1

LITERARY TERMS

PART I

Unit Structure

1.0 Objectives:

- To introduce students to various literary terms and movements related to fiction,
- To enable them to study and analyse fiction with the help of these terms and background of the movements discussed herewith.

1.1 Introduction:

This unit and the next unit introduce learners to some important literary terms and literary movements related to fiction. In the last semester, you have studied various types of fiction. In this semester, you are going to study literary movements like modernism and postmodernism and their characteristics. There is also discussion of some more types of fiction such as the psychological novel, postmodern novel, science fiction, postcolonial novel, spy fiction and campus novels. The twentieth century novelists employ some techniques like stream of consciousness and magic realism to represent complex reality in their fiction. These techniques are also explained in this unit.

1.2.1 Stream of Consciousness

The term 'stream of consciousness' originated in the 19th century. The psychologist William James coined the term in 'Principles of Psychology' (1890) to denote continuous flow of sense-perceptions, feelings, thoughts and memories in the human mind. In literature, the stream of consciousness is a narrative method used to render the flow of subjective thoughts, inner experiences, feelings and memories. It is mostly associated with the 20th century Modernist novelists. However, earlier novelists also used to present the flow of inner experiences by allowing the character to

speak in the first person such as in Richardson's Clarissa (1748).But they used linear narrative techniques to represent them. With the increasing awareness of the complexity of the human mind, the twentieth century novelists employed the stream of consciousness more extensively as they were not in favour of authorial rhetoric of earlier novels or socio-descriptive novels. So they centred their novels on the character itself. In their novels, through long passages of introspection, the narrator records in detail what passes through a character's awareness. The best known practitioners of the stream of consciousness are Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, William Faulkner and Patrick White.

Stream of consciousness is often considered as a synonym for interior monologue. However, to many critics the former is an inclusive term which includes all the techniques employed by the writer to present the consciousness in a character. So, interior monologue is a type of stream of consciousness. It refers to the technique of presenting inner thoughts, impressions and impulses of the character. It presents the course of the consciousness exactly as it happens in a character's mind. In this technique, the writer does not intervene or sometimes intervene minimally but prefers to present the process of consciousness as precisely as possible. So in interior monologue, the character's thoughts are presented using traditional or chronological narrative methods. The stream of consciousness, on the contrary, represents the actual experience of thinking with all its chaos and spontaneity. As a result, the reader can experience the mental process of a character's thinking.

Dorothy Richardson was one of the chief exponents of the stream of consciousness technique. She used this technique in her thirteen volume semi-autobiographical novel, *Pilgrimage,* published between 1915 and 1967. The novel centres on the female consciousness of the protagonist, Miriam Henderson. May Sinclair applied the term 'stream of consciousness' for the first time in 1918 in her review of *Pointed Roofs,* the first volume in a sequence of 13 volumes.

An Irish novelist, James Joyce employed this technique in *Ulysses* (1922). The novel tracks an ordinary day in the life of Leopold Bloom. There are lengthy passages of stream consciousness. The characters in the novel have their own problems as reflected through the passages containing an unbroken flow of perceptions, feelings and thoughts in the conscious mind. They talk to themselves in mind and cannot control the continuous flow of thoughts, feelings and ideas. This technique helps the reader to understand the character's personality, past, problems and mental condition. Joyce used this technique more elaborately in his next narrative-free novel, *Finnegan's Wakes* (1939).

The stream of consciousness is often non-linear making use of unusual syntax, associated leaps and repetition. This type of writing does not follow ordinary rules of grammar and syntax. Thoughts are often not fully formed or they are constantly changing or are interrupted by another thought. Hence, they are presented in ways that are not grammatically or syntactically correct but appear to be accurate. The stream of

consciousness writing also makes use of associated leaps or thoughts. Associated thought is random for it leaps from one thing to the next on the basis of ambiguous or non-existent connections. This technique helps the writer to present the human thought more accurately than presenting them in a systematic or logical manner. So also, there is a use of repetition in the stream of consciousness writing as the character keeps coming back to or is hooked to a certain thought or sensory impression. Use of repeated words or phrases act as sign posts giving readers an idea about important themes and motifs. The other features of the stream of consciousness writing are unreliable narrators and non-linear plot structure. Many writers experiment with the narrative time i.e. moving forward or backward in time. They choose to arrange events out of chronological order or offer details about the past through the memories of characters.

Two novels of Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927) are notable examples of the stream of consciousness technique. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf records the thoughts, experiences and memories of several characters on a single day in London. In *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf delves into the minds of characters by using different grammatical and syntactical techniques, associated thoughts, repetition of ideas and thoughts through interior monologues. She uses parenthetical phrases to introduce characters in the first part; in the second part, parenthetical sentences are used in brackets to highlight the phenomenon such as death and destruction; and in the last part, parentheses are used to represent different perspectives. Characters are shown indulging in associated thinking. For example, in the second part of the novel, *Time Passes*, in chapter eight, Mrs. M'cNab while cleaning the house thinks about the war, garden and the Ramsey family. In the following passage from the first chapter of Part One, Woolf by using straight narration presents the feeling, inner thoughts and consciousness of the character:

...For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, and possibly more in stormy weather, upon a rock the size of a tennis lawn? She would ask; and to have no letters and newspapers, and to see nobody; if you were married, not to see your wife, not to know how your children were, —if they were ill, if they had fallen down and broken their legs or arms; to see the same dreary waves breaking week after week, and then a dreadful storm coming, and the windows covered with spray, and birds dashed against the lamp, and the whole place rocking, and not be able to put your nose out of doors for fear of being swept into the sea? How would you like that? She asked, addressing herself particularly to her daughters. (p.4)

This passage gives us an idea of how modern novelists like Virginia Woolf made use of the stream of consciousness because they found it a more honest way of representing characters than conventional narrative styles which forcefully present thoughts and inner experiences into a logical or easily digestible syntax.

1.2.2 Magic Realism

Magic Realism is a term applied to novels that infuse fantastic or magical elements in a realistic setting. The key element of this form is that the

magical is seen in a matter-of-factly way in the narrative, and the characters express no surprise or awe about its existence in day-to-day life. Magic Realism is also often called 'Marvellous Realism' or 'Magical Realism', though these latter terms are sometimes seen as specific variations in the former (see below). The form developed mainly in Latin America in the 1950s and '60s, with the key motive to comment on political situations. Columbian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Indian author Salman Rushdie and Japanese author Haruki Murakami are some well-known exponents of the genre.

The form is distinguished from Fantasy in that it does not intend to create surprise or shock about the Magical. Magic Realist fiction is mainly characterised by: a) Authorial Reticence, which entails refusal by the author to explain the origin or logic of the magical elements in realistic settings; b) Metafiction, which means making the readers aware that it is a story they are reading; and c) usage of local myths to highlight the unique cultural background and worldviews in a particular setting.

These characteristics, among others, serve two important functions: a) Underlining that the magical needs no explanation; further, in a more political context, symbolising that there are things way more absurd than the magical in the stories; and b) Challenging the European and American notion of art, which promotes the prevalence of naturalism, impressionism and social realism, all forms which mainly focus on imitating real life as it is.

The historical background of Magic Realism is in the 1920s. It emerged in opposition to Expressionism, a branch of Modernism, which tries to interpret and represent reality from an extremely subjective point of view. German critic Franz Roh coined the term in 1925 as an attempt to present reality more objectively, and see the "uncanny" in everyday objects. "Uncanny" is a concept from psychoanalysis, developed by Sigmund Freud, that says that there is something strange in ordinary things, like dolls when observed closely can seem to be eerie. This phenomenon forms the basis of Magic Realism.

Roh's formulations were translated into Spanish by essayist Jose Ortega y Gasset and were picked up by Latin American writers, where the language is prevalent. Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges' short-story collection *A Universal History of Infamy* (1935; originally Spanish) was one of the earliest works in the genre. Borges used the term "Magical Realism" to describe the stories. This was followed by Cuban author Alejo Carpentier's novel *The Kingdom of This World* (1949; originally Spanish), which had a slave in Haiti as protagonist who discovers magical powers described in African myths, and is set in the background of the Haitian Revolution of 1791 against French colonisers. Carpentier himself and others have used the term "Marvellous Realism" to describe the form of the novel, which is distinguished from Magic Realism in that it is focused more on the magical than the real.

Carpentier's ideas were taken forward and applied in a post-colonial context by Haitian writer and critic Jacques Stephen Alexis. His novel *General Sun, My Brother* (1955; originally French) is set against the

backdrop of the anti-Communist rule of Haitian President Stenio Joseph Vincent and the Parsley Massacre of Haitians peasants in Dominican Republic in 1937. In the peasants' cause, the sun is portrayed as a living being and a leader.

Marquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967; originally Spanish) is often cited as the canonistic text of Magic Realism. Set in Columbia, it tells the story of generations of the Buendia family, and has classic elements of the genre, including ghosts, comments on Columbian politics and economic exploitation by America. The novel is part of what is called the Latin American Boom of Magic Realism, of which writers like Mario Vargas (Peru), Julio Cortazar (Argentina), Carlos Fuentes (Mexico) and Isabella Allende (Chile) were a part.

Outside Latin America, Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* (1981), among his other works, is seen as an important work in Magic Realism. It tells the story of children born at the stroke of midnight of India's Independence Day and who have supernatural powers. Nigerian author Ben Okri's novel *The Famished Road* (1991) and Japanese writer Haruki Murakami's novels are also noted examples of this genre. US-Canadian author Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993) and US author Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) are sometimes seen as Magic Realist. In Europe, Gunther Grass (Germany), Italo Calvino (Italy) and John Fowles (England) are some more exponents of this genre.

1.2.3 Modernism

Modernism is an art movement, mainly located in early 20th century Europe. It is characterised by a feeling of loss of culture, particularly after the First World War. It primarily deals with the idea of incoherence, i.e. culture, and in turn the self, are not unified, stable entities, but unstable and ever-changing. This thought is reflected more in style than in themes, giving rise to writing techniques like fragmented narrative and the stream of consciousness. Writers like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and T.S. Eliot were the champions of this Modernism in literature.

The roots of Modernism lie in opposition to the ideas of Humanism and individualism, propagated by the Renaissance, also called Enlightenment. The period of Renaissance is roughly marked from the 14th to the 17th century. Humanism, although diversified in its principles and practices, had two central tenets – a) that man is infinitely capable and conscious, and thus having free will, and b) that there is coherence, order and stability, both in humans as well as the world. These ideals reflected in both the themes and the style of the literature produced during the time. This movement itself is often called "modernity", as opposed to the regressive Medieval Age that preceded it.

The primary challenge to these ideas comes from the likes of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche and Charles Darwin. The significant contribution of Marx and Freud was to discard the idea of free will and consciousness; the latter two challenged the prevalent theological dicta of the previous eras.

A precursor to Modernism is Imagism, a term coined by Ezra Pound in 1912 for the poetry of Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) and Richard Adlington. The primary features of this poetry, according to Pound, were that it was objective, direct and with no metaphors, as opposed to the "verbose" Victorian poetry (David Ayers). A significant idea in this movement, that laid ground for Modernism, was to avoid "slither", i.e. a smooth movement between lines and thus create dissonance. Pound himself wrote the epic *The Cantos* (1915-1962), which is considered a landmark text of Modernism. Similarly, movements like Italian Futurism (led by F.T. Martinetti) and Vorticism (by Wyndham Lewis) had the motivation of confronting existing aesthetics of art. In this sense, these two movements were more political than Imagism.

Modernism after the World War I, also called High Modernism, had its foundation in the destabilisation of the presumed moral and cultural superiority of Europe, established through colonialism, industrialisation, monarchies, religious codes, scientific discoveries and the tenets of Humanism, among other factors. The War shook this elitist belief and further challenged the idea of coherence. In turn, the artistic and particularly literary aesthetics were subjected to scrutiny. Out of this, particular styles, that reflected the dissonance in the world order and more importantly, in the self, were born. Thematically, a profound sense of loss of coherence and order are at the core of Modernist Literature.

Irish author James Joyce explored the instability of a unified self in his novels like *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (1916), *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegans Wake* (1939). The novels were primarily characterised by fragmented narrative, wherein chapters were disconnected from each other and the technique of Stream of Consciousness, wherein thoughts of the characters were not arranged sequentially and are often repetitive, but reflected the randomness of one's thinking. Ulysses, for example, narrates the events of a single day in three characters' lives – Stephen Dedalus (who is also the protagonist of A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man), Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom. The chapters of the novel shift abruptly between perspectives of the three characters and take non-linear jumps in narrative. Chapters 3 and 18 use the stream of consciousness, with the latter without any punctuation marks. Joyce makes several such stylistic interventions with the use of musical language, boxing match commentary and other such elements in other chapters.

The novel also brings out another feature of Modernism, i.e. allusions to past literature. The 18 chapters of Ulysses are structured according to the 18 episodes of Homer's epic poem Odyssey. Allusions are also an important feature in Eliot's poetry.

British writer Virginia Woolf used similar techniques in novels like Mrs Dalloway (1925), To the Lighthouse (1927) and Orlando (1928). Woolf brought in Feminist sensibilities to Modernism by underlining the dissonance in a woman's existence. Further, novelists like Gertrude Stein, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, William Faulkner and Thomas Mann brought out and established various aspects of Modernism.

In poetry, American-turned-British writer T.S. Eliot remains a looming figure after Pound. His poems like *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1915), *The Waste Land* (1922) and the *Hollow Men* (1925) examine the futility of and loss of culture in modern existence. Eliot retains the fragmented narrative technique on a macroscopic level in his poems, but also makes it microscopic by not overtly relating two consecutive lines. Another feature of his poetry is the highly encoded allusions. *The Waste Land*, considered the most significant example of Modernist poetry, is known for its fragmented narrative and numerous allusions. Eliot makes oblique references to Dante, Shakespeare, the Buddha and the Upanishads. The central theme of the poem is however the impotency of modern times and the fragmented existence, as seen in lines like "A heap of broken images".

Other important names in Modernist poetry include W.B. Yeats, Stephane Mallarme, Wallace Stevens and William Carlos.

In the drama, figures like Norwegian playwright Henrick Ibsen and August Strindberg (Swedish) are said to be founders of Modernism in the 19th century, with their techniques of surrealism and realism. Lungi Pirandello laid the foundation for what would later be called Theatre of the Absurd. Playwrights like Samuel Beckett (seen more as a Postmodernist), Eugene O'Neill and Bertolt Brecht further experimented with techniques of drama. Although their techniques and themes are more in allegiance with movements like Marxism, Absurdism, Surrealism and Realism, their connection with Modernism, though loose, is seen in the fundamental tenets of challenging existing aesthetics and underlining dissonance and lack of purpose in human life.

1.2.4 Intertextuality

The term intertextuality is popularized by Julia Kristeva in her analysis of Bakhtin's concepts of Dialogism and Carnival. Intertextuality signifies 'the multiple ways in which any one literary text is in fact made up of other texts, by means of its open or covert citations and allusions, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts' (Abrams: 310). To Kristeva, every text is an intertext in which there is an intersection of many texts and it exists only through its relation with other texts. This idea echoes Barthes' idea of the text as 'a tissue of quotations', as 'fluid' having many levels of meaning. In this sense, intertextuality is a rejection of the traditional humanist notion of the text as a self-contained entity.

Intertextuality is inevitable as no text exists in a vacuum. All writers read and are influenced by what they read. Sometimes they draw parallels between their work and the inspirational or influential works through allusions, imitation, parody etc. So a relation is established among these texts. However Kristeva challenges this traditional notion of literary influence by arguing that intertextuality is a transposition of sign system (s) into one another. It is a kind of 'new articulation' as new discourse is created through the interdependence of texts.

In short, intertextuality refers to the manner in which many types of texts contain references to other texts. To Julia Kristeva, texts function along two axes: horizontal axis and vertical axis. The former determines the relationship between the reader and the text while the latter contains the complex set of relations of the text to other texts. It helps the readers to know what to expect from a particular text.

Intertextuality disturbs the belief in the originality of the text. However, such beliefs in the originality of text are relatively recent phenomena. Until the Renaissance period, there was a widespread belief that a literary work is a patchwork of existing texts. Appropriation and adaptation of earlier texts was a common practice. At that time the stamp of an author was of little importance. With the age of Romanticism, the originality of the text becomes an important issue. The text becomes a product of an individual's imagination. However, this idea of authorship is strongly challenged by the structuralists and poststructuralists who attach prime importance to the sign system called language. Their belief in the preexistence of the linguistic codes and structures means that the author is already positioned in the sign system and is, therefore, not contributing anything new or original.

Postmodern novelists deliberately draw attention to the self referential quality of the art and explore the notion of intertextuality. They expose the frames of the production and interpretations of the text. They write about the process of writing which is known as 'metafiction'.

The notion of intertextuality gives equal importance to the reader in the creative process. To them, the writer encodes the echoes of the previous works and thereby creates a pattern but the reader's task is equally important in decoding that pattern. The reader invokes certain intertexts while encountering the text. It results in multiple interpretations which are as valid as the meaning that the author wants to generate.

1.2.5 Postmodern Novel

Postmodernism is a movement in art and humanities, with its beginnings generally marked after the Second World War. It has been seen both as a continuation and a disruption of Modernism with the following central ideas: a) an acceptance of dissonance in the self and the world; further, an acceptance of non-existence of reality, but only narratives (even 'history' is only a narrative to the Postmodernists); b) like Modernism, a rejection of the existing forms of expression and aesthetics of art; further, rejection of even the techniques of Modernism as they too had become conventions in themselves; and c) collation of various artforms into a work of art, including popular art or "mass culture" in multimedia. These are, of course, not the only tenets of the movement, but the main ones.

The Second World War exposed Europe and the world to horrors like fascism, holocaust and the atom bomb. This provoked a bigger insecurity about the permanence of civilisation and human life itself, which could be destroyed in minutes. Additionally, the Western world was increasingly being subjected to dominant systems of commodification, multimedia (TV, films etc.) and capitalism, through which the Humanist idea of

individuality was further lost. To the Postmodernists then, the self or centre was not just unstable, but entirely absent.

Besides other factors, Postmodernism can be mainly differentiated from Modernism with respect to collation and interaction with popular art. Through this, Postmodernism intended to challenge the elitism in the High Art of Modernism. In other words, in the sense of loss and coherence in Modernism, there was still a search of self. Postmodernism gives up this search and rejects the perceived egotism of Modernism.

These basic ideas are further diversified and theorised in two main philosophers of Postmodernism – Jean Baudrillard and Jean-Francois Lyotard. The former famously quoted that the Gulf War is not real and conceptualised Hyperreality, which implies that with there is no reality, but only "floating images" on media. Lyotard argued that Humanism or modernity had generated totalising and flawed 'grand narratives' or 'metanarratives', and that there are only 'local narratives'. In other words, there is no overarching, coherent reality (portraying progress of humankind), but only subjective reality. Linda Hutcheon and Patricia Waugh are among other prominent theorists of Postmodernism.

This acceptance of non-existence of reality and existence of only narratives led to the technique of metafiction in novels, also called self-reflexive novels, which entails the awareness within the narrative or characters that they are part of a narrative. British author John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), for example, is narrated by a third person narrator who keeps commenting on the story and how his characters are behaving. The novel also has many footnotes and references to other books (called 'intertextuality'). Both these factors pull the reader out of the story and do not allow an immersive experience of reading. The technique stresses the idea that everything is indeed a narrative.

Other famous examples of this technique are novels by British authors - Graham Swift's *Waterland* (1992), and those by American authors – Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy* (1987), Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada* (1976) and Susan Sontag's *The Benefactor* (1963) and *Death Kit* (1967). Self-reflexivity is also noted in Argentinean writer Jorge Louis Borges' short stories, who is more seen in the light of Magic Realism. A precursor to metafiction can be seen in Anglo-Irish writer Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759).

An important category in Postmodern novels is the revisionist historical novel, or what Hutcheon has called 'historiographic metafiction'. This form is the product of the Postmodern tenet that even history is a narrative, and hence, it can be moulded according to the narrative of the novel. In more general terms, this approach can also be called parody or pastiche. American author Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* (1977), for example, revises the execution of Ethel Rosenberg and Julius Rosenberg, who were accused of spying in America for the Soviet Union and executed in 1953. The novel uses a fictionized version of American President Richard Nixon (vice-president in 1953) as a narrator who has sexual attraction for Ethel. It also personifies Uncle Sam, a popular symbol of

American government. The novel, again, shows how history is a narrative constructed by those in power.

Other examples of this form are novels by American authors - John Barths' *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960), Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's *Rainbow* (1973), Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse – Five* (1969) and E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime* (1975) and those Indian author Salman Rushdie including *Midnight's Children* (1981). However, like Borges, Rushdie's work is also mainly classified under Magic Realism. Similarly, Italian authors Umberto Eco and Italo Calvino, whose works have been translated into English, infuse history with semiotics, gothic elements and many other elements and drive home the idea of intertextuality and collation of forms.

Postmodernism's dicta of loss of purpose and the acceptance of, and even revelation in it, are seen in works like American author William S. Burroughs' novel *Naked Lunch* (1959). The novel defies any structure and has no apparent thematic purpose. It describes apparently random episodes in the life of its protagonist William Lee, shifting places and time randomly. This is in line with the idea of absurdity seen in writers like Samuel Beckett. Beckett, more known as a playwright and also seen many times in the context of Modernism, has also written novels like *Molloy* (1951) and *Malone Dies* (1951), which has such absurdist Postmodern elements. Absurdism, with Postmodern characteristics like metatheatre, is also seen in the works of playwrights like Tom Stoppard. Further, Absurdism is in line with the Postmodernist stand to avoid interpretation, at least through traditional methods, seen in works of theorists like Ihab Hassan and Sontag.

It should also be noted that some tenets of Postmodernism intersect with Poststructuralism and hence, at least some critics and writers can fall in either category. Similarly, many Marxist and Feminist theorists have intersected their theories with Postmodernism.

1.3 Let's Sum Up

In this unit, we have learnt literary terms related to fiction viz. Stream of consciousness, magic realism, intertextuality, modernism and postmodern novel.

The stream of consciousness is a narrative method used to render the flow of subjective thoughts, inner experiences, feelings and memories. Magic Realism is a term applied to novels that infuse fantastic or magical elements in a realistic setting. Modernism is a movement in art characterised by a feeling of loss of culture, particularly after the First World War. It primarily deals with the idea of incoherence, i.e. culture, and in turn the self, are not unified, stable entities, but unstable and ever-changing. Intertextuality refers to the multiple ways in which any one literary text is in fact made up of other texts. Postmodernism is a movement in art and humanities, with its beginnings generally marked after the Second World War and has been seen both as a continuation and a disruption of Modernism

1.4 Questions

Write short notes on the following terms:

1) Stream of Consciousness
2) Magic Realism
3) Intertextuality
4) Modernism
5) Postmodernism

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2

LITERARY TERMS

PART II

Unit Structure

2.0 Objectives:

- To introduce students to various literary terms related to fiction,
- To enable them to study and analyse fiction with the help of these terms.

2.1 Psychological Novel:

A psychological novel is a type of prose fiction that deals with the interior life of characters, their inner experiences, feelings, memories, emotions and introspections. It is a type of novel in which thoughts, feelings and motivations of the characters are as significant as the external action of the novel. The central concern of this type of novel is the human mind and all that passes through it. Emotional reactions and inner states of the characters are both influenced by or trigger the external action of the narrative. There are earlier instances of psychological writing in Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759-67). However, the psychological novels are associated with literary movements like the nineteenth century psychological realism, the twentieth century modernism and stream of consciousness novels. The growth of the psychological novel coincided with the advancement in the field of psychology and experiments of Sigmund Freud. The preoccupation of the Modern psychological novel with sex is very much due to the theories of Freud and Havlock Ellis.

The stream of consciousness technique is used extensively in the psychological novels. We have already studied the nature of stream of consciousness technique. Writers like Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce made use of this technique to delve into the minds of their characters. Their novels show decay of plot and a tendency

towards discontinuity rather than continuity of action. So they do not seem to care about neatly finishing the given action. They are concerned more with the representation of subjective thoughts, memories and experiences of the characters.

For the writers of the psychological novels, the character is a psychological battlefield. They believe that one must delve deep within the mind of the character to understand his or her true self. So they focus on the unobservable subconscious of the character which was neglected by the traditional authors. The following are the aspects of the psychological novels:

1. The focus of the psychological novels is on the inside of a character or characters.
2. Physical aspects are given less importance.
3. Use of stream of consciousness and interior monologues
4. Non-linear plot structure, often subordinate to and dependent upon the probing delineation of character
5. Use of heavy imagery especially images fused with sound and sight forming a perceptual experience
6. Repeated use of some words, phrases or images to create motifs
7. Merging of the past, present and future time
8. Experiments with narrative time
9. No traditional story line
10. Use of associated thoughts.

American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote the first psychological novel, The Scarlet Letter in 1880, Hawthorne blends supernatural elements with psychological insight in the novel. The novel centres around Hester Prynne who conceives a child out of an affair and has to struggle to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Many other American authors followed the model of Hawthorne to write psychological novels. Henry James' psychological novel, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) is the story of Isabel's mind and how it shapes her destiny and character. The scene in which Isabel sees a private conversation taking place between Ms. Merle and Mr. Osmond is the peak of the psychological scene.

Early twentieth century writers like Dorothy Richardson, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, William Faulkner and Virginia Woolf are influenced by the advancement in the field of psychology and the theories of Sigmund Freud. They tried to explore the unconscious and subconscious of their characters and experimented with the structure in their novels. They blended many narrative modes such as first person narration, interior monologues, intrusive third person narration and stream of consciousness to trace characters' associated thoughts, memories, past experiences, emotions and feelings. In Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), the action takes place in Dublin in a 24-hour period, but it evokes associations that take the reader back and forth through the character's past and present lives.

2.2 Science Fiction:

Science fiction is often shortened to sci-fi or SF. It is a form of fiction that deals with the impact of imaginative or futuristic scientific concepts or discovery or events on society and individuals. It deals with how human beings respond to advances in science and technology. Science fiction is often set in another planet or future earth or an imagined universe. So it is related to fantasy, horror and exploits of a superhero. Though science fiction is considered as a modern genre, it is as old as literature for we come across many popular ancient tales of ghosts, demons and supernatural manifestations. The earliest example of science fiction is the 2nd century novella, *A True Story (History)* by Lucian of Samosata. It contains some of the major characteristics of science fiction such as travel to other worlds, Aliens, interplanetary warfare etc. Lucian's hero visits the Sun and the Moon and indulges in interplanetary warfare. However, before the nineteenth century such writing was merely fantasy intended to entertain and moralize.

In the nineteenth century, men realized that there is continuous advancement in science and technology having serious repercussions on human life. Mary Shelley's *Fankenstein* (1818) is considered a precursor of science fiction. Science fiction of that time was written in the style of the Gothic novel. But more characteristic science fiction writing such as Jules Verne's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864) and H. G. Well's *The War of the Worlds* (1897) appeared in the later half of the nineteenth century. Still science fiction writers lacked a popular base for writers until, in 1926, American Publisher Hugo Grensback started *Amazing Stories*, the first magazine devoted entirely to science fiction. The Hugo Awards, given annually since 1953, by the World Science Fiction Society are named after him.

There are various trends in Science fiction writing. As mentioned above earlier writers followed the style of the Gothic Novels. Modern writers like Ursula Le Guin (in The *Dispossessed,* 1974) tries to project future utopio while writers like George Orwell (*Ninety ighty Four,* 1949) and Margaret Atwood (*The Handmaid's Tale* 1986) present the dystopian effects of modern science. And there are some writers like Aldous Huxley (*Brave New World,* 1932) who use science fiction for political and social satire.

Science fiction is classified into two broad categories: hard science fiction and soft science fiction. Hard science fiction is inspired by 'hard' sciences such as chemistry, physics, and astronomy. It is based on scientific fact and is characterized by concern for scientific accuracy and logic. P. Schuyler Miller was the first to use the term in a review of John W Campbell's *Islands of Space* (1957). Soft science fiction, on the contrary, is inspired by soft sciences like psychology, anthropology and sociology. There is no serious concern for scientific accuracy in this type of fiction. It is more concerned with character and speculative societies. The term is attributed to Australian literary critic, Peter Nicholis. George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a good example of soft science fiction as it is

basically concerned with how society and interpersonal relationships are influenced by a political force with the use of technology.

The common elements of science fiction are time travel, space travel or exploration, fantasy, imaginative or fictional world, supernatural, aliens or extraterrestrial lifeforms, parallel universe, alternative histories, speculative societies, supercomputers and artificial intelligence.

In the twentieth century, the science fiction genre is popular in film and other media. The first sci-fi film was A Trip to the Moon produced in 1902 by a French filmmaker Georges Méliès. Fritz Lang directed Metropolis (1927) is the first feature-length science fiction film. With the production of *Godzilla* (1954) by Ishirō Honda, kaiju subgenre of science fiction began. *2001: Planet of the Apes* and *Star Wars* are some of the popular science fiction movie series.

Science fiction is also known as 'literature of ideas'. It has many sub-genres - fantasy fiction, utopian fiction, dystopian fiction, space opera, and cyberpunk.

Cyberpunk is a subgenre of science fiction. It emerged in the 1970s. It is a postmodern version of science fiction which often has a dystopian setting that combines both low life and cyber technology. Scientific achievements such as artificial intelligence are juxtaposed with degradation of social order. Characters are either human or artificial intelligences acting in virtual reality. The famous example of cyberpunk is William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984) which carries the influence of punk subculture and hacker culture.

2.3 Postcolonial Novel:

The term Postcolonial/Post-Colonial is used to denote two different but interconnected meanings: a) to denote the period after the colonisers left a colonised country. For example, in India, the period after 1947 can be understood as post-colonial; and b) to mark the cultural impact of colonialism in a colonised country. E.g. the impact of changed administrative, economic, educational and political systems. This latter phenomenon is of particular interest in literature, especially in colonised countries. It analyses the identity-crisis in colonised people. Colonisers generally ruled other countries on the basis of a moral high-ground that the colonised people were uncivilised and needed to be civilised. This created an inferiority complex in the colonised people and generated a doubt about their cultures and identity. Some protested against this, while others simply succumbed to this narrative and became proponents of colonial culture. What interests Postcolonial Fiction are characters who succumbed to the colonial systems, but felt alienated from their culture. Alienation, thus, is the second important feature of such novels.

Theorists like Frantz Fanon (from Martinique), Edward Said (Palestinian American), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (India) and Homi K. Bhabha (Indian-British) have written extensively on Postcolonialism. They theorise how the colonisers created stereotypes about African and Asian countries, how they portrayed themselves as saviours of the colonisers

who were assumed to be barbaric and how this has created an identity-crisis in the colonised people. Some theorists like Wilson Harris (Guyana) have also suggested ways like Syncretism that entails preserving native cultures along with accepting changes.

One of the earliest examples of a Postcolonial novel is E.M. Foster's *A Passage to India* (1924). Set in British-occupied India, it looks at the racist prejudices the British have about Indians. Dr. Aziz, an Indian physician, is accused of sexual assault on Adela, a British schoolmistress. In the end, it turns out Adela was the victim of a misunderstanding. The reasons for her misunderstanding, the novel hints, is that she saw Dr. Aziz as capable of such behaviour, as he is seen as a savage. Rudyard Kipling's novel Kim (1901) is also seen in the context of relations between the coloniser and the colonised.

Postcolonial literature started flourishing after the Second World War when several countries started attaining political freedom, but weren't free of the cultural impact of colonialism. Nigerian author Chinua Achebe's three interconnected novels – *Things Fall Apart* (1958), No *Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Arrow of God* (1964) – generally known as the African Trilogy are defining texts in this genre. The first and the third novels in this series depict how local culture of Nigerian tribes was wiped away due to colonialism, in particular by Christianity. The second novel shows how Obi Okonkwo, a local, studies law in England and becomes a lawyer back in Nigeria. He however eventually accepts bribe, thus succumbing to the evils of the colonial system. Novels by other African writers like *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) by Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *The Interpreters* (1965) by Nigerian author Wole Soyinka (mainly known for his plays) and *The Conservationist* by South African author Nadine Gordimer are also significant in this genre.

Alienation is also a theme in the works of writers from the Caribbean. Caribbean islands were inhabited by colonisers and Black people from various African countries, along with other people like Indians, were brought there as slaves. As these people were from different regions, displaced in alien lands, their alienation is sharper. A prime example of this theme is the novel *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953) by George Lamming, an author from Barbados. Semi-autobiographical in nature, the novel traces the journey of the protagonist named G, who reminisces his life in Barbados while now living in London. His journey, while personal on one hand, also tells the story of how the culture of Barbados was lost due to colonisation. Similarly, another semi-autobiographical novel, *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961) by V.S. Naipaul, an author from Trinidad and Tobago, portrays the struggle of Mohun Biswas, who wants to buy a house, which for him will truly mean attaining freedom.

In India, R.K Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967) looks at the country's society immediately after independence. The novel is a story of a father and son, Jagan and Mali. Jagan, an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi, carries the traditional pre-colonisation values. Mali, however, is more globalised in his sensibilities. The story traces the cultural friction in India after independence. Salman Rushdie's novels like *Midnight's*

Children (1981) can be seen in Postcolonial context more in terms of style than themes. Rushdie uses traditional storytelling techniques like story-within-a-story, multiple diversions and magical elements, like in folk tales. Anita Desai's novel *Fire on the Mountain* (1978) is also sometimes seen in Postcolonial context as it equates the alienation of women to alienation of the colonised, and patriarchy to colonialism.

Novels from other colonised countries, like *Not Wanted on the Voyage* (1984)by Timothy Findley (Canada) and *The Edge of the Alphabet* (1962) by Janet Frame (New Zealand) are other important examples of Postcolonial novels.

2.4 Spy Fiction:

Spy Fiction is a genre of literature which typically focuses on themes of inter-country rivalry, espionage and exciting adventures of a hero. The hero, mostly a spy belonging to a western country, is given a task to obtain secret information about an enemy country. The novel or short story then takes him on a journey towards this final goal and portrays the difficulties and adventures experienced by him in the process. Another typical feature of the genre is a series of books with the same fictional spy as hero. British writers William Somerset Maugham, Desmond Cory and Ian Fleming and British-Chinese writer Leslie Charteris are popular examples of such fiction, who wrote more in the populist vein of adventure and thrill. More introspective works on the nature of morality in the profession of a spy are written by British-Irish author John le Carre and British writers Graham Greene and Frederick Forsyth.

Spy Fiction must be differentiated from detective stories. Popular examples of the latter are British author Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* series and Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot* series.

The genre is characterised by nationalist sentiments, portraying love for one's country and having another country as a villain. One of the earliest examples of this is American writer James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Spy* (1821). It tells the story of Harvey Birch, who is working as a secret American agent during the American Revolution to throw out the British colonisers. Rudyard Kipling's famous novel *Kim* (1901) is set in undivided India and portrays how a young Irish boy helps the British to obtain secret information from the Russian intelligence. Irish writer Erskine Childer's *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903) is considered to be the defining novel in the genre. It tells the story of Carruthers, a British officer, who discovers and foils a plan by the Germans to invade England.

The same theme of nationalism continues more strongly in the period of the First World War, owing to growing distrust among European nations. Scottish author John Buchan's novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) is a renowned example of this. It tells the story of Richard Hannay, who discovers a plot to assassinate Constantine Karolides, the Prime Minister of Greece and cause unrest in Europe. Maugham's *Ashenden: Or the British Agent* (1927), a collection of stories, shows Ashenden, a writer recruited as a spy, carrying out several secret operations during the War.

Much later, British writer Compton Mackenzie wrote the novel *Water on the Brain* (1933) based on his experiences as a British secret agent during the War. The novel is a variety in Spy Fiction with its parodic and comic style. Leslie Charteris' novels like *Meet the Tiger* (1928) explore the adventures of Simon Templar.

Before and during the Second World War, Spy Fiction was incorporated with a larger theme of preserving world peace and human right against more universal threats like the atom bomb and fascism. British writer Eric Ambler's novel *The Dark Frontier* (1936) is an example of this. The story is built around an atomic bomb threat (much before the actual atomic bomb was made) and how Conway Carruthers, a British spy, prevents this in the interest of humanity. Ambler's later novels are also set in the War period, where Nazi Germany is the villain. Scottish-American writer Helen MacInnes' novel *Above Suspicion* (1941) and Manning Coles' several novels are also set in the same era, where, again, the dangers of fascism are portrayed through spy stories.

In the Cold War era, as the capitalist West (mainly America and England) and the communist Soviet Union locked horns for world supremacy, Spy Fiction became more nationalistic and populist, with heroes going on the most dangerous adventures to protect their country. These heroes were also characterised by stylish looks, womanising tendencies and smartness to get out of any difficult situation. British author Desmond Cory wrote 16 novels with his fictional spy Johnny Fedora as their hero. Fedora is often compared to James Bond, invented by another British writer Ian Fleming, who wrote 12 novels and two short-story collections with Bond as their hero. *Casino Royale* (1953), the first novel in the Bond series, shows how Bond is trying to prevent funnelling of money from a French casino to Soviet Union. Similar spy heroes were later invented by many authors, e.g. Jason Bourne by American author Robert Ludlum and Jack Ryan by another American author Tom Clancy. All these heroes have also been adapted in films, with tremendous commercial success.

