers not only physical agony but also psychological and emotional. She has felt that her struggle with poverty, ugliness, and meanness has been a very painful one. Finally, she gives birth to a child on which her husband remarks; "May God bless the child", as if he was performing a duty without any emotion. Mr Morel's irresponsibility, mechanical behaviour, destitution germinate the seed of abhorrence in Mrs Morel's heart and soon she gets fed up with him. As a consequence, he gets alienated from his family.

4.3.3: The casting off of Morel- the taking on of William

"Now, with the birth of this third baby, herself no longer set towards him, helplessly, but was like a tide that scarcely rose, standing off from him. After this she scarcely desired

him. And, standing more aloof from him, not feeling him so part of herself, but merely part of her circumstances, she did not mind so much what he did, could leave him alone", the novelist expresses. Completely dissatisfied with her conditions, Mrs Morel surreptitiously moved towards her son for satisfying her emotional and financial urge. The promising presence of her son, William in her life, made her to satisfy her emotional and economic needs. Looking at the miserable condition of his family, William started earning money and giving it away entirely to his mother so that she could manage the family. She developed a strong feeling for her son and became deeply possessed with him. She never allowed him to get entangled with any girl as she herself was deeply engrossed with him even in his emotional domain. Towards the end of the chapter, it becomes evident that now William has an offer to go to London for a job.

4.3.4: The young life of Paul

The irresponsible and reckless behaviour of Mr Morel made him the bone of contention in his family. His meagre income that he used to receive from his employer was spent completely in his unceasing drinking habit. His drinking habit left him with no penny for his family and as a result, his family used to suffer from a severe financial crunch and poverty. The deplorable condition of his family, with regard to poverty, forced his children and his wife to develop a sense of resentment against him. His wife and his son Paul were completely against him and finally he was left alienated and uncared. The impecunious condition of the family forced the children to work hard so that they might meet their both ends. After William's departure to London only Paul, Annie and Arthur were left in the family. Paul was a delicate boy suffering from bronchitis. It was because of this that he received a perennial treatment from Mrs Morel. Annie and Arthur used to go out early in the morning, in summer, looking for mushrooms, but the most important harvest for them was the blackberries. Paul always used to bring his mother a spray. She would admire the spray in the tone of a woman accepting a love token. William, on the other side, had sent some letters and some money to his mother. Finally, he came home for Christmas in which he had brought gifts for all his brothers and sister and also for his mother. It was an occasion in their life to be happy and joyous.

4.3.5: Paul launches into life

"Paul was now fourteen, and was looking for work. He was a rather small and a rather finely-made boy, with dark brown hair and light blue eyes. His face had already lost its chubbiness, and was becoming somewhat like William's – rough-featured, almost rugged – and it was extraordinarily mobile. Unusually he looked as if he saw things, was full of life, and warm; then this smile, like his mother's, came suddenly and was very lovable; and then, when there was any clog in his soul's quick running, his face went stupid and ugly. He was the sort of boy that becomes a clown and a lout as soon as he is not understood, or feels himself held cheap; and again, is adorable at the first touch of warmth" writes the novelist. Paul grows out from his world of innocence to his world of experience by his mature traverse through the world of his father and mother and through the experience of his physical and emotional upheaval. In the outset of the chapter Paul is found to be a bit unsettled with the news of his father being hospitalized with a broken leg. Paul soothes his mother and tries to share the emotional burden of her heart and finally, all of them sighed for relief. Paul is aware of the fact that the financial condition of the family has badly been affected after William's departure and hence he is looking for a job. Finally he gets a job as a junior clerk. Paul joins the company with a great

energy so that he may earn his living to support his family. When he receives his wages for the first week, he comes home with bright eyes and he puts his eight shillings proudly on the table, telling his mother that the money may somewhat relieve her financial difficulties.

4.3.6: Death in the family

Arthur, the replica of his father has been growing up and has reached the maturity of mind and body. On the other hand, Walter Morel has turned out to be intolerant and peevish and because of that he has been loathed by all members of the family. Arthur, after getting the scholarship, joins Grammar School in Nottingham and decides not to stay at home because the atmosphere of the family is vitiated and not at all conducive for psychological growth. Now, Paul, who is working in a surgical company, is the only catharsis of his mother. She keeps on waiting for his arrival from work in the evening, and then she unburdens herself of all that has been worrying her. Paul sits and listens to her earnestly. Each shares the life of the other.

4.3.7: Lad and Girl Love

Paul has now started coming out from his early childhood to the early stage of manhood. His experience at the work places shapes his personality and he finds Miriam for his love. Miriam appears to be dangling between her emotion of love and indifference. However, Paul makes several visits to Willey farm where the Leivers family lives. Paul develops relationship with the boys of the family and he has been successful in impressing Miriam with his countenance, intellect and manners. Paul finds a disharmonious and discordant relationship among the children of Leivers family. Gradually, Paul's intimacy with the family becomes closer and harmonious which entrusts him to interact with Miriam whom he finds a bit closed and sadly engrossed with learning and spiritual journey of her life. It does not allow Paul to quench the fire of his sexual desire. However, there is something indefinable in her, which always attracts Paul to her and hence, he expresses his desire of marrying Miriam which his mother disapproves. It brings him at the state of limbo where he is caught between the love of his mother who controls him by her blood and the love of Miriam who controls him by her body and brain. Ultimately, Paul and Miriam develop a chaste relationship because she believes that love begets love.

4.3.8: Strife in love

The chapter opens with the careless work of Arthur as he has been enlisted in the army and he can't now come out from there, however hard he and his mother try for this. Mrs Morel is extremely happy for the fact that Paul is with her now because he has left his job and now involves himself deeply in aesthetics, in paintings which bring him a prize of handsome money. It gladdens everybody in the family and even Miriam. She comes to see Paul at his place which is not liked by Mrs Morel and other family members. When Paul asks his mother about her response for Miriam, she speaks bluntly that she is unsuitable for him because she in her inner world thinks that "she is not like an ordinary woman who can leave me my share in Paul. She wants to absorb him. She wants to draw him out and absorb him till there is nothing left of him, even for himself. He will never be a man on his own feet because she will suck him up". This leads to an inner tension and skirmish in Mrs Morel's life. Though she wins, as Paul stops meeting Miriam for some time, but his inner and spiritual urge propels him to come to meet her again.

4.3.9: Defeat of Miriam

Mrs Morel does not allow Paul to continue with Miriam and hence he does not feel comfortable with Miriam. He has become more satirical to Miriam and passes ireful comments against her and now it appears to them that their marriage is not feasible. Gradually, he feels attracted towards Clara and hence he discusses with his mother about her amicable and sociable nature. In the meanwhile, both Annie and Arthur get married and begin their new journey of life.

4.3.10: Clara

Paul decides to stay with his mother and provide support to her life whenever it is needed and therefore he proclaims that he may not marry now. He, therefore, moves towards the world of art, aesthetics and beauty where he finds the tranquillity of mind. He gets involved in water paintings with which he wins two trophies that fetch some money for his family and makes his mother happy. However, Paul's view of life is different from his mother's. They discuss at length the meaning of life and religion. He believes in the philosophy of staying with the people of his class rather than the heartless people of the upper class. He welcomes uncertainty in life which may not go along with the common principle of the married woman, for him happiness is the absolute and ultimate thing in life. He believes that happiness in married life is a woman's whole theory of life and a woman always aims at an ease of soul and physical comfort, while he despises this sort of thing. On the other hand, Clara Dawes has successfully been able to attract Paul with her winsome body and sociable nature.

4.3.11: The Test on Miriam

Paul and Miriam love each other head over heels. She has tried her best at avoiding the indulgence of body in their love. In spring, Paul goes to see Miriam at Wood Linton where they roam around and finally come to the cottage in which Miriam lies on the bed and calls Paul too to join her which culminates into the physical consummation. Now, Paul wants to marry Miriam but he feels dissatisfied and feels cold which results into the termination of their long love and relationship. It gladdens Mrs Morel but now Paul visits Clara very often to satisfy his physical desire and even Clara too is inclined towards him as she has been living alone, away from her husband.

4.3.12: Passion

After the termination of Miriam and Paul's relationship, Mrs Morel experiences a better hope for herself as her son will never go away from her. Both Clara and Paul are full of passion as both of them have never been able to give an outlet to their physical desire. Their growing relationship provides them with an opportunity to consummate each other to the fullest and for which Clara has no criminal feeling. Clara comes to Paul's house to meet his mother and from then she develops some doubt in her behaviour and conduct. Paul goes to stay with Clara at night and relishes the physical intimacy but their passion is not satisfied.

4.3.13: Baxter Dawes

The growing relationship between Paul and Clara is now known to Mr Baxter and the moment he comes to know about their intimate relationship, it unsettles him and he is finally prompted to take revenge against Paul. Baxter, at first, troubles him in his office

and creates an intolerable situation for Paul. He attacks Paul and makes an attempt to kill him. The fight between Baxter and Paul forces Baxter to come to his wife, Clara, and begin a new journey of life. Finally, they are united as wife and husband, leaving Paul alone and desolate.

4.3.14: The Release

"Take me back!" she whispered ecstatic. "Take me back, take me back!" articulates Mrs Morel when she experiences that her pain is unbearable as she has been ill since a long time. Her condition has neither been improving nor getting worse. In fact, it is quite exasperating for Paul to continue with the same uneventful condition. He, therefore, gives some extra dose of the medicine which proves to be harmful and finally chokes her life to death. At this moment he experiences the state of *pharmakon* in his life. On the one hand he experiences quite relaxed and on the other, he feels crumpled and lonely.

4.3.15: Derelict

After the death of Paul's mother, everything seems so different and unreal. There seems no reason for him why people should go along the street, and houses piled up in the daylight. There seems no reason why these things should occupy the space, instead of leaving it empty. Finally, he decides that he will not take that direction to the darkness, to follow. He quickly walks towards the faintly humming, glowing town.