Writers like John le Carre and Frederick Forsyth (both British) however examined the moral dilemmas of espionage during Cold War. In le Carre's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963), Alec Leamas, a British secret agent, working in the erstwhile East Germany which was under the Communist control, is exposed to the left ideologies and questions the nature of his job. Le Carre's more popular hero is however George Smiley, protagonist of novels like *Call for the Dead* (1961) and the popular *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1974). Smiley is much more realistic than the likes of Bond and Bourne. Le Carre portrays him as a common man with intelligence, who believes in subtlety than flashy antics. Forsyth draws inspiration from real events and his books are deeply political. *The Day of the Jackal* (1971) is a portrayal of the actual attempt on the life of Charles de Gaulle, a French army officer, who was briefly the chief of Germany after the Nazis were defeated in the Second World War.

Other notable writers in this genre are the British Graham Greene, the Americans Charles McCarry and Ross Thomas and the Russian Yuilan Semyonov.

2.5 Campus Novels:

A campus novel is also called an academic novel. The main action of this type of novel is set within the campus of an academic institution. Campus novels appeared on the literary scene in the 1950s. The writers of campus novels are usually teachers or past students. They record their experiences at the academic campus in their works. There is a fine blending of realistic (often autobiographical) and imaginary elements in the campus novel. Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of Academe* (1952) is considered to be the earliest instance of a campus novel. The campus novel often deals with the internal affairs (often politics) of a university or a college. It throws lights on the complex relationship among faculty, administration and students. It often narrates past memories of a teacher or student. While presenting the conflict and struggle of the protagonist, the novelist presents the socio-cultural point of view of one of the members of an academic institution.

The campus novel is replete with scenes of partying, drinking, drugs, romance, sex, seduction, molestation, ragging, envy, manipulation and exploitation on the campus. There is an attack on administrative authorities, the snobbery and hypocrisy of faculty and staff, and their extramarital affairs. Discrimination based on caste, religion, race and gender are common themes in the campus novels. We get a dirty picture of power politics on the campus in this type of novel. Hence, such novels often assume the tone of satire and sarcasm. Some novels present a serious discourse on academic life as in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999) and Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* (2000). As mentioned above, the campus novels are often narrated from the point of view of a faculty member as in *Lucky Jim* or a student as in *The Secret History* by Donna Tart (1992). The campus novels that focus students rather than faculty are often considered to belong to varsity novels, a subgenre of the campus novels. Alison Lurie's *The War Between the Tates* (1974) that deals with student politics, infidelity and teenage revolt is a fine example of a varsity novel.

American novelist Willa Sibert Cather's novel, *The Professor's House* (1925) deals with the story of a disillusioned and dejected middle-aged professor, St. Peter. The central section of the novel is about Outland, St. Peter's dead student and finance of his elder daughter. The professor recounts Outland's discovery of an ancient cliff city in New Mexico. Though this novel is about a professor and a student, it is not a campus novel in true sense of the term.

Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of the Academe* (1952) is the first and earliest example of the campus novel. It is written in a satirical vein describing the author's teaching experiences at Bard and Sarah Lawrence Colleges.

Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* (1954) is a comic and satirical campus novel. It deals with the exploits of James Dixon, a reluctant lecturer at an unnamed provincial English University. It is a satire on the university

culture of hypocrisy and snobbery. There are many scene of romance, seduction and flirting, exploitation and internal politics of the university.

David Lodge's The Campus Trilogy, *Changing World, Small World* and *Nice Work*, are set at an imaginary English University of Rummidge, a new-built university in Midland. *The Changing World* (1975) is about the relationship between English Literature lecturer, Philip Swallow and his American counterpart, Professor Morris Zapp. *Small World* (1984) is set against the backdrop of an International academic conference and *Nice Work* (1988) depicts shifts in the academic world and British society.

A campus murder mystery is a sub-genre of the campus novel. It deals with a crime committed in a closed setting of a university or college. The character's job is to find out who committed the crime. Dorothy L. Sayers' *Gaudy Night* (1935) is a fine example of campus murder mystery novel. The protagonist, Harriet Vane is invited back to Shrewsberry College, her alma mater to investigate an outbreak of vandalism at the school.

The campus novel appeared on the Indian literary scene with the publication of P. M. Nityanandan's *The Long Long Days* in 1960. Then there was a gap of a decade before the second campus novel, *The Farewell Party* by M. V. Rama Sarma was published in 1971, followed by K. M. Trisanku's *Onion Peel* (1973) and Saros Cowasjee's *Goodbye to Elsa* (1974).

Anurag Mathur's novel *The Inscrutable Americans* (1991) presents an interesting account of life of Gopal, a religious and vegetarian Indian student pursuing a diploma course at a small American university, Eversville. The writer has recorded the cultural dilemma of Gopal very succinctly.

With the publication of Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* in 2004, a new trend of student centric campus novels emerged in India. The novel depicts the story of three students studying at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. It presents a detailed account of how they are screwed up by the grading system. Important issues of Indian campus life such as ragging, grade system, academic stress, malpractices, student-teacher relations, friendship, hostel life, casteism and competition are covered in this novel.

Abhijit Bhaduri's *Mediocre But Arrogant* (2005), Srividya Natarajan, *No Onions, Nor Garlic* (2006), Amitab Bagchi's *Above Average* (2006), *Joker in the Pack* (2007) by IIM alumni Ritesh Sharma and Neeraj Pahlajani, Tushar Raheja's *Anything for You Ma'am: the love story of an IITian* (2007), Anirban Bose's *Bombay Rains Bombay Girls* (2008), Karan Bajaj's *Keep off the Grass* (2008), Sachin Garg's *A Sunny Shady Life* (2009), Manish Gupta's debut novel, *Nine Months Ago* (2010) and Saurabh Singh's *College 2 Company* (2012) are some of the notable examples of campus novels in India.

2.6 Let's Sum Up

In this unit, we have learnt some more types of novels: psychological novel, science fiction, postcolonial novel, spy fiction and campus novel.

A psychological novel is a type of prose fiction that deals with the interior life of characters, their inner experiences, feelings, memories, emotions and introspections. Science fiction, often shortened to sci-fi or SF, is a form of fiction that deals with the impact of imaginative or futuristic scientific concepts or discovery or events on society and individuals. A Postcolonial novel is a recent phenomenon representing the impact of colonisation on the colonised country. Spy Fiction is a genre of literature which typically focuses on themes of inter-country rivalry, espionage and exciting adventures of a hero. A campus novel, also known as academic novel is often is set within the campus of an academic institution and records the experiences of the protagonist (usually a teacher or student) at the academic campus.

2.7 Questions:

Write short notes on the following terms:

1) Psychological Novel
2) Science Fiction
3) Postcolonial Novel
4) Spy Fiction
5) Campus Novel

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3

Critical Study of
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

Unit Structure

3.0 Objectives:

- It enables students to understand the style and intellectuality of James Joyce in his masterpiece which was the milestone of modern literary history.
- The novel introduces the term autobiography and experiments steam of consciousness techniques as well which highlights the exclusiveness of Joyce.

3.1 Introduction:

James Joyce was an Irish, modernist writer who wrote in a ground-breaking style that was known both for its complexity and explicit content. James Joyce was a novelist, poet and short story writer from Ireland. In 1916 he published. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* which drew the attention of Ezra Pound. Joyce refined his stream-of-consciousness style and established himself as a literary star with Ulysses. His graphic content influenced seminal court rulings on obscenity. Joyce suffered from an eye problem for obscenity. Joyce battled eye ailments f most of his life and he died in 1941.

Life and Works

Joyce was born into a large family. He was the eldest son of John Stanislaus Joyce and Marry Murray Joyce, the parents of 10 children. His father was a gifted singer, Joyce, James Augustine Aloysius, was born in Dublin, Ireland, on February 2, 1882. Joyce was one of the twentieth century's most admired writers, and his seminal work, Ulysses, is widely regarded as one of the best novels ever written. His investigation of language and new literary forms demonstrated not just his writing brilliance, but also generated a new method for writers, one that leaned heavily on Joyce's appreciation of the stream-of-consciousness technique and the examination of large events via little occurring in daily lives.

Long before Ulysses was published, there was much discussion over the novel's substance. Parts of the narrative had previously appeared in periodicals in the United States and the United Kingdom; nonetheless, the book was prohibited with its sophisticated use of inner monologue, the novel not only immersed the reader in Bloom's occasionally lurid imagination, but also pioneered Joyce's use of stream of consciousness as a literary technique, laying the groundwork for a whole new form of novel. However, Ulysses is not an easy read, and when it was published in Paris in 1922 by Sylvia Beach, an American exile who ran a bookstore in the city, it garnered both praise and harsh criticism.

Joyce's long-awaited follow-up novel, Finnegan's Wake, was released in 1939, and with its plethora of puns and new terms, it proved to be an even more difficult read than his previous work. Nonetheless, the book was an instant success, receiving "book of the week" honours in both the United States and the United Kingdom shortly after its release.

Joyce, however, did not live to see World War II come to an end. The writer died on January 13, 1941, at the age of 59, at the Schwesternhause von Roten Kreuz Hospital, following an intestinal surgery. When he died, his wife and kid were at his side. He was laid to rest in Zurich's Fluntern cemetery.

For the first time, Irish politician Charles Stewart Parnell brought together Irish nationalists in a single group, the Irish Parliamentary Party, in 1882. The party was particularly supportive of the Irish Home Rule movement, which campaigned for an Ireland that was part of the United Kingdom but had its own government. Parnell did not survive to see his campaign's success; it took four attempts and more than thirty years for Britain to ratify and sign the Home Rule Bill. The Catholics, who made up the bulk of the population, advocated for total independence from the United Kingdom, but the Protestant minority in the north — primarily wealthy landowners and upper-class members – felt a strong attachment to the United Kingdom.

3.2 Brief Summary

Pre-School Stephen

"Baby tuckoo" and a "moocow" are stories Stephen Dedalus hears from his father, who is also singing. Stephen enjoys dancing and listening to his mother play the piano. It is his dream to marry Eileen, his neighbour, when he is older. His mother wants him to apologise for something one day while he hides beneath the dining table. If he does not apologise, his governess Dante Riordan threatens to have an eagle peck out his eyes.

A Cesspool and Its Consequences

Stephen is at Clongowes Wood College, attending elementary class. He is playing sports with the other boys, but he doesn’t enjoy it – he would much rather be inside in front of a fire, thinking about poetry. One boy makes fun of his name. The cold reminds Stephen of the time his classmate, Wells, pushed him into the water of the toilet’s cesspool. Wells

pushed him because he refused to swap his snuffbox for a hacking chestnut. Stephen can't stop thinking about the cold water.

During a lesson, Father Arnall chooses him as a candidate for a math competition. The calculation is too hard, and Stephen fails to come up with the correct answer. His team loses. Stephen starts thinking about the universe, about the nothingness that surrounds him and about God, who has different names in different languages but is still the same everywhere.

"By thinking of things, you could understand them"

He sits and watches the other lads play after classes. He misses his mother and longs to be with her again. He drifts off to sleep thinking about coming home for the holidays. When he wakes up the next morning, it is clear he is been infected with the flu. In order to find the prefect, his classmate Fleming sets out to find him. There, Wells begs him not to tell anybody that he tossed him in the filth. When Stephen is sent to the infirmary, Brother Michael takes care of him, according to the prefect. Someone should have warned him that he was unwell, and whether he is going to die from his cold, Stephen thinks aloud. A funeral for him is in his thoughts. He imagines what it will be like to die. Even if he does not die, he is attacked by B in the evening

Christmas Arguments

Christmas Eve finds Stephen and his family gathered for a feast now that he is settled back in his hometown. There is his mother, father, Uncle Charles, Dante, and John Casey, a family acquaintance. A fiery debate erupts about politics, religion, and the legacy of Charles Stewart Parnell. The Catholic church has harshly rebuked Parnell for his infidelity. Stephen's father, John Casey, is an ardent admirer of Charles Stewart Parnell and his cause, although they believe the church should stay out of politics. It is heresy to her; the church is far more essential than the goods of this world, according to Dante. Dante storms out of the tavern when John argues that everyone in Ireland should denounce God in that event.

Stephen the Hero

Christmas Eve finds Stephen and his family gathered for a feast now that he is settled back in his hometown. There is his mother, father, Uncle Charles, Dante, and John Casey, a family acquaintance. A fiery debate erupts about politics, religion, and the legacy of Charles Stewart Parnell. The Catholic church has harshly rebuked Parnell for his infidelity. Stephen's father, John Casey, is an ardent admirer of Charles Stewart Parnell and his cause, although they believe the church should stay out of politics. It is heresy to her; the church is far more essential than the goods of this world, according to Dante. Dante storms out of the tavern when John argues that everyone in Ireland should denounce God in that event.

"His childhood was dead or lost and with it barren his soul capable of simple joys and he was drifting amid life like the shell of the moon".

After school, Stephen musters all his strength and goes to the rector to express his displeasure with the unfairness of his sentence. The rector pays

attention and, despite his attempts to absolve Father Dolan, admits that Father Dolan was incorrect. Steve says he will talk to Stephen and make sure he does not hit him again. When Stephen gets back to school and tells his friends about his triumph, they hail him as a hero.

Summer Holidays

Stephen spends the summer months in Blackrock, Maine, where he lives with his family. On long outings and errands, his uncle Charles looks after him. While he is trained in running by another of his father's friends, Mike Flynn, Stephen does not love it and does not believe he will succeed in the sport. He spends his evenings reading The Count of Monte Cristo and envisioning himself as the vengeful hero, helplessly in love with Mercedes. He forms a group with Aubrey Mills, one of the other lads, and they all spend their days playing outside. Stephen does not have to return to Clongowes Wood after the summer break since his father is in financial trouble. The group disbands when Aubrey returns to school.

First Forays into Art

When Stephen's family relocates to Dublin, he embarks on his own explorations of the city in search of his fictitious Mercedes. While at a children's birthday celebration, he plays the role of an observer. He is surprised to discover that he enjoys the alone. He does, however, continue to capture the eye of a young lady named Emma. They all depart together at the end of the night and board a tram to head home. Stephen has the chance to kiss her when they are sitting on the steps, but he doesn't. He returns home and composes a melancholy poem about the experience after she has left.

Back at School

Stephen's days of not going to school are over. His father has arranged for him to attend Belvedere, another Jesuit institution. He gets ready for a role he has in a play one evening. He takes for a walk outside before getting his make-up done. There he meets Heron, a fellow student, and Wallis, a dapper young guy with whom Heron is travelling. They made fun of Stephen since they saw his father on his way to the theatre with a young girl who inquired about Stephen. They believe she is Stephen's girlfriend. Steven is reminded of another time Heron struck him with his riding whip when he was a kid: To that end,

Visiting Cork

Stephen goes to his father's hometown of Cork with his dad. Stephen quickly grows bored listening to his father speak about the past while riding the train. They travel to Cork to see his father's old college, but Stephen is unimpressed. Stephen, on the other hand, notices the word "foetus" etched into a desk in the anatomy lesson. Where his father's stories have failed to create any ideas of what school life was like, this one word has succeeded. They then go on a bar crawl with Stephen seeing his father become wasted with old pals in a number of different establishments. The friends of Stephen's father look for parallels between Stephen and their acquaintance.

To Hell and Back

Stephen is awarded a prize for an article he wrote, but the cash he receives is short-lived. He uses the money to treat himself to fine foods, buy presents, go to the theatre, and redecorate his apartment. When his money runs out, he goes back to his old school routine. But he is tormented by passion and yearns to have sex. He goes out for a walk by himself one evening in Dublin. He is approached by a prostitute, who extends an invitation to her room. He is happy to go along with it. It is become a weekly ritual to pay a visit to the brothels.

"He wanted to sin with another of his kind, to force another being to sin with him and to exult with her in sin".

Stephen is sitting in his math lesson when he had a thought about his sin and his sexual experiences. When he wakes up, he has torn between his wicked evenings and his sorry conscience. Francis Xavier, the patron saint of the institution, will be honoured with a weeklong retreat. Father Arnall, whom Stephen remembers from his time at Clongowes Wood, instructs the lads on death, judgement, hell, and paradise as part of the retreat. He goes into great detail on the horrors of hell, including how excruciating the suffering would be, how nauseating the scent will be, and how unfathomable eternity in torment will be. Stephen is in near-physical anguish because of his remarks. He is convinced that he will never be able to change his ways. Go to his room and he will be in there soon.

A tiny chapel is where Stephen finds an old priest and confesses his sins in the evening, after wandering Dublin's streets for a while. The priest is kind and begs the man to turn from his sins. With a great sigh of relief, Stephen makes the conscious decision to live a godly life going forward. A few days after that, he and a few of his classmates take holy communion.

Journey to become a Priest – or Not

Stephen has changed his ways and now acts like a penitent sinner. He prays multiple times a day and has a rosary in his pocket at all times. He also practises strict self-control over his senses, such as lowering his gaze if a lady approaches, exposing himself to strong scents, and sleeping or sitting in an uncomfortable position to train his body. The fact remains that no amount of effort will ever be enough to make him completely free of sin. He begins to question if he is actually free because of this realisation.

"He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable".

The rector approaches Stephen after the holidays and asks whether he would be interested in becoming a priest. They both agree on one thing: Stephen's life has some sort of purpose. He tells Stephen to spend some time apart and pray about it. Stephen is overjoyed at first because he is always wanted to be a priest and he is looking forward to the respect and adoration that come with the job. However, he begins to examine the rules, restrictions, and ordered lifestyle that govern a priest's existence. The possibility has lost its allure overnight.

Off to University

While waiting for his father at home to find out if Stephen has been accepted to university, Stephen has grown agitated. His mother strongly opposes his going. Stephen is hopeful that attending university would allow him to shed his rigid religious upbringing. Along the river, he comes upon some of his schoolmates having fun in the water. If you hear people call out your name and build yourself wings to fly to freedom, you are thinking of the mythological character Dedalus, who did just that when he was imprisoned. Stephen aspires to the same goals. He strolls down the sand, full of anticipation for the future. He passes a young lady paddling in the water as he walks by. Stephen notices her after they exchange eyes.

Student Life

Stephen has enrolled in his first semester of university studies. his father views him as lethargic and his mother believes he is being corrupted by college. His family's financial condition worsens. Before Stephen can even go to his lectures, he is running late. He even stops at a newsstand to see what day it is just to make sure. Along the way, he recalls his friendship with Davin, the only other person to address him by his first name. He meets the dean of studies, who is attempting to start a fire at the institution where he works. The topic of beauty and aesthetics comes up, and the dean quizzes Stephen on his definition of beautiful. Soon, the topic of conversation shifts to how to start a fire. The dean, who is originally from England, uses the word "funnel," which Stephen does not understand. Because he does not think English will ever be his language, he is convinced that he will never completely express himself in it.

"You are an artist, are you not, Mr. Dedalus? said the dean…."

After a long day of travelling, Stephen has arrived for his first lecture. He has a great time with his buddies, and they crack each other up a lot. As soon as class is over, students begin to make their way from the lecture hall. Stephen leaves with his Latin-speaking buddy Cranly. A plea for national harmony has been left on a table in the foyer. Stephen refuses to sign it and gets into a dispute with his buddy MacCann, who accuses Stephen of selfishness and lacking a social conscience. Stephen departs with Cranly and Temple, who are impressed by Stephen's independence. When Stephen and Davin finally meet, Stephen immediately begins to tease Davin for having joined the online petition.

Stephen continues on his way with Lynch, another one of his buddies. He begins by explaining to him his aesthetic theory, according to which an artist's work reflects him in the same manner that creation reflects God. Stephen sees Emma, the girl from the tram, on whom he has a crush. He is enamoured with her from a distance. He had a dream about her and wakes up inspired, so he composes a love sonnet for her. He recalls writing another poem for her 10 years ago, and he wonders if she still feels the same way about him.

"This race and this country and this life produced me, he said.

I shall express myself as I am".

Stephen is standing in front of the library, watching a herd of birds fly by. In his opinion, human people have lost the capacity to trust their instincts, like birds do. Instead, they want to dissect and dissect everything. He runs into Cranly and Temple, who are engaged in a heated discussion over schooling when he arrives. As she exits the library, Emma passes them both by, but she just says hello to Cranly and ignores Stephen completely. The two men leave Temple behind and begin discussing an argument Stephen has been having with his mother about going to church on Easter Sunday, but he refuses go since he has lost his faith and does not want anything to do with the religion. Cranly attempts to encourage Stephen to attend to church because he claims that he makes the case that a mother's love is far more significant than religious belief, and that it should thus take precedence. Stephen responds by saying he intends to leave everything behind, including his family, university, and friends, in order to focus only on art. Just thinking about how lonely the world must be makes me cry.

Stephen mentions in his final journal post that he intends to leave Ireland and obtain international experience. The novel A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is based on the author's own life. Joyce was educated at Clongowes and Belvedere, both of which were affiliated with the Anglican Church. Real-life occurrences are probably the inspiration for other plot points, such as the major family fight at Christmas dinner and the trip to the red light district.

3.3 Characters

Stephen Dedalus

The primary figure in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man Hedonism and intense religion are interspersed throughout Stephen's childhood. He eventually embraces an aestheticism worldview, placing a high value on aesthetics and the arts. Stephen is basically Joyce's alter ego, and many of the events in Stephen's life mirror those from Joyce's own adolescence.

Throughout the storey, Stephen goes through a lot of changes. The first is his transformation from a secluded child to a brilliant student who understands social relations and can begin to grasp the world around him during his first years as Clongowes. The second is Stephen's descent from purity to depravity, which takes place when he sleeps with the Dublin prostitute. Third, Stephen becomes a fervent Catholic after hearing Father Arnall's sermon on death and damnation. Finally, Stephen's biggest shift is from a near-fanatical religiousness to a new commitment to beauty and art. This shift occurs in Chapter 4, when he is made an offer.

Simon Dedalus

Stephen's father, an impoverished former medical student with a strong sense of Irish patriotism. Sentimental about his past, Simon Dedalus frequently reminisces about his youth.

Simon Dedalus spends a lot of time remembering the past and getting caught up in his own emotional nostalgia. Joyce frequently makes use of

Simon as a metaphor for the ties and responsibilities that Stephen's family and nationality put on him as he gets older. Simon is a sentimental, sad character who takes great pleasure in his heritage but is unable to manage his own problems. The aspects of Stephen's family, nation, and tradition that he thinks he must fight against are symbolised by his father Simon. The only time we see Simon is during Stephen's trip to Cork, when he gets drunk and waxes lyrical about his past. Joyce depicts a man who has been through a lot.

Mary Dedalus

The mother of Stephen and the wife of Simon Dedalus. Mary is a devout Christian who frequently gets into arguments with her son about whether or not they should go to church.

The Dedalus Children

Despite the fact that his siblings do not have much of a role in the storey, Stephen does have a large family, including Maurice, Katey, Maggie, and Boody.

Emma Clery

Throughout his life, Stephen has had a crush on Emma, and she is his "beloved," the young woman he has devoted himself to. Stephen does not know much about Emma, and he is usually ashamed or frightened to talk to her, but whenever he sees her, he has a strong reaction inside him. "To E— C—," Stephen's first poem, is dedicated to Emma. In the storey, she is a mysterious character who we learn practically nothing about at the conclusion. Emma represents one extreme of the feminine spectrum for Stephen. Only the extremes of this spectrum are perceived by Stephen: for him, women are either pure, aloof and unapproachable like Emma, or impure, sexual and common like the prostitute. Throughout his life, Stephen has had a crush on Emma, and she is his "beloved," the young woman he has devoted himself to. Stephen does not know much about Emma, and he is usually ashamed or frightened to talk to her, but whenever he sees her, he has a strong reaction inside him. "To E— C—," Stephen's first poem, is dedicated to Emma. In the storey, she is a mysterious character who we learn practically nothing about at the conclusion. Emma represents one extreme of the feminine spectrum for Stephen. Only the extremes of this spectrum are perceived by Stephen: for him, women are either pure, aloof and unapproachable like Emma, or impure, sexual and common like the prostitute.

Mr. John Casey

The buddy of Simon Dedalus, who sits with little Stephen for the first time during Christmas dinner. Simon is a firm believer in Irish nationalism, and during dinner, Mr. Casey debates with Dante about what will become of Charles Stuart Parnell.

Charles Stewart Parnell

A deceased Irish politician who has a significant impact on the plot despite not appearing in the book as a main character Until he was imprisoned for

having an affair with a married lady, Charles Stewart Parnell was the charismatic leader of the Irish National Party.

Dante (Mrs. Riordan)

The Dedalus children's ardent and religious Catholic governess. During Christmas dinner, Dante, whose actual identity is Mrs. Riordan, gets into a heated dispute with Mr. Casey regarding what will happen to Parnell.

Uncle Charles

Great uncle of Stephen who is always up for a good time. Charles is a member of Stephen's household. Summer is a favourite time for little Stephen to go for long walks with his uncle and listen to Charles and Simon talk about the history of Ireland and the Dedalus family.

Eileen Vance

A young woman who grew up next door to Stephen when he was a boy. Because Eileen is a Protestant, Dante is furious when Stephen informs him of his intentions to marry her.

Father Conmee

The rector at Clongowes Wood College, where Stephen attends school as a young boy.

Father Dolan

The cruel prefect of studies at Clongowes Wood College.

Wells

The Clongowes school bully. While Stephen is trying to sleep, Wells insults him for kissing his mother goodnight. Then one day he throws Stephen into the sewer, where he ends up becoming sick.

Athy

A friendly boy whom Stephen meets in the infirmary at Clongowes. Athy likes Stephen Dedalus because they both have unusual names.

Brother Michael

The kindly brother who tends to Stephen and Athy in the Clongowes infirmary after Wells pushes Stephen into the cesspool.

Fleming

One of Stephen's friends at Clongowes.

Father Arnall

At Clongowes, Stephen had a tough Latin teacher. Later on, while Stephen is a student at Belvedere College, Father Arnall gives a series of lectures about death and damnation that have a significant impact on Stephen.

Mike Flynn

A friend of Simon Dedalus's who tries, with little success, to train Stephen to be a runner during their summer at Blackrock.

Aubrey Mills

He was a playmate of Stephen, plays imaginary adventure games at Blackrock.

Vincent Heron

A rival of Stephen's at Belvedere.

Boland and Nash

They are two schoolmates of Stephen's at Belvedere, who taunt and bully him.

Cranly

Stephen's closest buddy at school, to whom he opens up about his innermost sentiments. As a result, Cranly serves as Stephen's apolitical confessor. As time passes, Cranly begins to push Stephen in the direction of conforming to his family's desires and trying harder to blend in with his classmates, advice that Stephen despises.

Davin

Another of Stephen's college pals. Davin is a native of the Irish countryside, with a straightforward demeanour. Stephen respects Davin's physical ability, but he disagrees with his unwavering Irish patriotism, which he urges Stephen to accept.

Lynch

Another one of Stephen's college pals, this time a rough and unpleasantly dry young guy. Lynch has a worse financial situation than Stephen. In Chapter 5, Stephen reveals to Lynch his aesthetic philosophy.

McCann

A fiercely political student at the university who tries to convince Stephen to be more concerned with politics.

Temple

He was a young man at the university who openly admires Stephen's keen independence and tries to copy his ideas and sentiments.

Dean of Studies

A Jesuit priest at University College.

Johnny Cashman

He was a friend of Simon Dedalus.

3.4 Critical Commentary:

It is a book by Irish writer James Joyce called A Portrait of the Artist When He Was a Young Man. It traces the intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth of Stephen Dedalus, a young Catholic Irishman, as well as his battle against the limitations his culture places on him. Portrait belongs to a literary genre known as the bildungsroman, which follows the life of a protagonist from infancy into maturity. Joyce contrasts adolescence's

rebelliousness and experimentation with the sombre effect of Stephen's Catholic schooling. The renowned 'Hellfire sermon,' for example, follows his surprised delight of a sexual experience in chapter two.

Some reviewers argue that the term ‘stream-of-consciousness' understates the impression the approach creates in the novel's narration. Through varying the tone of his words as Stephen matures, Joyce shows the many stages of his character's growth. Joyce's language play parallels Stephen's phonetic, linguistic, and intellectual progression from the initial baby babble to the high-minded aesthetic conversation at the close. By the end of the book, Stephen has made the decision to leave Ireland and pursue his dream of being an artist and "forging in the smithy of my soul the uncreated consciousness of my race".

In many ways, the novel represents Joyce's own artistic development, and Stephen plays out fictionalised versions of many of his author's experiences: the episode surrounding the death of the disgraced Irish home-rule leader Charles Stuart Parnell shares many similarities with the arguments that this event caused in the Joyce household.

Joyce's contemporaries were troubled by the protagonist's life's ups and downs, which were described in great detail. As bed-wetting children and visits to prostitutes were uncommon in early 20th century literature, early assessments of James Joyce's work were less than kind. Intellectuals, authors, and artists, on the other hand, unanimously hailed Joyce's work as a masterpiece. It was prophesied by Ezra Pound and H.G. Wells that the work would become a landmark in British literature and that no other literary character could compare to Stephen Dedalus' realism. Only after the publication of Ulysses did Joyce achieve his full literary reputation.

3.5 Critical Essay:

Joyce is widely regarded as a key figure in modernism, a literary movement that aimed to develop new methods of writing about human experience in order to challenge established literary traditions like romanticism and realism. In addition to Yeats, Eliot, Pound, Woolf, and Auden were important writers in this aesthetic movement. These authors, who were active between the turn of the century and the mid-1930s, were bound together by the desire to rebuild writing from the ruins of a society torn apart by war and exploitation. They were adamant on communicating in novel and unexpected ways, which meant pushing the boundaries of language and rejecting established forms and structures.

Joyce's use of stream of consciousness makes *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* a story of the development of Stephen's mind. In the first chapter, the very young Stephen is only capable of describing his world in simple words and phrases. The sensations that the experiences are all jumbled together with a child's lack of attention to cause and effect. Later, when Stephen is a teenager obsessed with religion, he is able to think in a clearer, more adult manner. Paragraphs are more logically ordered than in the opening sections of the novel, and thoughts progress logically. Stephen's mind is more mature and he is now more coherently aware of

his surroundings. Nonetheless, he still trusts blindly in the church, and his passionate emotions of guilt and religious ecstasy are so strong that they get in the way of rational thought. It is only in the final chapter, when Stephen is in the university, that he seems truly rational. By the end of the novel, Joyce renders a portrait of a mind that has achieved emotional, intellectual, and artistic adulthood.

Despite the fact that A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man is not a first-person narrative, the book entirely follows and presents the views and thoughts of the protagonist Stephen Dedalus. Joyce wrote in a style known as "stream of consciousness," which aims to capture the irrational, chaotic, and associative character of human mind. This means that Stephen's views and discussions are mingled with his recollections and daydreams, giving the reader the sense of being able to peer inside Stephen's mind. While the vocabulary is initially infantile and naïve, it becomes progressively scholarly and cerebral as Stephen grows older. Last section concludes the essay.

The artist's novel, a subgenre of the coming-of-age novel, includes A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man as one of its most well-known examples. A modern take on the Greek tale of Dedalus, who fashioned himself a pair of wings to help him escape his cell and find freedom elsewhere. Stephen Dedalus, like his namesake, must find his or her own way out of the shackles of his upbringing, religion, politics, and society in order to become a unique individual. Even as a youngster, Stephen had nothing in common with his friends, making him the prototypical lone artist.

In the storey, art and reality are frequently depicted as being at conflict. Stephen, especially as a youngster, lives in a dream world he understands he cannot reproduce in reality. In the narrative, language takes on a physical element. For instance, when Father Arnall talks about damnation, Stephen feels the anguish almost literally. Before Stephen can develop his own ideas and become an independent man, he must fight societal conventions, including the strong influence his religious upbringing has had on him throughout his life. Women are frequently portrayed as conflicted or downright evil in popular culture. They serve mostly as a blank canvas on which Stephen paints his fantasies and thoughts; they never take on a life of their own.

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4

JOSEPH CONRAD'S THE SECRET AGENT PART I

Unit Structure

4.0 Objectives:

- To introduce the students to the author Joseph Conrad and his contribution to literature
- To make the students understand the summary of the novel

4.1 Introduction:

In this unit the students will learn the contribution of Joseph Conrad to literature. The summary of the novel highlights the salient features of the novel. Conrad has explored the spy thriller genre.

4.2 Joseph Conrad:

Joseph Conrad grew up in the Polish Ukraine, a large, fertile plain between Poland and Russia. It was a divided nation, with four languages, four religions, and a number of different social classes. A fraction of the Polish-speaking inhabitants, including Conrad's family, belonged to the *szlachta*, a hereditary class in the aristocracy on the social hierarchy, combining qualities of gentry and nobility. They had political power, despite their impoverished state. Conrad's father, Apollo Korzeniowski, studied for six years at St. Petersburg University, which he left before earning a degree. Conrad's mother, Eva Bobrowska, was thirteen years younger than Apollo and the only surviving daughter in a family of six sons. After she met him in 1847, Eva was drawn to Apollo's poetic temperament and passionate patriotism, while he admired her lively imagination. Although Eva's family disapproved of the courtship, the two were married in 1856.

Instead of devoting himself to the management of his wife's agricultural estates, Apollo pursued literary and political activities, which brought in little money. He wrote a variety of plays and social satires. Although his works were little known, they would have tremendous influence on his son.

A year into the marriage, Eva became pregnant with Joseph, who was born in 1857. The Crimean War had just ended, and hopes were high for Polish independence. Joseph's family moved quite a bit, and he never formed close friendships in Poland.

After Apollo was arrested on suspicion of involvement in revolutionary activities, the family was thrown into exile. Eva developed tuberculosis, and she gradually declined until she died in 1865. The seven-year-old Conrad, who witnessed her decline, was absolutely devastated. He also developed health problems, migraines and lung inflammation, which persisted throughout his life. Apollo too fell into decline, and he died of tuberculosis in 1869. At age eleven, Joseph became an orphan.

The young boy became the ward of his uncle, who loved him dearly. Thus began Joseph's Krakow years, which ended when he left Poland as a teenager in 1874. This move was a complex decision, resulting from what he saw as the intolerably oppressive atmosphere of the Russian garrison.

He spent the next few years in France, mastering his second language and the fundamentals of seamanship. The author made acquaintances in many circles, but his "bohemian" friends were the ones who introduced him to drama, opera, and theater. In the meantime, he was strengthening his maritime contacts, and he soon became an observer on pilot boats. The workers he met on the ship, together with all the experiences they recounted to him, laid the groundwork for much of the vivid detail in his novels.

By 1878, Joseph had made his way to England with the intention of becoming an officer on a British ship. He ended up spending twenty years at sea. Conrad interspersed long voyages with time spent resting on land.

When he was not at sea, writing letters or writing in journals, Joseph was exploring other means of making money. Unlike his father, who abhorred money, Conrad was obsessed by it; he was always on the lookout for business opportunities.

Once the author had worked his way up to shipmaster, he made a series of eastern voyages over three years. Conrad remained in the English port of Mauritius for two months, during which time he unsuccessfully courted two women. Frustrated, he left and journeyed to England.

In England in the summer of 1889, Conrad began the crucial transition from sailor to writer by starting his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*. Interestingly, he chose to write in English, his third language.

A journey to the Congo in 1890 was Joseph's inspiration to write Heart of Darkness. His condemnation of colonialism is well documented in the journal he kept during his visit. He returned to England and soon faced the death of his beloved guardian and uncle. In the meantime, Conrad became closer to Marguerite, an older family friend who was his closest confidant. For six years he tried to establish intimacy with her, but he was eventually discouraged by the age difference and the disparity between their social positions.

Then, 1894 was a landmark year for Conrad: his first novel was published; he met Edward Garnett, who would become a lifelong friend; and he met Jessie George, his future wife. The two-year courtship between the 37-year-old Conrad and the 21-year-old Jessie was somewhat discontinuous in that Conrad pursued other women during the first year of their relationship, but his attention became strongly focused on Jessie by the autumn of 1895. Garnett disapproved of the match, especially since Jessie was miles behind Joseph in education. Nonetheless, they married in March 1896.

The children who followed the union were not warmly welcomed by their father; an absent-minded sort, he expressed surprise each time Jessie delivered a baby. His days were consumed with writing, a struggle no doubt exacerbated by the gaps in his knowledge of the English language.

The major productive phase of Conrad's career spanned from 1897 to 1911, during which time he composed *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, *Youth*, Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim, *Nostromo*, *The Secret Agent*, and *Under Western Eyes*, among other works. During this period, he also experienced serious financial difficulties, often living off of advances and state grants, there being little in the way of royalties. It was not until the publication of *Chance* in 1914 that he experienced some level of commercial success.

As the quality of his work declined, he grew increasingly comfortable in his wealth and status. Conrad had a true genius for companionship, and his circle of friends included talented authors such as Stephen Crane and Henry James.

Still always writing, he eventually returned to Poland, and he then traveled to America, where he died of a heart attack in 1924 at the age of 67. Conrad's literary work would have a profound impact on the Modernist movement, influencing a long list of writers including T.S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Virginia Woolf, Thomas Mann, Andre Gide, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and William Faulkner.

Heart of Darkness

A group of men are aboard an English ship that is sitting on the Thames. The group includes a Lawyer, an Accountant, a Company Director/Captain, and a man without a specific profession who is named Marlow. The narrator appears to be another unnamed guest on the ship. While they are loitering about, waiting for the wind to pick up so that they might resume their voyage, Marlow begins to speak about London and Europe as some of the darkest places on earth. The narrator and other guests do not seem to regard him with much respect. Marlow is a stationary man, very unusual for a seaman. The others do not understand him because he does not fit into a neat category in the same manner that the others do. He mentions colonization and says that carving the earth into prizes or pieces is not something to examine too closely because it is an atrocity. He then begins to narrate a personal experience in Africa, which led him to become a freshwater sailor and gave him a terrible glimpse of colonization.