4.4: Themes in the Novel

Sons and Lovers does not have a single theme. It revolves around the following themes:

1. Impact of industrial revolution and technological growth on human behaviour and human relationship
2. Love, spirit, body and marriage
3. Relationship between parents and children or Oedipus Complex

The entire Western world from 1910 onward, on the one hand, has been struggling and fighting which can be seen in the culmination of the First and the Second World Wars, but on the other hand, it marks the aggressive growth of Capitalism which has engraved itself deeply on the history of the human civilization. Capitalism, which is an outcome of the surmounting growth of industrial progress and advancement, has changed the human body into an object which can be bought and sold through money. It has snapped away the emotional bond between the producer and the product by bringing the phenomena of estrangement or alienation. Finally, it changes human into a mechanical object and all relationship between the human is debased at the nexus of money and product. The labour works mechanically and unemotionally to fill his belly and works day and night with his surplus labour. The degrading condition of Walter Morel is the consequence of the tyrannical power of industrial and mechanical advancement and the growth of capitalistic tendency. It is the surplus labour of the worker and the exploitative framework of the capitalists that make them what they are. All miners who work in the mines are victims of the mechanical system. They are exploited by the capitalists and they perpetuate the capitalist machinery of capital formation. Workers participate in the

process of urbanization but they are also inexplicably controlled by the urbanization and capital formation. The lower wages and unhygienic condition, the result of capital formation, have made the life of the Morel's family miserable. The fight between Mr and Mrs Morel is the result of an eradicable poverty which is a sour legacy of capitalist agency. The tantrum between father and sons is also the result of a deeper poverty which does not allow them to satisfy their basic needs. William's death can implicitly be attributed to overwork which is the bane of a capitalist enterprise and industrial advancement. Hence, it is evident from the preceding discussion that the reality of the industrial growth and technological advancement which further results into the phenomena of capitalism has a negative impact upon human relationship and social harmony.

The novel, with its stream of consciousness technique, borders on the motifs of love, spirit, body and marriage. *Sons and Lovers* essentially explicates the variety of love; it expounds erotic, philia and agape varieties of love. The love that William manifests with Lilly is nothing but a result of physical consummation. It disappears the moment the romantic presence is eclipsed. Paul's physical relationship with Clara is yet another example of the romantic pleasure which is highly erotic in its nature. These love episodes are deeply engraved into the body of the characters. The body is the material reality which is the locus of physical desire. In other words, it is the desire which is located in the body or it is the body that creates a series of desires among the characters so that it formulates a series of desires which passes through the process of territorialisation. It is identified as a process in which the desire or love locates its territory more specifically in the body so that it can be fulfilled; once fulfilled, it gives birth to another form of desire in the body or in the material reality which is known as re-territorialisation. And finally, the body attains its desire or love with the process of de-territorialisation. The physical love between the male and the female is quite natural and hence must be celebrated. Love between Paul and Miriam initially appears to have transcended the physical domain of the world in which the love exists. Miriam loves him with philia and agape and hence discourages Paul from any sexual relation. The relation between Mrs Morel and her sons is primarily guided by the condition of lack of absence. The absence of love in her life from her husband coaxes her to get inclined towards her son named William and then towards Paul. But, the love between Mr Morel and Mrs Morel which is initially reflected is nothing but an association based upon the need fulfilment. The absence of the attainment of love between them is the grisly consequence of the relationship based upon mere material requirement. Their love is in wanting of material and physical fulfilment.

The filial love among Mr Morel and Mrs Morel and their children occupies the lion's share of the novel. In fact, it runs from first to the last chapter of the novel. The novel presents that the love between Mr Morel and his sons is different from the love that Mrs Morel shares with them. It is obvious in the text that the father and sons maintain a hostile relationship with one another whereas they are quite comfortable and sympathetic with their mother. It can accountably be visualized through economic, social and psychological factors. When Mrs Morel marries Mr Morel, she has an impression that he comes from a well to do family and he has his accommodation and living set up in the city but as time passes on, she gets to know that nothing belongs to him, even the furniture is not his and his earnings are meagre of which the larger part he consumes in alcohol and hence she is not able to meet even her both ends.

This condition of poverty and destitution make them fight almost every day and thus sons develop antagonistic feelings against their father. It is the mother's blood that controls their life and emotion. Psychologically, it is the penis envy, as propagated by Sigmund Freud, which controls and maintains the conditions of antagonism. There is no lack or the absence that may create some desire among them and hence they maintain a repulsive relationship. On the contrary, Mrs Morel controls her sons with the condition of lack, they do not possess what she possesses, and that creates desire in her and them which bring them together. The condition of uterus envy compels the protagonist to get cling to her and hence their relation continues. Thus, it represents the condition of Oedipus complex.

4.5: Characterization

Sons and Lovers is full of characters who have given meaning to the rubric of the novel and its texture. All of them are deeply interwoven and stand in an organic harmony without any clash however. There are some differences among them which make them distinct and distinguishable in the novel. An amateurish attempt has been made to elaborate upon each character and a close examination has been made to evaluate the novelist's contribution in the growth and development of the plot of the novel. Characters of the novel belong to several families and they communicate sincerely and graphically among one another which is manifested in the growth of the narrative and the development of the plot of the novel. Initially, the novel introduces Morel's family that lives at Bestwood which consists of Walter Morel, Gertrude Morel, William Morel, Annie Morel, Paul Morel and Arthur Morel. The second family that is brought into the firmament of the novel is Leivers family which lives at Willey Farm including Edgar, Agatha and Miriam. The next family is of Dawes in which the readers are introduced to Clara and Baxter. Finally, there is a long list of characters who participate in the growth of the novel. They are Mrs Radford, Beatrice, Lily Western, Mr Thomas Jordan, Mr Heaton, Jessy Purdy, Barker, Wesson and Minnie. The paucity of space does not allow us to discuss all the characters. However, a candid attempt has been made to introduce all the major characters. Initially, the protagonist and all major characters are squarely and roundly discussed and later some minor characters are briefly introduced so that they may provide some aspects of their hue that they represent in the novel.

4.5.1: Walter Morel

> He had that rare thing, a rich, ringing laugh. Gertrude Coppard had watched him, fascinated. He was so full of colour and animation; his voice ran so easily into comic grotesque, he was so ready and so pleasant with everybody. Her own father had a rich fund of humour, but it was satiric. This man was different: soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gambolling.

The above excerpt presents the character of Walter Morel who is a collier and who is deeply imbricated into the life of Morel's family. It simply implies the fact that the life of Walter Morel affects the life of Gertrude Morel, Paul Morel and William Morel along with two more characters namely Annie and Arthur. The first chapter of the novel introduces Walter Morel as a man of enthusiasm, vitality, energy and force. He is not only respected by the members of his society and family but is also loved and given a due space. When he gets extensively involved into the mechanical enterprise of the industry, he loses his thread of emotion and humanity. He is forced to work or at times over work

so that he may be able to meet the requirements of the family, but the more he works, the more he is pushed into the world of alcoholism. His decreasing income and increasing consumption of alcohol spoils the tranquillity of his family and worsens its financial predicament. The weakening of the economic thread results into the snapping of emotional umbilical cord between characters. The first and the direct impact of the worsening condition is reflected in the relationship between Walter Morel and his wife. Mrs Morel is deeply displeased with him and hence fights with him almost every day. The phenomena of daily skirmish have turned her family into a battle field. The bitterness in their relationship creates abhorrence and hatred between them and this compels her to move swiftly towards her sons. The miserable condition of their mother makes the son feel irritated and begs nothing but disrespect for their father. The inability of Mr Morel forces them to work at a very early age so that the need of the family can be fulfilled. It impels William to go to the city to work so that he may support the family. The monster of capitalism and industrial growth takes away his life and brings Paul on the fore to take the responsibility of the family. He paints and works hard to meet the prosaic needs of his family and for this he loathes his father.

4.5.2: Gertrude Morel

> She was thirty-one, and had been married eight years. A rather small woman of delicate mould but resolute bearing, she shrank a little from her first contact with the Bottom woman.

Gertrude Morel, the wife of Walter Morel, was initially attracted towards Walter Morel for his countenance, for the richness of his disposition and the fund of honour that he exhibits. As time passes, she realizes the ignominious part of his character. She gradually comes to know about his impecunious condition that indeed creates all feuds in the family. She is depicted as a very strong woman who tries to control the situation; but it gets out of her hand. Very soon, after her marriage with Walter, she comes to know of his annoying tendency and finally she starts abhorring her husband, but she develops a good relationship with her sons, first with William, and after his death, with Paul whom she holds with passion and love. Her conception of psychological lack propels her to come closer to Paul and before that to William. She does not allow any of her sons to marry for she fears she might lose them because she apprehends that after the marriage, it is the girl who controls her husband. This claustrophobia keeps her enclosed in herself. Thus, it is evident from the discussion that she holds a central place in the novel, as the novel opens with her and finally closes with her.

4.5.3: William Morel

> **…** then her thoughts turned to William. Already he was getting a big boy. Already he was top of the class, and the master said he was the smartest lad in the school. She saw him a man, young, full of vigor, making the world glow again for her.

William, the eldest of the family, has been the first hope and aspiration of his mother Gertrude Morel who is driven by the condition of lack and economic impoverishment towards him expecting that William may surrogate some emotion and economy that she requires. William has been forced by the economic condition of his family to go to London where he may work and fetch some respite to his mother. While working in London he falls in love with a half-witted girl named Lily Western, who satisfies his

physical desire. Gradually when the stream of love and emotion penetrate deeper, he decides to marry her though his mother does not approve of it. In the meantime he suffers from pneumonia and dies a premature death.

4.5.4: Annie

The daughter of Mr and Mrs Morel, Annie shares the complex web of her family. She has been born and brought up in the vitiated atmosphere of the family which is generally ruled and controlled by fight, quarrel and economic deprivation. The condition of economic deprivation has resulted into the lack of emotional harmony in the family which finally pushes her to find her way in the world. There is a dire lack of any bond in the family which propels her to develop friendship with Leonard and finally she marries him.