Marlow has always had a passion for travel and exploration. Maps are an obsession of his. Marlow decides he wants nothing more than to be the skipper of a steamship that travels up and down a river in Africa. His aunt has a connection in the Administration Department of a seafaring and exploration company that gathers ivory, and she manages to get Marlow an appointment. He replaces a captain who was killed in a skirmish with the natives. When Marlow arrives at the company office, the atmosphere is extremely dim and foreboding. He feels as if everyone is looking at him pityingly. The doctor who performs his physical asks if there is a history of insanity in Marlow's family. He tells Marlow that nothing could persuade him to join the Company down in the Congo. This puzzles Marlow, but he does not think much of it. The next day he embarks on a one-month journey to the primary Company station. The African shores that he observes look anything but welcoming. They are dark and rather desolate, in spite of the flurry of human activity around them. When he arrives, Marlow learns that a company member recently committed suicide. There are multitudes of chain-gang types, who all look at him with vacant expressions. A young boy approaches Marlow, looking very empty. Marlow can do nothing but offer him some ship biscuits. He is very relieved to leave the boy behind as he comes across a very well-dressed man who is the picture of respectability and elegance. They introduce themselves: he is the Chief Accountant of the Company. Marlow befriends this man and frequently spends time in his hut while the Accountant goes over the accounts. After ten days of observing the Chief Accountant's ill temper, Marlow departs for his 200-mile journey into the interior of the Congo, where he will work for a station run by a man named Kurtz.

The journey is arduous. Marlow crosses many paths, sees deserted dwellings, and encounters black men working. Marlow never describes them as humans. Throughout the novel, the white characters refer to them in animalistic terms. Marlow finally arrives at a secondary station, where he meets the Manager, who for now will oversee his work. It is a strange meeting. The Manager smiles in a manner that is very discomfiting. The ship on which Marlow is supposed to set sail is broken. While they await the delivery of the rivets needed to fix it, Marlow spends his time on more mundane tasks. He frequently hears the name "Kurtz" around the station. Clearly everyone knows his future boss. It is rumored that he is ill. Soon the entire crew will depart for a trip to Kurtz's station.

The Manager's uncle arrives with his own expedition. Marlow overhears them saying that they would like to see Kurtz and his assistant hanged so that their station could be eliminated as ivory competition. After a day of exploring, the expedition has lost all of their animals. Marlow sets out for Kurtz's station with the Pilgrims, the cannibal crew, and the Manager. About eight miles from their destination, they stop for the night. There is talk of an approaching attack. Rumor has it that Kurtz may have been killed in a previous one. Some of the pilgrims go ashore to investigate. The whirring sound of arrows is heard; an attack is underway. The Pilgrims shoot back from the ship with rifles. The helmsman of the ship is killed, as is a native ashore. Marlow supposes that Kurtz has perished in

the inexplicable attack. This upsets him greatly. Over the course of his travels, he has greatly looked forward to meeting this man. Marlow shares Kurtz's background: an English education, a woman at home waiting for him. In spite of Marlow's disappointment, the ship presses onward. A little way down the river, the crew spot Kurtz's station, which they had supposed was lost. They meet a Russian man who resembles a harlequin. He says that Kurtz is alive but somewhat ill. The natives do not want Kurtz to leave because he has expanded their minds. Kurtz does not want to leave because he has essentially become part of the tribe.

After talking for a while with the Russian, Marlow has a very clear picture of the man who has become his obsession. Finally, he has the chance to talk to Kurtz, who is ill and on his deathbed. The natives surround his hut until he tells them to leave. While on watch, Marlow dozes off and realizes that Kurtz is gone. He chases him and finds Kurtz in the forest. He does not want to leave the station because his plans have not been fully realized. Marlow manages to take him back to his bed. Kurtz entrusts Marlow with all of his old files and papers. Among these is a photograph of his sweetheart. The Russian escapes before the Manager and others can imprison him. The steamboat departs the next day. Kurtz dies onboard a few days later, Marlow having attended him until the end.

Marlow returns to England, but the memory of his friend haunts him. He manages to find the woman from the picture, and he pays her a visit. She talks at length about his wonderful personal qualities and about how guilty she feels that she was not with him at the last. Marlow lies and says that her name was the last word spoken by Kurtz—the truth would be too dark to tell her.

Under Western Eyes

As in many of Conrad's stories, the first-person narrator is somewhat removed from the action of the story; in this case, it is an old English professor of languages residing in Geneva, who has received the personal record of a young orphaned Russian student named Razumov. Razumov is a studious and career-motivated young man who keeps himself largely aloof from his peers. One day when he returns home, he finds a student acquaintance named Victor Haldin hiding in his apartment. Haldin informs Razumov that he has just committed a political assassination (which Conrad modeled after the real-life assassination of Vyacheslav von Plehve) and evaded the police. This news

causes the single-minded Razumov to panic, as he has no sympathy for Haldin's actions and feels that all he has worked for is slipping away.

Haldin requests Razumov to contact someone named Ziemianitch, who may be able to help Haldin escape successfully. Razumov is panic-stricken, but after much soul-searching agrees to help Haldin—primarily with the intention of getting him out of his apartment. When Razumov finds Ziemianitch in a drunken stupor and unable to assist Haldin he temporarily snaps. Then, in a panic stricken state of confusion, Razumov proceeds to go to the one person that may be able to assist him, his sponsor at the university. They decide to betray Haldin. Accordingly, they

go to the chief of police, General T (whom Conrad modeled after real-life Petersburg police chief Fyodor Trepov). Subsequently a trap is laid for Haldin, and Razumov finds himself taking the first step to becoming a secret agent, although at this time he has no such intention.

The narrative then shifts to Geneva where Natalia Haldin, the sister of the executed revolutionary, receives the tragic news via the professor of languages, who has become her tutor and friend and who reads of Victor Haldin's demise in the English newspaper. In his last correspondence to his sister, Victor Haldin mentioned a certain serious young man named Razumov who was kind to him. Nathalie soon learns that Razumov is scheduled to arrive in Switzerland, and she impatiently awaits the arrival of her late brother's final friend.

Razumov comes distressed to Geneva, though he is received warmly by the Russian revolutionist community there, who are planning an insurgency in the Baltic regions. No one knows that Razumov betrayed Haldin, and that he has been sent as a secret agent of the Tsarist regime. Though he is supposed to be penetrating the revolutionary colony in order to access its secrets, Razumov is unable to contain his fits of aggression and sneering toward the left-wing leaders, who are puzzled but continue to trust the young man. It is ultimately revealed that the cause of Razumov's outbursts is his love for Natalie Haldin, who he sees on her daily walks. Never having experienced any kind of warmth or affection from another person, he is long unable to recognize the emotion in himself; when he finally does, he reveals the truth to Natalie and to the revolutionaries, and suffers the consequences for his betrayal. (When Conrad began writing, he planned to have Razumov marry Natalie, have a child, and finally confess years later

Lord Jim

Jim is the son of an English parson and becomes a ship's chief mate, with an ambition to do heroic and romantic things with his life. He sails on the Patna (c. 1883), a merchant ship carrying Arab pilgrims to Mecca. The Patna hits a submerged obstacle on his watch and appears to be sinking, with a rusty bulkhead threatening any moment to give way. The German captain and the ship's main and second engineers panic and abandon ship--and Jim jumps after them. Subsequently, the ship does not sink and Jim faces an Inquiry (in Bombay?) about their cowardly actions. Captian Brierly, one of the examiners, tries to get Jim to escape & later commits suicide (because of his disillusionment over this breach of the nautical code of honor by "one of us"?) Jim loses his certification and is tormented with guilt and hypersensitivity over his cowardice therafter, drifting from job to job, quitting when his identity is known or exposure threatens. Jim meets Marlow during the Inquiry and Marlow narrates the remainder of the story, befriends him, and repeatedly tries to help him get established again in a non-seagoing position such as a ship's chandler.

Marlow consults with his merchant friend Stein, a naturalist and butterfly collector, who identifies Jim as a romantic and offers him the head position at Patusan (inland from the NW coast of Sumatra, upriver 30 miles), for which Jim is elated and grateful-- it offers a chance to escape to

complete oblivion (c. 1986). He supplants the snivelling Cornelius, whose mixed-race wife died leaving a step-daughter. Jim falls in love with her and calls her Jewel, takes her as his common-law wife. Jim encounters warring factions -- the Bugis (immigrants from Celebes) led by Doramin, the followers of the Rajah Tunku Allang, and followers of Sherif Ali. After Jewel alerts him to save his life from 4 assassins (who were aided by Cornelius), he plans with Doramin to attack Sherif Ali's stockade. After this attack, his power and authority are unchallenged and he becomes Tuan Jim ("Lord" Jim), acting as de facto governor and judge and regarded as all-wise and invincible. He is close friends with Doramin's son, Dain Waris, with whom he led the attack on Sherif Ali's stockade. Marlow visits with him two years after his arrival (c. 1988) and feels encouraged that Jim is finding a more satisfying existence for himself despite his obvious ongoing torment.

But Cornelius is resentful as is the displaced Rajah. The pirate "Gentleman Brown" arrives (c. 1889) in Patusan desperately searching for food to steal, fleeing the Spanish whose schooner he has stolen. Jim negotiates with Brown (who has a "satanic gift ... for finding out the best and the weakest spot in his victims"), and Brown implies a type of common guilt between the two-- this induces Jim to allow them safe conduct back down the river, despite his previous attack on the village and wanton killing of one villager, apparently because of Jim's need to get them out of his sight. Brown subsequently takes revenge on the villagers waiting further down river, killing many including Dian Waris. This action disillusions the villagers faith in Jim's truthfulness amd justness and, despite the pleas of his wife, he presents himself to Dormain for penance (saying "Time to finish this")--Doramin shoots and kills him, at last ending Jim's misery.

4.3 The Secret Agent – Summary:

The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale is a novel by Joseph Conrad published in 1907. The story is set in London in 1886 and deals largely with the life of Mr. Verloc and his job as a spy. *The Secret Agent* is also notable as it is one of Conrad's later political novels, which move away from his typical tales of seafaring. The novel deals broadly with the notions of anarchism, espionage, and terrorism.It portrays anarchist or revolutionary groups before many of the social uprisings of the twentieth century. However, it also deals with exploitation, particularly with regard to Verloc's relationship with his brother-in-law Stevie.

Because of its terrorist theme, *The Secret Agent* was noted as "one of the three works of literature most cited in the American media" around two weeks after 11 September 2001. *The Secret Agent* was ranked the 46th best novel of the 20th century by Modern Library.

The novel is set in London in 1886 and follows the life of Mr. Verloc, a secret agent. Verloc is also a businessman who owns a shop which sells pornographic material, contraceptives, and bric-a-brac. He lives with his wife Winnie, his mother-in-law, and his brother-in-law, Stevie. Stevie has a mental disability, possibly autism,[5] which causes him to be very excitable; his sister, Verloc's wife, attends to him, treating him more as a

son than as a brother. Verloc's friends are a group of anarchists of which Comrade Ossipon, Michaelis, and "The Professor" are the most prominent. Although largely ineffectual as terrorists, their actions are known to the police. The group produce anarchist literature in the form of pamphlets entitled *F.P.*, an acronym for *The Future of the Proletariat*.

The novel begins in Verloc's home, as he and his wife discuss the trivialities of everyday life, which introduces the reader to Verloc's family. Soon after, Verloc leaves to meet Mr. Vladimir, the new First Secretary in the embassy of a foreign country (implied to be Russia). Although a member of an anarchist cell, Verloc is also secretly employed by the Embassy as an agent provocateur. Vladimir informs Verloc that from reviewing his service history he is far from an exemplary model of a secret agent and, in order to redeem himself, must carry out an operation - the destruction of Greenwich Observatory by a bomb explosion. Vladimir explains that Britain's lax attitude to anarchism endangers his own country, and he reasons that an attack on 'science', which he claims is the current vogue amongst the public, will provide the necessary outrage for suppression. Verloc later meets with his friends, who discuss politics and law, and the notion of a communist revolution. Unbeknownst to the group, Stevie, Verloc's brother-in-law, overhears the conversation, which greatly disturbs him.

Comrade Ossipon later meets The Professor, who describes the nature of the bomb which he carries in his coat at all times: it allows him to press a button which will blow him up in twenty seconds, and those nearest to him. After The Professor leaves the meeting, he stumbles into Chief Inspector Heat. Heat is a policeman who is working on the case regarding a recent explosion at Greenwich, where one man was killed. Heat informs The Professor that he is not a suspect in the case, but that he is being monitored due to his terrorist inclinations and anarchist background. Knowing that Michaelis has recently moved to the countryside to write a book, the Chief Inspector informs the Assistant Commissioner that he has a contact, Verloc, who may be able to assist in the case. The Assistant Commissioner later speaks to his superior, Sir Ethelred, about his intentions to solve the case alone, rather than relying on the effort of Chief Inspector Heat.

The novel often moves between Verloc's work life and his home life. At home, Mrs. Verloc's mother informs the family that she wishes to move out of the house. Mrs. Verloc's mother and Stevie use a hansom which is driven by a man with a hook in the place of his hand. The journey greatly upsets Stevie, as the driver's tales of hardship coupled with his menacing hook scare him to the point where Mrs. Verloc must calm him down. On Verloc's return from a business trip to the continent, his wife tells him of the high regard that Stevie has for him and she implores her husband to spend more time with Stevie. Verloc eventually agrees to go for a walk with Stevie. After this walk, Mrs. Verloc notes that her husband's relationship with her brother has improved. Verloc then tells his wife that he has taken Stevie to go and visit Michaelis, and that Stevie would stay with him in the countryside for a few days.

As Verloc is talking to his wife about the possibility of emigrating to the continent, he is paid a visit by the Assistant Commissioner. Shortly thereafter, Chief Inspector Heat arrives in order to speak with Verloc, without knowing that the Assistant Commissioner had left with Verloc earlier that evening. The Chief Inspector tells Mrs. Verloc that he had recovered an overcoat at the scene of the bombing which had the shop's address written on a label. Mrs. Verloc confirms that it was Stevie's overcoat, and that she had written the address. On Verloc's return, he realises that his wife knows her brother has been killed by Verloc's bomb, and confesses what truly happened. A stunned Mrs. Verloc, in her anguish, then fatally stabs her husband.

After the murder, Mrs. Verloc flees her home, where she chances upon Comrade Ossipon, and begs him to help her. Ossipon assists her, but also confesses his romantic feelings for her. Planning on running away with her, he aids her in taking a boat to the continent. However, her instability and the revelation of her murder increasingly worries him, and he abandons her. He later discovers in a newspaper, a woman had disappeared, leaving behind her a wedding ring, before drowning herself in the English Channel.

In the aftermath of the attacks on Sept. 11, Joseph Conrad's *Secret Agent* became one of the three works of literature most frequently cited in the American media. Among Conrad scholars, *The Secret Agent* is notorious for its tone of corrosive irony, and the entire thrust of the novel is to argue against placing one's trust in government. Conrad's police are either too corrupt or too caught up in their own petty career ambitions to be able to protect the populace against violence of this kind. There is one assistant commissioner in the London police department intelligent enough to identify the real culprit of the plot, but he is represented as an anomaly and is foiled in part by another officer's incompetence in the end.

4.4 Check Your Progress:

Attempt a summary of the novel 'The Secret Agent' by Conrad.

Evaluate Joseph Conrad as a writer/ novelist.

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Study Material Sources

1) www.biography.com

2) Gradesaver

3) Wikipedia

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5

JOSEPH CONRAD'S THE SECRET AGENT PART II

Unit Structure

5.0 Objectives:

To explain the novel *The Secret Agent*, its critical commentary, characterization, technique, themes, motifs and symbols

5.1 The Secret Agent:

Introduction

The Secret Agent (1907) is a short novel and a masterpiece of sustained irony. It is based on the real incident of a bomb attack on the Greenwich Observatory in 1888 and features a cast of wonderfully grotesque characters: Verloc the lazy double agent, Inspector Heat of Scotland Yard, and the Professor – an anarchist who wanders through the novel with bombs strapped round his waist and the detonator in his hand. The English government and police are subject to sustained criticism, and the novel bristles with some wonderfully orchestrated effects of dramatic irony – all set in the murky atmosphere of late Victorian London. Here Conrad prefigures all the ambiguities which surround two-faced international relations, duplicitous State real politik, and terrorist outrage which still beset us a hundred years later.

The Secret Agent – Critical commentary

Conrad is celebrated for his use of irony, and he lays it on very thick indeed in The Secret Agent. In fact he employs several types of irony throughout the novel, much of it for grim effect.

- comic irony
- ironic narrative
- situational irony
- dramatic irony
- tragic irony

Comic irony

This occurs where there an obviously funny disparity between something intended and the result. For instance the 'terrorists' who group themselves around Verloc are all hopelessly inadequate beings who have very little political effect. But Conrad depicts them as comic grotesques. Michaelis is almost obscenely overweight, and he has lost the power of consecutive thought whilst in prison. The Professor is a small shabby figure who lives in abject poverty and does nothing except walk round London with an explosive device strapped to his body. Ossipon is a failed medical student who pathetically sponges off shop girls, and by the end of the novel is 'ready to receive the leather yoke of the sandwich board'. Karl Yundt is a pathetic old man with a whispy beard who appears to do nothing of any consequence.

These are comic caricatures – and all of them are light years away from their declared aim of overthrowing society. They are all well known to government authorities and under regular supervision by the police force they profess to scorn. Moreover, they are being led by a man who betrays them – Verloc, a double agent.

Admittedly, it is a *grim* form of comedy – but that is very much Joseph Conrad, and many critics have observed that this is one of his more pessimistic novels.

Ironic narrative

This occurs when the narrator says something about the narrative or a character which the reader knows is not true. Conrad's characterization of Verloc uses this device all the way through the novel. We the readers know that Verloc is an overweight, lazy, incompetent, self-indulgent failure. But Conrad in his third person omniscient narrative mode gives an account of Verloc which is couched in positive terms. Conrad achieves this effect by slipping into Verloc's own point of view – an indirect form of narrative.

He was tired. The last particle of nervous force had been expended in the wonders and agonies of this day full of surprising failures coming at the end of a harrassing month of scheming and insomnia. He was tired. A man isn't made of stone. Hang everything! Mr Verloc reposed characteristically, clad in his outdoor garments. One side of his open overcoat was lying partly on the ground. Mr Verloc wallowed on his back. But he longed for a more perfect rest – for sleep – for a few hours of delicious forgetfulness. That would come later. Provisionally he rested. And he thought: "I wish she would give over this damned nonsense. It's exasperating."

Here are two (maybe three) forms of irony active at the same time. The narrative gives us Verloc's point of view: "A man isn't made of stone". We know however that he is lazy, self-indulgent, and vulgar. (He spends most of his time indoor dressed for the street.) He wishes for a 'more perfect rest' – and he is shortly going to get it when Winnie murders him with the carving knife. And what he calls "damned nonsense" is the fact that he has just killed her beloved brother with the bomb.

Situational irony

This occurs where there is a disparity between intention and result. It could be argued that the scenes in the home of the lady protector of Michaelis offer examples of these. The guests include Michaelis, who the police regard as a dangerous terrorist; the police themselves, in the form of the Assistant Commissioner, who is supposed to be tracking down the anarchists; and Mr Vladimir from the Russian embassy, who has instigated the bomb plot in the first place.

So – the characters who are supposed to be at the opposite ends of society are in fact mingling socially. The intention is to preserve the power of the ruling class and its appearance of solidity. The result is that it deals with its own enemies. Our own society has provided plenty of similar examples – from Lord Profumo mixing with Russian spies and prostitutes at Cliveden in 1963, to Tony Blair cozying up to Muammar Gaddafi and Rupert Murdoch.

Some people might argue that these are examples of dramatic irony: but in fact all the characters in the un-named lady's house *know* what is going on in these scenes. They keep up a polite diplomatic front of being sociable, even though some of them are sworn enemies.

Dramatic irony

This occurs when the reader knows something that a character does not. There is a superb example of this at the end of the novel when Winnie is fleeing the scene of her crime and she bumps into Ossipon. Her state of distress leads him to believe that it is caused by the bomb explosion at Greenwich, which *he* believes has resulted in Verloc's death. He is only too keen to take advantage of an attractive woman in her bereaved state.

What he does *not* realise is that her distress *is* caused by the death of Verloc – but because she has just *murdered* him. We as readers know that, but Ossipon does not – and when he discovers Verloc's body with the meat cleaver sticking out of it, he vomits all over the floor. This is another example of what might be called double irony (see below).

Tragic irony

This is a form of dramatic irony which occurs when a character's actions lead to tragic consequences, contrary to the characters desire or intentions. For instance in the dramatic finale to the novel Winnie wishes to escape from the scene of her crime. She entrusts herself and all the money she has got into the hands of Ossipon. But unknown to her he is a persistent user of women, and even worse, he has categorised her as a 'degenerate … of a murdering type' likely to cause him trouble. So he steals her money and abandons her – which leads to her suicide.

In fact it could be argued that there is a sort of double irony operating here – because although Ossipon's belief in Lombroso's crackpot theories of phrenology are obviously not shared by Conrad, it is in fact *true* that Winnie has been a dangerous woman with a knife, and she *has* committed a murder.

Many critics note that Conrad's irony reflects a pessimistic perspective of the British society in *The Secret Agent*. Conrad's perspective is reflective of a society still reeling from the traumatizing social effects of industrialization. Walter Wright observes that London's drab streets and barren ugliness reveal the futility of life (189-190), and impersonal fate's destruction of individuals further reveals life's emptiness (197). From Wright's perspective, the life without control or choice in *The Secret Agent* is a life without meaning. Rosenfield believes the city of London represents the archetype of death, "a modern underworld" where the personal self is annihilated (99-100). In such a city, neither life commitment nor its opposite, despair, have any purpose (114). Holland considers Conrad's dark city of London "inner madness rendered as outer setting" (55), while Jeffery Berman aptly summarizes Conrad's cynical approach towards the society of *The Secret Agent* by stating, "nothing seems worth saving" (114).

Conrad's pessimistic view of society envelops each character's personal relationships. Throughout *The Secret Agent*, the usage of geometric imagery shows the ripple effects of evil within society on the micro level. Wright observes the "weblike involvement of the forces of lawlessness and those of the law" (179) and Rosenfield notes major similarities between both conservatism and anarchism in their cyclical worlds (80). Holland claims that each major character throughout the book has doubleness and tripleness in relationships with others (54), and in expressing the "chaos and maze of human relations," Conrad uses circle after circle and packs the novel with "geometric images," as if he "were trying to squeeze some order out of chaos" (55). Steven Land focuses on the societal structures that balance hostile forces throughout the novel. The dualistic framework within *The Secret Agent* gives each major character, including the police, a similar opposite (150-153), and implies that everyone, even the models of justice, has a double life.

Critics essentially agree that the novel's ironic tone conveys pessimism towards society and relationships, but they differ over Winnie Verloc's morality. The central character of the novel, many critics consider her a tragic heroine due to her sacrificial role. Conrad himself seems to support this interpretation: in his preface to the 1920 edition of the novel, he states that this is "Winnie Verloc's story" (13), which could imply that she is a heroine. John Palmer writes, "morally, however, Conrad's deepest interest lies with Winnie and Stevie, the norms of male and female innocence, and Verloc's essential victims" (118), implying that Winnie is a victim of circumstances, undeserving of her suffering. In Tillyard's essay, "*The Secret Agent* Reconsidered," he calls Winnie Verloc pathetic and noble (104), someone who should cause sympathetic feelings in readers. Richard Curle claims that Conrad's "women portraits are the most finished, delicate, and poignant of all his portraits." Winnie, is a "tragedy," and indeed, "[Conrad's] finest women are *good* women" (145, original emphasis).

Other critics see Winnie as a darker character. For example, Jacques Berthoud states that Winnie is as impenetrable as her mysterious husband because of her utter lack of curiosity (150). Wright observes that after

Stevie dies, "her studied efforts of deception have been defeated by the more sinister deceit of Verloc himself" (195). George Panichas goes farther, considering her as evil as her husband, commenting, "Both husband and wife have been dishonest with each other, masking their motives [for each other] in the most insidious ways" (*Modern Age*). Rosenfield even considers Winnie an archetypal "*femme fatale*" (113).

Though Winnie has some positive characteristics, such as a maternal love towards her helpless brother, she is an essentially negative character. Her passive obedience to social conventions makes her mostly responsible for the death of her brother, her murder of her husband, and her subsequent suicide. The complex morality of Winnie Verloc is the central question of the novel. Despite a surface appearance of nicety, Winnie is the most chilling character in what Berman calls Conrad's "most chilling novel" (111). Winnie is a stereotypical Victorian wife, and Conrad uses her magnetic attraction towards destruction to criticize women who obey unreasonable social expectations. Conrad's use of a biblical allusion to Satan warns readers that the Victorian wifely ideal dehumanizes women and that women passively following Victorian social conventions by sacrificing all of their dreams and relationships for others, not communicating with their husbands, and marrying primarily due to economic concerns will never reach their full potential.

Winnie's greatest character flaw is her passivity. Her passive philosophy of life causes her to conform to Victorian social expectations of self-sacrifice, silence, and a marriage made in the courtroom, and this passivity stunts any moral development. Indeed, *The Secret Agent* is "a study in sloth" (Bloom 57), and passivity explains most of Winnie's activities within the novel. Conrad's excessively harsh judgment upon her, a death sentence because of her passivity, suits the darkly ironic tone of *The Secret Agent*. As Andrew Roberts states, the Verloc's marriage and family life "is clearly a parody of the secrecy and restraint of the corrupt and suffocating bourgeois society of which Verloc is a servant" (139). Winnie's obedience to her suffocating societal expectations leads to her dehumanization.

Victorian society expected wives to completely sacrifice themselves for the benefit of their husbands and families. For example, Sarah Stickney Ellis, a popular Victorian moralist, admonished wives to always "make sacrifices, in order that his enjoyment may be enhanced" (68). Within a poor marriage, wives should "suffer and be still," rather than seek better treatment; the worst sin a wife could commit was defying her husband (Hammerton 76-77). Dorothy Mermin and Herbert Tucker, Victorian scholars, note that in the typical British home, "women remained safe at home in the private sphere of tenderness, sympathy, piety, self-sacrifice, and love, providing nurture and uplift for men and children" (81). Social mores allowed women little else.

Winnie makes an enormous sacrifice to provide for her brother who is retarded and her mother who is infirm when she gives herself in marriage to Mr. Verloc who is repulsive. Famous for his sea stories, Conrad uses boating allusions to make Winnie's sacrifice more vivid to the reader.

Although she dearly loved an impoverished butcher's son, he had "no accommodation for passengers [Winnie's brother and mother]" in his boat of life. Mr. Verloc, however, always had "some money in his pockets" and accepted "as a matter of course the presence of passengers" in his life's "barque" (201). When Winnie meets Comrade Ossipon on her way to commit suicide, she cries about her sacrificial marriage, "Seven years - seven years a good wife to him, the kind, the good, the generous, the - And he loved me. Oh, yes. He loved me till I sometimes wished myself - Seven years" (226). Her sacrifice is, pathetically, ironically, unnoticed by her family: Stevie is mentally incapable of grasping her love for him, and her nave mother "never really understood why Winnie had married Mr. Verloc", deciding, "it was clearly providential" (45-46).

Winnie also sacrifices any supportive relationships outside of her immediate family by marrying Mr. Verloc. His true work as a double agent is secretive and he runs a pornography shop for his cover business. Thus, the only visitors to the house and attached shop are grotesque anarchists and nervous young men. After Winnie murders Mr. Verloc, she tries to think of someone who can help her, but "she had no acquaintances of her own. No one would miss her in a social way" (221). She is "friendless" in this dark city of "five millions of lives" (221, 11). Drowning imagery shows her helpless despair as she recognizes her overwhelming isolation in London. "She floundered over the doorstep [....] This entrance into the open air had a foretaste of drowning [....] Another wave of faintness overtook her like a great sea, washing away her heart clean out of her breast" (220-221). Winnie's sacrifice of any relationships beyond her family leaves her alone when she most needs help.

Though Winnie's sacrifice gives Susan Jones ample reason to state that Conrad presents Winnie in the Polish tradition of "idolized motherhood and female heroism" (50), she does not acknowledge the knotty problem of Winnie's passivity. In the same manner, Holland's perception of females as the models of self-sacrifice (57) is somewhat accurate, but flawed, because Winnie's apparently noble sacrifice is mainly motivated by her passivity. Ironically, she is still a moral failure even as she gives up everything for her family. She sacrifices a life spent with the boy she loves not because she needs to, but because for her, the easiest psychological route is obeying Victorian social expectations. She assumes that she is solely responsible for keeping her family intact, and her mental passivity finds a sacrificial solution by marriage to Mr. Verloc. Winnie could have married the butcher's son, whom she loved, and sent Stevie and her mother to charity while working to eventually earn money for their care. In the center of the novel, for example, Winnie's mother retreats to a charity-house, despite the financial prosperity of the Verloc household. If she could fall into the arms of charity when the Verlocs were well-off, she could have received care while Winnie and the butcher's son were fighting their way out of poverty. Stevie, who is mentally retarded, presents a more complex problem, but some sort of charity likely could have taken care of him as well. However, Winnie never looks for aid for either family member. Searching for help would be more work - and less conventional - than accepting an unloving marriage.

Besides the subordinating sacrifices of females, a hallmark of Victorian society was poor communication between husbands and wives. A Victorian historian, Ginger Frost, notes that men "could not express their emotions openly" and had to keep their pains private and sorrows secret (55). According to Mrs. Ellis, the husband "knows not half the foolish fears that agitate her breast. He could not be made to know, still less to understand, the intensity of her capability of suffering from slight" (68). Neither the husband nor the wife are truly honest with each other in a relationship without communication, and neither will realize genuine emotional growth. Mrs. Ellis also reveals that much of Victorian society believed that women, who lacked worth, should not talk about themselves to their husbands. Men may seem dull discussing politics, but women are "infinitely worse - they have themselves [to talk about]" (39-40). Although a companionate ideal of marriage developed in the late-Victorian era, it saw little actual influence in the lives of the lower-middle classes (Frost 155) or, for that matter, most of England.

There is no loving companionship in the Verloc's socially-defined relationship largely due to an utter lack of communication. Mr. Verloc and Winnie never explain themselves to the other, and throughout the novel, their ambiguous relationship lumbers towards disaster. They each have married with hidden pasts, for both have had previous relationships that utterly failed - a female spy betrayed Mr. Verloc and Winnie walked away from the person she truly loved. Neither shares significant events in their life with the other. Mr. Verloc's "work was in a way political, he told Winnie once. She would have, he warned her, to be very nice to his political friends." She, on the other hand, agrees, and looks at him with a "straight, unfathomable" face (20), and throughout the novel, her face never betrays emotions to her husband, until the few moments before she kills him. Winnie has been married to Mr. Verloc for seven years, yet she never knows his true occupation until the end of the novel, never questions why he stays out until three or four in the morning on a regular basis, and never asks why the only visitors to their house are anarchists ranting about the "cannibalistic" nature of capitalism (53). Winnie is completely incurious, her "force" and "safeguard" in life being a "distant and uninquiring acceptance of facts" (132). Later, Conrad states that "she felt profoundly that things did not stand much looking into" (151). Her passive acceptance of life as it appears destroys those around her.

Two critical bedroom scenes highlight the Verloc's lack of communication. In the first, Mr. Verloc feels that his stilted, awkward conversation with Winnie "was as if her voice was talking on the other side of a very thick wall" (59-60). About to share his upsetting occupational problems with her, he restrains himself, afraid of leaving his well-defined social sphere and becoming vulnerable to an unfathomable woman. Meanwhile, Winnie ignores his disquiet, and talks to him about Stevie, though to all of her remarks, "Mr. Verloc made no comment" (60-61). His silence does not disturb Winnie because it is typical of their relationship. In the second bedroom scene, Mr. Verloc, about to comment on his mother-in-law's escape from their house, "very nearly said so" (151). He feels that her exit might be of ill portent. He is "within a hair's

breadth of making a clean breast of it all to his wife" and explaining his true career, but "he forebode" (152). Mr. Verloc instead "bore his sufferings silently" (153). Winnie, unapproachable by her husband, has followed the pattern of life for many Victorian wives. Immediately before their relationship catastrophically ends with Winnie's murder of Mr. Verloc, Conrad explains why they cannot understand each other: "they refrained from going to the bottom of facts and motives" (203).

Winnie's lack of communication with her husband is due to her passivity. She bases her relationship with him on the simplest route, living like the typical Victorian wife. Rosenfield notes the centrality of the Verlocs' lack of communication in their relationship as she states, "this novel is a domestic drama, a story of personal relationships and lack of communication" (108). Mr. Verloc is naturally secretive, and Winnie "felt profoundly that things do not stand much looking into" (Conrad 150-151). Their relationship never consists of genuine communication not only because of societal expectations, but because communication takes effort. For example, Winnie realizes that it takes less work to allow Mr. Verloc to stay out "as early as three or four in the morning" than questioning him about his whereabouts and activities (20). When Mr. Verloc arrives back from the embassy, he is clearly in emotional shock because of his idiotic orders to bomb Greenwich Observatory, but Winnie never takes the effort to ask him about his upsetting problems.

5.2 Characterization:

- Mr. Adolf Verloc: a secret agent who owns a shop in the Soho region of London. He is tasked by his superiors with destroying Greenwich by means of a bomb. He is part of an anarchist organization that creates pamphlets under the heading *The Future of the Proletariat*. He is married to Winnie, and lives with his wife, his mother-in-law, and his brother-in-law, Stevie.
- Mrs. Winnie Verloc: Verloc's wife. She cares for her brother Stevie, who has an unknown mental disability. She is younger than her husband and thinks of what may have happened if she had married her original love, rather than choosing to marry the successful Verloc. A loyal wife, she becomes incensed upon learning of the death of her brother due to her husband's plotting, and kills him with a knife in the heart. She dies, presumably by drowning herself to avoid the gallows.
- Stevie: Winnie 's brother is very sensitive and is disturbed by notions of violence or hardship. His sister cares for him, and Stevie passes most of his time drawing numerous circles on pieces of paper. He is implicated in Verloc's attempt to bomb Greenwich, although the degree of his complicity is not known.
- Chief Inspector Heat: a policeman who is dealing with the explosion at Greenwich. An astute man who uses a clue found at the scene of the crime to trace events back to Verloc's home. Although he informs his superior what he is planning to do with regards to the

case, he is not aware that the Assistant Commissioner is acting without his knowledge.

- The Assistant Commissioner: of a higher rank than the Chief Inspector, he uses the knowledge gained from Heat to pursue matters personally. He informs his superior, Sir Ethelred, of his intentions, and tracks down Verloc before Heat can.
- Sir Ethelred: the Secretary of State (Home Secretary) to whom the Assistant Commissioner reports.
- Mr. Vladimir: an employee of an embassy from a foreign country, strongly implied to be Russia. Vladimir employs Verloc to carry out terrorist acts, hoping that the resulting public outrage will force the English government to repress emigre socialist and anarchist rebels.
- Comrade Alexander Ossipon: an ex-medical student and friend of Verloc, and another anarchist.
- Karl Yundt: a friend of Verloc, and another anarchist.
- Michaelis: a friend of Verloc, and another anarchist.
- The Professor: another anarchist, who specialises in explosives.

5.3 Themes:

Terrorism and anarchism

Terrorism and anarchism are intrinsic aspects of the novel, and are central to the plot. Verloc is employed by an agency which requires him to orchestrate terrorist activities, and several of the characters deal with terrorism in some way: Verloc's friends are all interested in an anarchistic political revolution, and the police are investigating anarchist motives behind the bombing of Greenwich.

The novel was written at a time when terrorist activity was increasing. There had been numerous dynamite attacks in both Europe and the USA, as well as several assassinations of heads of state. Conrad also drew upon two persons specifically: Mikhail Bakunin and Prince Peter Kropotkin. Conrad used these two men in his "portrayal of the novel's anarchists". However, according to Conrad's Author's Note, only one character was a true anarchist: Winnie Verloc. In *The Secret Agent*, she is "the only character who performs a serious act of violence against another", despite the *F.P.'*s intentions of radical change, and The Professor's inclination to keep a bomb on his person.

Critics have analysed the role of terrorism in the novel. Patrick Reilly calls the novel "a terrorist text as well as a text about terrorism" due to Conrad's manipulation of chronology in order to allow the reader to comprehend the outcome of the bombing before the characters, thereby corrupting the traditional conception of time. The morality which is implicit in these acts of terrorism has also been explored: is Verloc evil because his negligence leads to the death of his brother-in-law? Although Winnie evidently thinks

so, the issue is not clear, as Verloc attempted to carry out the act with no fatalities, and as simply as possible in order to retain his job, and care for his family

Politics

The role of politics is paramount in the novel, as the main character, Verloc, works for a quasi-political organisation. The role of politics is seen in several places in the novel: in the revolutionary ideas of the *F.P.*; in the characters' personal beliefs; and in Verloc's own private life. Conrad's depiction of anarchism has an "enduring political relevance", although the focus is now largely concerned with the terrorist aspects that this entails. The discussions of the *F.P.* are expositions on the role of anarchism and its relation to contemporary life. The threat of these thoughts is evident, as Chief Inspector Heat knows *F.P.* members because of their anarchist views. Moreover, Michaelis' actions are monitored by the police to such an extent that he must notify the police station that he is moving to the country.