4.5.5: Arthur Morel

A minor character, Arthur is the third son of Morel's family. He gets trained as an electrician but gets enlisted in the army, while on a trip with his friends. He joins the army but does not like it and hence he tells his mother to get him released. After his release from army, he falls in love with a woman named Beatrice and finally marries her.

4.5.6: Clara Dawes

Clara is the wife of Baxter Dawes, and annoyed with her husband's rough conduct, she has decided to live with her mother. She is found to be very close with Leivers family, where she meets Paul and gradually develops intimacy with him to the extent of a physical proximity. Paul and Clara share an intimate physical relationship but she eventually gets united with her husband. Clara's association with Paul not only gives him some moments of relief but also creates in him a sort of awareness.

4.5.7: Baxter Dawes

He is a smith working in Mr Jordon's factory where Paul has been working as a spiral clerk. He is rough, insolent and rough. When he gets to know that his wife maintains an intimate relationship with Paul, he directly attacks him and tells him not to stay with her. Finally, Paul acts wisely in the reconciliation between Clara and Baxter.

4.5.8: Paul

Paul, the protagonist of the novel, holds an important place in the entire growth of the novel. He is profoundly connected with the plot, narrative and the thematic development of the novel. Paul's character grows through a complex process with his close relationship with his parents, Miriam and Clara Dawes and his perpetual association with art and aesthetics. The birth of Paul has been an experience of pain and joy for Mrs Morel. It was painful because she experiences an acute pain in herself and it was a matter of great joy for him because it is he who accepts her in totality and loves her not only like a mother but also like a lover and tries to provide her with all kinds of happiness. He creates a great possibility of sharing happiness by accompanying her not only emotionally but also physically.

After his brother, William's death, Paul accepts the responsibility of his family and tries to manage economic freedom for his family. The abusive attitude of his father towards his mother and other members of the family makes him abhor his father. He is also

driven by the feeling of penis envy because his father and he do not face the condition of lack or absence. In fact it is the irony of the presence that impedes the possibility of any coherence and cohesion. However, in the case of his mother, he manifests the psychological phenomenon of 'mother fixation' or Oedipus complex that attracts him towards his mother. It is in the process of the growth of his self that he experiences the oppressive apparatuses of the socio-political and economic and cultural order which his father exercises and which makes him rebellious and hence raise his voice against his father. He moves into the world of unbecoming, becoming non-existential or an un-essentialist and he fights between the physical and spiritual. In the rebellious journey of his life, he comes in contact with Miriam, Clara and his mother. As the journey of his life proceeds he feels the struggle within, the struggle of body and spirit and which is exemplified in his relationship with Miriam. She loves him with all ingenuity and bestows the fountain of spirit upon him but the earthly desire of Paul does not understand the semiotics and signification of ethereal life and love. The unfulfilled physical desire brings him closer to Clara where he quenches the hunger of his bodily requirements. Notwithstanding, his mother hooks him not only with blood but also with emotion and empathy which makes him struggle till the end of the novel. By the end of the epilogue he appears to be frustrated and hence rejoices when his mother passes away. The process of unbecoming continues in his life. Finally he enters into the weird and unfathomable world that moves towards the infinity.

4.5.9: Miriam

The other significant female character in the novel is Miriam, who is puritan and Catholic in her attitude. She is the product of the super-ego of society. She loves Paul but only in her spiritual world and refuses to yield to his sexual desires. Her ascetic behaviour surprises him. However, towards the end of the novel she makes a proposal of marriage to Paul. But he expresses his inability to accept the proposal. Miriam's character can only be seen in her relationship with Paul.

4.6: *Sons and Lovers* as a *Bildungsroman* or an Autobiographical Novel

You have already noticed that *Sons and Lovers* has in it autobiographical elements. Many of the incidents in the novel resemble those of Lawrence's own life. While reading the summary, you might have felt it. An autobiographical novel is quite close to *Bildungsroman* novel which discusses the growth and development of its characters. *Bildungsroman* is read, observed, understood, analysed and critically evaluated through some clearly marked variants. Among these the first is *Entwicklungsroman,* a chronicle of a young man's general growth rather than his specific quest for self-culture. It merely records the perceptible or imperceptible development of the self without any specific desire of attaining and acculturation or individuation. The character passes through the process of socialization and social mobility to attain a mature and individual self but not an idealized one. The second variant is *Erziehungsroman,* which deals with the youth's training and formal education. Here the character is brought in contact with different aspects of civil society and institutions so as to attain some knowledge and skills. The character gradually gets imprints of all social constructs and becomes the part of a complex and confounding social structure. The last variant, *Kunstlerroman,* is a tale of the orientation of an artist, where the character after getting acquainted with the baffling

social structure and its functioning through Base and Super-Structures, finally gets disillusioned and discovers the stark reality of the world, unbearable and untenable, which finally encourages the character to come back to the inner culture of an artist. George Lukacs in his *Theory of the Novel* (1920) considers *Bildungsroman* as "romance of disillusionment". For Lukacs, the disillusionment plot is characterized by an essential disjunction of self and world, in which the prosaic and materialist world ultimately proves to be unaccommodating to the poetic ideals of the protagonist. Hence, some English expressions like "self-development", "self-formation" and "self-cultivation" do not quite capture the emphasis on aesthetic education and a spiritual inner culture, on the harmony of one's intellectual, moral, spiritual, and artistic faculties, or on achieving a dialectical harmony of self and society, of personal desire and social responsibility, holds Gregary Castle in his *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman.*

Bildungsroman in its pure form has been defined as the "novel of all round development or self-culture" with a more or less conscious attempt on the part of the hero to integrate his powers, to cultivate himself by his experience", says Susanne Howe. Somerset Maugham in his *Of Human Bondage* conspicuously articulates, "*Bildungsroman* is not an autobiography but an autobiographical novel; fact and fiction are inextricably mingled for self-formation". Before, embarking upon Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* as a modernist *Bildungsroman*, it is indeed indispensable to look into the characteristic features of *Bildungsroman*. The principal characteristics of the genre can be viewed in the movement of a child of some sensibility from county to city or in a provincial town in search of some vocation. The character faces some constraints, social or intellectual, placed upon his free imagination. His family, particularly his father, proves doggedly hostile to his creative instincts or flights of fancy. The character also experiences an exasperating and frustrating school atmosphere. He leaves family and school and moves to city life where he tries to grow in an independent air and begins his real education of life. He also experiences the tortuous reality of life and feels some metamorphosis. In addition, the character is also involved in at least two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting, which demand the hero reappraise his values. Also at this stage the character experiences epiphany or sudden revelation that propels the character for soul searching. Finally, the character discovers the world of aesthetic sublimity. Jerome Hamilton Buckley holds that the *Bildungsroman* novels deal with "childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, the large society, self-education, alienation, ordeal by love, the search for a vocation and the working philosophy". Self-formation or self-cultivation or self-development is a continuous process that is recounted by linguistic elements, social reality, economic condition, political situation and cultural conditions.

Sons and Lovers is generally read and examined through the psychological and autobiographical spectrum; the former reads the novel as the psychological reality of Paul's uncanny mind with particular emphasis on Oedipus complex whereas the latter focuses on the autobiographical elements of Lawrence's life. It appears that in passage after passage Lawrence has been retelling his experience fictionally. Reading the novel through psychological perspective may reduce it to a mere case history, whereas reading it as an autobiographical novel may undermine novel's effectiveness as fictional vision, turning it instead into a confessional autobiography, and vitiating Lawrence's achievement with plot, symbol, dramatic scene, and invented character. Moreover, both these approaches, the autobiographical and the psychological, will allow the reader to consider two kinds of critical literature as observed by Richard D. Beards. He "on the one

hand gets to study a literary rendering – and a superb one – of the Oedipus complex; on the other, he can absorb the facts of Lawrence's life as they are recorded in his letters, in autobiographical sketches and in memoirs about his *Sons and Lovers* period".

Bildung or Kalokagathia signifies a continuous process of passive and active formation of individuals who may instinctively act in the common interest to preserve the civil liberties necessary for the cultivation of the moral arts. Shaftesbury in his *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) introduces the concept of Pietism that stresses the individual's training for an active role in a greater community. Self-recognition does not remain the goal of development but rather the means of fulfilling one's social responsibility. The metaphorical role of the artist has become a real social function: the moral artist must assume responsibility for enlightening humanity through an aesthetic education and the character learns several forms of knowledge with a particular taste in poetry, language and painting. The acquisition of linguistic ability becomes of primary interest for the character because it is language that indeed designs the episteme of an individual. Empiricist, Cognitivist and the Connectivist have stressed upon the role of language in knowledge construction. B.F. Skinner, Pavlov, Locke, Hume and many others have traced the growth of knowledge from tabula rasa state of mind to the condition of knowledge formation.

The Cognitivists and the psychologists emphasize upon the construction of knowledge through unconscious, subconscious and the conscious as propounded by Sigmund Freud. Similarly, Julia Kristeva finds the growth of knowledge through several stages of human mind – namely the mirror state, the symbolic stage and the real state. Jacques Lacan explains that the very sheet of Knowledge is based upon language, the unconscious is structured like language and every language is a set of signs where there is a continuous chain of signs, one sign automatically refers to another sign and this process continues till infinity. As a result, the self of the protagonist is also in a state of constant change. You might have noted how Paul in his entire journey of life keeps on changing form one state of self to another.

Economy also plays a pivotal role in the construction of the self, in general development of the character or in the growth of the *bildung.* The entire social and political structure is controlled by the economic reality of the society. Generally a society is divided into three levels – the base Structure, the Super structure and the Civil society. In this tripartite structure the base (economic) reality controls every aspect of superstructure like education, food, clothes, and culture, and the civil society with all its institutions helps the dominant ideology to continue with its power. It is because the ideas of the ruling class become the ruling ideas and the power of ruling is located somewhere in the root of economic reality. Hence, economics plays a much larger role in the novel than is often recognized. *Sons and Lovers* depicts the financial account of the coal miners at least four times. It also reflects upon the miserable condition of Morels family, how they struggle to make their both ends meet. Readers get a clear picture of the coal miners' finances about how pay is divided in the family, collection of wages at the company office, compensation when Morel is injured, dividing the pay among four butties. The novel gives a clear picture of the professional growth of Paul as well as of his brother William. William's rise to a gentleman's levels is of great importance for Morel's family but a warning to Paul. However, Paul does not believe in the philosophy of gentlemanliness and rather decides to continue living in a way where he can bring art and money together.

When Mrs Morel tells him "to climb into the middle classes" and "in the end to marry a lady", he feels he must rebuke her genteel ambitions:

> "You know," he said to his mother, "I don't want to belong to the well-to-do middle class. I like my common people best. I belong to the common people."
>
> "But if anyone else said so, my son, wouldn't you be in a tear! *You* know you consider yourself equal to any gentleman."
>
> "In myself," he answered, "not in my class or education or my manners. But in myself I am."
>
> "Very well, then. Then why talk about the common people?"
>
> "Because – the difference between people isn't in their class, but in themselves. Only from the middle classes one gets ideas, and from the common people –life itself, warmth. You feel their hates and loves." (*Sons and Lovers*, chapter X)

Later, in chapter XII, "Passion," Paul begins to earn a living through his textile and ceramic designs, while "at the same time, he laboured slowly at his pictures". Furthermore, Paul's integrity as an artist and the peculiar subject of his painting, do not promise the kind of success Paul imagines for himself. Regardless, however, of his probable future, Paul here faces a problem which confronts all protagonists in self-development novels – how to make a living. Thus, the vocational and the economic issues that Paul faces actually propel his journey towards self-realization, which is one of the remarkable constituents of Lawrence's novel.

The discussion above makes it evident that economy plays a great role in the growth of the self of an individual. Almost every *Bildungsroman* portrays the growth of self with the birth of sex and the desire of sexuality. Sigmund Freud explains that it is the unconscious where the seed of the self is located. Much in the same manner, Jacques Lacan avers for the role of unconscious or imaginary state of mind in the construction of the self. However, D.H. Lawrence refutes and debunks Freudian unconscious and says "The Freudian unconscious is the cellar in which the mind keeps its own bastard spawn," while "The true unconscious is the wellhead, the fountain of 'real motivity'". Further, he holds, unconscious is the spontaneous life motive in every organism and it is this locus where the life begins.

The birth of an individual is inextricably embedded into the birth of sex and the growing desire of individual in sexuality. Paul Morel takes birth, as Lawrence says, through the conjugal relationship of male and female ready to become one by evading all physical and psychological boundaries.

Thus, Paul experiences his sexual desire as an apprentice lover where he struggles between the love of his mother and Miriam and Clara. After the death of his brother, William, "The deepest of his love belonged to his mother" (chapter X). From that early age, dramatic evidence of mother-fixation or Oedipus complex becomes explicit. This is repetitively shown in the chapters that follow. Paul from early childhood is completely devoted to his mother, confides in her, reverences her every opinion, admires her stoic fortitude, and aches with pity for her frailty. It is Paul's mother who controls his life, his physical and metaphysical concerns, "There was one place in the world that stood solid and did not melt into unreality: the place where his mother was…. It was as if the pivot and pole of his life, from which he could not escape, was his mother" (chapter IX).

However, Kate Millett describes Paul as the "Perfection of self-sustaining ego" and states, "the woman in the book exists in Paul's orbit and caters to his needs: Clara to awake him sexually, Miriam to worship his talent in the role of disciple and Mrs Morel to provide always that enormous and expensive support…" (*Sexual Politics*). The protagonist comes in contact with Miriam and Clara who help him find his self and finally Paul undergoes metamorphosis, which brings him closer to the Real.

Clara and Miriam, though they are opposite in their character, seem purposeless and incomplete unless they join in a vitalizing relationship with a male. Clara – listless, cynical and cold drifts until she consummates her relationship with Paul, who, when he realizes their relationship is merely physical, brings Clara and Baxter back together again. Miriam, on the contrary, has loved Paul not only by offering her body but also her soul and, therefore, she has faith that Paul will ultimately return to her, that his spiritual and idealistic side will triumph over his need for sex. She seems pathetic, in view of her sacrificial sexual surrender to Paul, her compulsive chapel going when he is involved with Clara, and his final dismissal of her:

> "Will you have me, to marry me?" he said very low…. "Do you want it?" she asked very gravely. "Not much", he replied, with pain". (chapter XV).

In *Bildungsroman*, the protagonist after experiencing sexual encounters feels a sudden revelation which brings him closer to the Reality. The revelation, on the one hand, brings the character closer to stark yet uncanny reality of life and on the other hand, it also encourages the character to come to the world of aesthetic beauty where he can explore the inner culture and meaning different from the real physical world. In the last chapter of the novel, "Derelict", Paul is left aimless, "with a drift towards death", yet he is committed no more to dying than to living and for that he chooses the world of aestheticism. The protagonist wants to convert himself into an aesthetic or the *Bildungsheld* and for that he has to strongly resist the knotty net of language, culture and nationality, and it is through this that one may attain the objective condition of the mind or the state of *naturalis.* Paul has to unlearn everything that has accrued in this psychosis. The process of unlearning and relearning is a process of negation. According to Theodor Adorno, the process of negation begins with thesis and continues even after synthesis, as synthesis also does not illustrate the final truth or knowledge. An artist may attain Claritas, 'brightness', Integritas, 'wholeness', and Consonantia, 'harmony' in his aesthetic creation, as has been proposed by Thomas Aquinas. Paul finally takes refuse in painting where he hopes to attain the epiphany, the Real.

At the end of the novel, Paul continues with his relentless journey of searching the truth of life, the truth that lies in the search itself. Paul indeed undergoes several distinct trials which the *Bildungsroman* protagonist must face – he becomes rebellious in the family, challenges the role of father, moves towards city in search of a vocation, develops physical proximity with some girls, gets epiphany or self-realization and finally tries to move towards the inner culture where he may find the meaning of life and peace. All these groom the protagonist so that he may be able to plunge deeper in search of Reality or truth of life.

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4.8: MODEL AND TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Paul's close relationship with his mother has provoked many Freudian and Oedipal readings of this novel. Is this type of reading valid?
2. Is Mrs Morel the most important woman to Paul throughout the novel, or are there moments at which his relationships with Miriam or Clara take precedence? If so, what is the significance of these moments?
3. Why does Paul come back to his mother in the end? Trace the theme of a higher level of understanding between Paul and his mother throughout the novel, possibly beginning with his illness immediately after William's death.
4. What goes wrong between Paul and Miriam? Is it just that she cannot compete with his love for his mother, or is there some other problem?
5. Why does Paul change his mind so often? Trace his on-again, off-again feelings for Miriam and Clara throughout the novel.
6. Discuss the religious aspects of this novel, considering in particular Miriam's notions of sacrifice and of "baptism of fire in passion."
7. Morel speaks in a dialect throughout the novel. Why might Lawrence have chosen to make Morel use a dialect? Does it set him apart from the other characters? Are there any other characters who speak in this dialect, and, if so, what purpose does this serve? What is the function of language as communication in the novel?
8. Discuss Sons and Lovers as an autobiographical novel.
9. Justify the title of the novel.
10. Sketch the characters of Paul Morel.
11. Write a note on the conflicting loyalties of Paul Morel.
12. *Sons and Lovers* is a blend of psychology and literature. Examine.

UNIT 5: E. M. FORSTER

A PASSAGE TO INDIA

5.1 Introduction

In the pages of the history books, you would have surely read that British Empire at the zenith of its glory encompassed nearly a quarter of Earth's landmass as well as of its population. Of all its possessions, India was the most precious one. India has always attracted and fascinated peoples and empires all over the world for its fabulous riches, unique talent, amazing landscape, a very ancient civilization and mosaic culture. It is also a fact that of all the hordes of people who conquered and ruled over India, the impact of the British rule has been the most profound and lasting, traces of which still continue to impress us all.

A large body of English literature exists which captures the essence of the unique relationship between India and British and constitutes an area of study in itself. Even before Kipling, a steady stream of exotic novels and short stories penned by Sir Henry Cunningham and Philip Robinson in 1870s captured the Britisher's curiosity in its ever growing Indian possessions. Rudyard Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), *From Sea to Sea* (1899), *Kipling's India: Uncollected Essays* (1884-88) (1987) reveal his ambivalent attitude in his imperialistic perspective and in his deep and personal nostalgic imaginings about India. John Masters' *Bhowani Junction*, covering the historical span of British rule from mutiny to independence, M. Kay's *The Far Pavilions* (1978) and *Shadow of the Moon* (1979), J.G. Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur*, Valerie Fitzgerald's *Zeminder*, Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet* capture the atmosphere and excitement of India. Of all these novels, Forster's *A Passage to India* stands in the canon of English literature as one of the most in depth discussion of colonial presence in India and even elsewhere. Serving as a retrospective mirror, the novel brings to life all the cultural, political and psychological tapestry of interrelated subjective realities with all the fears, uncertainties, doubts, love and animosities of the both Indian and English communities at a time when English authority was on the wane and Indians would see a new dawn of independence on the horizon. Going through the novel will be an enriching experience for the young generation for it provides them an access to study and weigh their past after a gap of almost a century. By the very nature of the theme and of the mind that created it, *A Passage to India* invites critical appraisal of being at once a historical document, a racist and social study, a philosophical statement and a work of conscious literary culture.

5.2 Objectives

This unit will help you to

- Analyse the inter-relation of literature and social history.
- Understand and anticipate postcolonial vision.
- Undertake a contrasting study of ancient and contemporary India and its people.
- Identify colonial as well as post colonial strains and analyse the representative view of Occident's perceptions of India from the turn of the 20th century to the present times.
- Depict the Indo-Anglian relationship on the basis of Forster's Indian experience.