The plot to destroy Greenwich is in itself anarchistic. Vladimir asserts that the bombing "must be purely destructive" and that the anarchists who will be implicated as the architects of the explosion "should make it clear that [they] are perfectly determined to make a clean sweep of the whole social creation." However, the political form of anarchism is ultimately controlled in the novel: the only supposed politically motivated act is orchestrated by a secret government agency.

Some critics, such as Fredrick R. Karl, think that the main political phenomenon in this novel is the modern age, as symbolized by the teeming, pullulating foggy streets of London (most notably in the cab ride taken by Winnie and Stevie Verloc). This modern age distorts everything, including politics (Verloc is motivated by the need to keep his remunerative position, the Professor to some extent by pride), the family (symbolized by the Verloc household, in which all roles are distorted, with the husband being like a father to the wife, who is like a mother to her brother), even the human body (Michaelis and Verloc are hugely obese, while the Professor and Yundt are preternaturally thin). This extended metaphor, using London as a center of darkness much like Kurtz's headquarters in *Heart of Darkness*, presents "a dark vision of moral and spiritual inertia" and a condemnation of those who, like Mrs Verloc, think it a mistake to think too deeply.

5.4 Check Your Progress:

1. What are the thematic concerns of Conrad in his novel The secret Agent? Elaborate
2. In what way do the characters reflect the themes of Terrorism and Anarchy ? Discuss
3. Why do critics call The Secret Agent a terrorist text? Discuss
4. Attempt a critical evaluation of The Secret Agent

5.5 Recommended Reading:

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- Woodard, J. David. *The America that Reagan Built*. New Haven, CT, USA: Greenwood, 2006. ISBN 0-275-98609-8

Material Sources

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6

STUDY OF LORD OF THE FLIES
PART I

Unit Structure

6.0 Objectives:

- To understand the nature of evil represented in the novel and society
- To familiarize the students with various thematic concerns depicted in the novel
- To study the mindset of the school children stranded on an island
- To acquaint the students with setting, characterization and symbolism reflected in the novel.

6.1 Introduction:

About the Novelist: Golding grew up in the years before the Second World War

William Golding was born in 1911 and grew up in the years before World War II. That war changed the thinking about man's essential nature. Before the war people generally believed that man was essentially good hearted and society often was evil. However, the atrocities of the war made it impossible for many people to believe any longer in man's basic innocence. You can see the influence of this shift in thinking in Golding's works. There is reflection of evil nature in the novel.

Golding's favourite authors

Some of Golding's favourite childhood authors were Edgar Rice Burroughs (Tarzan of the Apes), Robert Ballantyne (Coral Island), and Jules Verne (Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea). Each of these books portrays man as a basically good creature who struggles to avoid the evils of society.

Golding yearned to be like the characters in the fables and stories he read

Golding yearned to be like the characters in the fables and stories he read. The island setting for *Lord of the Flies* and the names Ralph, Jack, and Simon have been taken from Coral Island. "They held me rapt,"

Golding once said of the books he read. "I dived with the Nautilus, was shot round the moon, and crossed Darkest Africa in a balloon, descended to the centre of the earth, drifted in the South Atlantic, dying of thirst. ... It always sent me indoors for a drink-the fresh waters of the Amazon."

At about the age of twelve Golding decided to be a writer

At about the age of twelve Golding decided to be a writer. He planned a. twelve-volume work on trade unions but could never complete the enormous undertaking. With his love of reading and his early attempts at writing, Golding of course studied literature in college.

When World War 11 began in 1939, Golding joined the Royal Navy

When World War II began in 1939, Golding joined the Royal Navy. He saw action against German warships, he was in antisubmarine and antiaircraft operations, and in 1944 he was involved in the D-Day naval support for the landings on the beaches of Normandy. He continued to read the classics even as he acquired a reputation for loving tense combat. And his war experiences changed his view about mankind's essential nature. Because of the atrocities he witnessed, Golding came to believe that there was a very dark and evil side to man. "The war," he said, "was unlike any other fought in Europe. It taught us not fighting, politics or the follies of nationalism, but about the given nature of man."

After-the war Golding returned to teaching in a boys' school

After the war Golding returned to teaching in a boys' school, which may explain why the characters in *Lord oj tile Flies* seem. so real. Ralph, Jack, Piggy, Simon, and the other boys are based on the faces and voices of children Golding knew. Thus, his reading of the classics;' his war experience and his new insight into humanity laid the groundwork for his writing.

Golding's Lord *of the Flies* slowly establishes itself and its author

His first three novels were very much like novels he had read, and he called them the "rubbish" of imitation. They have never been published. His fourth novel was *Lord of the Flies,* and when it was finally accepted for publication in 1954, it had been turned down by more than twenty publishers. The book was not considered a success at first. It was not until the 1960s, when it had captured the imaginations of college and high school students that critic began to acknowledge Golding's talent. Even now there are differing opinions about the novel. Some believe that Golding's writing is bombastic and didactic, that he does not allow you to have any opinion but his. Other critics see him as the greatest English writer of our time. You will find that part of the' fun of his book lies in deciding for yourself what you think. Golding has continued to write in spite of the controversy over his work. It. would seem that the criticism, rather than frightening him, only challenges him to continue writing. In the same way, Golding challenges readers to think about what he considers most important: the true nature of human beings.

The three novels that followed *Lord of the Flies* brought Golding more success:

The three novels that followed Lord of the Flies-The Inheritors, Pincher Martin, and Free Fall-brought him more success, while the controversy over his talent, or lack of it, continued. Eventually Golding stopped teaching to write' full time. In 1983 Golding was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, which is given a writer not for one particular volume but for the body of his work. This was the recognition and respect that many believe he had deserved all along.

6.2 Outline of the Novel:

Golding's Lord of the Flies: At a Glance

Set during World War II, the story describes the plight of a group of British schoolboys stranded on a Pacific Island after their plane was shot down en route to England. Two of the boys, Ralph and Piggy, discover a conch in the lagoon near the beach and use it to call all the other survivors setting up a mock democratic government with Ralph as leader. Piggy continues to advise and give logic and reason to Ralph's rule. A signal fire kindled with the lens of Piggy's glasses, is established on the mountain to call passing ships to their rescue while shelters are constructed.

However, the school's choir leader, Jack, soon becomes obsessed with hunting the pigs of the island and loses sight of Ralph's democratic vision. Further discord results with an increasing fear of a supposed "beast" on the island, stemming particularly from the younger boys dubbed the "Iittluns." Jack eventually abandons any thought of being rescued, content instead with hunting and killing pigs with his choir boys turned into hunters. Jack later speaks out of turn during. their assembly meetings and eventually leaves the group to start a "tribe." Other children gradually defect to his side except for Ralph, Piggy, Simon and the twins Samneric (Sam and Eric), One by one these children are eliminated from the opposition.

Upon discovering the beast, the boys had all feared on the mountain is only the rotting corpse of a pilot whose plane had been shot down near the island, Simon runs down from the mountain to share this happy news. However, the boys ~including Ralph, Piggy, and Samneric). are all, following Jack's example caught up in, a primal ritual celebrating the murder of the pig they have just eaten and Simon runs into the midst of this. Mistaken to be the beast, Simon is killed by the boys' spears. Ralph, Piggy, and Samneric remain resistant to joining Jack's tribe. They attempt to cling to the democracy they had set up; still using the conch to call an assembly and struggling to keep a signal fire burning on the beach. This could be an emblem for rescue.
Then Jack and his hunters attack the four and steal Piggy's glasses to kindle the fire he needs for pig-roasting fires. Angry and blinded; Piggy decides to go to the place on the island called Castle Rock where the hunters have set up a base. Reluctantly, Ralph and Samneric agree and upon arriving Roger stops them at the gate. Jack emerges from the forest and begins to fight with Ralph while Piggy stands nearby shrieking in fear,

wanting only for his sight be restored by retrieving his glasses. Samneric are seized at Jack's command by the hunters and Roger, Jack's second-in-command, drops a large boulder on the head of Piggy, killing him and shattering the conch which he holds in his hands. Ralph alone is left to flee, with no friends left to aid him. Samneric have become hunters as well and betray the secret of his hiding place in the forest to Jack. The island is set ablaze and hunters fan out to kill Ralph with their spears, the sole remaining opposition to their tribe, as even now he tries to cling to his old democratic ideas.

Running wildly and suddenly becoming savage himself, Ralph stabs with his spear at the hunters pursuing him. He is chased by all until he at last comes to the beach. The shelters he had built with such labor are in flames and, falling at last upon the sand with the sea before him and nowhere left to run, Ralph looks up to see a naval officer. Rescue comes at last to the boys' aid, seeing the smoke from the mighty blaze set by Jack's hunters after Ralph's signal fire had earlier failed to alert anyone of their presence. When the officer expresses disapproval especially for the savage state and chaos to which the boys have reverted, Ralph breaks down in tears. Soon, all the hunters begin crying at the sight of grown-ups on the beach. Ralph weeps for "the end of innocence" and "the darkness of man's heart."

With the help of various symbols, Golding presents the allegory of man's fallen state. Unlike Ballantyne, who is optimistic and futuristic in his approach, Golding is pessimistic and disillusioned. He seems to affirm, as Anthony Burgess points out: "Take off the brakes of enforced control, and boys, like men, will choose chaos rather than order. The good intentions of the few are overborne by the innate evil of the many." Golding's novel stresses the essential evil residing in man, which be suppressed temporarily under the control of proper institutions and circumstances, but asserts its supremacy when the control is removed.

Lord of the Flies is a parable showing the harmful effect of the removal of civilized restrains, which results in a complete regression to a brutal and savage state. As Golding himself has admitted, this novel owes its origin to his experiences of brutalities that he had during World War II, and those he gained as a teacher of small boys for about 13 years.

About *Lord of the Flies*

Lord of the Flies was the first novel published by Sir William Golding after a number of years as a teacher and training as a scientist. Although Golding had published an anthology of poems nearly two decades before writing *Lord of the Flies,* this novel was his first extensive narrative work and is informed by his scientific training an academic background. In many ways *Lord of the Flies* is a hypothetical treatment of particular scientific concerns. It places a group of young English boys on a deserted island where they must develop their own society, in essence constructing a sociological experiment in which these boys must develop without any societal influences to shape them. In fact, the beginning chapters of the novel parallel assumptions about human evolution, as the characters "discover" fire and form levels of political authority. However, what concerns Golding in *Lord of the Flies* is the

nature of evil as demonstrated by the boys on the island. He concludes that the evil actions that the boys commit are inherent in human nature and can only be controlled by societal mores and rationality, as exemplified by the characters Piggy and Ralph.

Lord of the Flies Golding draws upon a great deal of religious symbolism

Although the novel does not adhere to themes particular to one religious' tradition, in *Lord of the Flies* Golding draws upon a great deal of religious symbolism updated to conform to more contemporary ideas of human psychology. The title 'character,' the pig's head that Simon dubs the *"Lord of the Flies"* is a translation of the Hebrew word Ba' alzevuv, or its Greek equivalent Beelzebub. For Golding, this devil comes from within the human psyche rather than acting as an external force, as implied by Judeo-Christian teachings. Being a novelist, Golding employs this religious reference in more Freudian terms. The devil that is the *"Lord of the Flies"* represents the Freudian conception of the Id, the driving amoral force that works solely to ensure its own survival. The *"Lord of the Flies"* directly confronts the most spiritually motivated character of the novel, Simon, who functions as a prophet-martyr for the other boys.

Lord of the Flies is firmly rooted in the sociopolitical concerns of its era

Lord of the Flies is firmly rooted in the sociopolitical concerns of its era. It has been beautifully depicted by the novelist. Published during the first decade of the Cold War, the novel contains obvious parallels to the struggle between liberal democracy and totalitarianism. Ralph vividly represents the liberal tradition, while Jack, before he succumbs to total anarchism, can be interpreted as representing military dictatorship. In its structure as an adventure the novel further resembles the science-fiction genre that reemerged as a popular form of the literature during the fifties. Although taking place among ostensibly realistic events, it is apparent that Lord of the Flies is an adventure story whose plot, which finds a small group of humans isolated on an alien landscape, correlates to this popular genre. Golding's next novel was a further step toward this genre. The Inheritors, heavily influenced by H.G. Wells' Outline of History, imagines life during the dawn of man.

Golding's novel remains significant for its depiction of the nature of human society and its musings on the nature of evil

Golding's novel remains significant for its depiction of the nature of human society and its musings on the nature of evil. Influenced by scientific teaching, Freudian psychology, religion and sociopolitical concerns, Lord of the Flies, like much of Golding's work attempts to account for the evil inherent in human nature.

The Plot of the Novel

The opening of the novel is very interesting and awful. During an unnamed time of war, a plane carrying a group of British schoolboys is shot down over the Pacific. During an unnamed time of war, a plane

carrying a "group of British schoolboys is shot down over the Pacific. The pilot of the plane is killed, but many of the boys survive the crash and find themselves deserted on an uninhabited island, where they are alone without adult supervision. The novel begins with the aftermath of the crash, once the boys have reached the island. The first two boys introduced are the main protagonists of the story: Ralph is among the oldest of the boys, handsome and confident on the contrary, Piggy, as he is derisively called, is a pudgy asthmatic boy with glasses who nevertheless possesses a keen intelligence. Ralph finds a conch shell, and when he blows it the other boys gather together. Among these boys is Jack Merridew, an aggressive boy who marches at the head of his choir. Ralph, whom the other boys choose as chief, leads Jack and another boy, Simon, on an expedition to explore the island. On their expedition they determine that they are, in fact, on a deserted island and decide that they need to find food. The three boys find a pig, which Jack prepares to kill but finally balks before he can actually stab it.

When the boys return from their expedition, Ralph calls a meeting and attempts to set rules of order for the island. When the boys return from their expedition, Ralph calls a meeting and attempts to set rules of order for the island. Jack agrees with Ralph, for the existence of rules means the existence of punishment for those who break them, but Piggy reprimands Jack for his lack of concern over long-term issues of survival. Being a leader, Ralph proposes that they build a fire on the mountain which could signal their presence to any passing ships. The boys start building the fire, but the younger boys lose interest when the task proves too difficult for them. Piggy proves essential to the process: the boys use his glasses to start the fire. After the boys start the fire, Piggy loses his temper and criticizes the other boys for not building shelters first. He worries that they still do not know how many boys there are, and believes that one of them is already missing. While Jack always tries to hunt pigs, Ralph orchestrates the building of shelters for the boys

While Jack tries to hunt pigs, Ralph orchestrates the building of shelters for the boys. The littlest boys have not helped at all, while the boys in Jack's choir, whose duty is to hunt for food, have spent the day swimming. Jack tells Ralph that he feels as if he is being hunted himself when he hunts for pigs. When Simon the only boy who has consistently helped Ralph leaves presumably to take a bath, Ralph and Jack go to find him at the bathing pool. However, Simon instead walks around the jungle alone, where he finds a serene open ace with aromatic bushes and flowers. The boys soon become accustomed to the progression of the-day' on the island. The youngest of the boys, known generally as the "littluns," spend most of the day searching for fruit to eat. When the boys play, they still obey some. sense of decency toward one another, despite the lack of parental authority. Jack continues to hunt, while Piggy, who is accepted as an outsider among the boys, considers building a sundial. A ship passes by the island, but does not stop, perhaps because the fire has burned out. Piggy blames Jack for letting the fire die, for 'he and his hunters have been preoccupied

with killing a pig at the expense of their duty, and Jack punches Piggy, breaking one lens of his glasses. Jack and the hunters chant "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in" in celebration of the kill, while Maurice pretends to be a pig and the others pretend to attack him. The protagonist Ralph becomes concerned by the behavior of Jack and the hunters and begins to appreciate Piggy's maturity. He calls an assembly in which he strongly criticizes the boys for not assisting with the fire or the building of the shelters. He insists that the fire is the most important thing on the island for it is their one chance for rescue, and declares that the only place where they should have a fire is on the mountain-top. Ralph admits that he is frightened but there is no legitimate reason to be afraid. Jack then yells at the littluns for their fear and for not helping with hunting or building shelters. He proclaims that there is no beast on the so-called island, as some of the boys believe but then a littlun, Phil, tells how he had a nightmare and when he awoke and saw something moving among the trees. Simon admits that Phil probably saw him, for he was walking in the jungle that night. The littluns begin to worry about the supposed beast, which they conceive to be perhaps a ghost. Piggy and Ralph fight once more, and when Ralph attempts to assert the rules of order, Jack asks rhetorically who cares about the rules. Ralph in turn insists that the rules are all that they have. Jack then decides to lead an expedition to hunt the beast, leaving only Ralph, Piggy and Simon. Piggy warns Ralph that if Jack becomes chief the boys will never be rescued.

The dead parachutist on the rock is mistaken to be a beast by the boys That night, during an aerial battle, a pilot parachutes down the island. Unfortunately, the pilot dies, possibly on impact. The next morning, the twins Sam and Eric are adding kindly to the fire when they see the pilot-and believe him to be a beast. They scramble down the mountain and wake Ralph. Jack calls for a hunt, but Piggy insists that they should stay together, for the beast may not come near them. Jack claims that the conch is now irrelevant, and takes a swing at Ralph when he claims that Jack does not want to be rescued. Ralph decides to join the hunters on their expedition to find the beast, despite his wish to rekindle the fire on the mountain. When they reach the other side of the island, Jack wishes to build a fort near the sea.

Jack's attempt to hunt a pig in vain

The hunters, while searching for the beast, find a boar that attacks Jack, but Jack stabs it and it runs away. The hunters also go into frenzy, lapsing into their "kill the pig" chant once again. Ralph realizes that Piggy remains with the littluns back on the other side of the island, and Simon offers to go back and tell Piggy that the other boys will not be back that night. Ralph realizes that Jack hates him and confronts him about that fact. Jack mocks Ralph for not wanting to hunt, claiming that it stems from cowardice, but when the boys see what they believe to be the beast they run away.

Simon's encounter with the 'Lord of the Flies'

Ralph returns to the shelters to find Piggy and tells him that they saw the beast, but Piggy remains skeptical. Ralph dismisses the hunters as boys with sticks, but Jack accuses him of calling his hunters cowards. Jack attempts to assert control over the other boys, calling for Ralph's removal as chief, but when Ralph retains the support of the other boys Jack runs away, crying. Piggy suggests that, if the beast prevents them from getting to the mountain-top, they should build a fire on the beach and reassures them that they will survive if they behave with common sense. Simon leaves to sit in the open space that he found earlier. Jack claims that he will be the chief of the hunters and that they will go to the castle rock where they plan to build a fort and have a feast. The hunters kill a pig, and Jack smears the blood over Maurice's face. They then cut off the head and leave it on a stick as an offering for the beast. Jack also brings several hunters back to the shelters, where he invites the other boys to join his tribe and offers them meat and the opportunity to hunt and have fun. All of the boys, except for Ralph and Piggy, join Jack. Meanwhile, Simon finds the pig's head that the hunters had left. He dubs it Lord of the Flies because of the insects that swarm around it. He believes that it speaks to him, telling him how foolish he is and how the other boys think that he is insane. The pig's head claims that it is the beast, and mocks the idea that the beast could be hunted and killed. Simon falls down and loses consciousness.

The death of Simon

Simon regains consciousness and wanders around. When he sees the dead pilot that the boys perceived to be the beast and realizes what it actually is, Simon rushes down the mountain to alert the other boys of what he has found. Ralph and Piggy play at the lagoon alone, and decide to find the other boys to make sure that nothing unfortunate happens while they play as hunters. When they find Jack, Ralph and Jack argue over who will be chief. When Piggy claims that he gets to speak because he has the conch, lack tells him that the conch does not count on his side of the island. The boys panic when Ralph warns them that a storm is coming. As the storm begins, Simon rushes from the forest, telling about the dead body on the mountain. The boys descend on Simon, thinking that he is the beast, and kill him. ,

Jack's party attack Ralph and the other boys at night

Back on the other side of the island, Ralph and Piggy discuss Simon's death. They both took part in the murder, but attempt to justify their behavior as acting out of fear and instinct. The only four boys who are not part of Jack's tribe are Ralph and Piggy and the twins, Sam and Eric, who help tend to the fire. At the castle rock, Jack rules over the boys with the trappings of an idol. He has kept one boy tied up, and instills fear in the other boys by warning them about the beast and the intruders. When Bill asks Jack how they will start a fire, Jack claims that they will steal the fire from the other boys. Meanwhile, Ralph, Piggy and the twins work on keeping the fire going, but find that it is too difficult to do by themselves. That night, the hunters attack the four boys, who fight them off but still

suffer considerable injuries. Piggy learns the purpose of the attack: they came to steal his glasses. After the attack, the four boys decide to go to the castle rock to appeal.

Jack as civilized people

After the attack, the four boys decide to go to the castle rock to appeal lack as civilized people. They groom themselves to appear presentable and dress themselves in normal clothes. When they reach castle rock, Ralph summons the other boys with the conch. Jack arrives from hunting and tells Ralph and Piggy to leave them alone. When Jack refuses to listen to Ralph's appeals to justice, Ralph calls the boys painted fools. Jack takes Sam and Eric as prisoners and orders them to be tied up. Piggy asks Jack and his hunters whether it is better to be a pack of painted Indians or sensible like Ralph, but Roger tips a rock over on Piggy, causing him to fall down the mountain to the beach. The impact kills him. Jack declares himself chief and hurls his spear at Ralph, who runs away.

The arrival of the naval officer on time saves the life of Ralph who is hunted down by Jack and team

Ralph hides near the castle rock, where he can see the other boys, whom he no longer recognizes as civilized English boys but rather as' savages. He crawls near the place where Sam and Eric are, kept, and they give him some meat and tell him to leave. While Ralph hides, he realizes that the other boys are rolling rocks down the mountain. Ralph evades the other boys who are hunting for them, and then realizes that they are setting the forest on fire in order to smoke him out, and thus will destroy whatever fruit is left on the island. Ralph finally reaches the beach, where a naval officer has arrived with his ship. He thinks that the boys have only been playing games, and scolds them for not behaving in a more organized and responsible manner, as is the British custom. As the boys prepare to leave the island for home, Ralph weeps for the death of Piggy and the end of the boys' innocence.

6.3 The Characters of the Novel:

William Golding has chosen the names of his characters with special care. You will notice that in most cases the root meaning of a name is related to the personality of the character.

(1) RALPH The significance of Ralph's name:

Ralph, originally from the Anglo-Saxon language, means "counsel." Ralph holds group meetings to share his power as leader. Ralph, a blond boy of twelve, is the first character you meet. Golding says he is strong like a boxer and quite handsome. He is likable from the start. He turns cart wheels in the sand when he realizes there are no grownups on the island, and before enjoying his first swim in the lagoon he drops his clothing about the jungle as if it were his bedroom. Ralph is like Adam in the Garden of Eden, like a child left alone to play his favorite games.

Ralph's optimism about their being rescued

Ralph's most distinguishing characteristic is his strong belief that someone will come to rescue the boys. Initially he is so assured of this that he doesn't worry about their situation. Later he insists the boys keep a fire going as a signal to passing boats. Ralph's clinging to his belief establishes the conflict in the story between himself and Jack.

Ralph is an embodiment of democracy

Ralph is not as thoughtful or as questioning as Piggy, not as spiritual as Simon or as aggressive as Jack. There is something good-natured about Ralph; he reminds us of someone we know or would want to know. Ralph shows fairness when he tries to share leadership of the boys with Jack, and he shows common sense in establishing rules to run the assemblies. Ralph is an embodiment of democracy; he is willing to be a leader but knows that it's important for each of the boys to be able to speak his mind. When there is a decision to be made, he lets the boys vote on it. Even when the boys do not live up to the responsibilities they've agreed on, Ralph does not use punishment to get them to do what he believes is right Instead he tries to talk sensibly to them. You might consider Ralph a strong person who doesn't want to use force as a method to get things done on the island. On the other hand, Ralph could be called stupid for not using force to take control of the boys in an extreme situation.

Ralph is a rounded personality

Ralph undergoes a profound change of personality during the island stay. Because of Jack's aggressiveness, the fear of the beast and his own insistence on a signal fire, Ralph begins to grapple with the problems of being a leader. The playful part of his nature is lost as he begins to recognize that he does not have Piggy's skill for thinking: Unsuccessfully, he tries to ponder the boys' fears and to act like an adult. He becomes more considerate of others as his self-awareness grows. Ralph can be said to represent the all-around, basically good person. He is not perfect, but he recognizes the need for responsibility, and he takes it on even though he is not particularly skilled at it.

(2) JACK

As his name suggests he is the character who has the most conflict with Ralph Jack comes from the Hebrew and means "one who supplants," one who takes over by force. This is how Jack gains and uses power. He is the character who has the most conflict with Ralph. Tall and thin, with red hair and freckles, Jack is marching the boys' choir down the beach when we first meet him. Unlike Ralph, Jack hungers for leadership positions. The impression that Golding gives us is of someone who is cruel. Jack has marched the boys in the glaring sun and lets them rest only when one of them faints. Although the word "military" is never used about Jack, there is

something about his manner that suggests military or authoritarian power.

Jack becomes jealous when the boys don't elect him as leader

In contrast with Ralph's good-naturedness, Jack is jealous when the boys don't elect him as leader. When Jack isn't getting his way, he lashes out, often attacking Piggy, a boy much weaker than he. Jack is like a bully you might know in school; when he doesn't get what he wants, you know that he'll get even.

Jack changes as the story advances

Jack changes as the story advances. At the beginning he can't make himself kill the first piglet they encounter. But Jack learns to trail the pigs, smelling their steamy droppings in order to find them. He allows his animal instinct, which had been restrained in the choir, to surface. He makes use of masks, dance, and ritual, knowing they will loosen the beast in himself and the other boys. He creates the chant, "Kill the pig. Slit her throat. Bash her in, "which is used first to reenact the killing of the pig in a ritual dance later to kill Simon.

Jack's animal instincts flourish in the jungle, and he encourages them in the other boys. As he and his methods become more primitive, they come in direct conflict with Ralph's. Together Jack and Ralph are like Cain* and Abel, the one bent on killing, the other on preserving. When Jack finally manipulates the leadership of the group away from Ralph, he uses fear and threats to control the boys. There is no discussion as there was under Ralph, only compliance. Anyone who does not see things the way Jack does is a threat and has to be beaten into submission or killed.

Jack lusts for power and is driven to destroy anyone who gets in his way While Jack's leadership is threatening, he does give the boys a way to cope with their fears of the beast. He teaches them to use their fear of something larger than themselves by turning it on someone smaller and less powerful. That is how he rules them; that is the only leadership he understands and respects. Unlike Ralph, Jack has no concern for being fair and allowing the boys to share in their own fate. He lusts for power and is driven to destroy anyone who gets in his way. Jack cares only about himself, thus his character demonstrates another way in which power may be used. It is difficult to like Jack. However, we recognize that he does take the responsibility for getting food and dealing with the fear of the beast. In extreme situations such as this, perhaps it is necessary and right to use extreme methods. How you feel about this will depend on your own beliefs.

(3) SIMON

The significance of Simon's name

Simon comes from the Hebrew for "listener." It was also the name of one of Jesus' apostles, Simon Peter. This hints at the spiritual role the character will play in the novel: Simon is the only one who

hears and understands the truth. Simon is a skinny little boy with black hair, about nine years old. At first he doesn't seem to be an interesting character, but he becomes important to the story.

Our first impression of Simon is that he is a little odd or weird

Our first impression of Simon is that he is a little odd or weird. He isn't easy to be friends with. He is the kid that others gang up on or laugh at because of the strange things he says. - He is friends with no one in particular, and no one really befriends him. Even though he is willing to help build shelters with Ralph, he often disappears on his own. The reason Simon may be a loner is that he has a disability which makes him slightly different from the boys: Simon has epilepsy, In ancient times many thought that the epileptic seizure was an indication that a person had great spiritual powers and was favored by communications from the gods. In an ironic twist, Simon communicates with an evil figure rather than a loving god. He is the only boy who hears Lord of the Flies speak and learns that the beast is within himself rather than in the jungle. Because of his spiritual nature, he understands what most boys his age never thinks about. Simon Alone knows for certain that there – no such thing as. a beast, that there is only the fear that is inside each boy. He knows that this is what terrifies them. It terrifies him also, and it makes him unable to talk about it. That is why, when he does speak, the words come out so strangely. Simon is the most compassionate of the boys; he is like a priest or a saint-exactly the opposite of Jack. When Simon sees the dead man in the parachute, he frees him in spite of the horror he feels. What Simon knows makes him unable to become a savage like the hunters or Jack. He can't even defend himself at the moment of his own slaughter. And when he tries to tell the boys what they cannot understand, the make him the beast of their fears. He is killed by the strength of their beliefs in the beast. Simon is one of the most important characters because the story revolves around fear of the beast and he is the only boy who confronts It, during one of his seizures, He hears the truth, and in spite of the consequences he tells it. Simon's spiritual power is invisible and personal. Someone like Jack, who has no internal understanding or respect for such things, can easily destroy Simon, but he can't destroy Simon's spiritual power. This power is also misunderstood by Ralph, who can't figure out the problem of the beast. Simon's ability is never recognized by his peers.

The character of Simon is presented in three phases in the novel

The character of Simon is presented in three phases in the novel: Initially Simon's attitude and nature; then with the complication of the plot, Simon's increasing Importance and his relation with nature and above all relation to his own self; and lastly his death, the climax of the novel which plays a pivotal role in the novel.

In the third chapter Huts on the Beach, Golding explores the distinction of Simon and the differences between the Both Ralph and Jack, who consider Simon faintly crazy, are also worlds apart from him. Simon acts as a peace-maker between Jack and Piggy; he is to be seen suffering the little children to come to him and getting them fruits. He is timid, his movements are silent and he withdraws himself from the realm of hot exchanges; and from these initial exposition one can see easily enough what Golding meant by calling Simon a 'saint' even a 'Christ-like' figure. But what brings Simon alive and makes the passages where he is by himself among the finest things in the books is the quality of the imagination that. goes into creating his particular sensibility. He is in fact, not so much a character in the sense that the other boys are, but the most inclusive sensibility among the children at this stage. The presentation of Simon in this chapter strikes us with considerable, force, as Simon moves through the jungle. As he moves, we find the forest is alien to man and how its fecundity is rooted in dissolution. Simon is the first child, to register fully, what the island and its jungle are like in, themselves. The qualities that were present in Ralph's day-dreaming at the: finding of the conch are fully realized in Simon. On the other hand, in solitary communication with nature, he taps Jack's sensitivity to the creepy as well as the beautiful. But he is outside the hunter mentality, the leader mentality outside even himself-like Meursault in Albert Camus' The Outsider. He exists in terms of his sensitivity to what is outside him This allows him to know comprehensively. He not only registers the heat the urgency, the riot, the dampness and decay; he also registers the cool mysterious submergence of the forest in darkness, the pure beauty and fragrance of starlight and night flower, the peace. Finally, he not only registers both, but accepts them equally, as two parts of the same reality. It is these qualities of acceptance and inclusion that give us the 'Simon-ness' of Simon.

From Chapter Five onwards, **Simon gains Importance along with the disintegration and brutal degeneration of the boys.**

Chapter Five, Beast from Water presents the superstition which leads to the inward fear which sparks off savagery. In this chapter the worst contempt of the meeting however, .is reserved for Simon, who thinks that there may be a beast that is not any kind of animal: 'What I mean Is... may be Its only us. But Simon is howled down even more than Piggy; and when~ the vote comes to be taken Ralph is forced to realize that fear cannot be dispelled by voting. And only Simon starts his quest which continues as long as he lives**.**

In the Ninth chapter, both the 'View' and the 'Death' of its title are Simon's

In the Ninth chapter, both the 'View' and the 'Death' of its title are Simon's; he climbs the -mountain and goes down to the others to tell them that the Beast is 'harmless and horrible' because 'What else is

there to do ?' So Simon moves to lay rest the 'history' of man's inhumanity and falls amidst the hysteric frenzy to be mistaken for the Beast, they 'do him in' and leapt on the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore'. Thus, Simon is a character as well as a symbol. Truth becomes the first casualty and Simon's struggle and fate bring him with the long tradition of truth-seekers. Simon's attempt to tell the truth synchronizes with his death. Golding gives an Epic dimension to Simon's death when the entire elemental nature pays a tribute to Simon-the infinite dark ceaseless waves of eternal sea, the thunder and rain. The whole vision of sea-burial reflects nature's glorification of a 'crucified martyr' and places the 'saint' to a cosmic perspective.

4. Piggy

Piggy's disabilities set him apart from the other boys

Piggy has an obvious meaning, and the name connects the boy to the pigs which the other boys hunt and kill. Piggy is a little like Simon. He has several disabilities- his asthma, his obesity and his near blindness and they set him apart from the other boys. But his have isolated him and given him time to think about life. Like Simon, piggy is wiser than most of the boys; however, he is able to speak~ up at meetings more than Simon can, and he becomes Ralph's respected friend.

Piggy represents civilization and its hold on man

As advisor to Ralph Piggy understands more than Ralph does. It is Piggy who knows that blowing the conch will call the boys together. Piggy tries to help .Ralph keep order. He also tries to think what adults would do if they were m the same situation. Piggy represents civilization and its hold on man. Piggy is a thinking person, one who has a strong belief in scientific explanations and rational solutions to problems. However, Piggy has his blind spots. He wants1t? believe that once you're an adult, you no longer fear the dark, and that life can always be explained. He also wants little to do with understanding evil. After Simon has been murdered, Piggy tries to deny and rationalize the killing. Piggy is Golding's argument for the need of civilization and his case against man's return to a more innocent state in nature. Piggy's presence on the island is a constant reminder of how thinking people live. In the jungle he becomes weakened, civilization recedes, and with his death the law of the jungle prevails. Piggy is Golding's argument for the need of civilization and his case against man's return to a more innocent state in nature.

5. ROGER

Roger symbolizes brute force

Roger comes from the German and means "spear." Roger's power is the use of brute force totally at whim. As Jack's right-hand man, Roger darkly parallels Piggy's relationship to Ralph. There is much conversation between Piggy and Ralph but little, between Jack and

Roger. Roger carries out, to an extreme, Jack's aggressive use of force. Roger's brute force is indiscriminate. Roger is the cruelest of the characters, and even though he doesn't; playa large part in the story, his role leaves the reader shuddering. Roger uses his spear to torment the sow after the boys have captured it. Later he brags about it, flaunting his meanness. He is responsible for wantonly murdering Piggy, using a stick to pry loose a boulder that bounds down and strikes him. Roger represents the worst that develops in people when there is no civilization to keep them in line. Roger despises civilization and sees it as a hindrance to what he wants.

6. SAM and (7) ERIC (SAMNERIC]

Sam and Eric are twins who are incapable of acting independently of one another. They seem to become one person, answering to a name that has been slurred together into Samneric. They represent loss of identity through fear of the beast.

6.4 *Lord of the Flies:* Chapter wise Summary:

Chapter One: The Sound of the Shell

The novel begins in the aftermath of a plane crash in the Pacific Ocean during an unnamed war in which a group of English schoolboys are isolated on what they assume to be an island under no adult supervision. The pilot died in the crash and the plane has been swept to sea by a storm. Among the survivors are a young, fair-haired boy of twelve named Ralph and a pudgy boy referred to only by the derisive nickname from school that he dislikes: Piggy. Piggy insists that he can neither run nor swim well because of his asthma. Ralph insists that his father, a commander in the Navy, will come and rescue them. Both of Piggy's parents had already died. Piggy doubts that anybody will find them, and suggests that the boys should gather together. Ralph finds a conch shell, which Piggy tells him will make a loud noise. When Ralph blows the conch, several children make their way to· Ralph and Piggy. There were several small children around six years old and a party of boys marching in step, dressed in eccentric clothing: black cloaks and black caps.

One of the boys, Jack Merridew, leads the group, which he addresses as his choir. Piggy suggests that everyone state their names, and Jack insists on being called Merridew, for Jack is a kid's name. Jack, a tall thin boy with an ugly, freckled complexion and flaming red hair, insists that he be the leader because he's the head boy of his choir. They decide to vote for chief: although Jack seems the most obvious leader and Piggy the most obviously intelligent, Ralph has a sense of stillness and gravity. He is elected chief, but concedes that Jack can 'lead his choir, who will be hunters. Ralph decides that everyone should stay there while' three boys will find out whether they are on an island.

Ralph chooses one of the boys, Simon, while Jack insists that he comes along. When Piggy offers to go, Jack dismisses the idea, humiliating Piggy, who is still ashamed that Ralph revealed his hated nickname. The three boys search the island, climbing up the mountain to survey it. On the

way up, they push down the mountain a large rock that blocks their way. When they finally reach the top and determine that they are on an island, Ralph looks upon everything and says "this belongs to us." The three decide that they need food to eat, and find a piglet caught in a curtain of creepers. Jack draws his knife, but pauses before he has a chance to stab the pig, which frees itself and runs away. Jack could not stab the pig because of the great violence involved, but he vows that he would show no mercy next time.

Chapter Two: Fire on the Mountain

Ralph called another meeting that night. The sunburned children had put on clothing once more, while the choir was more disheveled having abandoned their cloaks. Ralph announces that they are on an uninhabited Island, but Jack interjects and insists that they need an army to hunt the pigs. Ralph sets the rules of order for the meeting: only the person who has the conch shell may speak. Jack relishes having rules, and even more so having punishment for breaking them. Piggy reprimands Jack. He says that nobody knows where they are and that they may be there a long time. Ralph reassures them, telling them that the island is theirs, and until the grown- ups come they will have fun.