5.3 Forster: A Biographical Sketch

On a surface level, knowledge of the life history of a writer may not seem to be significant; true it is – what a reader has to do with his facial contours, color of his skin, height, his parentage, his friends etc.? However biographical information is important because it reveals his creative life and endeavour. Forster was born on 1st January 1879, in London. His father was an architect and it can be assumed that he inherited some of his father's artistic talent. With a legacy of 8000 pounds left to him by his great aunt Marianne he could make his career as a writer. He travelled to India in 1912, 1921 and 1945, which accounts for his novels written on Indian theme. It was Ross Masood who initiated him to Indian culture, a fact substantiated by Forster's humble acknowledgement, "He woke up out of my suburban and academic life, showed me new horizons and a new civilization and helped me towards the understanding of a Continent. Until I met him India was a vague jumble of rajahs, sahibs, babus and elephants and I was not interested in such a jumble." His contact with Maharaja Sir Tukoji Rao III of Dewas opened another face of India – Hindu religious experience with its unfathomable depths in philosophy and practice not known to any other creed or religion. The festival of Janmashtami though appearing no more than a muddle, "a frustration of reason and form' opened a world of universal warmth and a universal vision was achieved which was beyond the scope of reason to comprehend." Forster's two books *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson* (1934) and *Marianne Thornton* (1956) contribute to our understanding of Forster and our opinion of him as a writer. From *Marianne Thornton,* we learn that his characters Honeychurches and Harritons, Wilcoxes and Schlegels belong to the middle class families in the middle and late Victorian England. He inherited some of his father's artistic talent who was an architect. Classics he read while at Cambridge revealed to him how ancient wisdom could give vitality to modern knowledge. History gave him a breadth of outlook as well as a perspective for critical acumen. It was at Cambridge that he met intellectuals like Nathanial, Dodd, G.L. Dickinson and CGR Moore and developed humanitarian, idealistic and intellectually disinterested outlook. His travels to Italy and Greece resulted in giving him reprieve from the academic insularity of his English temperament and instilled in him pagan faith. His novel, *Howards End* bears traces of the spell of Germany where he went in 1905. Though he did not admit the influence of Bloomsbury Group, he owes much to it. The group consisted of Lytton Strachey, Roger Fry, Venessa, J.M. Keynes, Desmond McCarthy, Duncan Grant etc and advocated free personal relationship, pursuit of truth and frank discussion.

5.3.1 Forster's Famous Works: A Brief Introduction

In the half century of his literacy pilgrimage, Forster penned sixteen books- five novels, two volumes of short stories, three biographies, a treatise on the novel, two volumes of critical essays, travels books and pamphlets etc. *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905) satirises the conventional moral standards and snobbery of the upper middle class. He creates two worlds – Sawston where lives the aristocrat Mrs Harriton with her obstinacy. She attempts to dictate her widowed daughter-in-law Lilia's life who goes to Italy and marries a vulgar Italian. When Lilia dies in childbirth, she contrives to bring back the child. Gino, the father refuses to part with the child. The child is kidnapped and dies due to the stupidity of Harriton. Now Mrs Harriton realizes the futility of forcing her views and way of living on others. She now understands that love, emotions are stronger that social status. At one level, the theme presents the conflict between two cultures – the

English and the Italian, while on the other, it presents the class conflict. Divided into two parts, the novel *The Longest Journey* (1907) discusses the dilemma of Rickie Elliot, a somewhat neurotic Shelleyan idealist who has a touch of Joyce's Stephen Dedalus and a little of Maugham's Philip Carey of O*f Human Bondage*. Torn between his idealistic nature and the materialistic attitude of his wife Agnes, Rickie meets his pitiable end leaving us to think which way to opt for. *A Room with a View* (1908), an excellent comedy, very delicately handled, is set in Italy. Lucy Honey Church arrives in Florence with her cousin Charlotte, a woman whose horizon is circumscribed by narrow visions of propriety. The ladies express their displeasure to the proprietor of the hotel for he has failed to give them room with views. When another guest arrives at the hotel, Mr Emerson offers to exchange his room with theirs, the ladies are shocked and feel humiliated with such an outspoken suggestion. In fact, a room with a view symbolizes all those who love life and seek pleasure in sharing.

Howard's End (1910) once again analyses the conflict between classes – the Wilcoxes are materialists while Schlegels are deeply rooted in moral and aesthetic values. Evidently, Wilcoxes, the spiritually empty, business-minded people fail to understand that successful living means much than just money. Margaret's marriage with the senior Wilcox symbolizes the coming together of the passion and the prose, money and morals. 'Only connect' the motto of the novel thus refers to the attempts at reconciliation between the opposing attitudes. An overview of the novels of E.M. Forster suggests that the theme of his novels can be summarized under followings heads-

1. Human relationship – the failure to connect
2. Convention versus Nature
3. The Problem of Evil
4. Transcendent Realities

E.M. Forster's series of lectures on the English novel at Trinity College, Cambridge delivered in 1927 are published in his representative non-fiction work *Aspects of The Novel*. In these lectures, he spoke on the ground rules for his discussion of the English novel and critically analyses the novel and its various elements. He defines English literature as literature written in the English language- regardless of the geographical location or origin of the author. He makes it clear that while defining novel, he will not take into considerations-chronology, periodization or development of the novel. His insights into the craft of storytelling are excellent as he focuses on seven aspects of novel namely, Story, People, Plot, Fantasy and Prophecy, Pattern and Rhythm.

5.4 The Seeds of *A Passage to India*

Forster is one of those writers who shot to fame with only a few books. *A Passage to India* is indubitably his most popular piece of artistic creation. Published as far back as 1924, it still engages the reader with its theme and technique. It is in the fitness of things that Forster dedicated the first edition of the novel to Sir Ross Masood and the second to both Ross Masood and Sir Tukoji Rao Pawar III, Maharaja of Dewas. The title of the novel is reminiscent of Walt Whitman's famous poem, "Passage to India". The themes of Indo-Anglian relationship, the racial difference, and the social conflict, the depiction of places, people and festivals suggest Forster's knowledge of Indian society which could be

traced to his two visits to India in 1912 and in 1921. The picture of India he presents is in fact an amalgam of his experiences and perception he drew during his two visits. He draws analogy with Naipaul's perception of the land of his forefathers; while initially for Naipaul India was an area of darkness and a wounded civilization likewise Forster could locate an unbridgeable gulf between the India, he had tried to create and the India he was actually experiencing. India he discovered is not mystery but a muddle, very much like life itself.

5.4.1 *A Passage to India*: The Story Outline

The story begins with an introduction to India, a land of serpents, snake charmers, beggars and saints etc. Against the backdrop of an Anglo-Indian scene of the early decades of the 20th century, Forster recounts the story of the friendship of Dr. Aziz, a young Muslim doctor and Fielding, an Englishman. Adela Quested and Mrs Moore visit India for two reasons – first to arrange the marriage of Adela Quested with Ronny Heaslop, the son of Mrs Moore and the magistrate of Chandrapore and secondly to tour India with a view to find a passage through the hearts of the Indians. Liberal, kind and sympathetic as they are, they want to know the 'real India'. The local British official's attitude is totally different which by and large is irreconcilable, resulting often in a clash. Europeans regard Indians as ignorant, superstitious fools and as an inferior race. They are surprised to know that even Ronny is arrogant and contemptuous of Indians. Despite being warned by her son, Mrs Moore gets engaged in a conversation with Aziz. Humiliated and snubbed by the British officials, Aziz is impressed with Mrs Moore's simplicity so much that there develops a remarkable friendship irrespective of the constrictions of race, class or age. In order to see 'real India', Mrs Moore and Adela Quested accept the invitation of Aziz. Fielding, an Englishman and the Principal for the government school with no racial pride and Professor Godbole were to accompany the ladies. Fielding and Godbole however fail to join their expedition. Aziz makes elaborate arrangements for the excursion, incurring heavy expenditure to make the tour memorable. Ironically, it proves to be memorable but not in a way expected.

In one of the caves, Mrs Moore has a suffocating experience and urges Adela and Aziz to 'continue the slightly tedious expedition'. Adela and Aziz enter the second cave but soon get parted and Adela enters into one of the many caves alone. Forster does not go into detail of what happens next but tells about Adela's question to Aziz whether he is married or if so how many wives he has. In the cave, the strap of her field glasses is pulled by something or someone. Imagining that she is being assaulted, she rushes down the cave. Similar to one as possessed, she accuses Aziz of trying to rape her. Aziz is arrested and the atmosphere gets surcharged with racial hatred, bitterness and impotent rage as well as an inordinate thirst for revenge. However, Fielding and Mrs Moore think that Adela might have been under some hallucination and nothing of this sort had happened.

The British's pride in condemning the Indians, "they ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishman is in sight". They try to suppress evidence favourable to Aziz. Fielding is cut off by the local British; Mrs Moore is sent back to her country – she dies on the way. The trial is held and the racial antagonism between two great races with different heritage and history is seen at its bitter most. Adela Quested however realizes at the critical juncture of evidence that she was all along under a hallucination which resulted due to the hysterical mentality of the local British.

As now she is well, she withdraws all her charges against Aziz, "Dr. Aziz never followed me into the cave". The Anglo Indians now feel thoroughly crestfallen while Indians rejoice in their embarrassment and express their joy in wild demonstrations. Adela is abandoned by her own people; her engagement with Ronny Heaslop is cancelled. She joins Fielding, who is now shocked at Aziz's charge of his being in love with Adela. The friendship which stood the test of all sorts of strains in the past is broken off suddenly under the unmerited suspicion, entertained by Aziz about his friend. Aziz now develops great hatred against the Europeans and determines to avenge his dishonour and free India of the British. They separate finally, on a trivial misunderstanding about Fielding's marriage, who actually marries Mrs Moore's daughter Stella.

The story is concluded in the last section of the novel – a kind of epilogue to the narrative. The broken and loose threads are woven together to enable readers to arrive at reasonable, coherent and constructive conclusions. Aziz and Fielding happen to meet once again in Mau, a Hindu State. In an atmosphere of celebrations on the birth of Krishna, the Hindu God, the misunderstanding earlier referred to is cleared of and they become friends again however to part for ever.

5.4.2 Title: Its Many Connotations

The title is the 'novel in miniature' – just as the mirror reflects the image so does the title echoes the underlying theme of the novel. The title *A Passage to India* is highly suggestive for it denotes the attempt to bridge the great gulf existing between two nations from the ideological, religious, cultural and racial point of view. In the post-colonial scene, the novel seeks to analyse the question – can there exist goodwill and harmony between the rulers and the ruled, oppressor and the oppressed, the master and the slave. The title bears the implicit hint that races and people which stand apart due to different impulses, thoughts, feelings and interests can never get reconciled as they are drawn apart in varying directions.

Forster is indebted to Walt Whitman's poem "Passage to India" published in 1871. Whitman's poem is a celebration of the engineering feats of men who built the 121-mile waterway named Suez Canal that connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. The word 'Passage' is highly significant for it admits of separateness, impediments and barriers between two civilizations the two races, the two people – one colonized and the other colonizers. However, in Forster's ethics, passage is a transit between one place and the other – a search for union. Fielding states that the English rulers can work a passage into the hearts of the Indians – the subject nation by means of friendship, tolerance, mutual respect and sympathetic understanding. In the words of Walt Whitman's poem "Passage to India", the novel thus becomes a-

> Passage to more than India
> Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas
> Passage to you…

Forster's purpose thus gets explained further-

> All these hearts as of fretted children shall be soothed
> All affection shall be fully responded to…
> All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd and link'd together.

At the prophetic level, Forster assumes that Indo-British relations or relations between people of diverse cultures, races, orientations, and locations can improve only when channels of goodwill, love and peace are explored genuinely.

5.4.3 The Theme of Social Conflict

You would have read several literary works discussing conflicts of various types commonly codified as 'man against nature', 'man against himself'; 'man against society'. In Literature, conflict is an essential ingredient for it creates tension and interest in a story – situations and actions are directed towards resolution of the conflict – though it may not necessarily take place. The conflict is presented in the relationship of Hindus and Muslims. Despite their common hostility towards the British expressed during the trial of Aziz, the two are rivals. Godbole recalls to Aziz of the cow dung; the rhythm of drum is uncongenial to Aziz. Hindus are slack without having any idea of surety. Riots during the Mohurram festival lead Aziz to confess, "the British were necessary to India". Godbole if touched by a Muslim will take another bath. Hindus are a divided lot – the fissures of the Indian soil are infinite; Hinduism, so solid from a distance is driven into sects and clans (Forster). When Aziz tells Fielding at the end of the novel: "*It is useless discussing Hindus with me. Living with them teaches me no more. When I think I annoy them, I do not. When I think I don't annoy them, I do*". He is just demonstrating how misunderstandings get hardened into cultural stereotypes which further complicate the matters.

Along with the social conflict, *A Passage to India* also offers a study in personal relationship, 'it is private life that holds out the mirror to infinity.' Though subsidiary, the theme of personal relationship lends universal significance to the novel. The most important personal relationship analysed is that of Aziz and Fielding. Apparently, this is a relationship of two diametrically opposite individuals. There exists a great cultural religious and political divide between the two. The bonds between these two transcend all material barriers: Fielding, large hearted and just, opposes the steps taken by an unjust administration, much to the anger of his own people. The warm and intimate friendship between the two opens up the possibility of 'connect' between two races and two civilizations. However, the coming events suggest the impossibility of such an attempt. Aziz's criticism of the British Rule brings out a sympathizer of British rules in Fielding. Aziz vituperates against the British rule thus-

> Clear out, clear out, I say. Why are we put to so much suffering? We used to blame, now we blame ourselves, we grow winner. Until England is in difficulties, we keep silent, but in the next Europeans war-aha, aha! Then is our time.

In its simplest form, theme is a statement about the subject a novelist deals with. Generally, the novelist raises up a number of issues which normally get expressed in a hierarchy of questions and problems with perhaps some suggested answers. Occasionally, authors' conscious and unconscious intentions do come up. The author weaves several themes or issues which eventually lead to the complex thematics of the novel. *A Passage to India*'s complexity however is attributed to the multiplicity of themes – theme of fission and fusion, of chasm between the world of actions and the world of being, of clash of races and cultures, of personal relationship, of negation and affirmation etc. Studied minutely, the theme at the symbolic level turns out to be that of fission and fusion, though at material plane, it centres round the racial antagonism and social conflict in backdrop of British colonization of India. At a broader level, the main theme is rooted in the collision

between civilizations, between communities, between religions, between groups and even between among individuals.

Even when you begin the novel, you get the feeling that India constituted the subject. The novel begins with discussion upon 'whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman.' The relationship of Dr. Aziz, a doctor of Minto hospital and Fielding, the Principal of Government College Chandrapore is representative of Anglo-Indian relationship. Fielding represents those liberal Europeans who hope to understand India through love and sympathy. However on the other pole is Ronny Heaslop and other Britishers who contemptuously treat all that is Indian. Ronny is deeply upset with Adela and his mother for accepting invitation of Aziz to visit the Caves –*"I won't have you messing about with Indian any more. If you want to go to the Marabar Caves, you'll go under British auspices."* especially critical of Bhattacharyas, Aziz and the Nawab Bahadur, Ronny Heaslop like others believes that Indians are incapable of responsibility and are 'seditious'. Indian character is inherently flawed by an ingrained criminality. The observation of Englishman like Mc Bryde is illustrative of typical colonial mentality – "All unfortunate natives are criminals at least, for the simple reason that they live south of latitude 30". The attempts to bridge the gap at the Bridge Party between the communities fail as is evident in Adela's observation:

> This party today makes me so angry and miserable. I think my countrymen out here must be mad. Fancy inviting guest and not treating them properly…. The Englishmen had intended to play better, but had been prevented from doing so by their women folk, whom they had to attend, provide with tea, advice about dogs etc. When tennis began, the barriers grew impenetrable. It had been hoped to have some sets between East and West, but this was forgotten, and the counts were monopolized by the usual club couples.

Sharp and unbridgeable gap comes to the surface after the molestation incident at Marabar Caves. The incidents created a furore in the otherwise sleepy town of Chandrapore – racial hatred, resentment, prejudices, injustice and hysteria lying under the veneer overpowers all commonsense and defies all efforts at reconciliation. A rift is visible even among the Europeans. On the one side are the 'Crustaceans'- the Turtons, Major Callendar, Ronny while Fielding, on the other side continues to boost Aziz whom he thinks, is innocent. The general perception of Europeans is reflected in Mrs Turton's observation that Indian 'ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishman is in sight'? Racial hatred is seen at its height when the Police Superintendent states vehemently the prosecution case. The trial offers an instance of the collision of an individual Indian's innocence against the prejudices of government of an alien race.

The friendship between Aziz and Fielding passes through a rough phase and at times admits of an impossibility of reconciliation between the two races. Their friendship is intimate and deep despite hostility of Indians towards the English and vice versa. Aziz abstained from the Collector's Bridge Party but attends Fielding's tea party. Fielding pays a heavy price for supporting Aziz during the trial transcending all limits of race, religion, and cultural outlook. However, Aziz's suspicion breaches the friendship and he explodes:

> Down with the English anyhow. That's certain clear out, you fellows double quick I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you

> go, Ahmad will. If it's fifty five hundred years, we shall get rid of you, yes. We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then you and I shall be friends.

In the final analysis, Forster conveys the typical attitude of colonial British –

> I have never known anything but disaster results when English people and Indians attempted to be intimate socially. Intercourse, yes, courtesy, by all means. Intimacy – never, never.

Thus, the novel explores the barriers of inter-racial friendship in a colonial context. Adela and Mrs Moore however represent those who wish to connect. Critical of British savagery and injustice, they genuinely desire to meet and understand real India. Forster through such characters explores the ramifications of colonial rule in India and attempts to find a passage through opposites.

Exercise 1

1. Explain the significance of the title '*A Passage of India*' and its appropriateness.
2. "The theme of separateness, of fences and barriers, is in *A Passage of India* hugely expounded and everywhere dominant." (Lionel Trilling). Discuss.
3. Prepare a list of characters in the novel. Who in your opinion are Pro-British or Anti-British?
4. What exactly happens in the Marabar Caves? Indicate the consequences of the visit to the Caves.

5.5 Perception of India

Adela wants to see real India, but the seemingly innocuous desire becomes a subtle aesthetic device to articulate the baffling complexity of India, for India defies description. There is an India represented by Aziz, urbane, ostensibly sophisticated but essentially nostalgic for the past, for the glorious Mughal India. There exists also Ronny's Anglo India: poverty stricken, superstitious, servile India which British had plundered and decapitated. There is also the 'mystical' India of Godbole – The Brahman Professor, the enigmatic one who prefers to take "his tea at a little distance from the outcasts, but who now seems to have "reconciled the products of East and West, mental as well as physical, which could never be discomposed". For Adela Quested and Mrs Moore, India is both fascinating and frightening. Her initial enthusiasm and curiosity at everything Indian transforms into nightmares after the incident at the Caves. In fact, Adela's experience of India bears an analogy with Ruth Prawar Jhabwala's understanding of Western reaction to India. This she describes as the 'cycle of tremendous initial enthusiasm for everything Indian, followed by slow but unmistakable feelings of disillusionment culminating finally in definite disgust and loathing'. Forster's evocation of the Indian landscape reinforces the essentially indefinable nature of the experience:

> India is the country, fields, fields and then hills, jungles, hills, and more fields. The branch line stops, the road is practicable for cars to a point, the bullock-carts lumber down the side-tracks, paths fray out into the cultivation, and disappear near a splash of red paint. How can the mind take hold of such a country?