A small boy is about to cry; he wonders what they will do about a snake-thing. Ralph suggests that they build a fire on the top of the mountain, for the smoke will signal their presence. Jack summons the boys to come build a fire, leaving only Piggy and Ralph. Piggy shows disgust at their childish behavior as Ralph catches up and helps them bring piles of wood to the top. Eventually it proves too difficult for some of the smaller boys, who lose interest and search for fruit to eat.

When they gather enough wood, Ralph and Jack wonder how to set a fire. Piggy arrives, and Jack suggests that they use his glasses. Jack snatches them from Piggy, who can barely see without them. Eventually they use the glasses to reflect the rays of the sun, starting a fire. The boys are mesmerized by the fire, but it soon burns out. Ralph insists that they have rules, and Jack agrees, since they are English, and the English are the best at everything so must do the right things. Ralph says they might never be saved, and Piggy claims that he has been saying that, but nobody has listened. They get the fire going once more. While Piggy has the conch, he loses his temper, telling the other boys how they should have listened to his orders to build shelters first and how a fire is a secondary consideration.

Piggy worries that they still don't know exactly how many boys there are, and mentions the snakes. Suddenly, one of the trees catches on fire, and one of the boy screams about snakes. Piggy thinks that one of the boys is missing.

Chapter Three: Huts on the Beach

Jack scans the oppressively silent forest. A bird startles him as he progresses along the trail. He raises his spear and hurls it at a group of pigs, driving them away. He eventually comes upon Ralph near the lagoon. Ralph complains that the boys are not working hard to

build the shelters. The little ones are hopeless, spending most of their time bathing or eating. Jack says that Ralph is chief, so he should just order them to do so. Ralph admits that they could call a meeting, vow to build something, whether a hut or a submarine, start building it for five minutes then quit. Ralph tells lack that most of his hunters spent the afternoon swimming. Madness comes to Ralph's eyes as he admits that he might kill something soon. Ralph insists that they need shelters more than anything. Ralph notices that the other boys are frightened. Jack says that when he is hunting, he often feels as if he is being hunted, but admits that this is irrational. Only Simon has been helping Ralph, but he leaves, presumably to have a bath. Jack and Ralph go to the bathing pool, but do not find Simon there. Simon had followed Jack and Ralph, and then turned into the forest with a sense of purpose. He is a tall, skinny boy with a coarse mop of black hair. He walks through the acres of fruit trees and finds fruit that the littlest boys cannot reach. He gives the boys fruit and then goes along the path into the jungle. He finds an open space and looks to see whether he is alone. This open space contains great aromatic bushes, a bowl of heat and light

Chapter Four: Painted Faces and Long Hair'

The boys quickly become accustomed to the progression of the day on' the island, including the strange point at midday when the sea would rise. Piggy discounts the midday illusions as mere mirages. The northern European tradition of work, play and food right through the day made it possible for the boys to adjust themselves to the new rhythm. The smaller boys were known by the generic title of "littluns," including Percival, the smallest boy on the island, who had stayed in a small shelter for two days and' had only recently emerged, peaked, red-eyed and miserable. The littluns spend most of the day searching for fruit to eat, and since they choose it indiscriminately suffer from chronic diarrhea. They cry for their mothers less often than expected, and spend time with the older boys only during Ralph's assemblies. They build castles in the sand. One of the biggest of the littluns is Henry, a distant relative of the boy who disappeared.

Two other boys, Roger and Maurice, come out of the forest for a swim and kick down the sand castles. Maurice,' remembering how his mother chastised him, feels guilty when he gets sand in Percival's eye. Henry is fascinated by the small creatures on the beach. Roger picks up a stone to throw at Henry, but deliberately misses him, recalling the taboos of earlier life. Jack thinks about why he is still unsuccessful as a hunter. He thinks that the animals see him, so he wants to find some way to camouflage himself. Jack rubs his face with charcoal, and laughs with a bloodthirsty snarl when he sees himself. From behind the mask Jack seems liberated from shame and self-consciousness, Piggy thinks about making a sundial so that they can tell time, but Ralph dismisses the idea. The idea that Piggy is an outsider.is tacitly accepted. Ralph believes that he sees smoke along the horizon coming from a ship, but there is not enough smoke from the mountain to signal it. Ralph starts to run to the up, the mountain, but cannot reach it in time. Their own fire is dead. Ralph screams for the ship to come back, but it passes without seeing them. Ralph finds that the

hunters have found, a pig, but Ralph admonishes them for letting the fire go out. Jack is overjoyed by their kill. Piggy begins to cry at their lost opportunity, and blames Jack for letting the fire go out the two argue, and finally Jack punches Piggy in the stomach. Piggy's glasses fly off and break on the rocks. Jack eventually does apologize about the fire, but Ralph resents Jack's misbehavior. Jack considers not letting Piggy have any meat, but orders everyone to eat. Maurice pretends to be a pig, and the hunters circle around him, dancing and singing "Kill the pig. Cut her throat Bash her in." Ralph vows to call an assembly.

Chapter Five: Beast from Water

Ralph goes to the beach because he needs a place to think and is overcome with astonishment. He understands the weariness of life, where everything requires improvisation. He calls a meeting near the bathing pool, realizing that he must think and make the decision but that he lacks Piggy's ability to think. He begins the assembly seriously, telling them that they are there not for making jokes or for cleverness. He reminds them that everyone built the first shelter, which is the sturdiest, while the third one, built only by Simon and Ralph, is unstable. He admonishes them for not using the appropriate areas for the lavatory, and reminds them that the fire is the most important thing on the island, for it is their means of escape. He claims that they ought to die before they let the fire out. He directs this at the hunters, in particular. He makes the rule that the only place where they will have a fire is on the mountain. Ralph then speaks on their fear. He admits that he is frightened himself, but their fear is unfounded. Jack stands up, takes the conch, and yells at the littluns for screaming like babies and not hunting or building or helping. Jack tells them that there is no beast on the island. Piggy does agree with Jack on that point, telling the kids that there are no beasts and there is no real fear, unless they get frightened of people. A littlun, Phil, tells how he had a nightmare and, when he awoke, how he saw something big and horrid moving among the trees.

Ralph dismisses it as nothing. Simon admits that he was walking in the Jungle at night, Percival speaks next, and as he gives his name he recites his address and telephone number; this reminder of home causes him to break out into tears. All of the littluns join him. Percival claims that the beast comes out of the sea, and tells them about squids. Simon says that maybe there is a beast, and the boys speak about ghosts. Piggy says he does not believe in ghosts, but Jack attempts to start a fight again. Ralph ~tops the fight, and asks the boys how many of them believe in ghosts. Piggy yells at the boys, asking whether they are humans or animals or savages. Jack threatens him again, and Ralph intercedes once more, complaining that they are breaking the rules. When Jack asks "who cares?" Ralph says that the rules are the only thing that they have. Jack says that they will hunt the beast down. The assembly breaks up as Jack leads them on a hunt. Only Ralph, Piggy and Simon remain. Ralph says that if he blows the conch to summon them back and they refuse, then they will become like animals and Will never be rescued. He does ask Piggy whether there are ghosts or beasts, but Piggy reassures him. Piggy warns him that if Ralph steps down as Chief Jack will do nothing but hunt, and

they will never be rescued. The three reminisce on the majesty of adult life. The three hear Percival still sobbing his address.

Chapter Six: Beast from Air

Ralph and Simon pick up Percival and carry him to a shelter. That night, over the horizon, there is an aerial battle. A pilot drops from a parachute, sweeping across the reef toward the mountain. The dead pilot sits on the mountain-top. Early the next morning, there are noises by a rock down the side of the mountain. The twins Sam and Eric, the two boys on duty at the fire, awake and add kindling to the fire. Just then they spot something at the top of the mountain and crouch in fear. They scramble down the mountain and wake Ralph. They claim that they saw the beast. Eric tells the boys that they saw the beast, which has teeth and claws and stay there, for the beast may not come near them.

When Piggy says that he has the right to speak because of the conch, Jack says that they don't need the conch anymore. Ralph becomes exasperated at Jack, accusing him of not wanting to be rescued, and Jack takes a swing at him. Ralph decides that he will go with the hunters to search for the beast, which may be around' a rocky area of the mountain. Simon, wanting to show that he is accepted, travels with Ralph, who wishes only for solitude. Jack gets the hunters lost on the way around the mountain. They continue along a narrow wall of rocks that forms a bridge between parts of the island, reaching the open sea. As some of the boys spend time rolling rocks around the bridge, Ralph decides that it would be, better to climb the mountain and rekindle the fire, but Jack wishes to stay where they can build a fort.

Chapter Seven: Shadows and Tall Trees

Ralph notices how long his hair is and how dirty and unclean he has become. He had followed the hunters across the island. On this other side of the island, the view is utterly different. The horizon is hard clipped blue and the sea crashes against the rocks. Simon and Ralph watch the sea, and Simon reassures him that they will leave the' island eventually. Ralph is somewhat doubtful, but Simon says that it is simply his opinion. Roger calls for Ralph, telling him that they need to continue hunting. A boar appears; Jack stabs it with a spear, but the boar escapes. Jack is wounded on his left forearm, so Simon tells him he should suck the wound. The hunters go into frenzy once more, chanting "kill the pig" again. Roger and Jack talk about their chanting, and Jack says that someone should dress up as a pig and pretend to knock him over.

Robert says that Jack wants a real pig so that he can actually kill, but Jack says that he could just use a littlun. The boys start climbing up the mountain once more, but Ralph realizes that they cannot leave the littluns alone with Piggy all night. Jack mocks Ralph for his concern for Piggy. Simon says that he can go back himself. Ralph tells Jack that there isn't enough light to go hunting for pigs. Out of the new understanding that Piggy has given him, Ralph asks Jack why he hates him. Jack has no answer. The boys are tired and afraid, but Jack vows that he will go up the

mountain to look for the beast. Jack mocks Ralph for not wanting to go up the mountain, claiming that he is afraid. Jack claims he saw something bulge on the mountain. Since Jack seems for the first time somewhat afraid, Ralph says that they will look for it then. The boys see a rock-like hump and something like a great ape sitting asleep with its head between its knees. At its sight, the boys run off.

Chapter Eight: Gift for the Darkness

When Ralph tells Piggy what they saw, he is quite skeptical. Ralph tells him that the beast had teeth and big black eyes. Jack says that his hunters can defeat the beast, but Ralph dismisses them as boys with sticks. Jack tells the other boys that the beast is a hunter, and says that Ralph thinks that the boys are cowards. Jack says that Ralph isn't a proper chief, for he is a coward himself. Jack asks the boys who wants Ralph not to be chief. Nobody agrees with Jack, so he runs off in tears. He says that he is not going to be part of Ralph's lot. Jack leaves them. Piggy says that they can do without Jack, but they soul stay close to the platform. Simon suggests that they climb the mountain: Piggy says that if they climb the mountain they can start the fire again, but then suggests that they start a fire down by the beach. Piggy organizes the new fire by the beach. Ralph notices that several of the boys are missing. Piggy says that they will do well enough if they behave with common sense, and proposes a feast. They wonder where Simon has gone; he might be climbing the mountain. Simon had left to sit in the open space he had found earlier, Far off along the beach, Jack says that he will be chief of the hunters, and will forest the beast. He says that they might go later to the castle rock, but now will kill a pig and give a feast. They find a group of pigs and kill a large sow. Jack rubs the blood over Maurice's cheeks, while Roger laughs that the fatal blow against the sow was up her ass. They cut off the pig's head and leave it on as tick as a sift for the beast at the mountain-top. Simon sees the head, - with flies buzzing around it. Ralph worries that the boys will die if they are not rescued soon. Ralph and Piggy realize that it is Jack who causes things to break up: The forest near them suddenly bursts into uproar. The littluns run off as Jack approaches, naked except for paint and a belt, while hunters take burning branches from the fire. Jack tells them that he and his hunters are living along the beach by a flat rock, where they hunt and feast and have fun. He invites the boys to join his tribe. When Jack leaves, Ralph says that he thought Jack was going to take the conch, which Ralph holds as a symbol of ritual and order. They reiterate that the fire is the most important thing but Bill suggests that they go to the hunters' feast and tell them that the fire is hard on them. At the top of the mountain remains the pig's head, which Simon has dubbed Lord of the Flies. Simon believes that the pig's head speaks to him, calling him a silly little boy, Lord of the Flies tells Simon that he'd better run off and play with the others, who think that he IS crazy. Lord of the Flies claims that he is the Beast, and laughs at the idea that the Beast is something that could be hunted and killed. Simon falls down and loses consciousness,

Chapter Nine: A View to a Death

Simon's fit, passes into the weariness of sleep, Simon speaks aloud to himself asking What else is there to do?" Simon sees the Beast, the body if the soldier who parachuted onto the Island and realizes what it actually IS. ~e staggers down the mountain. to tell them what he has found. Ralph notices the clouds overhead and estimates that it will rain again. Ralph and piggy play in the lagoon, and Piggy gets mad when Ralph squirts water on him, getting his glasses wet. They wonder where most of the other boys have gone, and remark that they are with the hunters for the fun of pretending to be a tribe and putting on war paint. They decide that they should find _them to make sure that nothing happens. They find the other boys grouped together, laughing and eating. Jack sits on a great log, painted and garlanded as an idol. Jack orders the boys to give Ralph and Piggy some meat, and then orders a boy to give him a drink. Jack asks all of the boys who will join his tribe, for he gave them food and his hunters will protect them. Ralph and Jack argue over who will be chief. Ralph says that he has the conch, but Jack says that it doesn't count on this side of the island. Piggy tells Ralph that they should go before there is trouble. Ralph warns them that a storm is coming and asks where there shelters are. The littluns are frightened, so Jack says that they should do their pig dance. As the storm begins, Simon rushes from the jungle, crying out about the dead body on the mountain. The boys rush after him, striking him and killing him. Meanwhile, on the mountain, the storm blows the parachute and the body attached to it into the sea. That night, Simon's body washes out to sea.

Chapter Ten: The Shell and the Glasses

Back on the other side of the island, Ralph and Piggy discuss Simon, and Piggy reminds him that he is still chief or at least chief over them. Piggy tries to stop Ralph from talking about Simon's murder, Piggy says that he took part in the murder because he was scared, but Ralph says that he wasn't scared. He doesn't know what came over him. They try to justify the death as an accident caused by Simon's crazy behavior. Piggy asks Ralph not to reveal to Sam and Eric that they were in on the killing. Sam and Eric .return, dragging a long out of the forest. All four appear nervous as they discuss where they have been, trying to avoid the subject of Simon's murder.

Roger arrives at castle rock, where Robert makes him declare himself before he can enter. The boys have set a log so they can easily cause a rock to tumble down. Roger and Robert discuss how Jack had Wilfred tied up for no apparent reason. Jack sits on a log, nearly naked with a painted face. He declares that tomorrow they will hunt again. He warns them about the beast and about intruders. Bill asks what they will use to light the fire, and Jack blushes. He finally answers that they shall take fire from the others. Piggy gives Ralph his glasses to start the fire. They wish that they could make a radio or a boat, but Ralph says that they might be captured by the Reads. Eric stops himself before he admits that it would be better than being captured by Jack's hunters.

Ralph wonders about what Simon said about a dead man. The boys become tired by pulling wood for the fire, but Ralph resolves that they must keep it going. Ralph nearly forgets what their objective is for the fire, and they, realize that two people are needed to keep the fire burning at all times. This would require that they each spend twelve hours a day devoted to it. They finally give up the fire for the night. Ralph reminisces about the safety of home: and he and Piggy conclude that they will go insane. They laugh at a small Joke that Piggy makes. Jack and his hunters arrive and attack the shelter where Ralph, Piggy and the twins are. They fight them off, but still suffer considerable injuries. Piggy thought that they wanted the couch; but realizes that they came for something else. Instead, Jack had come for Piggy's broken glasses.

Chapter Eleven: Castle Rock

The four boys gather around where the fire had been, bloody and wounded. Ralph calls a meeting for the boys who remain with them, and Piggy asks Ralph to tell them what could be done. Ralph says that all they need is a fire, and if they had kept the fire burning they might have been rescued already. Ralph, Sam and Eric think that they should go to the Castle Rock with spears, but Piggy refuses to take one. Piggy says that he's going to go find Jack himself. Piggy says that he will appeal to a sense of justice. A tear falls down his cheek as he speaks. Ralph says that they should make themselves look presentable, with clothes, to not look like savages.

They set off along the beach, limping. When they approach the Castle Rock, Ralph blows the conch. He approaches the other boys tentatively, and Sam and Eric rush near him, leaving Piggy alone. Jack arrives from hunting, and tells Ralph to leave them alone. Ralph finally calls Jack a thief, and Jack responds by trying to stab Ralph with his spear, which Ralph deflects. They fight each other while Piggy reminds Ralph what they came to do. Ralph stops fighting and says that they have to give back Piggy's glasses and reminds them about the fire. He calls them painted fools.

Jack orders the boys to grab Sam and Eric. They take the spears from the twins and Jack orders them to be tied up. Ralph screams at Jack, calling him a beast and a swine and a thief. They fight again, but Piggy asks to speak as the other boys jeer. Piggy asks them whether it is better to be a pack of painted Indians or to be sensible like Ralph, to have rules and agree to hunt and kill. Roger leans his weight on the lever, causing a great rock to crash down on Piggy, crushing the conch and sending Piggy down a cliff, where he lands on the beach, killing him. Jack declares himself chief, and hurls his spear at Ralph, which tears the skin and flesh over his ribs, then shears off and falls into the water. Ralph turns and runs, but Sam and Eric remain. Jack orders them to join the tribe, but when they only wish to be let go, he pokes them in the ribs with a spear.

Chapter Twelve: Cry of the Hunters

Ralph hides, wondering about his wounds. He is not far from the Castle Rock. He thinks he sees Bill in the distance, but realizes that it

is not actually Bill anymore, for he is now a savage and not the boy in shorts and shirt he once knew. He concludes that Jack will never leave Ralph alone. Ralph can see Lord of the Flies, now a skull with the skin and meat eaten away. Ralph can still hear the chant “Kill the beast. Cut his throat. Spill his blood." He crawls to the lookout near Castle Rock and calls to Sam and Eric.

They tell him that Roger has sharpened a stick at both ends, but Ralph cannot attach a meaning to this. Ralph crawls away to a slope where he can safely sleep. When he awakes, he can hear Jack and Roger outside the thicket where he hides. They are trying to find out where Ralph is hiding. The other boys are rolling rocks down the mountain. Ralph finally runs away, not knowing what he should do. He decides to hide again, and then realizes that Jack and his boys were sitting the island on fire to smoke Ralph out, a move that would destroy whatever fruit was left on the island.

Ralph rushes toward the beach, where he finds a naval officer. His ship saw the smoke and came to the island. The officer thinks that the boys have been only playing games. The other boys begin to appear from the forest. Percival tries to announce his name and address, but cannot say what was once so natural. Ralph says that he is boss, and the officer asks how many there are. He scolds them for not knowing exactly how many there are and for not being organized, as the British are supposed to be. Ralph says that they were like that at first. Ralph begins to weep for the first time on the island. He weeps for the end of innocence and the darkness of man’s heart, and for the fall of Piggy. The officer turns away, embarrassed, while the other boys await-the cruiser in the distance. The last paragraph is the most chilling. Ralph and the boys appear to have been saved and Jack’s rule destroyed. Again, the perspective shifts, and we look away from the boys and out toward the cruiser. The boys will be heading into another war. Ralph has been saved not to return to the home he has dreamed of but to be carried toward a larger war not of his making. Those who are conducting the war have the same immature attitudes about civilization and power that the boys on the island had. The Jacks of the world may yet have their way.

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7

STUDY OF LORD OF THE FLIES
PART II

Unit Structure

7.0 Objectives:

- To understand the nature of evil represented in the novel and society
- To familiarize the students with various thematic concerns depicted in the novel
- To study the mindset of the school children stranded on an island
- To acquaint the students with setting, characterization and symbolism reflected in the novel.

7.1 Setting of Lord of the Flies:

The story takes place on an imaginary island in the ocean, an island the author never actually locates in the real world. He does this .so that you can imagine most of the island in your own way. You might even want to draw a map of the island, locating on it all the features listed below (the capitalized words). You will be exploring and getting to know the island in the same way that the boys have to, that is, little by little. If you include each of the sections, you will be able to follow the story more closely. A map will also let you experience how terribly trapped Ralph must have felt when he was being stalked by Jack.

The nature of the island and its various parts

The author tells us that the island is tropical and shaped like a boat. At the low end are the jungle and the orchards, which rise up to the treeless and rocky mountain ridge. The BEACH near the warm water LAGOON is where Piggy and Ralph first talk and find the conch. This is also where they hold their meetings. The author calls it a "natural platform of fallen trees." Not far away is the FRUIT ORCHARD where the boys can eat all they want and Ralph complains when the boys are "taken short." Inland

from the lagoon is the JUNGLE with PIG TRAILS and hanging vines which the "Iittluns" fear. Here Jack hunts the pigs, and then Ralph and this is where the beast supposedly lives. The jungle is also Simon's hiding place when he goes to see the candle bushes. In the same area he sees the pig's head that Jack mounted on a stake. The island has a MOUNTAIN that Ralph, Simon, and Jack climb, and from which they are able to see the terrain. This is where the boys are supposed to keep a fire going and where the parachutist landed on the rocks.

Finally, there is the CASTLE at the other end of the island, which rises a hundred feet above the sea. This is where the first search for the beast is made. It becomes Jack's headquarters when he declares himself chief, and it is from the castle that Piggy falls to his death on the rocks below.

Golding gives us a very strong sense of place, and the island shapes the story's direction. At the outset the boys view it as a paradise; it is lush and abundant with food. As the fear of the beast grows, it becomes a hell in which fire and fear prevail.

The island setting works as a metaphor for the world

The island setting works as a metaphor for the world. The boys are trapped on the island as we are trapped on this planet. What happens there becomes a commentary on our world. The island is also described as a boat, and the boys feel they are men about to embark on an adventure. When the story closes, a boat has landed on the island. The boys' first adventure is over, but they are about to begin another.

Structure of the Novel

It has been observed that the structure is the planned framework of the book. It is the deliberate way in which the story is organized by the author to make an impact on the reader. The novel opens abruptly. We are immediately with the boys on the island, asked to accept their presence there, and swept into a story so engrossing that we just keep turning pages. The middle of the story is spun out slowly and artfully through the repetitions of mirroring scenes and the steady buildup of tension The middle of the story is spun out slowly and artfully through the repetitions of mirroring scenes and the steady buildup of tension. In the beginning the boys explored the island and saw it and themselves as glamorous. Later, terrified of the beast, they go looking for it in a scene that recalls the first exploration but reveals their failed dreams and growing disillusionment. This creates tension in the reader. The boys' repeated use of the chant does the same thing. When they slaughter the first pig, they shout, "Kill the pig!" Later this becomes "Kill the beast!" One chant recalls the other, and the change of a word intensifies the meaning. The novelist also depicts the conflict between democracy and autocracy through protagonist and antagonist. Tension is also created by the steady falling away of civilization, which the reader is made aware of early in the story. It begins innocently with the boys' inability to keep rules they've made for themselves because they would rather play. In each chapter there is something which indicates this loss, and the reader begins to anticipate and worry about what will happen next. The author is a master at creating

tension. Once the reader becomes thoroughly absorbed, the story concludes with the same abruptness with which it began. At the end the reader is so caught up by events that he or she has totally suspended disbelief or objectivity and just wants to know what is going to happen to Ralph. The ending's impact is powerful because there is no time for the reader to question or disagree. The story is over and has made its impression before we realize it. The danger of automatic acceptance of an idea without due consideration of the facts? Golding seduces his readers into outthinking-the very failing he criticizes in the boys. Only after the story has been read, felt, and thought about can the reader understand the danger of being seduced by the automatic acceptance of an idea without due consideration of the facts.

7.2 THEMES

The prominent themes reflected in the world famous novel of William Golding are:

1. THE NEED FOR CIVILIZATION

The most obvious of the themes is man's need for civilization. Contrary to the belief that man is innocent and society evil, the story shows that laws and rules, policemen and schools are necessary to keep the darker side of human nature in, line. When these institutions and concepts slip away or are ignored, human beings revert to a more primitive part of their nature.

2. INNOCENCE AND THE LOSS OF IT

The existence of civilization allows man to remain innocent or ignorant about his true nature. Although man needs civilization, it is important that he also be aware of his more primitive instincts. Only in this way can he reach true maturity. Golding implies that the loss of innocence has little to do with age but is related to a person's understanding of human nature. It can happen at 'any age or not at all. Painful though it may be, this loss of innocence by coming to terms with reality is necessary if humanity is to survive.

3. THE LOSS OF IDENTITY

Civilization separates man from the animals by teaching him to think and make choices. When civilization slips away and man reverts to his more primitive nature, his identity disintegrates. The boys use masks to cover their identity, and this allows them to kill and later to murder. The loss of a personal name personifies the loss of selfhood and identity.

4. POWER

Different types of power, with their uses and abuses, are central to the story. Each kind of power is used. by one of the characters. Democratic power is shown when choices and decisions are shared among many. Authoritarian power allows one person to rule by threatening and terrifying others. Spiritual power recognizes

internal and external realities and attempts to integrate them. Brute force, the most primitive use of power is indiscriminate.

5. FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

Fear of the unknown on the island revolves around the boys' terror of the beast. Fear is allowed to grow because they play with the idea of it. They cannot fully accept the notion of a beast, nor can they let go of it. They whip themselves into hysteria, and their attempts to resolve their fears are too feeble to convince themselves one way or the other. The recognition that no real beast exists, that there is only the power of fear, is one of the deepest meanings of the story.

6. THE INDIFFERENCE OF NATURE

Throughout much of literature the natural world has been portrayed as "mother nature," the protector of man. In Lord of the Flies nature is shown to be indifferent to humanity's existence. When nature creates a situation which helps or hinders mankind, it is an arbitrary happening. Man may be aware of nature, but nature is unconscious and unaware of mankind.

7. BLINDNESS AND SIGHT

Being blind and having special sight are interwoven themes. One who is blind to his immediate surroundings usually has special understanding of things which others cannot fathom. This person sees more, but he is not seen or recognized by those around him. Such a person is often considered a fool and ridiculed by others.

THEME ANALYSIS

Lord of the Flies is a modern novel that can be read and interpreted at various levels.

Lord of the Flies as a fable

Golding has stated in his book The Hot Gates, that he used the fable form to present the truth as he saw it. A fable is defined as a story that uses symbolic characters to teach a lesson. In this novel, Golding certainly accomplishes this purpose. Through the boys, he clearly teaches man's inhumanity to man and mans inherent evil. In fact, Golding states that **"man produces evil as a bee produces honey".** Golding shows how civilization on the island breaks down and leads to anarchy and terror "because the boys are suffering from the terrible disease of being human".

Lord of the Flies as a religious tale

Since man is a fallen being who continuously pays for the original sin, his nature is characterized by base evil. Golding, in Lord of the Flies, is concerned about this evil and how it relates to man's soul and its salvation. Throughout the book, the author depicts the contrast between good and evil, kindness and cruelty, civilization and savagery, guilt and indifference, responsibility and anarchy. The rational good of

mankind is represented by Ralph and Piggy, with the conch their symbol of authority; the evil savagery of mankind is represented by Jack and his hunters, with the beast, or "Lord of the Flies", as their symbol of savagery. The beast stands for the evil that is present in all human beings, and Simon and Piggy, or rationality, are almost helpless in its presence. Fortunately, there is also Simon, a symbol of vision and salvation. He is able to see the beast as it really exists-in the hearts of all mankind. Unfortunately, when he tries to bring the truth to the-savage ones, he is sacrificed, much like Christ was sacrificed when he tried to bring truth to the unknowing. But the fact that Simon existed gives hope to all mankind; the truth about life, its goodness and its evil, is available to those who seek it.

Lord of the Flies as a symbolic novel

The novel functions throughout on a symbolic level. The boys, in their variety of personalities, symbolize mankind as a-whole. Ralph is the symbol of rational, but fallible, mankind. He tries to establish an orderly society, based on rules, authority, and knowledge; but he struggles against the forces of evil (Lord of the Flies) throughout the book. Jack, his counterpart, is the symbol of emotion and savagery. He lives for the hunt, rules as a dictator and is guided by evil purpose. Unfortunately, he knows the base level of human beings and successfully appeals to it through hunting, dancing, and fear. Each boy has a close follower. Ralph has Piggy, who is an intellectual and a true wise friend; he is destroyed by the evil hunters. Jack has Roger, who in his sadistic nature has the power to destroy and he kills Piggy. Simon occupies a central position in the symbolic scheme, for he represents truth, vision, and moral understanding. Unfortunately, he is quiet and shy and has difficulty speaking out. When he does try to tell the savages the truth about the beast, they refuse to listen and literally tear him apart, as if to blot out his message.

Lord of the Flies as a Political Novel

The novel can be viewed as a contrast between democracy and anarchy. Ralp is elected by the boys to be their chief. Governed by rationality, he tries to be a democratic leader, listening to the concerns of all watching out for the good of all (building and maintaining the fire), and protecting them all (building shelters). To remind the others of his leadership, he wisely and sparingly uses the conch as a symbol of the authority. Jack does not like the democracy and its rules. He tries to convince the other boys to vote Ralph out of office and put him in the leadership role. When they refuse to elect Jack, he reacts in anarchy. He deserts the democratic way of life, seizes a part of the island for himself, and gains followers through strong arm tactics. He and his savage hunters raid the democratic headquarters and steal the last vestiges of their civilization (the fire and the glasses) and break the conch (their authority). Then Jack begins to rule selfishly for his own good and pleasure. Like a dictator, he makes his own laws regardless of the consequences, doles out punishment as he sees fit, encourages savagery amongst his followers, and

demands loyalty to the point of servitude. Although democracy does not survive on the island, neither can anarchy.

Lord of the Flies as a psychological novel

The novel functions as a study of mankind's basic nature, and the picture that is painted by Golding is very negative. When' children, as symbols of mankind, are away from authority (adults) and without any checks (laws and policemen), they revert to primitive behavior. They evolve their own undemocratic rules and savage behavior they even create their own god, Lord of the Flies. Golding provides valuable lessons about basic human behavior through the group of the children.

Biblical Parallels

Many critics have characterized Lord of the Flies as a retelling of episodes from the Bible. While that description may be an over simplification, the novel does echo certain Christian images and themes. Golding does not make any explicit or direct connections to Christian symbolism in Lord of the Flies; instead, these biblical parallels function as a kind of subtle motif in the novel, adding thematic resonance to the main ideas of the story. The island itself, particularly Simon's glade in the forest, recalls the Garden of Eden in its status as an originally pristine place that is corrupted by the introduction of evil. Similarly, we may see Lord of the Flies as a representation of the devil, for it works to promote evil among humankind. Furthermore, many critics have drawn strong parallels between Simon and Jesus. Among the boys, Simon is the one who arrives at the moral truth of the novel, and the other boys kill him sacrificially as a consequence of having discovered this truth. Simon's conversation with Lord of the Flies also parallels the confrontation between Jesus and the devil during Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, as told in the Christian Gospels.

However, it is important to remember that the parallels between Simon and Christ are not complete, and that there are limits to reading Lord of the Flies purely as a Christian allegory. Save for Simon's two uncanny predictions of the future, he lacks the supernatural connection to God that Jesus has in Christian tradition. Although Simon is wise in many ways, his death does not bring salvation to the island; rather, his death plunges the island deeper into savagery and moral guilt. Moreover, Simon dies before he is able to tell the boys the truth he has discovered. Jesus, in contrast, was killed while spreading his moral philosophy. In this way, Simon-and Lord of the Flies as a whole-echoes Christian ideas and themes without developing explicit, precise parallels with them. The novel's biblical parallels enhance its moral themes but are not necessarily the primary key to interpreting the story.

7.3 SYMBOLISM IN THE NOVEL:

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

The Conch Shell

Ralph and Piggy discover the conch shell on the beach at the start of the novel and use it to summon the boys together after the crash separates them. Used in this capacity, the conch shell becomes a powerful symbol of civilization and order in the novel. The shell effectively governs the boys' meetings, for the boy who holds the shell holds the right to speak. In this regard the shell is more than a symbol and it is an actual vessel of political legitimacy and democratic power. As the island civilization erodes and the boys descend into savagery, the conch shell loses its power and influence among them. Ralph clutches the shell desperately when he talks about his role in murdering Simon. Later, the other boys ignore Ralph and throw stones at him when he attempts to blow the conch in Jack's camp. The boulder that Roger rolls onto Piggy also crushes the conch shell, signifying the demise of the civilized instinct among almost all the boys on the island.

Piggy's Glasses

Piggy is the most intelligent, rational boy in the group; and his glasses represent the power of science and intellectual endeavor in society. This symbolic significance is clear from the start of the novel, when the boys use the lenses from Piggy's glasses to focus the sunlight and start a fire. When Jack's hunters raid Ralph's camp and steal the glasses, the savages effectively take the power to make fire, leaving Ralph's group helpless.

The Signal Fire

The signal fire burns on the mountain, and later on the beach, to attract the notice of passing ships that might be able to rescue the boys. As a result, the signal fire becomes a barometer of the boys' connection to civilization. In the early parts of the novel, the fact that the boys maintain the fire is a sign that they want to be rescued and return to society. When the fire burns low or goes out, we realize that the boys have lost sight of their desire to be rescued and have accepted their savage lives on the island. The signal fire thus functions as a kind of measurement of the strength of the civilized instinct remaining on the island. Ironically, at the end of the novel, a fire finally summons a ship to the island, but not the signal fire. Instead, it is the fire of savagery-the forest fire Jack's gang starts as part of his quest to hunt and kill Ralph. .

The Beast

The imaginary beast that frightens all the boys stands for the primal instinct of savagery that exists within all human beings. The boys are afraid of the beast, but only Simon reaches the realization that they fear the beast because it exists within each of them. As the boys grow more savage, their belief in the beast grows stronger. By the end of the novel, the boys are leaving it sacrifices and treating it as a totemic god. The boys' behavior is what brings the beast into existence, so the more savagely the boys act, the more real the beast seems to become.

Lord of the Flies

Lord of the Flies is the bloody, severed sow's head that Jack Impales on a stake in the forest glade as an offering to the beast. This complicated symbol becomes the most important image in the novel when Simon confronts the sow's head in the glade and it seems to speak to him, telling him that evil lies within every human heart and promising to have some "fun" with him. (This "fun" foreshadows Simon's death in the following chapter.) In this way, Lord of the Flies becomes both a physical manifestation of the beast, a symbol of the power of evil, and a kind of Satan figure who evokes the beast within each human being. Looking at the novel in the context of biblical parallels, Lord of the Flies recalls the devil, just as Simon recalls Jesus. In fact, the name *"Lord of the Flies"* is a literal translation of the name of the biblical name Beelzebub, a powerful demon in hell sometimes thought to be the devil himself.

Ralph, Piggy, Jack, Simon, Roger

Lord of the Flies is an allegorical novel, and many of its characters signify important ideas or themes. Ralph represents order, leadership, and civilization. Piggy represents the scientific and intellectual aspects of civilization. Jack represents unbridled savagery and the desire for power, Simon represents natural human goodness. Roger represents brutality and bloodlust at their most extreme. To the extent that the boys' society resembles a political state, the littluns might be seen as the common people, while the older boys represent the ruling classes and political leaders. The relationships that develop between the older boys and the younger ones emphasize the older boys' connection to either the civilized or the savage instinct: civilized boys like Ralph and Simon use their power to protect the younger boys and advance the good of the group; savage boys like Jack and Roger use their power to gratify their own desires, treating the little boys as objects for their own amusement,

7.4 Critical assessment of the novel:

Golding's Style

Lord of the Flies reveals Golding's mastery of the technique of writing and his command over language and style

Lord of tile Flies reveals Golding's mastery of the technique of writing and his command over language and style. It is written in simple, clear, graceful, chaste and poetic style involving a deft use of various decorative devices like simile, metaphor, symbols, images, and so on. Golding's mastery of the English language is to be seen in his use of telling words and epithets and articulate sentences. As Miss Diana Neil observes, "*Lord of the Flies impresses* by sheer quality of the writing; the fresh vivid metaphors build up a textual richness. Golding gets his effects by use of words chosen for their pictorial value or their strange disturbing sense of movement. Particularly striking is his power to communicate the terror of the human heart before the unknown nature, and the all too clearly discernible cruelty in man." Although the story is exciting and fast-moving, the style of writing is a deliberate one: In order to write such a

compelling novel, Golding needed to be very much in control of his material. The story can be overwhelming for us, but he had to be objective about it in order to mold it as he did.

We can see instances of his ability to make us feel a certain way in the length and kinds of sentences he uses. We can see instances of his ability to make us feel a certain way in the length and kinds of sentences he uses. When he wants the action to move slowly, he uses long, deliberate sentences that slow the reader's pace, making us feel as though We too are having a leisurely time. Note the beginning of Chapter 4, when the boys have been on the island awhile: "The first rhythm that they became used to was the slow swing from dawn to quick dusk. They accepted the pleasures of morning, the bright sun, the whelming sea and sweet air, as a time when play was good and life so full that hope was not necessary and therefore forgotten." That long, graceful sentence is intended to give us a feeling for the slow passage of time and the leisurely way in which the boys spent their mornings.

When Ralph is being stalked by the boys at the climax, we feel his anxiety. Notice the short, choppy sentences that can be read quickly and that give a sensation of running. Notice also the brevity of Ralph's thoughts, as if there isn't much time to think. "Break the line. A tree. Hide, and let them pass .... Hide was better than a tree because you had a chance of breaking the line if you were discovered. Ride then."