It is, in fact, this India, incredible, unexplainable, and indescribable, India of extremes – of riches and poverty, of knowledge and ignorance, of spirituality and moral levity, of freedom and servility, of reality and illusion which Forster seeks to skilfully weave into the texture of the novel. To him India remains "unexplained, balancing two inexplicable", but he tries 'to connect'. His gratitude to Syed Ross Masood explains the wealth of knowledge and experience he owed to India. In fact, Forster's close association with the royal family of Dewas in pre-independent days enabled him to get the feel of society and recreate it in art. The question of racial conflict and Hindu-Muslim relations engaged his mind. India remains the strong link between situations and characters. India – a nation, in fact, emerges as the most impressive character in *A Passage to India.* Aziz prophetically says that the Englishmen will be driven out of India if not by him then by his sons and exhibits his friendship by holding the hands of Fielding – a symbol of India, remaining a friend of Britain and a member of the Commonwealth.

The India that Forster describes with its multitudes of people, its races, creeds and hierarchies, its conflicting aims and aspirations is the modern world in epitome. The India we meet in his pages exists at two levels of thought-the literal earthly reality and the transcendent reality. In the literal sense, India is a subject nation with its millions of peoples striving towards independence and self- government. At the transcendent level, it offers cosmic clarity towards which all humanity is striving. Forster switches from one India to another India with remarkable ease.

"The truth about India was not what I thought about India. It's what they are living through…. Those of us who are on the 'outside' can only observe from our own points of view", so wrote Naipaul. A number of writers, both Indians and Westerners, have written about India but still it baffles them in its myriad vividness and expanse and complexity. Forster is an outsider who views India both from inside and outside. Apparently he is a part of the British who hegemonized India and continue to rule it as its colony. However, the cultural liberal tradition that brands him as an anti-imperialist provides him the lens through which he visualizes Indians and Europeans as part of the unified spirit. His dominant ethics has been to attain the harmonious union whether between personalities, social groups or interesting ideas and attitudes. Naturally, therefore, you find him having an ambivalent view towards issues which for us never get reconciled.

When compared to Orwell's *Burmese Days* and J. R. Ackerly's *Hindoo Holiday* which focus upon topical problems like disenchantment with the colonial powers and personal relations between the Europeans and Indians, *A Passage to India* works upon a large canvas – embracing within its ambit India's historical, cultural, political and religious scene. Initially, it was the political aspects that brew interest in the readers. Quite interestingly, the novel was broadcast by Germans as part of their fascist propaganda to damage British prestige. The theme that the conqueror and the conquered cannot be friends explains the novel's conception in political terms.

5.5.1 Structural Pattern: Dynamics of Plot Making

A Passage in India has been divided into three sections entitled Mosque, Caves and Temple. In the Author's notes, these sections are intended to represent the three seasons of India – the Winter– cool, temperate and devoid of tension, the Summer, with its scorching, tormenting heat and the Monsoon, with its torrential rain clearing up everything all around. Forster weaves a rhythm in the novel when the temperate season invites friendship, followed by hot weather, precipitating the crises and the separation to

end up with monsoon, when the dust gathered on the horizons – physical as well mental – gets cleared up opening a new passage to the hearts. The structure of the novel thus expresses dialectic of Positive Affirmation (Mosque), Negative Retraction (Caves) and Reaffirmation (Temple).

Symbolically speaking, the sections represent an ideological framework, Forster wants to convey to the reader. The mosque thus represents brotherhood and offers suggestions of the possibility of the two antagonistic cultures coming together to form a bond. The caves refer to a spiritual wasteland suggesting a collapse of human relationships. The temple offers a platform for building up harmony between all that is divisive, sinister and fissiparous.

The principal theme that emerges out of the above discussion is the clash of cultures and interests. Set against the background of India's struggle for freedom, Forster seeks to analyse the racial relations by means of a logical development of incidents and situations. At the centre is Adela's accusation of rape against Dr. Aziz – an incident leading to the extreme polarization of the rulers and the ruled, the British bureaucracy and the native population. Within this is weaved skilfully, the subsidiary theme of the collapse of personal relationship- between Englishman and Indians. The friendship of Dr. Aziz and Fielding undergoes several phases from a happy union to separation and again to reconciliation with all its interplay of love, hate, sympathy and trust.

In the novel's scheme, all that is illogical is avoided. Every character, every theme and every image contributes to the basic pattern of the novel. Thus, Adela's hallucination not only reveals her self-delusion but also strains Aziz and Fielding's relationship and in large context British's and Indian's relationship. Likewise, Aziz's pride in his past and his references to the Mogul Emperors are not only personal, but reveal the urge of natives to get rid of Europeans. Though at first glance, the subsidiary theme of Hinduism may appear an interpolation, but studied closely it justifies its relevance in the novel. The celebration of the festival of Gokul Ashtami appears to be an appendage and incongruous to critics. However, seen in its proper context, it not only adds colour and variety to the novel, but completes the rhythm Forster had in mind. What has been affirmed in the beginning and negated afterwards has again been reaffirmed. Reconciliation during the festival reviews the friendship between Aziz and Fielding. Though they realize that their characters and ways of life have changed too radically for them to be able to continue as close friends, yet it promises the future possibility of an Englishman being friendly with an Indian.

One of the several reasons contributing to the success or popularity of a piece of art is undoubtedly how strongly it keeps reader's interest sustained. *A Passage to India* offers a variety of issues, incidents, situations and characters to sustain the interest of its readers. In the background of rising tide of nationalism against colonial powers, the novel not only discusses the political scene, the compulsions and strategies of the ruling classes in their bid to hold power but also the human relationships between the people of two races, two civilizations and different religions. Thus, we meet Ronny Heaslop, a hard boiled imperialist, a racial snob treating the Indians with an arrogance which his mother Mrs Moore is unable to comprehend. Adela Quested, Mrs Moore and Fielding group together to represent a class which believes in building 'bridges' between the races. The interaction between Fielding and Aziz offers a study in racial relations in all its complexity and intricacy.

Suspense or mystery is something that keeps the reader glued to the story. Unexpected startling turn of events, unexplained by logic at caves baffles the reader but still is integral to the design of the novel. Was Adela really raped inside the caves or was it simply her hallucination? Why does Adela charge Aziz? – These are the questions which are never answered – yet they bear great impact upon the future course of the novel. The echo is beyond explanation. The visit to the Marabar Caves holds the key to the relations between communities as well as individuals – sometimes sweet and at other sour. All the antagonism, bitterness, hatred and venom lying underneath the veneer of goodwill come to surface.

5.5.2 The Marabar Caves: The Sinister Design

"When I began *A Passage to India*, I knew something important happened in the Marabar Caves and that it would have a central place in the novel- but I did not know what it would be", so wrote Forster acknowledging thereby the value of the Caves in the overall structural and thematic pattern of the novel. Evidently, caves are the pivot of the novel. With almost uncanny insight and caution, Forster represents them as 'older than all spirit' and 'nothing, nothing attaches to them, and their reputation – for they have one – does not depend upon human speech'. From 'Author's Note', it is learnt that the Marabar is another name for the Barabas Caves, situated near Gaya in North East India. Though the Imperial Gazeteer of India associated them with Buddhism, Forster dissociates the Marabar Caves from any religious creed in line with the theme of the novel.

The caves represent mystery as no visitor can 'discuss the caves', nor can he keep them apart in his mind, for the pattern never varies, and no carving not even a bees' nest or a bat, distinguishes one from another. They are extraordinary-

> They are dark caves. Even when they open towards the sun, very little light penetrates down the entrance tunnel into the circular chamber. There is little to see, and no eyes to see it.

Caves are described as 'bare dark echoing eternity, infinity, the Absolute' and as 'the very voice of that union which is the opposite of divine, the voice of evil and negation'. They represent meaninglessness and their emptiness, desolation and darkness convey a sense of futility.

The whole episode of the Marabar Caves is central to the novel and the most complex of all the experiences described by the novelist. At the narrative level, while Adela and Mrs Moore board the train just by chance, Fielding and Godbole are left behind. The Marabar Caves represent primeval India wherein no ancient religion – Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have made any impression. What actually happened in the Caves is shrouded in mystery. Mrs Moore had 'nearly fainted' in the cave. She heard a 'terrifying echo' with a sound of 'boum' or 'bou-oum' or 'ou-boum'. Adela is wavering between her desire to marry Ronny or not. The awkward question whether Aziz was married is followed by disappearance of Adela to emerge later in Chandrapore. The expedition ended on a sore note with the arrest of Aziz on the charge of molesting Adela. Several questions raised about the nature of Adela's experience add to the complexity of experience; did she suffer a hallucination'? Did she lose her real perception? Was her modesty really outraged? Interpreted from psycho-analytical point of view, Caves relate the various facets of her experience. Too much pre-occupied with marriage, union, love and India, Adela's visit to the Caves laid bare the stark reality of these notions. She realizes that in

the absence of love, the marriage with Ronny would amount to a forced union, a rape virtually. It is no wonder that she alleges the charge of rape against Aziz. Adela's frightening fantasy in the cave emphasizes the dangerous and threatening aspects of sexuality. In a Freudian sense, this accusation seems to emerge out of her subconscious desire to be in physical relationship with Aziz, 'a handsome little oriental'. The imagined assault is thus a reflection of her divided being, of the unresolved battle of forces within her and also of her lack of self-knowledge. Wilfred Stone corroborates the same when he observes:

> Nothing happened to her, in two senses of the word, in a literal legal sense, no event occurred – Aziz was not even in the same cave. But nothing also occurred in a psyche sense: she had glimpse into the everlasting no, the pit of nada, the ultimate negation lying at the bottom of the unconscious. She had seen what can be explained mythologically as the archetypal emptiness preceding existence itself.