There is also Golding's deliberate choice of words. We've seen how each character's name represents an essential aspect of his personality. On the opening page Golding gives a sense of the jungle's menace in spite of the fact that Ralph thinks it's a paradise. The choice of words gives us the clue. Piggy and Ralph are both scratched by "thorns." Piggy is trapped in the "creepers." Golding lets us know before the characters do that this isn't a friendly place. The use of emotional material is also greatly controlled. Golding shows no sentimentality about Piggy's death as he gives the gruesome details of Piggy's twitching on the rocks. The deliberate use of imagery enhances the meaning of the story by appealing to the senses. Simon's meditation is surrounded by butterflies, and Lord of the Flies is covered by flies. Birds make witchlike cries, and coconuts are described as skulls. Golding also uses a mirroring technique. At the opening of the story, when the boys explore the island, they are excited with what they find. Here the description is filled with light, color, and friendship. The second exploration recalls the first, but the boys have become leery of one another. They are searching for the beast; there are gloom, fear, and isolation in the description. The narration is simple, the events flow smoothly, and the moods change rapidly without much effort The style of the novel is deceivingly simple. It reads quickly, like a children's adventure story. The narration is simple, the events flow smoothly, and the moods change rapidly without much effort. The boys are not given last names, the titles of the chapters clearly foreshadow the action that is to take place, and the author refrains from comment upon the development of events within the story. Despite his simple style, Golding has created an artistic masterpiece. Below the simplicity, there is a world of meaning and symbolism that evoke deep reactions.

Foreshadowing, flashback, imagery, symbols, and repetition tightly hold the novel together

The writing is also extremely well structured. It is a: war that causes the children to flee England and start the action; in the middle of the novel, the war still rages, as evidenced by the plane flight and the descent of the dead airman; at the end of the novel, the war continues, as evidenced by the warship and the naval officer carrying weapons. Two important symbols of civilization, the conch and the glasses, are closely followed throughout the action. As the civilized life breaks up on the island, the glasses are broken and stolen, and the conch is crushed. Piggy, who wears the glasses and carries the conch, is killed.

The savagery of the hunt and the tribal dances that follow are systematically repeated throughout the novel, with each description becoming more savage, clearly foreshadowing the descent into evil. The Lord of the Flies also ties the novel together. It is planted in the forest after the first pig is killed and is discovered by Simon shortly before his death at the hands of the savages. It is also seen by Ralph, as he tries to escape certain death from the hunters; he appropriately throws it to the ground and breaks it. The fire is another image that weaves the story together. The first fire on the mountain-top is allowed to rage out of control, killing the first victim in the story and foreshadowing that life, like the fire, will rage out of control. The second fire is allowed to go out, causing them to miss their first possible rescue from a passing ship. Ralph constantly worries about the fire as a signal; Jack worries about it as a means to prepare the meat from the hunt. In the end, Ralph is unable to build a fire, for Jack has stolen Piggy's glasses. The hunters, instead, try to burn Ralph up as he hides in the thicket. Ironically, it is this fire that has evil intent that signals their existence and brings their rescue and return to civilization. Obviously, Golding has structured the novel with great purpose and intent.

The title of the novel, Lord of tile Flies is itself symbolic in that it refers to some demon or force of Evil which dominates the world of the boys in the island. As Golding himself has admitted about Lord of the Flies, "The whole book is symbolic in nature except the rescue at the end where adult life appears, dignified and capable, but in reality, enmeshed in the same evil as the symbolic life of the children on the island." He has, in this novel employed various symbols to convey his meaning and vision effectively. The title of the novel, Lord of the Flies is itself symbolic in that it refers to some demon or force of Evil which dominates the world of the boys in the island. The 'beast" is also an important symbol in the novel. As symbolized by the parachutist, it is actually human, as Simon seemed to realize. But to the boys in the island 'it is a 'beast from the air'. It represents the interiorized evil present in all human beings.

Golding has employed both public and private symbols in Lord of the Flies. The public symbols include the crosses on the cloaks of choir-boys led by Jack Merridew. It refers to their being Christians following Christian beliefs and modes of conduct; daytime and darkness having obvious implications; the mountain standing for a high place, and the lagoon for a safe place; and so on. The meanings of such symbols as these

are intelligible to all. There are also some private symbols in the novel, like Piggy's glasses signifying intellectuality/reason, and the conch-shell possessed by Ralph is a symbol of his power and his authority over others. The stick pointed at both ends, the dead air-man, and the pig's head impaled on a stick, are some of the private symbols in Lord of the Flies, that can be interpreted only in the context of the story or action.

7.5 Point of View of the Novel

In *Lord of the Flies* the point of view shifts several times. For most of the story we see events through the eyes of the boys. sometimes it is through Ralph's eyes that we watch, at other times through Piggy's or Simon's. We are on the island with them, and we are close to what is happening to them.

However, sometimes the author steps into the story to give information that is not in the realm of the boys' experience However, sometimes the author steps into the story to give information that is not in the realm of the boys' experience. When the parachutist lands on the island, the author tells about the war that is still going on in the world. There are also the descriptions of the mirages in nature and the sea's dragging Simon's body away. At the close of the story, when we are close to ~hat is happening to Ralph, the author again backs us away from it

At the close of the story, when we are close to what is happening to Ralph, the author again backs us away from it. He turns us around, and we find we are seeing the boys through the eyes of the officer. Golding does this deliberately. By making us feel what Ralph is experiencing and thinking, Golding forces us to get caught up in the story and forget about being objective. Then, bringing in the officer so that we see the boy through adult eyes, he makes us recognize that the boys' situation is of great importance to us. Golding then swings the point of view around again, and we are looking with the officer and the -boys at the cruiser. In this way, Golding forces us to realize that our situation is the same as that of the boys, the officer, and the world in general. What happens to the boys is the same as what is going on in the world of war.

7.6 Let's Sum up:

In this way, William Golding has successfully depicted the nature of evil and the conflict civilization versus savagery in his remarkable and commendable novel The Lord of the Flies.

7.7 Questions:

1. "The Lord of the Flies is an exploration of civilization versus savagery, democracy versus dictatorship, conflict between good and evil and loss of innocence"

   Would you agree with this? Justify your answer

2. Discuss the character portrayal of Ralph as a protagonist with reference to The Lord of the Flies
3. "Bee produces honey similarly man produces evil" Would you agree with this? Substantiate this statement with reference to the novel.
4. Examine the character of Jack as an antagonist with reference to The Lord of the Flies.
5. Explain the suitability and significance of the title "The Lord of the Flies"
6. Compare and contrast between Ralph as a protagonist and Jack as an antagonist with relevant illustrations.

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8

CRITICAL STUDY OF GRAHAM GREEN'S THE HUMAN FACTOR

Unit Structure

8.0 Objectives:

To explain the novel *The Human Factor*, its critical commentary, characterization, technique, themes, motifs and symbols

8.1 Author's Information:

Henry Graham Greene was born on October 2 1904 in Berkhamstead, England. He studied at Berkhamstead School at which his father, Charles Henry Greene would later become the school master. His experiences at school were traumatic. He was bullied there and had a difficult time balancing his loyalty to his father and his friends who actively rebelled against the school. The bullying led Graham to be very depressed. In this state of mind, Greene attempted suicide, one of which included Russian roulette. Russian roulette consists of spinning the cylinder of a revolver loaded with one cartridge, pointing the muzzle at one's own head, and pulling the trigger. Greene even attempted to escape from the school. He was eventually treated with psychoanalysis which was quite a radical move in the 1920s. Afterwards, he continued in school as a day pupil as opposed to a boarder.

Greene graduated from Balliol College, Oxford. After graduation, Greene embarked on a career in journalism. He even wrote film reviews for The Spectator. However his now notorious review of the film "Wee WillyWinky" starring Shirley Temple prompted litigation proceedings against the magazine

Greene published his first book *The Man Within* in 1929. He published *Stamboul Express* also called *Orient Express* in 1931. *A Gun for Sale* was published in 1936 while *The Ministry of Fear* was published in 1945 among many others. His finest novel of this time are *Brighton Rock* (1938) and *The Power and the Glory* (1940). Only *Stamboul Express* and *Brighton Rock* were commercial successes of the books published till 1940.

In 1941, Greene started working for the Secret Intelligence Service or the MI6. His supervisor was Kim Philby, who also became his friend. Philby was later revealed to be a double agent for the Russians. Many believe the character of Maurice Castle in *The Human Factor* is modelled after Kim Philby. However, Greene has stated that the character of Castle is not at all like Philby's. Greene left MI6 in 1944. He wrote *The Heart of the Matter* in 1948. *The Quiet American* in 1955 foreshadows the Vietnam conflict. Greene satirizes the Intelligence service in his next novel *Our man in Havana* in 1958. *The Human Factor* along with *The Honorary Consul* were published during his later years in 1978 and 1973 respectively.

Greene's novels are fast moving, dramatic and thrilling. Its no surprise that most of his works have been easily translated into films. His works concern itself with the moral and spiritual struggle of an individual amidst the presence of evil. His experiences in journalism, travelling and serving MI6 have contributed to the richness and variety to many of his novels. Novels such as *Brighton Rock, The End of the Affair, The Heart of the Matter* have religion as a theme. Although he never liked to be called a Roman Catholic novelist, religious themes are a plenty in his works.

Greene has won numerous accolades and awards for his exhaustive literary career. He was even considered for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Greene died of leukaemia in 1991 in Switzerland.

Structure:

The novel is divided in six parts. There is no thematic or structural difference between the parts. The parts are further divided into chapters.

8.2 Summary:

Part one:

The novel revolves British agent for the MI6, Maurice Castle. Castle works for the African division of the secret agency known as section 6A. He is 62 years of age. He has worked for more than 30 years in the agency and is looking forward to a quiet retired life. Castle lives far away from his workplace. He lives a rather normal life in Berkhampstead with his wife Sarah and his step-son Sam and their dog Buller.

The novel begins with suspicions of a leak in his division for which his assistant Arthur Davis is the alleged culprit. Davis is besotted by his secretary Cynthia. Davis takes some confidential papers with him to read during lunch which Colonel Daintry who is investigating the leaks finds suspicious. Colonel Daintry, Doctor Percival and 'C' discuss how the leak happened, who might be responsible for it and the proper way to get rid of the culprit.

Meanwhile, Maurice's phone at home keeps ringing and cutting off at add hours. This worries Sarah as she home alone for most of the day. Sam, their son is down with measles. Colonel Daintry visits the Hargreaves for a weekend shooting at their house. There, he is introduced to Dr Emmanuel Percival who is also looking into the leak at section 6A.

Part two:

Maurice visits a bookshop called 'Halliday and Sons' which he has been visiting for years. The shop is run by Mr Halliday and his son who is never seen. At work, Maurice and Davis talk about their personal lives and their work. Davis wishes to be posted to a foreign locale. He also confesses to be in love with Cynthia.

Maurice is asked to meet 'C'. They discuss his time in South Africa and the troubles Maurice found himself in after falling in love with Sarah who is black during apartheid. 'C' explains the importance of keeping South Africa away from Russia. He remarks that diamonds mines and uranium, both found in South Africa, are more important in the world than petrol. He talks to Castle about Uncle Remus, a joint operation between South Africa, UK and America that will prove immensely beneficial to the countries involved.

Maurice takes his son Sam to the park after his home quarantine from contracting measles. Sam asks him questions about spies and what they do. Sam is an inquisitive young child. Maurice informs Sarah that Cornelius Muller is to visit them. Many years ago when Maurice was stationed in South Africa, Maurice fell in love with Sarah which was against the law in apartheid South Africa. When Muller, his immediate superior in South Africa found out about the affair he refused to help Maurice and Sarah to flee to England. Both Sarah and Maurice hate Muller but have to invite him over as he is important for the Uncle Remus operation.

Davis plans to meet Cynthia at the zoo for lunch. He asks Maurice to lie to his superiors about his whereabouts as he going out during office hours. He tells Maurice to say he is going to the dentist. Maurice reluctantly agrees to lie for him. Doctor Percival is interested to know who Davis' dentist is as he was sure that Davis has perfect teeth. Castle realises that Davis' alibi is thin and is afraid of what will happen to him.

Part three:

Doctor Percival and John Hargreaves meet for lunch. Percival is convinced that Davis is the leak although he admits that the evidence is circumstantial. Davis' only fault is that he is a drinker and owns a Jaguar. Percival also discusses Davis taking confidential papers out of the office during lunch. He is also certain that Davis did not visit the dentist. Soon after Davis' visit to the dentist, there is a leak and Percival is convinced he is the man. Davis was followed to the zoo by agents who watched his every move. Percival informs Hargreaves that he plans to poison Davis. Percival describes what will happen and how Davis will die. Hargreaves is shocked by the cold manner in which Percival describes Davis' eventual death. Percival tells Hargreaves that this is the job and by killing Davis, he is saving Davis from worse deaths.

Davis has joined Maurice and his family for a picnic. Maurice tells Castle that he thinks he is being followed. Maurice visits Mr Halliday's book shop and asks him to recommend a book for him. Afterwards he goes into

a phone booth and calls someone. When someone on the other end says Hello he says “Im sorry, wrong number”, and hangs up.

Maurice is nervous about Muller’s visit to his house. Sarah cautions him to drink less. Maurice remembers his interaction with Muller during his days in South Africa. Muller had made it clear to Castle then that falling in live with an African woman was political suicide and against the law. When Muller arrives, Maurice and him reminisce about their time in South Africa. Sarah answers Muller’s questions tersely. Muller is interested in finding out how Sarah managed to escape to Swaziland. He is aware that Maurice had Communist friends who may have helped him. Muller informs Maurice that his Communist friend Parsons died of pneumonia. Maurice knows that Parsons died in prison and not how Muller described. Maurice remembers Parsons as the person who helped him get Sarah to safety and for that he owes him a debt. Sarah and Maurice talk about the gratitude they both feel for what Carson was able to do for them.

Maurice and his family routinely visit his mother. His mother is 85 years old and accepts Sarah and Sam without a doubt. Maurice tell her that he intends to leave Sam in her care if something were to happen to him and Sarah. His mother remembers Maurice’s first wife and how much she liked her and wishes he had a child with her. Unbeknownst to his mother, Maurice finds out that he is sterile so he could not have a child with Mary, his first wife. He also remembers her death at the hand of a buzz bomb while he was away on work. He regrets not being able to protect his wife. In fact, he never mentions her even to Sarah. After returning from his mother’s, the phone rings twice at midnight which scares Sarah. Maurice goes to Sam’s room to see if he is okay. Sam asks Maurice if the telephone call is a secret signal. Maurice does not answer his questions and tucks him to bed. Sarah feels guilty at the fact that Sam is not Maurice’s biological child. He knew about her pregnancy when they met in South Africa. Maurice tells her anything of hers is his and he sees Sam as his son.

Maurice visits a café. A man mistakes him for someone else. Maurice eventually follows the man to an ordinary neighbourhood where he meets his friend and handler Boris. The stranger was not a stranger but an agent who making sure Maurice is not being followed. It turns out that Maurice has been the double agent all along. He does not reveal this secret to anyone, including Sarah. The phone calls to his house were in fact signals sent by the Russians. The book shop that Castle visits is also a cover up for sending codes. Maurice explains to Boris his reservations about continuing to be a double agent. He agrees to be a double agent due to the help Carson provided him to help Sarah flee South Africa. He wishes to retire and live a comfortable life with Sarah and Sam. Maurice goes on to talk about his hatred towards the BOSS outfit, one that wanted to separate Sarah and him. Maurice is worried that he will lose his wife and child if the truth was revealed. Boris promises to take care of Sarah and Sam if things go out of control. He promises a safe passage to Sarah and Sam out of the country in the event that Maurice has to flee.

At work, Maurice notices Davis is not at his usual place. He is told that Davis drank too much with Dr Percival the night before and is nursing a hang-over. Daintry asks Maurice if he is satisfied with Davis' work. He asks Maurice to accompany him to his daughter's wedding. Daintry has a contentious relationship with his ex-wife. He does not wish to meet her alone. Maurice agrees to go with him.

Worried about Davis' health, Maurice convinces Cynthia to go with him over to Davis' house to check up on him. Davis opens the door rather animatedly and says his liver is acting up. Maurice tells Davis about his meeting with Daintry and the alleged leak in their unit. Davis remarks he is always someone who is found out. He is will always get caught for taking papers out of the building while he has seen Maurice do the same before and he is never questioned for it.

At Daintry's request Maurice accompanies him to his daughter's wedding. Daintry is anxious of meeting his ex-wife, Sylvia, whom he has not spoken to for seven years. The wedding group moves to Daintry's ex-wife's house after the ceremony. Maurice gets a call at Sylvia's home. He is at first surprised as no one knew he was there. He imagines it's a call regarding Sam or Sarah. It turns out that Cynthia has called. She informs him that Davis is dead. At Davis' flat, Percival is examining the body and surprised at how quickly the poison worked. Maurice, unaware of the poison or Percival's role in Davis' death is trying to understand what happened. There are Special Agents at the house trying to find any clue of Davis' secret life as a double agent. They find a book of poems by Robert Browning. Certain paragraphs are marked and letter 'c' written next to it. Maurice deciphers it as simply poems which Davis may have marked for Cynthia and that there was nothing sinister about it.

Maurice knows that his report on Uncle Remus will be his last report he will hand over as double agent. He wonders if his debt to Carson can truly be over. Back home, Maurice tells Sarah about Davis' death. He also voices his reservations about Davis' death and the role of Dr Percival. Sarah asks him to leave everything and leave England and move to France Maurice says they cannot go just yet until he gets his pension.

Part four:

Thoughts of Davis haunt Maurice. His section now feels empty with just Cynthia for company. Castle wants to reveal everything to Sarah. He knows he can trust her but he decides it is not worth the worry when everything is almost over.

Maurice has a meeting with Muller where they discuss the unfortunate death of Davis. Maurice forgets the funeral is on the same day as his meeting as Muller's. However, he continues the meeting to get more information on Uncle Remus.

At the funeral, Dr Percival and John Hargreaves discuss the post mortem of Davis and how no one suspected anything. Dr Percival remarks at the efficacy of the poison, of how quickly it acted despite the doctor's predictions. He also remarks that this particular type of poison had never

been used on a human. Percival explains that he put the poison in Davis' drink when Davis gave him bad whisky.

At home, Maurice is wrestling with the guilt of possibly losing his family. He again wonders whether he should Sarah everything. He reads a children's book to Sam knowing full well that this may be the last time he may ever read to his son. Later that night Sarah has a nightmare about finding herself alone with Sam on a white only compartment of a train. She is worried for their future and if they are safe. Maurice assures her that they are. He thinks of the last report he has written and the repercussions of encoding the message 'goodbye' in the report.

Part five:

Desperate to talk to someone, Maurice tries to meet Halliday Junior, who he thinks is being used to pass on the codes unknowingly. Unable to meet him, Maurice tries calling from phone booths as signal that he wishes to talk. He is unable to remember the exact location of the house he met Boris in. In desperation, he enters a church. The priest refuses to take his confession as he is not Catholic. At home, Sarah knows there is something on Maurice's mind. Maurice finally tells her the truth. He tells her it will be clear who the leak is from. He advises her to take Sam and go to his mothers pretending that she and him had a fight. Meanwhile he will figure out the next course of action and inform Sarah what to do.

John Hargreaves is enjoying his weekend at home with his wife. He gets an urgent phone call from Muller asking to meet as soon as possible. Hargreaves reluctantly invites him to his house as the matter seems urgent. Muller tells him of his suspicions regarding Maurice. Maurice was known to be friendly to Carson. Muller believes the friendship was much more. He suspects Maurice of being the double agent.

Maurice convinces Sarah to take her and Sam to his mother's. They are uncertain of their future but hebelieves they will meet each other again. He tells her not to call him, that he will call her from a public phone in a few days. After Sarah leaves, he is left all alone with Buller at his house. There is incessant ringing of the phone which Maurice knows could be a signal.

Hargreaves is certain that Maurice may be the culprit and not Davis. He goes through Maurice's safe and finds Muller notes missing. They tap Maurice's phone to make certain that he is not the leak. Hargreaves feels guilty of having Davis killed. Percival remarks that Davis was a waste of time, he was not good at his job and drank too much. They cannot use the same poison on Maurice and as he does not drink. They may have to take him to court unless they think of another way to eliminate him.

Alone at home, Maurice thinks of the various scenarios he may find himself in. He thinks of the dog as a liability. He receives a call from his mother asking what has happened. He tells her, as planned, that he and Sarah had a fight. He tells her that she will find out the reason for the fight. Maurice's mother asks if a reconciliation is at all possible, to which Maurice replies that let them cool off and they will come up with a solution. After the phone call, Maurice notices footsteps outside his door. He hides a pistol in his pocket and opens the door. To his surprise, it is

Colonel Daintry. Maurice is wary of why Daintry, of all people, has come to visit him. He tells Daintry that he is alone at home because his wife and child have left him. This Maurice believes will be important point to maintain Sarah's innocence in the whole ordeal. Daintry and Maurice talk about Davis' death. Maurice tells him that he sure that Davis was not the leak, knowing full well that an admission like this would be risky for him. Maurice tries to blame other secretaries, other agents of being leaks. Daintry is convinced that Davis is the leak as he liked money. When Daintry leaves Maurice is sure he has implicated himself enough to be taken away.

Daintry goes to a pub. He calls Dr Percival to report on what happened with Maurice. He tells the doctor that they killed the wrong man. Daintry is certain that Maurice is the leak because he was sure that Davis was innocent.

Maurice hears a knock on the door. He is certain that this is the final moment. He opens the door to find Mr Halliday. He thinks Mr Halliday has come to see him about his son. Halliday tells him that he and not his son is the one who passed on the codes. Halliday tells him they have to get him out of the house as soon as possible. The dog, Buller cannot be kept alone as his barking will alert the neighbours. Halliday suggests they kill the dog in the cellar to reduce the noise of the shot. Halliday takes Maurice's gun but Maurice insists on finishing Buller off by himself. He pulls the triggers and kills Buller.

Halliday drives Maurice to a hotel near the airport and asks him to check in in room 423. Halliday tells Maurice that he has been a Party member for many years and he does what he can to help the Russians. Halliday also tells him not to talk to anyone at the hotel and go directly to his room. At the hotel Maurice ends up meeting Blit, a man who was his contact at the American embassy. They both end up having rooms on the same floor. Maurice is afraid that Blit might ruin all their plans. He locks himself in the room waiting for the next orders. Later on, a short man enters the room informing Maurice that he is take the flight to Paris. He will be disguised and has to pretend to be blind.

Part six:

Sarah is now staying with Maurice's mother. Neither she nor her mother-in-law are happy about the situation. Her mother-in-law tries to find the reason for their fight. Sarah simply tells her that Maurice asked her to come here. Sarah tries calling Maurice's office aware of the fact that it is not good idea. She spends time with Sam and tries to get along with her mother-in-law. Sam is worried about Buller and whether Buller is taken care of by Maurice. Police arrive Mrs Castle's house to enquire about Maurice. Sarah informs the police that she does not know where Maurice is as she has left him. Deep down, Sarah is happy about the enquiry as it means that they have not caught him. The police tell them that neighbours complained of a whining dog. When the police came into the house, they found Buller in the cellar shot but not dead. They had to do put the dog to put it out of its misery.

Sarah gets a phone call from Percival. The doctor wishes to meet her regrading Maurice. Sarah agrees to meet him. Their meeting is tense. They are tracing her calls and know that Maurice has not called her. Percival informs her that Maurice has reached Moscow safely, to which Sarah gives a sigh of relief. Percival threatens her in no uncertain terms. He tells her that she can never leave the country with her son as he is will make it impossible for Sam to get a passport. He questions the paternity of Sam and suggests it is someone from South Africa.

Maurice has reached Moscow safely. It's a cold and bitter place. Ivan, his handler in Moscow tell him of other British double agents who are living happily in the countryside in Russia. He also has a cleaner who also doubles up Maurice's Russian tutor. Maurice manages to find some English books from the money Ivan has provided him, Maurice keeps reminding Ivan of bringing his family to Moscow. Ivan tells him once the press find out about Maurice as a double agent they will try to get Maurice's family out of the country. Maurice asks Ivan to give him something to do as he finding it hard to pass time. As days go by, Maurice gets progressively angry at the Russians not making any effort at bringing his family to Moscow. Maurice refuses to talk to anyone or discuss anything with anyone unless his family is brought to him and he also wishes to talk to his wife on the phone. Ivan tells him he will do what he can.

Bellamy as fellow British double agent visits Maurice. They talk about their time in the British agency. They drink whisky. Bellamy tells Maurice to visit the countryside when he can.

After a few days, Boris visits Maurice in Moscow. Boris tells him his family is fine. Maurice asks him when he will see his family again. Boris tells him that Sam does not have a passport. The procurement of a passport will take time. Furthermore, he says of Sarah tries to leave the country, she could be arrested for complicity. The MI6 will make sure of that. Sarah also refuses to leave Sam behind in the eventually of fleeing the country. Boris tells him the promise of bringing the family was done in good faith. It is clear to Maurice that his role as double agent was not as valuable to the Russians to keep him happy. He realises he is a pawn in a much bigger game.

Back in England Mrs Castle finds out the truth about Maurice's double life. She is disgusted by her son's actions. She sees her son as a traitor. Sarah tries to explain to her that he turned traitor because of Sarah and all the blame should go to her. When Sarah tells Mrs Castle she intends to leave England with Sam to be with Maurice, Mrs Castle refuses to let Sam out of the country. She says he is a British citizen and is her ward and she would never let that happen.

Sarah is at her mothers-in-law's in the afternoon when the phone rings. It is Maurice. They are both happy to hear each other's voices. She tells him she cannot leave Sam and come Moscow. She says maybe when he is older she might try to come. Sarah tells Maurice to keep on hoping and the phone gets disconnected.

8.3 Characters:

Maurice Castle: Maurice Castle is the protagonist of the novel. He is an agent of a firm called BOSS stationed in South Africa. While in South Africa he meets and falls in love with his contact Sarah. The fact that Sarah is pregnant with another man's child does not make any difference to his love for her. Their love affair is the cause of all the decisions that Maurice has to make to keep him and Sarah together. In a sense, he makes a deal with the devil to be able to live in England with Sarah. Maurice has already risked his life in South Africa a white man falling in love with a black woman at the height of apartheid. He asks his agency for help but they do not provide him any. This leads him directly into the hands of his Communist friend Carson who helps Sarah escape safely. As gratitude, Castle chooses to be a double agent. As his mother says 'You always had an exaggerated sense of gratitude for the least kindness.' Maurice always maintains that ideology is not what made him a double agent, but love did. He keeps to himself and minds his own business to avoid being recognised as a double agent. Throughout the novel he is plagued with guilt and fear of being revealed as a double agent, especially after the news of the leak in his section. Davis' death makes Maurice aware of the danger he is putting himself and his family in. The callousness with which Davis is killed disillusions him to the workings of his own people.

Maurice's belief that the Communists will find a way for him and his family to be together after he flees shows his naivety. His fervent belief that when one makes a promise, one adheres to it is child-like. He does not know that he is a pawn in a much bigger plot. He may never see his family again and that is the price he has to pay for love.

Sarah Castle: Sarah is the wife of Maurice Castle. She was his contact in South Africa. They both fall in love which goes against the race laws in South Africa. Sarah's relationship with Maurice is loving, tender and mature. She knows Sam is not Maurice's son and is grateful that Maurice treats him as his own. She owes her life to him because England is not as racially biased as South Africa. Sarah is happy to be the dutiful wife. She trusts Maurice wholeheartedly. She does not get angry or blame Maurice for hiding the fact that he is a double agent. When Maurice tells her to pretend that they are separated and go to his mother's, she does so without a thought in the world. As a woman, she holds her own when being interrogated by Doctor Percival. When Boris asks her to leave Sam behind and go to Moscow to be with Maurice, she refuses. She as well as Maurice know that this is not a sacrifice she can make.

Arthur Davis: Arthur Davis works in the same section as Maurice. He has a flair for dressing up. He is close associate of Maurice's. Davis is considered to be the alleged double agent as he known to have taken confidential papers out of the office during lunch hours. He even asks Castle to lie about his whereabouts when he fixes a date with Cynthia, his secretary. He is madly in love with her. Davis lives alone in an untidy apartment. Davis has a propensity to be a heavy drinker. His drinking is

used as a cover up for killing him. He is poisoned and made to look like he died of liver failure. Davis is the unlikely victim of the web of deceit that Castle in fact has planted. There is a lack of procedural investigation done to ascertain Davis' role as a double agent. The only thing that goes against him is his drinking.

Doctor Percival: Dr Emmanuel Percival works for BOSS. He is called in to find out who the leak is and quietly dispose off of him. Percival thinks of Davis as the culprit due to his heavy drinking as well as due to the fact that he takes confidential papers out of the office during lunch hours. For eliminating Davis, Percival concocts a poison which when administered would mimic liver damage. When Davis dies, he is surprised at the speed with which the poison worked. Percival feels no remorse for what he does. He looks at it as part of his job. When Davis is finally revealed to be innocent, Percival's reaction is cold and clinical. He believes that Davis was never a good recruit and that his death was probably for the best. Percival represents the evil that is within BOSS.

Colonel Daintry: Colonel is the new head of security. He is the 'new broom' in the office. Daintry wants to find the leak in section 6A. He has a troubled personal life. He is separated from his wife. When his daughter invites him to his wedding, he finds it difficult to attend alone. He asks Castle to come with him. Castle, feeling sorry for the poor man agrees to go with him. His nervousness throughout the wedding and after shows just how hostile his relations are with his ex-wife. He inadvertently breaks his ex-wife's owl artefact which causes him more embarrassment. Daintry has his reservations about the method of eliminating the leak and that too without any proper investigation. He is worried that Dr Percival had jumped the gun when he poisoned Davis. Daintry is sent to check up on Maurice after suspicions are cast on him as the leak. After his meeting he is certain that they made a mistake and that Maurice was the leak. He feels utterly guilty at having played any hand in the death of an innocent man.

Sam: Sam is the son of Sarah and is Maurice's step-son. He is dark skinned just like his mother. Maurice treats Sam as his own flesh and blood even though he knows he is not his son. Sam, like most children his age has an active imagination. He keeps asking Maurice about spies and gadgets. Maurice is also very close to his dog Buller. He misses Buller the most when he and his mother go to live with Maurice's mother. Sam is also fond of Davis. He loves playing hide and seek with Davis.

Mrs Castle: Mrs Castle is Maurice's mother. She is a formidable woman. She readily accepts Sarah and Sam as part of her family. When Sarah and Sam come to live with her, she agrees. She tries to solve the fight between her son and Sarah. When she finds out the truth about Maurice being a double agent, she is embarrassed by her son's actions. She thinks of her son as a traitor to the nation. She even threatens Sarah with eviction if she played any part in Maurice's betrayal. When Sarah informs her that she plans to leave for Moscow with Sam when the opportunity arrives, she claims guardianship over Sam. She claims that Sam is a British citizen and will be her ward and she will never Sam leave.

8.4 Commentary

In his biography *Ways of Escape*, Greene speaks about his own superstitious belief that the protagonists he named with the letter 'C', would always be failures. When he named the character of 'Castle' he went ahead with it 'with a sense of almost failure'. Greene intended the novel to be a less romanticised version of the Bond like spy figure. He wanted to depict the less than glamorous life they live. He wanted to depict the ordinariness of the spy. As Greene writes in *Ways of Escape*, 'I wanted to present the Service unromantically as a way of life, men going daily to their office to earn their pensions, the background much like that of any other profession – whether the bank clerk or the business director – an undangerous routine, and within each character the more important private life.'

Apart from being a spy, the novel is also about the sacrifices Maurice makes in the name of love. Love is an important theme in the novel. It is the guiding light for all the decisions Maurice makes regarding his family. Throughout the novel, Maurice is plagued by the uncertainty of his future. Maurice is also a naïve character who blindly believes that those who promised him help would come through during his time of need. He does not understand that he is being used to further the cause of the Russians. Maurice deliberately keeps a low profile to protect his identity as a double agent. Maurice pays the ultimate price for love. He may never see his wife again, but that is the cost he to pay. The novel stays morally ambiguous. Both sides commit reprehensible acts in the name of ideology and national security. They use men like Davis and Maurice in their game of lies and deceit with impunity.

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9

CRITICAL STUDY OF THE ENGLISH PATIENT BY MICHAEL ONDAATJE

Unit Structure

9.0 Objectives:

- To study a very renowned South Asian writer, Michael Ondaatje
- To analyse the novel *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje
- To study various themes and symbols used by Michael Ondaatje in his novel.

9.1 Introduction:

Michael Ondaatje was born in Sri Lanka on 12 September 1943. He moved to England in 1954, and in 1962 moved to Canada where he has lived ever since. He was educated at the University of Toronto and Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and began teaching at York University in Toronto in 1971. He published a volume of memoir, *Running in the Family*, in 1983. His collections of poetry include *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid: Left Handed Poems* (1981), which won the Canadian Governor General's Award in 1971; *The Cinnamon Peeler: Selected Poems* (1989); and *Handwriting: Poems* (1998).

His first novel, *Coming Through Slaughter* (1976), is a fictional portrait of jazz musician Buddy Bolden. *The English Patient* (1992), set in Italy at the end of the Second World War, was joint winner of the Booker Prize for Fiction and was made into an Academy Award-winning film in 1996. *Anil's Ghost* (2000), set in Sri Lanka, tells the story of a young female anthropologist investigating war crimes for an international human rights group. Michael Ondaatje lives in Toronto with his wife, Linda Spalding, with whom he edits the literary journal Brick. His recent novels include *Divisadero* (2007), *The Cat's Table* (2011) and *Warlight* (2018).

Ondaatje is, along with Margaret Atwood, one of Canada's most important contemporary writers and one of the country's biggest cultural exports.

Due to the phenomenal success of his Booker Prize-winning The English Patient (1992) and, Anil's Ghost (2000) and other novels, Ondaatje is best known today as a novelist. However, he first achieved critical acclaim as a poet with early collections like The Dainty Monsters (1967), Rat Jelly (1980) and his long poem The Man with Seven Toes (1969). More recently he has returned to poetry with the publication of his long poem, The Story (2005). Set alongside water-colour illustrations by artist David Bolducan, this beautiful book aims to raise funds for the World Literacy Project in Canada. Ondaatje has also compiled a book of interviews with filmmaker Walter Murch (responsible for The English Patient among other things) entitled The Conversations (2002).

Ultimately, Ondaatje is perhaps best understood not as poet or novelist, but as an artist.

In his first novel, Coming Through Slaughter (1976), Ondaatje continues his focus on folk heroes, creating a fictionalised biography of Charles 'Buddy' Bolden (1876-1931), a legendary jazz musician. Here Ondaatje develops the formal experimentation of The Collected Works to produce a prose poem that is also 'a parable of the twentieth century artist'. Like Billy, Buddy exists outside 'official' history and the narrative hints that this is a 'life' only available to us through music, stories and rumours.

In Running in the Family (1983), Ondaatje turns away from America and Canada in order to interrogate his own life and family history through a return to Sri Lanka. Written shortly after a visiting the country of his birth, the text, once more, blends different genres in a fragmentary collage of photographs, poems and stories. If the boundary between autobiography and fiction is frayed in Coming Through Slaughter, then in Running in the Family it appears to have been erased completely. More recent works such as Handwriting (1998) and Anil's Ghost see Ondaatje dwelling increasingly on the history and landscape of his native country. While early pieces like The Collected Works and Coming Through Slaughter led to accusations that Ondaatje was an 'Americanised' artist, his writing since the late 1980s reveals a growing preoccupation with the artist's 'roots' and the politics of race and migration (Ondaatje was born in Sri Lanka before settling in Canada).

In the Skin of a Lion (1987) fictionalises the lives of those migrants and minorities that participated in the construction of Toronto in the early 1900s, but who have since been written out of the country's official history. In this beautiful, poignant novel, Ondaatje dwells on the work, labour, and energy invested in Canada by those settlers who are imagined as outsiders. In the Skin of a Lion is a profound exploration of the migrant condition. It is a novel about the wearing and the removal of masks; the shedding of skin, the transformations and translations of identity.

His next novel, The English Patient (1992), takes up these themes and issues in a more subtle, indirect manner. Ondaatje has said that the novel articulates 'All people born in one place who live in another place [and who] have lost their source'. In the place of origins and sources, we are offered fragments: fragments of narratives, fragments of buildings, fragments of lives. While Ondaatje's early work was without doubt

critically successful, it was The English Patient, a work that has also been translated into a successful film, that brought the author true international fame. Set in a villa in northern Florence, The English Patient observes the tumultuous events at the end of Second World War from the 'margins'. The haunting, harrowing yet compelling narrative spirals around one woman (Hana) and three men: Caravaggio (also the name of a key character in In the Skin of the Lion), Kip and the English patient of the title. The mysterious, nameless protagonist is confined to an upstairs bedroom after receiving horrific burns in a plane crash. Physically immobile, it is through his restless, drifting memory that the story of the victim's past emerges through a series of teasing fragments that takes us on an intimate journey between continental Europe and the African continent.

Anil's Ghost (2000) returns us once more to the author's Sri Lankan homeland. Here the backdrop shifts from European World War to South Asian civil war and the horrors and traumas of post-colonial violence. The novel tells the story of Anil Tissera, a forensic anthropologist who has trained in the United States and in England. Anil returns to Sri Lanka to investigate a series of politically motivated murders on the island. Paired up with anthropologist, Sarath Diyasena, it is the discovery of human remains in the Bandarawela caves that drives their quest for the truth and which haunts both the novel and its war-torn landscape. The novel confirms his status as one of the world's leading storytellers.

Ondaatje's next novel, Divisadero (2007), takes its name from a street in San Francisco. According to Ondaatje, 'it's a story where each half reflects the other'. One half focuses on a farm in California, the other on Southern France before the outbreak of World War I. But there is also internal division. The first narrative describes the disintegration of an already fragile family comprising a father, his biological daughter (Anna), an adopted girl (Claire) and an orphaned boy (Coop). It is this story of division that reverberates throughout the novel as Anna slowly discovers when she traces the life of writer Lucien Segura in Europe. Ondaatje's first novel in seven years, it received a mixed critical reception, with many praising Ondaatje's writing style, but with some complaining about the contrived connections between the two parts.

Ondaatje's work includes fiction, autobiography, poetry and film.

- He has published 13 books of poetry, and won the Governor General's Award for The Collected Works of Billy the Kid (1970) and There's a Trick With a Knife I'm Learning to Do: Poems 1973–1978 (1979).
- Coming Through Slaughter (1976), is a novel set in New Orleans, loosely based on the lives of jazz pioneer Buddy Bolden and photographer E. J. Bellocq. It was the winner of the 1976 Books in Canada First Novel Award.
- Running in the Family (1982) is a semi-fictional memoir of his childhood in Ceylon.

- In the Skin of a Lion (1987), a novel about early immigrants in Toronto, was the winner of the 1988 City of Toronto Book Award, finalist for the 1987 Ritz Paris Hemingway Award for best novel of the year in English, and winner of the first Canada Reads competition in 2002.
- The English Patient (1992) won the Booker Prize, the Canada Australia Prize, and the Governor General's Award.
- Anil's Ghost (2000) was the winner of the 2000 Giller Prize, the Prix Médicis, the Kiriyama Pacific Rim Book Prize, the 2001 Irish Times International Fiction Prize and Canada's Governor General's Award.
- Ondaatje's novel Divisadero won the 2007 Governor General's Award. In 2011 Ondaatje worked with Daniel Brooks to create a play based on this novel.
- In July 2018 his novel Warlight was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

9.2 The English Patient Summary:

Ondaatje's best known work is The English Patient, which won the Booker Prize upon its publication in 1992 and was adapted into a film by Anthony Minghella that won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1997.

The English Patient tracks the convocation of four people at an Italian villa - a nurse, a Sikh sapper, a thief, and a badly burned Englishman - who come to forge an unlikely family, and together discover the secrets of their respective pasts, and the emotional wounds they share.

Hana tends to the burned English patient in a room of their Italian villa. The nurse asks him how he was wounded, and he replies that he "fell burning into the desert" from a plane. His plane crashed in the Sand Sea, and nomadic Bedouins saw him stand up naked from the burning plane, on fire. They saved him, but he had no memory of who he is: after the accident, he knew only that he was English. At night the patient rarely sleeps, so the nurse reads to him from whatever book she finds in the library.

Hana is only 20 years and won't leave the English patient even though he is destined to die and the villa is unsafe. Soon, a new character emerges: a man with bandaged hands named Caravaggio, who Hana used to know. He comes to the villa and begs Hana to leave because she cannot stay with all the bombs still left underground, undefused. Hana refuses to leave the English patient.

Caravaggio and Hana go for a walk in the garden. Caravaggio allows her to loosen the bandages and change them, and Hana sees that someone removed both of his thumbs.

Outside it is raining, and Hana plays the piano in the library. She looks up, in a flash of lightning, and sees that there are two men in the room. Two soldiers - a Sikh and another man, both holding wet guns. She continues to play until she stops, nods towards them. When Caravaggio returns, he

finds Hana and the two soldiers in the kitchen making sandwiches. One of the soldiers, an Indian Sikh, sets up a tent in the garden. This is Kip, who has come to the villa to demine the property. Hana watches him bathe in the garden, and it's clear she's attracted to him.

Kip finds a large mine in a field north of the villa, and defuses the bomb with Hana's help. However, he is shaken by the experience and resents Hana because now he feels like she feels that he owes her; that he is somehow responsible for her. These feelings bring him closer to her, and soon they become lovers.

Hana sits by the English patient in his room, and he tells her that he was part of an expedition in 1930 that went searching for the lost oasis of Zerzura. There he met Katharine Clifton, wife of British aristocrat Geoffrey Clifton. Katharine was a firebrand, full of passion and moxie, and the English patient, despite his resistance to adultery, fell in love with her. Katharine somehow wanted Geoffrey to find out about the affair, but couldn't bear to tell him. Torn, frustrated, Katharine began physically assaulting her lover - leaving bruises on him from blows, cuts from flung plates and forks. He made up excuses for his wounds, and yet continued the affair, feeling disassembled by her.

Finally, Katharine told him they could never see each other again. She couldn't risk her husband finding out about them. Eventually, however, he did - long after the affair ended. When Geoffrey Clifton found out, he arranged a murder-suicide on a plane trip and crashed the plane, killing himself, mortally wounding his wife, and yet ironically leaving the English patient injury-free.

Hearing all this, Caravaggio tells Hana that he suspects that the English patient is actually Almasy, a Hungarian spy. Hana says the war is over and says it doesn't matter. Caravaggio injects the patient with more morphine and alcohol and begins to ask him questions. The patient tells Caravaggio that after crashing in the desert, he took Katharine's body to the Cave of Swimmers, where he made love to her dead body, wrapped her in parachute material, and promised to return for her. But he was arrested in El Taj by British Intelligence, and didn't return to the cave for three years. He dug up the buried plane and put Katharine inside it. He put fuel into the tank, and they began to fly in the rotted plane. Soon, however, the oil leaked onto him, the plane began to schism, and it fell from the sky in flames.

Kip flashes back to his youth. He was supposed to be a doctor, but the arrival of war meant he would join the army as an engineer - a bomb defuser. The life expectancy in his unit was only ten weeks. Kip's leader was a man named Lord Suffolk who Kip adored, but Lord Suffolk died while dismantling a large bomb. Kip left the army when he found out that people expected him to replace Lord Suffolk in position and in vision. Caravaggio says British Intelligence knew about Almasy's affair with Katharine even when Geoffrey didn't. Caravaggio tells Almasy that he worked for the British as a thief and that Almasy was considered a dangerous spy - all of British Intelligence had been looking for him. The

English patient knows nothing of all of this and can only attest to his love for Katharine.

One day, Hana sees Kip listening to the radio on his headphones in the garden. He hears something awful, runs into the tent, grabs his rifle, and runs into the villa, into the English patient's room. He tells Almasy that the Allies have dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, and wants to kill Almasy for he is a representative of the West - the West that would create such destruction. The English patient begs Kip to kill him, but Kip doesn't. Kip leaves the villa.

At the end of the novel, Hana writes a letter to her stepmother and finally explains how her father died. He was burned, and left deserted by his men. She could have saved him, but she was too far away. The novel ends with Kip, who years later is a doctor with a wife and two children. He thinks often of Hana, who used to send him letters. Because he never replied. she finally stopped.

9.3 Characters

Almasy / The English Patient

Almasy is the burned English patient who stays at the village with Hana. He was burned when his helicopter crashed - a crash engineered by the man with whose wife he was having an affair. The protagonist of the novel and the English patient of the title. Almasy is knowledgeable and reflective, the "blank screen" upon which the other characters reflect their thoughts and wishes. Though he is badly burned in a plane crash, he retains all his mental faculties and is able to tell Hana, Kip, and Caravaggio the pieces of his past and the story of how he fell in love with Katharine. Almásy strongly believes that nations are dangerous inventions, and that love can transcend both time and geography.

Hana / The Nurse

A young Canadian who serves the Allies as a nurse in World War II. Only twenty years old, Hana is an excellent nurse who takes good care of her patients. She has quickly learned that she must not become emotionally attached to her patients, as she has seen too many young soldiers slip out of her life. Very close to her father, Hana had an emotional breakdown when she heard the news of his death. She falls in love with the idea of the English patient, of the thought that she is caring for a saint-like man. Her heart, however, belongs to Kip, to whom she looks for protection as she stands at the boundary between adolescence and adulthood.

Kip / Kirpal Singh

A Sikh man from India who works as a "sapper," defusing bombs for the British forces in World War II. First introduced only as "the sikh," Kip is polite and well-mannered, and has both the skill and character to be an excellent sapper. A brown man in a white nation, Kip has grown emotionally detached, aware that people will not always react positively to him. His emotional detachment stands in the way of his relationships, most significantly his relationship with Hana. He found a mentor in Lord

Suffolk, but when Lord Suffolk died in a bomb explosion, he, like Hana, turned inwards. At the villa, Kip falls in love with Hana, but we see that deep down he is uncomfortable with his own race, and has never been comfortable being part of a culture that was subservient to the British..

Caravaggio

Caravaggio is a thief who had his hands amputated when he was caught during the war. He comes to the villa to try to get Hana to leave, since the place is littered with mines. Eventually, however, he falls in love with her. Ultimately, Caravaggio is her practical guide, where Almasy is her ethereal guide. A Canadian thief whose profession is legitimized during the war when he puts his skills to use for the British intelligence effort. Caravaggio, whom we first know only as "the man with bandaged hands," proves endearing despite the fact that his actions are not always virtuous. Hana remembers that, in his burglaries, Caravaggio was always distracted by "the human element"—an Advent calendar that was not open to the right day, for example. Caravaggio serves as a kind of surrogate father to Hana, and sheds light on the identity of the English patient.

Katharine Clifton

An Oxford-educated woman and the wife of Geoffrey Clifton. One of the most mysterious characters in the novel, Katharine is never fully understood. We know that she married Geoffrey quite young and traveled with him to Northern Africa, and that she is an avid reader who voraciously learns all she can about Cairo and the desert. Though polite and genteel, Katharine nevertheless takes what she wants, assertively approaching Almásy and telling him that she wants him to "ravish her." Though Geoffrey is a devoted and kind husband, Katharine never seems remorseful about her extramarital affair. We see Katharine's wild, dark side in her affair with Almásy, as she punches and stabs her lover, angry at him for refusing to change and daringly challenging the world to recognize their relationship.

The English patient quickly fell in love with this Oxford-educated firebrand and began an adulterous affair with her that led to both of their demises, when Geoffrey tried to kill them both in a plane crash. Katharine is stubborn and feisty, and is frustrated by Almasy's coldness. She leaves him because he can't bear to be owned by her, but ultimately dies because of the time they spent together. When she dies, Almasy leaves her in a cave, promising to come back, but he is never able to

Geoffrey Clifton

Goeffrey Clifton is a British explorer and Katharine Clifton's husband. A young, good-natured, affable man, Geoffrey is a new addition to the group of explorers who are mapping the North African desert. Geoffrey seems to have everything going for him: an Oxford education, wealthy family connections, and a beautiful young wife. He is a proud and devoted husband, and enjoys praising his wife in front of the other explorers. Goeffrey claims to have come to North Africa purely out of an interest in exploration, but Almásy finds out that Geoffrey has been working for

British Intelligence as an aerial photographer. Everyone seems to like Geoffrey, but Katharine, who knows him best, knows his capacity to be insanely jealous.

As a part of the aristocracy, he is fiercely protective of his wife. When he finds out that she is having an affair with Almasy, he initiates a murder-suicide plane crash that kills him and his wife and burns Almasy beyond recognition. Later, Almasy learns that Geoffrey wasn't just on the expedition for an adventure - he was part of British intelligence.

Lord Suffolk

A member of the old English aristocracy who, once the war begins, takes it upon himself to defuse bombs and train other men to do so. Lord Suffolk is the one "true English gentleman" whom Kip meets while he is abroad. Though Lord Suffolk is described as strange and eccentric, Kip finds that he is actually a wonderful man and a kind mentor. Kip especially values the fact that Lord Suffolk can look beyond his race and welcome him into the "English family." The nobleman's death is a large loss in Kip's life.

Madox

Almásy's best friend in the desert. Madox is a rational, level-headed man who, like Almásy, chose to live in the desert to study the features of the land and report back to the Geographical Society. Unlike Almásy, Madox includes his own emotional reactions in his writing and reports, and is not shy to describe his amazement at a particular mountain or his wonder at the size of the moon. Madox always carries a copy of Anna Karenina, the famous tale of adultery, but remains ever faithful to his wife back home. Madox sees the church as proclaiming a jingoistic pro-war message during World War II. He takes his own life in the church, and Almásy concludes that he "died because of nations."

Patrick

Hana's father, the only parent who was present to raise her while she was growing up. Like Hana, Patrick leaves Canada to join the war effort. Hana is extremely close to her father, and the news of his death sparks her initial emotional breakdown. She takes comfort in the fact that he died in a "holy place," a dove-cot.

Clara

Hana's stepmother and Patrick's wife. Clara does not appear in the novel as a character, but Hana thinks of her occasionally, remembering her in a canoe on the lake she loves so much. Despite her absence, Clara plays an important role in the novel because, to Hana, she symbolizes home, the place she has escaped from but the place to which she longs to return at the end of the novel.

9.4 Plot Overview:

In *The English Patient,* the past and the present are continually intertwined. The narrative structure intersperses descriptions of present

action with thoughts and conversations that offer glimpses of past events and occurrences. Though there is no single narrator, the story is alternatively seen from the point of view of each of the main characters.

There are ten chapters, first chapter of the novel begins with hana. “Hana is gardening. She feels it starting to rain, so she returns inside and enters a room where a man lies on a bed”.

Second chapter begins with Caravaggio. The man with bandaged hands, Caravaggio, has been in the military hospital in Rome for over four months.

Third chapter begins with Kips, “One of the soldiers who has entered the library while Hana plays the piano is a young sikh, an Indian officer who works with the British forces to clear unexploded bombs and mines. He has run into the library out of fear for the piano player, as Germans often hid bombs in musical instruments and metronomes.

The fourth chapter begins with brief discussion of the western world's history between Hana and English patient.

The fifth chapter begins with Katharine Clifton, Katharine Clifton first dreamed of the man who would become the English patient several days after she met him.

The Six chapter begins with Caravaggio tells Hana that he thinks the English patient is not really English.

The Seven chapter begins with Kips, Kip remembers his training for the bomb squad in 1940 in Westbury, England, under the direction of Lord Suffolk, his mentor. As the second son in his family, Kip was expected to be a doctor, but the war changed all that.

The eight chapter begins with Kip, remembers a time in 1941 when he was lowered into a pit to defuse a giant Esau bomb,

Nine chapter begins with The English patient talks about "how one falls in love."

The Ten chapter begins with Kip makes dinner for Hana's twenty-first birthday, and together they celebrate with Caravaggio, drinking wine and singing. Caravaggio thinks how much he wants Kip and Hana to get married. He wonders how he got in this position.

The novel opens with Hana, a young nurse, gardening outside a villa in Italy in 1945. The European theater of the war has just ended with the Germans retreating up the Italian countryside. As the Germans retreated, they left hidden bombs and mines everywhere, so the landscape is particularly dangerous. Although the other nurses and patients have left the villa to escape to a safer place, Hana decides to stay in the villa with her patient.

Hana does not know much about the man for whom she cares. Found in the wreckage of a plane crash, he been burned beyond recognition, his whole body black and even the slightest touch painful to him. He talks about the Bedouin tribe who found him in the wreckage, cared for his wounds, and eventually returned him to a British camp in 1944.

He does not know who they were, but he feels grateful to them nonetheless. To pass the time, Hana reads to the English patient—she assumes he is English by his manner and speech—and also gardens, fixes up the villa, and plays hopscotch.

One day, a man with bandaged hands named Caravaggio arrives at the villa. He is an old family friend of Hana's father, Patrick, and had heard about her location while he was recovering in a hospital a few miles away. In Canada, where Caravaggio knew Hana years ago, he was a thief. He tells her how his skills were legitimized in the war and how he put them to use working for British Intelligence in North Africa.

He tells her that the Germans caught him after an attempt to steal a camera from a woman's room. They tortured him and cut off his thumbs, leaving his hands mutilated and nearly useless. Although he has recovered somewhat, he is still addicted to morphine. In the villa, he reminisces with Hana and mourns with her over the death of her father in the war.

As Hana plays the piano in the library, two soldiers come in and stand alongside while she plays. One of them is Kip, an Indian Sikh trained as a sapper, or bomb-defuser, in the British army. After hearing the piano, Kip has come to clear the villa of bombs, knowing that the Germans frequently booby-trapped musical instruments. Kip and the English patient get along very well, as they are both experts in guns and bombs and enjoy talking to each other and sharing stories. Kip makes camp in the garden of the villa and becomes a part of the "family" that now exists there. He goes off into town every day to clear more bombs from the area and to bury fellow sappers who have died. Kip's job is extremely dangerous. He feels a strong attraction to Hana, and soon they become lovers.

Asked about his past, the English patient begins to tell the others his story. His real name is Almasy, though this is not definitively confirmed until Chapter IX. He spent the years from 1930 to the start of World War II exploring the North African desert. His job was to make observations, draw maps, and search for ancient oases in the sands. Along with his fellow European counterparts, Almasy knew every inch of the desert and made many trips across it. In 1936, a young man from Oxford, Geoffrey Clifton, and his new wife Katharine, joined their party. Geoffrey owned a plane, which the party found especially useful in helping to map the desert.

The explorers, Almasy, and the Cliftons got along very well. One night, after hearing Katharine read a passage from his book of Herodotus, Almasy realized he was in love with her. They soon began a torrid and tumultuous affair. Everywhere they stole glances and moments, and they were obsessed with each other. Finally, in 1938, Katharine broke off their affair, telling Almasy that Geoffrey would go mad if he ever found out. Although their affair was over, Almasy remained haunted by her, and he tried to punish her for hurting him by being particularly mean to her in public. At some point, Geoffrey somehow found out about the affair.

World War II broke out in 1939, and Almasy decided to close up their camp and arranged for Geoffrey to pick him up in the desert. Geoffrey

arrived in his plane with Katharine. Geoffrey attempted to kill all three of them by crashing the plane into Almasy, who was standing on the ground. The plane missed Almasy, but the crash killed Geoffrey, left Katharine severely injured, and left them with no way to escape the desert. Almasy placed Katharine in a nearby cave, covering her with a parachute for warmth, and promised to come back for her. He walked across the desert for four days until he reached the nearest town, but when he got there, the English army would not help him get back to Katharine. Because Almasy had a foreign-sounding name, the British were suspicious and locked him up as a spy, prevented him from saving Katharine.

Almasy was eventually released, but he knew it was too late to save her. He worked for the Germans, helping their spies make their way across the desert into Cairo. After he left Cairo, his truck broke down in the desert. Without transportation, he walked to the cave to get Katharine. He took her dead body and placed it in a plane that had been buried beneath the sand. The plane malfunctioned during their flight and caught fire. Almasy parachuted down from the plane, his body covered in flames. That was the point at which the Bedouins found him and cared for his burns.

Little by little, the English patient tells this whole story. Caravaggio, who has suspected the English patient was not really English, has his suspicions confirmed. He fills in gaps for the Almasy, telling him that Geoffrey Clifton was really an agent of British Intelligence and that Intelligence had known about Almasy and Katharine's affair the whole time. They knew Almasy had started helping the Germans and planned to kill him in the desert. They lost him between Cairo and the plane crash, and now, of course, he is unrecognizable.

The focus of the novel shifts to Kip, and we are told his entire story. Although Kip's brother always distrusted the west, Kip went willingly to serve in the British army. He was trained as a bomb defuser under Lord Suffolk, a true English gentleman, and was then virtually welcomed into an English family. Kip soon grew quite skillful at his job, able to figure out both the "joke" and the "character" of each bomb he tackled. Lord Suffolk and his group were blown up defusing a bomb, and Kip decided to leave England and become a sapper in Italy.

Kip has felt emotionally removed from everyone in his job as a sapper. When he meets Hana, he uses her to once again connect to humanity. All the residents of the villa celebrate Hana's twenty-first birthday, and Kip grows comfortable as her lover. When August comes, however, Kip hears on the radio of the atomic bomb that the United States has dropped on Japan. He becomes enraged, knowing that a western country would never commit such an atrocity against another white country. He takes his gun and threatens to kill the English patient, whom he sees as a symbol of the West. Kip does not kill Almasy, but takes off on his motorcycle, leaving the villa forever. Years later, he is a doctor in India with a family of his own. Though he is happy and fulfilled in his new life, he often wonders about Hana.

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10

CRITICAL STUDY OF THE ENGLISH PATIENT BY MICHAEL ONDAATJE

PART II

Unit Structure

10.0 Objectives:

- To study a very renowned South Asian writer, Michael Ondaatje
- To analyse the novel *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje
- To study various themes and symbols used by Michael Ondaatje in his novel.

10.1 Introduction:

Michael Ondaatje, in full **Philip Michael Ondaatje**, (born September 12, 1943, Colombo, Ceylon [now Sri Lanka]), Canadian novelist and poet whose musical prose and poetry were created from a blend of myth, history, jazz, memoirs, and other forms.

Ondaatje immigrated to Montreal when he was 19 and received a B.A. in English from the University of Toronto in 1965 and an M.A. from Queen's University in 1967.

The English Patient is a 1992 novel by Michael Ondaatje. The book follows four dissimilar people brought together at an Italian villa during the Italian Campaign of World War II.

The genre of novel English patient is historiographic metafiction. The term is used for works of fiction which combine the literary devices of metafiction with historical fiction. The term is closely associated with works of postmodern Literature.

According to Hutcheon, in A **Poetics of Postmodernism**, "works of historiographic metafiction are those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages."

Historiographic metafiction is one kind of postmodern novels which rejects projecting present beliefs and standards onto the past and asserts the specificity and particularity of the individual of past event.

Above Historiographic metafiction characteristics are found in the novel, The English patient. The four main characters are: a burned man, almasy — presumed to be English; his Canadian Army nurse, Hana, a Sikh British Army sapper, Kips and a Canadian thief, Caravaggio.

The story occurs during the North African Campaign incremental The book is, in part, a sequel to In the Skin of a Lion, continuing the characters of Hana and Caravaggio, as well as revealing the fate of the latter's main character, Patrick Lewis. It won the 1992 Booker Prize, the 1992 Governor General's Award, and the 2018 Golden Man Booker.

10.2 Analysis of Chapters:

Chapter I

- Ondaatje takes full advantage of the possibilities of narrating in different tenses, alternating between present and past, changing tenses as he changes scenes. The novel uses flowing transitions to move from present action to flashback, mirroring real action and remembrance in smooth movement of prose.
- We do not know what has happened in the past and are not given any explanations for what we see, but things are explained to us little by little.
- The descriptiveness of Chapter I is especially notable. The account of the patient's burned body and the Italian villa are detailed and realistic. Religious allusions are used frequently.
- Christianity permeates the minds of these characters, though they often choose to put it aside to deal with the realities of war.

Chapter II

- One major theme of The English Patient is the way the war transforms the individuals who are involved in it. All the characters that have been introduced thus far have been entirely altered by the war. Caravaggio, a former thief, has lost not only his thumbs, but also much of his youth and his identity. He can no longer steal, nor can he live any kind of happy life. The English patient has likewise been visibly transformed by the war. Having literally lost his entire identity.
- Hana, too, has been irrevocably altered by her wartime experience. After having a near-breakdown, Hana stands on the cusp of adulthood, unsure whether to take charge of her life or to hide and look for shelter like a child.
- An important and recurring symbol in the novel is the Italian villa in which Hana and the English patient live.

- The villa represents both death and rebirth. War has destroyed the villa, making huge holes in walls and ceilings. Nature has returned to fill these holes, however, replacing absence with life. Such an image mirrors the spiritual death and rebirth of the villa's inhabitants.

Chapter III

- In Chapter III, Ondaatje explores the nature of love and shows how it can surface even in the middle of war. Caravaggio charges that Hana is in love with the English patient, reasoning that she is drawn to the patient because he is so smart and mysterious. What Caravaggio does not see is that Hana needs the patient as much as he needs her.
- Ondaatje writes that when Hana is with Kip. Hana is not a nurse, but a woman, and this withdrawal from her professional duty is refreshing to her. Kip, on the other hand, finds in Hana a link to sanity, someone who is young and alive. Facing death every day, Kip is forced to come to grips with is own mortality, yet Hana links him to life. The love that emerges, therefore, is one based on mutual needs and the search for fulfillment of those needs during the stress of wartime.

Chapter IV

- Starting the chapter with history by Herodotus and threading quotes by the historian throughout the novel, Ondaatje connects the past with the present. Indeed, the past is of utmost importance in The English Patient. The past is the only thing the patient has left in his life. Even before his injury however, he had always been aware of the past and connected to it.

Chapter V

- Chapter V is like the other chapters in that it is not chronological, but is unlike some of the others in that it has a unifying theme: The English patient's passion for Katharine. Their love, which begins as purely physical, quickly progresses to something much deeper. This conflation of the physical body with the emotional existence is a recurring idea in the novel. The English patient's connection to Katharine transcends the physical, and he feels insane when he is not with her. She is so constantly in his thoughts that he is unable even to work. Her emotional and psychological presence becomes so foremost in his mind that he is shocked to be brought back to reality with a reminder of physicality—a vaccination scar on her arm. Ondaatje perhaps mentions the otherwise insignificant scar to highlight the physical and emotional depth of Katharine's relationship with the English patient.

Chapter VI

- In The English Patient, there is no single narrator, as each of the main characters has a voice at one time or another. The point of view shifts from one character to another, sometimes within the

same chapter, offering descriptions of a single event from multiple perspectives. The critic Lorraine York points to the evening of Hana's birthday to illustrate this "complicated dance of gazes." On this evening, Caravaggio watches Hana's legs as she walks: "her legs and thighs moved through the skirt of her frock as if it were thin water." Then, from Kip's point of view: "Hana moved alongside them, her hands in her pockets, the way Kip loved to see her walk." This change of perspectives adds depth to the narrative, emphasizing the presence of multiple realities and various points of view within a scene.

- There is no one character who is the only watcher, or other characters who are the only ones watched. Each character watches in his or her own right, taking in sensory experiences and mixing them with memories. Ondaatje's use of this technique makes the narrative a complete tale, rejecting the idea that there is only one story to be told.

Chapter VII

- Through Kip, Ondaatje further explores the idea of nationality and the quality of being "nationless." The English patient tells Kip that the two of them get along so well because they are both "international bastards"—men born in one place who choose to live in another. Unlike his brother, Kip embraces the western world, and especially the English. He sings Western music, wears Western clothes, and makes it his job to defuse bombs in order to save English lives. Far from being "nationless," Kip has strongly attached himself to the English nation, and knows he could never imagine doing the same job for the Germans.
- Much of Kip's goodwill toward the English emerges from his experience with Lord Suffolk and his staff. Suffolk is astute enough to recognize Kip's skill and character, and thus not only trains him in bomb defusing, but also welcomes him into the "family.

Chapter VIII

- Chapter VIII highlights the differences between Kip and Caravaggio. Caravaggio, though a thief, is morally and emotionally complex. Far from perfect at his profession, Hana remembers him being "constantly diverted by the human element during burglaries. ...Breaking into a house during Christmas, he would become annoyed if he noticed the Advent calendar had not been opened up to the date to which it should have been." Such a diversion signals fallibility in Caravaggio, and his remarkably human actions give us the sense that even though he is a thief, he may not necessarily be immoral.
- In contrast, Kip's profession in the army is a noble one. He saves innocent lives every day by defusing bombs, a duty that neutralizes aggression. As a character, however, Kip is not gripped by the same humanizing diversions that occupy Caravaggio. While he is working on a bomb he completely puts aside the human element of his work.

He does not give a thought to his feelings or emotions, but only to the task at hand. He repeatedly thinks that he needs either Hardy or Hana to "bring him back to humanity."

- This contrast between Kip and Caravaggio emphasizes the nature of humanity in wartime. Because the characters find it is so necessary to protect themselves emotionally, they find it easy to sacrifice humanity. Kip sections off his humanity, seemingly saving it until after the war by placing a wall between himself and everyone else.

Chapter IX

- The concept of history plays a large and crucial role in The English Patient. It is the book of Herodotus—itself a history—in which Almásy records not only his travels and explorations, but his thoughts about the affair with Katharine. The Herodotus book, becomes not only an ancient history, but a more recent history as well. It details Almásy's own observations, his own affair with the desert. History in the novel is not a static concept, but a flowing, changing force that connects the past to the present.

Chapter X

- The news of the atomic bomb brings the reality of the outside world back into to the sheltered environment of the Italian villa. When Kip hears about the United States' bombing of Hiroshima, he screams, falling to his knees. His pain comes not only from the shattered lives of the Japanese people, but from the shattering of his own ideals. Despite his older brother's anti-western warnings, Kip has put his faith in the west, adjusting to its culture and doing all he can to save it from destruction. He denies, in his own mind, that the west could be as oppressive to Asia as his brother claims. The explosion of the atomic bomb symbolizes the destruction of Kip's entire belief system. The bomb's intrusion on their villa existence highlights the fact that events and realities are not isolated.

10.3 Themes:

- **Nationality and Identity**
- Nationality and identity are interconnected in *The English Patient,* functioning together to create a web of inescapable structures that tie the characters to certain places and times despite their best efforts to evade such confinement. Almásy desperately tries to elude the force of nationality, living in the desert where he creates for himself an alternate identity, one in which family and nation are irrelevant. Almásy forges this identity through his character, his work, and his interactions with others. Importantly, he chooses this identity rather than inheriting it. Certain environments in the novel lend credence to the idea that national identity can be erased. The desert and the isolated Italian villa function as such places where national identity is unimportant to one's connection with others. Kip, who becomes enmeshed in the idea of Western

society and the welcoming community of the villa's inhabitants, even dismisses his hyperawareness of his own racial identity for a time.

- Ultimately, however, the characters cannot escape from the outside reality that, in wartime, national identity is prized above all else. This reality invades Almásy's life in the desert and Kip's life in the Italian villa. Desperate for help, Almásy is locked up merely because his name sounds foreign. His identity follows him even after he is burned beyond recognition, as Caravaggio realizes that the "English" patient is not even English. For Kip, news of the atomic bomb reminds him that, outside the isolated world of the villa, western aggression still exists, crushing Asian people as Kip's brother had warned. National identity is, then, an inescapable part of each of the characters, a larger force over which they have no control.

- **Love and grief**

- One theme that emerges in the novel is that love, if it is truly heartfelt, transcends place and time. Hana feels love and connection to her father even though he has died alone, far from her in another theater of war. Almásy desperately maintains his love for Katharine even though he is unable to see her or reach her in the cave. Likewise, Kip, despite leaving Italy to marry in India, never loses his connection to Hana, whom he imagines thirteen years later and halfway across the world. Such love transcends even death, as the characters hold onto their emotions even past the grave. This idea implies a larger message—that time and place themselves are irrelevant to human connection. We see this especially in Almásy's connection to Herodotus, whose writings he follows across time through the desert. Maps and geography become details, mere artificial lines that man imposes on the landscape. It is only the truth in the soul, which transcends time, that matters in the novel.

War

All of the residents of the villa have suffered losses in the war, whether they are physical or emotional, depicting war as brutal and unjust.

10.4 Symbols:

- **The Atomic Bomb**

  The atomic bomb the United States drops on Japan symbolizes the worst fears of western aggression. The characters in the novel try to escape the war and all its horrors by remaining with the English patient in a small Italian villa in the hills. Staying close to the patient, they can immerse themselves in his world of the past rather than face the problems of the present. The atomic bombs rip through this silence of isolation, reawakening the characters, especially Kip, to the reality of the outside world pressing in upon them. The bomb reminds them of the foolishness and power of nation-states and reminds them of the violability of their enclosed environment.

- **The Italian villa**

  In Chapter II, Hana reflects to herself that "there seemed little demarcation between house and landscape." Such an organic depiction of the villa is symbolically important to the novel. Straddling the line between house and landscape, building and earth, the villa represents both death and rebirth. War has destroyed the villa, making huge holes in walls and ceilings. But nature has returned to fill these holes, replacing the void with new life. Such an image mirrors the spiritual death and rebirth of the villa's inhabitants, the way they learn to live again after the emotional destruction of war.

- **The Desert**

  Much of The English Patient takes place in the Gilf Kebir, a desert plateau in North Africa, and this desert landscape is symbolic of the English patient, László Almásy's, lack of a national identity

- **Mirrors**

  Mirrors are symbolic of the characters' struggles with their respective identities within the novel. When Hana, a nurse, first arrives in Italy during World War II, she cuts her hair after it in falls

- **Books**

  Books help Ondaatje's characters to understand and interpret the world and each other, but books also symbolize the incredible connection between personal narratives and history within the novel. Books are important on many levels in…

- **Kip's Turban**

  As the only character of color in the novel, attention is repeatedly drawn to Kip's differences, often through his turban, which is an ongoing symbol of his Indian identity.

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11

STUDY OF DAVID LODGE'S SMALL WORLD

PART I

Unit Structure

11.0 Objectives:

The unit attempts to provide a comprehensive background to study the prescribed academic novel, The *'Small World'* by David Lodge. The students would understand here an author and appreciate his literary feasts in a given period of time. A writer is the product of his time and so it becomes important to have prior knowledge of the age in which he or she was born. Therefore, this unit will focuses on the socio-political and literary ethos of the times that contributed to shape the author's literary choice so that a better understanding can be fostered.

11.1 David Lodge: A Short Biographical Sketch:

British author and literary critic **David John Lodge** is also an Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the University of Birmingham. He taught at the University of Birmingham from 1960 to 1987 and then retired to write full-time. He had been the Harkness Fellow in the United States from 1964-65, Visiting Professor at the University of California, Berkeley in 1969 and Henfield Creative Writing Fellow at the University of East Anglia in1977. These varied academic experiences in Lodge's career supplied much of the raw materials on his campus novels.

His novels are critically acclaimed for his satiric exposure of the academic life of which he himself was a part of. His "Campus Trilogy" – *Changing Places: A Tale of Two Campuses* (1975) and *Small World: An Academic Romance* (1984) and *Nice Work* (1988)-are set at a fictional English Midland university called "Rummidge" which is modelled on the University of Birmingham. The novels depict the ambitions of the academicians who aspire to be "the highest paid teacher of Humanities in

the world". Lodge himself acknowledges the influence of his academic exposure and experience that ignite the satiric plots of his campus novels. He says that the plot of the campus novel is "a narrative transformation of the thematic material and the socio-cultural similarities and differences I had perceived between Birmingham and Berkeley," during his visiting professorship.

David Lodge published his first novel *The Picturegoers* in 1960 and the novel introduces a recurrent theme in his novel –Roman Catholicism. Although brought up as a Roman Catholic, Lodge sees himself as an "agnostic Catholic". Many of his Catholic characters display his predicament faced in the context of fast changing a modern world. His novels –'*The British Museum Is Falling Down'* and '*How Far Can You Go?"* published in the US as '*Souls and Bodies*' exhibit the quandaries of orthodox Catholics while encountering the issues of sexuality. For example, the dilemma faced by the characters because of the prohibition of artificial contraception by religion. Lodge confesses that if his novels are read chronologically, then they will depict an orthodox Roman Catholic becoming "less and less so as time went on".

Lodge's experience of military service in the 1950s are brought up in novels like -*Out of the Shelter* (1970), *Ginger, You're Barmy* (1962) where the atmosphere of post-war England on the verge of change is evoked.

Catholic novelists like Graham Greene and the exponents of Campus novels like Malcolm Bradbury have remained major influence in Lodge's writing career. Lodge has also written for the stage and the television and his stage plays and television screenplays have shaped his judgements in his literary criticism. His collection of essays - *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism* -includes critical essays on 20th-century writers including T. S. Eliot.

He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and was the Chairman of the Judges for the Booker Prize for Fiction in 1989.

David Lodge was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres* by the French Ministry of Culture in 1997 and in1998, he was appointed CBE for his services to literature.

11.2 Introduction to Campus Novel:

A **campus novel** is a type of novel set within a university campus dealing with the internal affairs of a university or college. A **campus novel** is also called as the **academic novel**. The hopes and aspirations, success and failures and disillusionments and discontentment of characters that are part of the academic life are foregrounded in a campus novel. The genre became immensely popular in Britain and America with hundreds of campus fiction coming out in the market as best-sellers in the 1950s. '*The Groves of Academe'* by Mary McCarthy, is often cited as the earliest example of **campus novel**. Many famous campus novels are comic and satirical intent on exposing the intellectual pretensions and human weaknesses of the characters that are in pursuit of the academic life. Kingsley Amis's novel- *Lucky Jim* and the novels of David Lodge

counterpoint the showing off of the academic intellects in a light-hearted way while some campus novels like C. P. Snow's '*The Masters'*, J. M. Coetzee's '*Disgrace',* Philip Roth's '*The Human Stain',* and Norene Moskalski's *'Nocturne, Opus 1: Sea Foam'*, attempt to make a serious treatment of the university life.

The **campus novel** focuses its action on the faculty and is told from the perspective of the faculty-members of a university. There is another distinct form of novel that focuses on the university life from the perspective of the students, sometimes referred to as the **'varsity novels'**.

The complex relationship between the members of a university arising of the hierarchical order, the personal biases based on religion, language, gender, culture are highlighted . The past memories of the characters within the university, their experiences and intriguing power-politics are the major subjects of delineation in a campus novel. The personal desires of the characters are placed in confrontation with the academic pursuits where academic pursuits become the medium to fulfil the narrow personal longings. Although the exposure of the hypocrisy and pretentions are done in a comic satirical vein, the undercurrents are always serious. Scenes of drinking, partying, seduction, molestation, envy, exploitation and manipulation are characteristic features of the campus novel. Many campus novels depict the predicaments of stupid, tactless anti-heroes who are incompetent and unlucky. Kingsley Amis's novel- *Lucky Jim* is such an anti-hero who didn't fall into the snobbishness of the faculty members of his university.