In a sense, Adela represents the major neurosis of modern man, 'split' between the conscious and the unconscious psyches. She cannot 'connect' either within herself or without. The effect of caves on Mrs Moore is different from that of Adela. Mrs Moore, the mystically inclined Christian elderly lady wishes 'to become one with the universe' and hears in the Marabar echo, an infinity of nothing. She hears, "everything exists, nothing exists, nothing has value". God and evil are identical. Profound despair and collapse of will are what she receives from caves. The ultimate impression that the Caves leave on Adela and Mrs Moore is a disintegrating one. Though Adela regains the lost ground, her loss however is irreparable. Not only her engagement with Ronny is put off, she also forfeits the goodwill of the English community of Chandrapore. The memory of the Caves has left an imprint on her mind which she fails to obliterate. For Aziz, the happenings at the caves prove disastrous – charged with false accusation, Aziz suffers humiliation as well as ruin in his professional career. The charge though eventually withdrawn proves ruinous for India as it aggravates the racial prejudices between the Britishers and the natives.

5.5.3 Symbols in the Novel

Literature is never a text alone. Embedded in it are cultural contexts of a society which challenge the interpretive mind in deciphering them in different phases of times. Great literature aspires to be universal and the literary devices such as symbols, images and patterns are weaved in the texture of a novel extending thereby the scope of the work. Although Forster was not too happy with the terms symbol and preferred the more flexible, vibrant device of rhythm, *A Passage to India* offers them in plenty, both major as well as minor. Several themes, such as the conflicts of civilizations, races, communities, ideologies, religions and individuals are explored by Forster through symbols.

The title itself is symbolic. Set against the backdrop of India, the title suggest of the exploration of a link between the British colonialist and the colonized Indians. At the macro level, this search extends to the whole of humanity, torn asunder by political, economic and racial antagonism. India in the novel stands not merely for a country but also for a mystifying pattern of art and life, a 'muddle' which refuses comprehension by the rationalism of the British. Often compared with T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), *A Passage* offers a study on the spiritual condition of the modern man. To fashion and

unfold this theme, Forster employs powerful symbols weaved carefully in the texture of the novel. A reading of the novel draws analogy with the three stages of mankind's spiritual history, besides referring to the three stages of the individual's spiritual development. The first phase is conveyed through the first structural division 'Mosque' which represents the superficial optimism through its shallow arcades, the verbal gymnastics of the ninety-nine names of God as well as its mention of Christianity. Besides, Mrs Moore's simple-minded beliefs in oneness with the universe also highlight man's immaturity.

Caves represent everything that is foreign to nature. A symbol of evil and negations, nothingness and illusions, caves are unapproachable with chambers, 'never sealed since the arrival of gods'. Defying rational categorization and identification existing in 'every direction', caves challenge the human intellect which remains preoccupied and obsessed with definitions. The expeditions to the Caves is carried in with the express objective of bringing the two races together, but eventually, it fails in its purpose as the gulf is widened, bringing to the fore the complexities involved in such an attempt. At the personal level too, the episode in the Cave reveals the almost historical honesty of Adela, the pride and generosity of the temperamental Aziz, the sense of rational decorum of Fielding, Godbole's capacious tolerance, the prejudiced lenses of the colonials as well as the simmering discontent of the ruled. Mrs Moore too undergoes a transformation, a complete metamorphosis after being in the Caves. But once again this experience is indistinguishable whether it was a vision, a religious experience, a mystical trance or just a psychological tension – Forster bothers not to answer. Caves as symbols are in fact, inextricably linked up with the two preceding and succeeding major symbols, the mosque and the temple symbols with which it has overlapping, making the structure of the novel perfect. In this section, the Temple as an ambivalent symbol reaffirms Mrs Moore's vision on the one hand and on the other hand is an acceptance of the muddle that India is. Forster conveys through these symbols that the world may be in the shambles but there are also potentialities of constructive action. The three sections represent three blocks of notes, rising and falling and rising again whereby Forster composes a symphony of ideas. In addition to the symbolic design of its structure, several symbols are used by Forster such as symbols of wasp, stone, match flame, game of polo, The Bridge Party etc. which lend a unique richness to the novel.

5.6 A Character Study

Drawn by Forster as people living in his own make believe world of whims, peculiarities, inconsistencies and contradictions, Aziz is the most complex character in *A Passage to India*. A doctor trained in England and practicing in India and given to love of Persian poetry, of Ghalib and Iqbal, Aziz is caught up in a strange fascination for the past with Babur and Alamgir as his heroes and his desire to seek proximity to the British ruling class in India. Emotional by temperament, Aziz succumbs to his impulses and exhibits humility and contempt in his demeanour towards everyone. Lionel Trilling notices this dichotomy in Aziz's character:

> Aziz is cast in the mould of un-Englishness that is to say of volatility, tenderness, sensibility, a hint of cruelty, much warmth, a love of pathos, the desire to please

> even at the cost of insincerity. Aziz's nature is in many ways child-like, in many ways mature, it is mature in its acceptance of child-like inconsistency.

Analysed in the backdrop of imperialism, Aziz's sense of the past, his constant harping on the Mughal Emperors is in fact not mere personal idiosyncrasy but the expression of his deep sense of loss and hatred. The same holds good about his prejudiced and contemptuous behaviour towards Hindus. Forster develops Aziz's character from the angle of reflecting the religious acrimony between the two major communities of India. Despite the bitterness, he reads the game plan of British and refuses to discuss, "Hindus with me, perhaps they will see me for tumbling on to their dolls' house. On the other hand perhaps they will increase my salary. Time will prove". For all of his oscillations between a child-like instability and all responsive sensibility, he appears in the novel as a very credible human being as Trilling says of him, 'for good or for bad, he is human'.

The relationship between Aziz and Fielding despite the barriers of race and character is the most interesting one as it undergoes different phases with the change of circumstances. In their very first meeting, the two decide to be genuine friends. The differences however are too sharp to be bridged – Fielding is from the ruling class while Aziz is a colonized one. How can their interest be reconciled? Their religious priorities, language differences and cultural values further add to their polarities.

In fact through them, Forster looks into the problematic relationship between the colonizers and colonized in the colonial context. Their relationship is used as a ploy to highlight that despite the wish to 'only connect' the animosities between the colonizer and the demonic 'other' frustrate any chance of amicability between the two. Fielding stands in sharp contrast to Ronny Heaslop who believes in his mission of bringing light to the colonized's ignominious darkness' (Memmi) and think that "we are not pleasant in India and don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do". Fielding, however is not the 'type' nor is he 'one of us'. Fielding refuses colonization but dislikes himself being called, 'seditious'– 'a term that bored him, and diminished his utility'. Fielding had no racial feelings…. because he had matured in a different atmosphere, where the herd instinct does not flourish'. Through fielding sides with Aziz in Adela Quested molestation case and invites the wrath of his own community, he changes later in his stand and admits of the 'fundamental difference' and questions the possibility of India ever becoming a 'nation'. He tries to convince Aziz that British are better rulers that any other colonial power since they understand India better. Their friendship is symbolic of the uneasy colonial relationship between India and England.

The trial of Aziz is a watermark which brings to surface the misunderstandings and complications. The humiliated Aziz is determined to take revenge upon Adela for ruining his career. Fielding out of sympathy for Adela asks Aziz to withdraw his demand from Adela. Suspecting Fielding's sympathy for Adela with love, Aziz breaks his relationship with Fielding. Adela Quested's hallucination inside the Caves caused a tremor in the socio-political scene of Chandrapore laying threadbare the inner turmoil in the inter-race relations. Again her candid confession of wrongly accusing Aziz raises eyebrows of the British Community. Mrs Moore possesses an extraordinary characteristic of intuitive perceptions and in her is portrayed the 'finer type of English spirit, different from the diplomatic and imperialistic one'. In an atmosphere of divisions and separateness, Mrs Moore represents a sane person's bid to restore trust and infuse harmony. To sum up,

Forster displays his remarkable skill in using the technique of character pairing and contrast.

Exercise 2

1. Aziz once so friendly with the British comments in the later section of the novel 'Down with the English'. What circumstances force Aziz to change his stance?
2. Read the text and describe the landscape and the people which inhabit Chandrapore.
3. Group both-the major as well as the minor symbols used in *A Passage of India.*

5.7 Summing Up

Studied in retrospect, the novel *A Passage to India* appears to be a trendsetter in its comprehensive recreation of the atmosphere in India during 1920-30s. Perhaps, E. M. Forster is one of the first writers to challenge the imperial assumption that India is ruled by the English not for its evangilical stance of being 'white men's burden' but for its own colonial objectives. Marvellously written, the novel offers a study in colonial discourse which in Homi Bhabha's words 'is an apparatus that turns on the recognition and disavowal of racial / cultural and historical differences'. *A Passage to India* anticipates Orwell's conventionalized figure of a sahib and also Memmis' typical colonizer; harsh and cold as well as his 'colonizer who refuses'. The issues which Forster raises in the novel such as, barriers of rigid convention, rudeness, racial arrogance, insensitively of the powerful are still alive and seek an answer. The novel is significant in that Forster discusses relations between the master-servant, colonizer-colonized, India and British at both levels, historical as well as prophetic. The colonialism which Forster seeks to propagate is a system of colonizing the human heart with understanding and affection, of connecting, of bridging, of finding a passage through hearts.

5.8 Answers to Self-Assessment Questions

Exercise 1

1. Refer to the discussion given at 5.4.2.
2. Refer to the discussion given at 5.4.3.
3. See section 5.6
4. Refer to the discussion given at 5.5.2.

Exercise 2

1. Refer to the discussion given at 5.4.3 and 5.6 .
2. You can take the help of section 5.5.2 and 5.5.3.
3. Refer to the section 5.5.3.

5.9 References

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5.10 Terminal and Model Questions

1. "In a Passage to India, Forster's intent is to present the Western civilization in collision with the Eastern, the imperial with the colonial, the human heart in conflict with the machinery of government, class and race". Comment.
2. Discuss *A Passage to India* as a colonial text.
3. Enumerate the barriers of understanding between nations, races, cultures, religions and peoples in the present context of globalization.