Context for the campus novel: **Neoliberalism in Higher Education**

There has been a great change in the scenario of higher education especially in the US and the UK after the world war-II. With the resurgence of the neoliberal ideas in the 1930 and the rise of globalisation, higher education had undergone a drastic change. Neoliberalism refers to the resurgence in the 20th century of economic doctrines of Classical Liberalism - the political ideology that advocates legal civil liberties with an emphasis on economic freedom for an overall development of a state. After the Great Depression, the ideas of classical liberalism lost its popularity that was manifested in the government policies to control market. The 20th century witnessed an attempt to revive and renew central ideas of classical liberalism to uphold the doctrine of free market capitalism. The policies of economic liberalisation including privatisation, deregulation, free trade, and globalisation are the associated ideas that evolved and got rooted with time making capitalist ideas to penetrate even onto most abstract fields that supposedly didn't have any apparent connections with pragmatically economic matters like department of philosophy in a university. Neoliberalism slowly entering into the world of academics, higher education began to witness the corrupting influences of cut-throat competition and global professionalism. The universities became open to foreign students and the phenomenon not only helped to generate revenue but also helped to give rise to varied student communities across the world and the universities became inherently plural and multi-cultural. The national and international conferences have

evolved as a communication platform where an academician can harness his aspirations to get recognitions for his academic achievements. But, the apparently intellectual ambience has its darker sides too. The global academic environment and challenges, at the same time, have given rise to cut-throat competitions among colleagues leading also to pretentions and intriguing power-politics within the universities.

The signs of all these negative impulses are blatantly visible in David Lodge's campus novels. His novels testify the harm and mutilation of higher education under the rise of the neoliberal regime. Lodge's novels demonstrate the changes in the structure of funding in the universities, in the expectations of teaching and research, and in the experience of and the relationship between professors and students. The branch of humanities were worst affected because the branch by its very nature is dissociated from defining itself from utilitarian position. Therefore, the impairments of neoliberalism had particularly serious consequences in the area of academia like philosophy that were least prepared to justify itself in strictly economic or utilitarian terms.

The academic novel plays an important role in bearing the witness to the changes, mostly for the worse, in higher education under the influence of neoliberalism. The changes witnessed in higher education are portrayed sometimes in a wryly comic a way-as in Frank Parkin's *The 'Mind and Body Shop'* published in 1986. The novel demonstrates how radically the financial need of a philosophy department forces it to open a brothel for its own survival. The consequences at the end of an academic novel can sometimes be despairing and apocalyptic while it can still be comic.

The academic novel could be taken as the early warnings to the downfall of a holistic learning atmosphere in today's university because of the competition and the hugely economic goals hooked on to the ideas of academic success. But, at the same time, the campus novel also can be seen as to upholding the values of higher education by reminding the readers how higher education should be and actually meant to do to students. If the morale behind the criticism of the novels is grasped in a serious manner, it can motivate to learn for the sake of sheer knowledge, illumination, solace and the transcendence of art without the guarantee of well-paid employment.

11.3 Introduction to Romance as a genre:

The genre of Romance flourished during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance (1400-1600) and differed highly from the epic poetry or tragedy because of its diversion of the focus from war and death to 'Love' that takes place most of the time, between a handsome chivalric knight and his beloved. The action of the romance demands dangerous journeys to be undertaken to establish justice. And at the end of the journey, the chivalric knight hero would not only win a war, or establish justice but also win his lady love. The romantic action is based on resolving all the hindrances their love encounters. There also exists other romance that delineates journeys in quest of wisdom or any sacred object

like the Holy Grail but the rescue of a damsel in distress and the resulting love also played underneath.

King Arthur and his knights remains a central figure in the body of mediaeval literature and slowly he emerged as a figure of international interest. According to mediaeval histories and romances, King Arthur was a leader who defended Britain against the Saxton invaders in the 5th and 6th Centuries. The details of Arthurian cycle are mainly composed in Celtic/Welsh and English folklore and modern historians agree that the figure was truly unhistorical. The chivalric qualities, like bravery, military prowess, honour, loyalty, justice and courtly manners, respect for women, qualified the knight to be the desirable protagonist of the romance.

The popularity of the mediaeval romances is so great that the theme entered in many classic poems like the Italian epic poem '*Orlando Furioso'* and the Spenser's '*The Faerie Queene*'.

The world of these romantic epic poems offer increasingly complicated plot with a host confusing characters –the knights and their helpers, the damsels they rescue, the sorcerers, monsters or dragons they slay and the allegorical places they visit adds to the intricate beauty of their works.

David Lodge's novel '*Small World*' uses the conventions of romance in an obvious manner but for the intentional burlesque. The names of the characters, the quests they undertake allude to the romances in a very palpable manner. The text also refers to post-Renaissance works which reference or rework romance, from Keats's 'Romantic' poetry, through to T.S. Eliot, whose masterpiece of modern poetry - *The Waste Land* is also quoted throughout.

As Cheryl Summerbee, the airport check-in girl, explains:

'Real romance is a pre-novelistic kind of narrative. It's full of adventure and coincidences and surprises and marvels, and has lots of characters who are lost or enchanted or wandering about looking for each other, or for the Grail, or something like that.' (p.258)

The text also refers to post-Renaissance works which reference or rework romance, from Keats's 'Romantic' poetry, through to T.S. Eliot, whose Modernist masterwork *The Waste Land* is also quoted throughout. (There is even an amusing scene where the jet-lagged hero arrives in Lausanne only to find everybody dressed as characters from *The Waste Land* walking round quoting lines from it. It turns out to be the annual *Waste Land* festival.)

11.5 Introduction to the novel -'*Small World*':

' *'I was telling a young guy at the conference just this morning. The day of the single, static campus is over.'*
'And the single, static campus novel with it, I suppose?'
'Exactly! Even two campuses wouldn't be enough. Scholars these days are like the errant knights of old, wandering the ways of the world in search of adventure and glory.' (p.63)

'*Small World'* can be easily summed up in these lines. Multiple characters with their interlacing lives and polyphonic voices deny a single static narrative or a singular point of view in the novel. *Small World* demonstrates Lodge's power to synthesize and expand the lively talents for literary parody and parallel plotting. The novel has a dazzling comical vein while exposing and satirising the pretentions of the modern academia. As a sequel to Lodge's '*Changing Places*, in that it includes the two central figures of that novel -the American academic Morris Zapp and the dowdy English academic Philip Swallow but the scope of the novel is significantly expanded with several new characters.

Small World is David Lodge's seventh novel and is apparently an academic comedy of manners. Lodge creates an inherently plural form of parody by blending the realistic surface of his story with the plot-structure borrowed from the romance literature of the mythic quest, specifically the Arthurian romance formula. The novel is distinctly self-reflexive and allusive to the quests for the Holy Grail and specifically to Edmund Spenser's '*The Faerie Queene'*. The novel also alludes highly to numerous critical studies such as '*Inescapable Romance'* by Patricia Parker. The Characters are made to discuss the romance as a genre and the various aspects of the genre in such a way that it comments directly on the action in the book.

David Lodge's '*Small World'* is not confined within the fixed structural designs because there is a deliberate blurring to all defining lines to describe '*Small World'*. The novel teems with numerous literary allusions while parodying the current varieties of literary theory.

Intertextual allusions and deliberate parodies make the novel inherently plural. David Lodge displays an aspiration to balance opposing views, of theories to play each against the other. This fine balance of opposing views is most obvious in the "duplex chronicle" of '*Changing Places'* and very exuberantly used in '*Souls and Bodies'* and *'Small World'*. His novel demonstrates the full embodiment of the dialogic voices that Bakhtin aptly called "joyful relativity." The interweaving experiences of some fourteen other academics, writers, publishers, and translators with their distinct voices in the novel turn the small world of the academia a truly '**carnivalesque'** celebration of chaotic polyphony.

Polyphony is a literary concept introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian literary critic. It refers to a diversity of simultaneous points of view and voices denying the dominance of a single voice while granting validity to all voices. These dialogic or plural voices create joyous commotion and chaos that overthrow dominance of monologic or singular voice.

'Carnivalesque' as a literary term is derived from the concept of 'carnival' as used by Bakhtin in his book '*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*' and *'Rabelais and His World'*. The transgressive social behaviour that thrives beneath the veneer of social order during the festivities of the carnival season constantly threatens to upend power-structures. For Bakhtin, 'carnival' is deeply rooted in human psyche and has strengthened over time into an entire 'language of symbolic sensuous forms' which can

be transposed into language of literature. This transposition of the spirit of carnival-described by Bakhtin as the carnivalisation of literature helps de-stabilization or reversal of power structures, although temporarily. It can be achieved by mobilizing humour, satire, and grotesquery in all its forms. Carnivalesque has come to mean the subversive literary mode that liberates the conventions of a single dominant style or atmosphere through humour and chaos. Lodge, influenced strongly by Bakhtin's literary concepts have created his novel on his theory and made his global academic world teem with subversive tropes that deny the dominance of any monologic structure.

The characters in Lodge's novel are made casually to use the language of the romance: they are described to be 'lured' into situations, to experience 'peril' and think of each other as a 'sorceress' or a 'hero', or to cast a 'spell' on each other and these small verbal details makes the modern academic romance a very comically enjoyable satire. The comical incidents which are confusingly large are scattered throughout the long novel and the novel doesn't just tell one story but it is a storehouse of multiple stories. The comic elements results from the seemingly innocent co-incidences, the situational incidents re-enactment of the roles from the allegorical past, the fusion of the language of the past with the present.

11.6 Plot Overview:

The novel which is fashioned on the mythic Arthurian Quest begins in the month of April 1979 at a small academic conference at the University of Rummidge. Lodge begins his novel with a prologue that evokes the prologue to the Canterbury Tales by the 'father' of English poetry – Geoffrey Chaucer. Lodge directly draws parallel to the religious pilgrimage of the olden times to the pilgrimage of the modern academic world called conference-

"*When April with its sweet showers has pierced the drought of March to the root, and bathed every vein of earth with that liquid by whose power the flowers are engendered; when the Zephyr, too with its dulcet breath, has breathed life into the tender new shoots in every cops and on everyhealth….as the poet Geoffrey Chaucer observed many years ago, folk long to go on pilgrimages only these days professional people call them conferences."*

After the small prologue indicating the analogue of religious pilgrimage to conferences, the Part One of the novel begins Persse, the protagonist of the novel quoting to himself the first line from T.S. Eliot's *'Waste Land'* which in turn is an evocation to and reworking of Geoffrey Chaucer's prologue to Canterbury Tales. These allusions conjure up the lineage, the continuity of English literature from the time of Chaucer to Eliot and further down to our times later.

The novel foregrounds several quests by various characters of which the most prominent is the quest of Persse McGarrigle whose name bears the reference to Percival, the grail knight. Persse is a naïve young Irishman who attends a small academic conference at the University of Rummidge.

It is the first conference that Persse McGarrigle attends and it is also first conference that the university hosts. Persse, along with the reader, experiences the general ambience of a conference that focuses on little work brimming with as much fun as possible. Persse notices the beautiful participant whose name the badge reads A L Pabst. Several characters are introduced and all these culturally diverse people give rise to a truly Bakhtinian carnivalesque polyphony within the small world of the academia. Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp, two major characters from the previous novel -'*Changing Places*' appear again in '*Small World'* along with many new characters. At the Conference at Rummidge University, Morris Zapp and Philip Swallow are seeing each other for the first time in ten years after the events of *Changing Places.* Since the previous novel, Swallow has become a professor now and also the Head of the English Department. Zapp, after discovering and engaging with deconstruction, academically reinvents himself. Zapp and Swallow discusses their personal lives when they take a long evening walk at Rummidge and Zapp learns from Swallow about an incident that occurred a few years ago that after almost dying in a plane crash, he spent the night at a British Council official's home and slept with the official's wife, Joy. Soon after, Swallow read in the newspaper that Joy, the official, and their son had died in a plane crash.

At the conference, virgin Persse pursues the beautiful, intelligent, and playfully elusive graduate student called Angelica Pabst. He instantly falls in love with her and desires to marry her. He assumes that he has arranged a date with her. But she tricks him and vanishes without leaving any way to contact her. Angelica Pabst has formidable command of romance literature and contemporary literary theory comes as a stark contrast to Persse's comic naiveté. Persse's quest for Angelica Pabst begins at the sparsely attended conference of University Teachers of English Language and Literature organized by and at Rummidge University and goes on all through the globe. Persse's hopeful, undeterred quest for Angelina makes him go on joining from one academic conference to another academic conference all over Europe to Los Angeles, Asia, and Jerusalem. Persse's quest finally ends up, along with many of the novel's other characters, in New York, at the annual conference of the Modern Language Association (MLA).

The linearity of the plot of Persse's pursuit of Angelica is complicated in a number of ways by Lodge and thus the reader's pursuit of the narrative is also complicated. While attending the conference at Rummidge, Persse had learnt that his cousin Bernadette has brought dishonour upon herself and therefore, she has been cast out by the family. Persse becomes resolute to save her honour while pursuing Angelica. Bernadette, a fallen woman now adopts the stage name - Marlene and Persse while searching for his disgraced cousin gets the indications that Angelica too leads a second life as a pornographic performer by the name Lily in the sexual underground. Persse's quest to find the elusive trail of the two women is remains hopeless and therefore, he returns to teaching. But, with the intervention of Fate, Persse wins a huge amount as prize for his poetry and the prize money offer a good chance in carrying out the quest of the two fallen

women. He tries at first in Amsterdam because Angelica had told him during the conference that she was an adopted child after her father, Hermann Pabst, was an executive for the KLM Flights at the time of her adoption. At Amsterdam, Persse discovers that her father has relocated to Los Angeles but not with his daughter. He has shifted alone. Persse gets to see another sordid poster of Lily in Amsterdam but he doesn't know of any way to reach to her.

Persse's expectations of meeting Angelica are thwarted again and he diverts his thoughts to another literary retreat. Co-incidentally, he happens to encounter his cousin's rapist and procures a support agreement. With the support agreement in hand, Persse sets off on the cold trail in search of the fallen women. The trail passes through Switzerland to Los Angeles and in Los Angeles, he meets Angelica's foster father Hermann Pabst. There, Persse gets to know the full story about the identical twins, Honolulu, Tokyo and Seoul. By the time Persse reaches Hong Kong and his quest remains still unfruitful, he is utterly broken. Then, the readers find him again in Jerusalem to where he reaches on foot over the desert from Aden. Like many other symbolic events, Persse's journey to Jerusalem on foot evokes another rich symbolic meaning in the novel.

Part Two of the novel demonstrates what different characters are doing all at the same time across different time zones at various conferences around the world. Persse's quest keeps going while other characters are leading interlacing lives. The capacious number of characters fill the small world of academia into a truly carnivalesque polyphony. The action of the novel progresses with characters meeting people they knew in the past and revealing, renewing and rebuilding past relations. Coincidences play a major trope in these revelations. The readers see Morris Zapp travelling while Rodney Wainright, an unprepared lecturer from Australia, is making an attempt at writing a conference paper; Zapp's x-wife Désirée intends to write a novel; Howard Ringbaum is in his endeavour to convince his wife Thelma to have sex with him on an aeroplane so that he can join the Mile High Club; German literary scholar Siegfried von Turpitz is seen talking to Arthur Kingfisher about the new UNESCO chair of literary criticism while Rudyard Parkinson is plotting to procure that chair for himself. Italian Fulvia Morgana is meeting Morris Zapp on a plane; and many more characters are revealed in an interlocking series of coincidences.

Cheryl Summerbee, a check-in clerk for British Airways at Heathrow airport is at the heart of the novel because her job endows her with the power to manoeuvre coincidental meetings between characters in the novel. Cheryl keeps meeting Persse again and again. When Persse met her in the beginning, she loved reading "Bills and Moon" romance novels –the fictionalised version of Mills & Boon. But, later she began to read not romance novels but romances such as *Orlando Furioso*, the epic Italian poem by Ludovico Ariosto whose heroin by the same name as Angelica is as illusive. She also has begun to read critics such as Northrop Frye. Persse shows his happiness for the Cheryl's intellectual upliftment. Cheryl loves Persse and is traumatized to see Persse's infatuation with Angelica. Persse's chase for Angelica continues around the world- to conferences in Hawaii, Tokyo, and Hong Kong, and Jerusalem. While he fails to catch up

with her, other minor characters have found their romances back in life. Philip and Morris Zapp who had exchanged faculty positions ten years ago along with their wives find themselves along with the readers in new adventures in life. The marital relationship between Philip and his wife Hilary are drifting apart but they both agree to remain married. Dysirye Zapp divorces Morris and writes a novel on her husband. The novel sells well and she becomes rich that prompts her to embark on new projects. But, she is frustrated by the writer's block on a new project. Both Philip and Zapp travel a lot to attend conferences. Zapp, before flying on to the next conference, gets to hear from Philip Swallow about his blissful one night encounter with Joy Simpson in Italy. Joy has later been declared dead in a plane crash. But the readers get to meet her again on one of those ostensibly worthless academic excursions on a distant land. Reunited with Joy, Philip enjoys a trip to Jerusalem with her where the romantic couple bump into their son who has come to the place working on a kibbutz during his gap year. At the Jerusalem conference, where Philip Swallow coincidentally meets his son falls psychosomatically ill but people assume that to be Legionnaires' Disease-a form of pneumonia infecting the lung. The Jerusalem conference therefore stops in the middle. This brings an end to their relationship also.

Zapp had come to the Jerusalem conference for a peaceful retreat. Zapp after overcoming an uncomfortable relationship with Fulvia and Eduardo Morgana was kidnapped by their leftist friends in Italy. The kidnappers believed that his rich wife Dysirye would ransom well for him and Dysirye did negotiate with the kidnappers thoroughly. But, when she was almost ready to hand over the amount, Fulvia intervened and warned the kidnappers to release him for free. Rescued, Zapp felt that he has got a new lease on life and so he flew to Jerusalem in quest of a relaxed, hassle-free conference. Everyone scatters from Jerusalem when Philip Swallow's disease is assumed to be Legionnaire's Disease. While Zapp and Thelma Ringbaum get involved in a relationship, Philip Swallow and Joy go their separate ways.

Part Five of the novel takes place at the epic annual conference conducted by Modern Language Association in New York at the end of 1979. The whole world of English scholarship comes together in New York in December for this esteemed convention. Persse's quest finally comes to an end he finds his lady love at the conference. He hears Angelica read a paper on romances that directly echoes the structure of *Small World* itself-

"No sooner is one crisis in the fortunes of the hero averted than a new one presents itself; no sooner has one mystery been solved than another is raised; no sooner has one adventure been concluded than another begins... The greatest and most characteristic romances are often unfinished – they end only with the author's exhaustion, as a woman's capacity for orgasm is limited only by her physical stamina. Romance is a multiple orgasm."

Persse sees Sybil Maiden, a retired spinster professor who had been appearing in the novel a many times. Her name bearing the lost glory has striking similarity to the impotent Fisher King –Arthur Kingfisher. After the paper by Angelica, Persse talks to Sybil and reveals to her what he

learnt about Angelica's past that she is one of the twins that were found in the washroom of a KLM plane in 1954. Sybil Maiden faints to hear this. Angelica leaves the hall in the interim and Persse chases for her through hotels and finally finds that lady he feels is Angelica and experiences his very first sexual encounter with her. However, after this sexual encounter, the lady reveals that she is not Angelica, but her twin sister, Lily. Although Persse feels embarrassed, Lily successfully persuades him that he was "in love with a dream" because Angelica is engaged to someone else. Persse is also introduced by Angelica to her fiancé, Peter McGarrigle, who happens to be the person with the same surname whose interview invitation for the job at Limerick College in Ireland was sent to Persse mistakenly. Peter reveals that is however not angry with the situation because as a consequence, he left for America and met Angelica there.

The MLA convention helps to expose and resolve many of the tangles in the plot. Zapp is cured of his fetish in deconstructionism after his kidnapping experience while Philip Swallow returns to his wife, saying "Basically I failed in the role of a "romantic hero.

Another shocking revelation takes place when Sybil Maiden makes the announcement that she is Angelica and Lily's biological mother -the mother of the twins found on the KLM plane in 1954 while Venerable Arthur Kingfisher, the undisputed but impotent king of literary criticism, is their true biological father. Arthur Kingfisher, named in direct reference to the Arthurian legend and Fisher King, chairs a panel discussion on the future of literary criticism at the convention where Persse is inspired to ask the question - "What follows if everyone agrees with you?" The unbeaten king of literary criticism has been evaluating contenders for a UNESCO chair but suddenly he declares take the chair for himself because he feels that his intellectual creativity is re-fuelled after hearing Persse's question. His sudden emergence from retirement into action breaks the heart of many ambitious contenders for the important chair. Kingfisher's earlier announcement to marry his beautiful young Korean assistant is also placed in a direct confrontation with Sybil's shocking revelations later in the same convention.

Persse now realises that it is Cheryl Summerbee and not Angelica who is the woman for him, and he flies to Heathrow to see her. After arriving at the airport at the New Year's Eve, Persse learns from the new attendant that Cheryl is fired from her job just a day before he arrived. The new attendant informs him that Cheryl always wanted to travel at some point anyway and took her overthrow as the chance to do so and now no one knows where she has gone. Like Angelica, Cheryl too disappeared somewhere in the small, narrow world after being fired from her job but Persse is determined to make another romantic quest for his newly recognised attachment. The novel ends in comical hopefulness with Persse wondering -"where in the small, narrow world he should begin to look for her."

More important, and more confusing, Persse is only one of the many characters in this novel who are engaged in a quest of one kind or another: from the pursuit of love or sex to publishers' acceptances, literary awards,

the perfect conference, and academic appointments, especially the coveted UNESCO Chair of Literary Theory, a purely conceptual chair that confers status and wealth without involving any real work.

11.7 Let's sum up:

The tremendous developments in science and technology have not only increased the pace of transportation and communication but also reliability and economic viability. The increase in the speed of transportation and communication in the past few decades have given birth to what we call globalization turning the whole world into a global village. The places that once took a long time and a lot of money to reach have become quickly accessible with much lesser money. Even sharing of information became quick and cheap through electronic transfers. The impact of these fast communication and transportation have infiltrated naturally to the world of academics too. The methods of imparting education changed and along with that, the goals and outcome of the academic world. International conferences became a resourceful platform to share knowledge and build networks. In this background, David Lodge creates his academic satire *'Small World'* in which he exposes the pretensions of the academia and the true meaning of conference to many of the ambitious professors. It is not only the campus in the novel that has gone global but also the lives of its attendees and their personal lives that have gone global.

11.8 Exercise/Questions:

1. Throw light on the life and work of David Lodge.
2. Write a note on Campus Novel.
3. Describe how Neo-liberalism had its impact on the academic world.
4. Write a note on- Romance as a genre
5. Discuss the plot structure of the novel
6. Write a short note on the special features of the novel '*Small World'*.

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12

STUDY OF DAVID LODGE'S SMALL WORLD

PART I

Unit Structure

12.0 Objectives:

The objective of this unit is to offer in a nutshell the various aspects of the novel 'Small World' by David Lodge that can be unlocked for thorough study and analysis. Therefore, the students are advised to study the text for appreciating the humour, satire and the simple pleasure of the travelogue and also other material to prepare better for the examination.

12.1 Setting of the novel:

The setting of the novel too like the incidents, characters, point of view and allusions are never singular and fixed. Following the frantic travels of the characters for various conferences across the globe, the setting of the novel keeps changing from place to place with scenes placed in realistic settings in different locations like Amsterdam, New York, London, Ireland, Hawaii, Heidelberg, Israel, Turkey, Australia and so on and even narrowing down to the hotel rooms, conference rooms, pubs and bars and cinemas and streets in which the characters move into. But besides the realistic settings, the novel does have some locations that take on obvious symbolic meaning, like the underground Chapel at Heathrow which is a re-creation of the innumerable chapels in which Arthurian knights seek rest in. And there is rather a lot of hanging round in brothels or strip clubs or porn movie cinemas, which are both 'realistic' settings for characters sneaking off for a quiet afternoon to bump into other characters with embarrassing consequences, and more symbolic places of temptation and misunderstanding.

The novel also has an imaginary setting – the University of Rummidge. Rummidge University was also the place where half of Lodge's earlier novel, *Changing Places: A Tale of Two Campuses'* took place. The main thread of events of the novel begins at this imaginary university where

most of the important characters are introduced at the conference held by the university for the first time. To set the novel in the beginning at the conference organised by Rummidge for the first time serves as the suitable launch to introduce new characters and expose to them as well as to the readers the nuances of the already existing academic world where lives of each academician is interlaced with another. Typical of a Campus novel, '*Small World'* exploits all the possibilities offered by a closed environment of the university. The power-politics between idiosyncratic characters inhabiting unambiguous hierarchies provide much of the criticism of Lodge's satire. The fixed socio-cultural mind-set of the academic staff is presented in opposition to the new social attitudes of the new students who admit in the university. The characters of Professors Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp and their wives were important characters from the previous novel- *'Changing Places*' and '*Small World'* uses them with new additions to the of the pool of pleasantly peculiar and eccentric characters. The events are built up following the characters around the international circuits of academic literary conferences.

12.2 Characters:

The global campus of '*Small World'* with some more than fourteen academicians, writers, publishers, and translators across the world meeting and exchanging their distinct ideas and sex throughout transform the small world of the academia into a truly ebullient carnivalesque one. To girdle his "small world" of academics from different countries to make his satire universal, Lodge have created national stereotypes because hypocrisy and pretensions are not restricted to any particular nation. Human frailties know no national borders. Therefore, Lodge have produced national stereotypes in his academic characters.

Each of the academics represents an approach to criticism while also representing a particular nation like the Englishman Philip Swallow is an anti-theoretical humanist who inevitably begins by quoting Dr Johnson. There is the Frenchman is a leathery structuralist, interested only in the universal binary principles of all texts. The German Professor Siegfried von Turpitz tries to trump the Frenchman with his even more Universalist reception theory. The two-dimensional Italian Marxist Fulvia Morgana, who wears gorgeous clothes from Milan fashion houses and lives in a sumptuously tasteful villa, offers an Althusserian critique of the very notion of literature, which she reveals to be an instrument of bourgeois hegemony. And the American ambitious Morris Zapp performs a loosely Freudian, fearlessly meretricious meditation on the similarities between literary criticism and striptease, from his party piece at another conference at the start of the book. Akira Sakazaki, is the Japanese academic living in his tiny Tokyo capsule and so on. But, some characters that play significant role in developing and connecting the disconnected narratives of the novel are discussed below-

Persse McGarrigle

Persse McGarrigle appears to be one of the most significantly adventurous characters in the novel. He is presented as a modern equivalent to

Perceval-one of the King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table. Like Perceval, Persse begins his journey of exploration into the world as a naïve, virgin first-time attendee in a conference held by a small university at Rummidge that had never organised a conference before. His first attendance in a conference is like the very first ritual of initiation. Persse is a poet and a lecturer in English literature at Limerick University, Ireland and he has recently completed his master's thesis on T. S. Eliot. Persse gets the job at Limerick College because the administration sent the interview invitation to him by mistake instead of someone else with the same last name. Hence, with sheer stroke of luck, he was interviewed by the panel and procured the job. Lodge points out comically the errors that may possibly take place by the sheer negligence of the administration.

Persse as a "conference virgin," is ignorant of the structuralist and poststructuralist theories that have changed the face of literary criticism in the twentieth century and thus in turn, have become the governing force of modern literary criticism. His first attendance have provided him with new experiences and allowed him to see places, meet new people and widen his own research and knowledge of the world. Persse is presented as a man of strong spiritual beliefs and devoted to his religious faith and his spiritualism and catholic faith have kept him at a distance from all kinds of temptations and the use of foul language. But, enticing influences like the extremely beautiful and sensuous participant Angelica Pabst, supply the necessary contradictions to demonstrate the tussle between his spiritual idealism and desire. As a first –time attendee in the Conference at Rummidge, he appears not only as a 'conference virgin' but also as a virgin in respect to sex because his morale as a devout Roman Catholic would not allow him to indulge in sex before marriage. At the first conference, he falls in love with the elusive Angelica Pabst as a "hopeless romantic". She disappears as soon as Persse expresses his love to her. Persse, following the structural quest of the Arthurian Holy Grail, goes in attending conference-to-conference in quest for her hand in marriage. He uses his poetry prize to finance him his international conference travels in the sacred quest. He finally succeeds to catch up with her at the epical annual conference of Modern Language Association (MLA) in New York. At this sacred conference, Persse, plays the part of grail knight by asking the question that frees the small world of academic critics from their sexual and intellectual impotence and he himself indulges in sex with the prostitute lady he believes to be Angelica Pabst. He saves the small world of the academia from not only from sexual inability but also intellectual vulnerability but loses Angelica because the girl whom he believed to be Angelica wasn't her. She was Angelica's twin sister who was sent to break the news that Angelica is getting married to somebody else. But Persse, ever hopeful, is now seen about to set off in pursuit of yet another grail/girl- Cheryl Summerbee.

The Irish origin of the young poet Persse alludes to the Celtic influence of on the Arthurian legends. Ireland as a country is strongly influenced by the Celtic culture. Angelica's name evokes and is derived from the word 'angel' while her surname Pabst is a German word for Pope. The reference to Pope, the highest rank in the Catholic Church makes angelica a worthy

grail to pursue. The reference to Persse's adherence to his mother's advice to go and visit his aunt in Rummidge brings to the mind of the reader the parallel incident with the young Perceval. Chretien's young Perceval too had forgotten to ask the important question in the castle of the Fisher King because his mother had taught him to speak only when he was asked to do so. These are the obvious parallels drawn between Perceval and Persse that foreground the mediaeval analogues to modern characters.

Angelica Pabst:

Angelica Pabst with her incredible brilliance and dazzling beauty makes her the real object of quest just like the Holy Grail. Her name bears reference to angel while her surname Pabst is German for Pope and thus, her name combined with her illusive nature symbolically establishes herself as the sacred modern object of quest parallel to the Arthurian quest of the Holy Grail. Angelica is also the analogue to the character by the same name in the classic Italian epic poem 'Orlando Furioso' by Ludovico Ariosto. Angelica of the poem relishes in illusiveness and this feature is shared by both the heroin. There is further reference to the poem when Cheryl later informs Persse that she has begun to read romances like Orlando Furioso instead of reading romance novels published by 'Bills and Moon".

Angelica in the novel is a graduate student and is twenty-seven years old who immediately become the object of Persse's chaste romantic desires. She is proficient in the field of contemporary literary theory and is writing a dissertation on romance from Heliodorus to Barbara Cartland. Her unapproachable knowledge of theory comes as stark contrast to the naïve virgin Persse who is unaware of the modern critical theories. Angelica was found by an executive for KLM flight Hermann Pabst after she was abandoned in the washroom of an aeroplane in flight and Hermann Pabst reared the child while bestowing on her the gift of the unlimited air travel. While Persse is looking for Angelica, she on the other hand, is looking for a suitable theory of romance for herself and that justifies her illusiveness to be the modern version of the illusiveness of the heroin from 'Orlando Furioso'.

Cheryl Summerbee:

Cheryl Summerbee has a small but very significant role in the novel. She is in fact, is at the heart of the novel because she writes the fate of romances of the characters working as a check-in clerk for British Airways at Heathrow airport allocating seats to people she wants to pair. Therefore, she functions is the impresario of coincidences. Her job of assigning seats to the passengers allows her to indulge in her passionate entertainment of manoeuvring union and separation of people. What people experience as coincidences is actually a contrivance by her in this sense and thus Cheryl becomes the writer of the actions of the novel.

Cheryl's position at the airport makes her meet most of the characters in the novel. When Persse met her in the beginning, she revealed her interest in the romance novels published by "Bills and Moon" which is the fictionalised version of real-life 'Mills & Boon'. But, later she escalated

her intellectual capacity by beginning to read real romances like *Orlando Furioso* and critics such as Northrop Frye. Persse appreciates her efforts in this academic upliftment. Cheryl is depicted to fall in love with Persse herself Persse's infatuation with Angelica leaves her heartbroken.

But, when at the end, Persse after realising that it is Cheryl Summerbee who is the woman for him and not Angelica because she is engaged to somebody else, flies to Heathrow to see her. Persse remembers that he had seen her last time crying over his devotion to Angelica and hopes for a fruitful union with her. But, after arriving at the airport at the New Year's Eve, he learns that Cheryl is fired from her job just a day before he arrived and no one knows where she has gone. Like Angelica, Cheryl too becomes another illusive romantic heroin to be chased after in the small, narrow world. Persse is seen determined to find her and he wonders -"where in the small, narrow world he should begin to look for her."

Lily Papps, Angelica's twin sister. Their only distinguishing...

Arthur Kingfisher:

Arthur Kingfisher, named in direct reference to the Arthurian legend and Fisher King, evokes the physical and intellectual impotency ruling the kingdom of the academia. He is the impotent but venerable professor who is modelled on the olden pagan myth of King Fisher featuring also in T.S.Eliot's '*Waste Land*' who ruled over a parched, infertile kingdom. Fisher King's kingdom suffers because the king is always wounded in his legs or groin and his modern version as Arthur Kingfisher in Lodge's '*Small World'* alludes to a kind of sterility, a kind of impotency that afflicts the writers and intellectuals of the modern times. Although the king is passive and inactive, he remains at the top of the social hierarchy. And in spite of his incapability to come up with an original idea for a long time, he continues to be regarded highly among literary theorists. Lodge defines him in page 344 of the novel as a man who is a 'kind of personifies the whole profession of academic literary studies'. The unbeaten king of literary has been evaluating contenders for a UNESCO chair but suddenly shocks everyone by approving to accept the post himself. His intellectual creativity is re-fuelled after hearing Persse's question at the MLA conference and he decides to take the chair for himself. His sudden emergence from retirement into action and afterwards his announcement to marry his beautiful young Korean assistant is then confronted by another revelation that he is actually the Pabst twins' – Angelica's and Lily's biological father. Arthur Kingfisher's relation with a retired spinster teacher who has been appearing throughout the novel comes to a shocking exposé that their union had been the cause of the birth of the Pabst twins who had been abandoned in a flight.

Sybil Maiden:

Although, Professor Sybil Maiden doesn't represent a fictional Arthurian character, she has a striking similarity to the impotent Fisher King of the Arthurian Romance who also featured in T.S.Eliot's 'Waste Land'. According to the Greek myth of the Cumaean Sybil, who has the power to prophesy, had asked Apollo for eternal life. Apollo granted the boon but

she forgot to ask for eternal youth. The Sybil aged and lost her authoritarian glory. The insolent people of Cumae suspended her in a basket in a public place when she soon turned decrepit and there was nothing left but her voice at the end of a thousand years. Sybil, who appears in T.S.Eliot's 'Waste Land', has come to symbolise a prodigious old woman with prophetic power. In Lodge's novel, Sybil Maiden is a kindly spinster folklorist from whom Persse gains another perspective on romance. Miss Maiden is seen quoting from her mentor Jessie Weston's book -'*From Ritual to Romance'*. '*From Ritual to Romance'* is a genuinely pioneering work on literary criticism by Jessie Weston and was first published in 1920. The book supplied T. S. Eliot with much of the imagery and allusion for his poetic masterpiece of 1922 –*The Waste Land*. Miss Maiden argues that the academic spectacle that Persse is witnessing should be traced back even further than the quest of King Arthur's knights for the Holy Grail so that a proper explanation and understanding could be made. For her- "it all comes down to sex, in the end," and medieval and academic quests, in the similar veins, are the versions of pagan fertility rites, of phallic thrusts in search of the feminine womb, "the life force endlessly renewing itself."

12.3 Themes:

Quest: Quest obviously becomes one of the important themes because the novel has been deliberately structured on the style of medieval romances specifically the mythic Arthurian Romance. The realistic modern surface of the academic world with allusions to actual books, places and conferences is blended in a perfect way with the medieval romance formula. All the characters in the novel are always leading a nomadic life by attending conference after conference like the journeys undertaken by the Knights of the romances in quest for something or the other. One of the most significant quests is the quest of the naïve, virgin Irish professor Persse McGarrigle, whose name evokes the grail knight Percival, for his love for the beautiful graduate student Angelica Pabst whom he meets at the virgin conference at Rummidge. The novel foregrounds the pursuit of the all the characters in its small academic world from love or sex to publishers' acceptances, from literary awards to the perfect conference, and from academic appointments, especially the coveted UNESCO Chair of Literary Theory which is a purely conceptual chair that confers status and wealth but that involves no real work.

Catholicism and Sexuality: David Lodge's world inside the *'Small World'* is permeated to teem with sexual anxiety. Persse is presented as a naive young man resolute to preserve his virginity until marriage finds himself falling intensely in love with a beautiful, sensual teaser-Angelica. Persse's strong Catholic beliefs are confronted with his own desire for love and symbolically sex when he has to trail his cousin who has fallen into the disgrace in the sexual underground. His faith and beliefs torment him when he is bound to descend into the world of pornography. It is not only Persse's sexuality that's been explored but the entire novel is built on

the sexual encounters of various characters. Each and every character in the novel is engaged rather obsessed with sexual experiences.

Confused identities: Persse's confusion of Angelica with her twin stripper sister Lily provides much fun to the plot of the novel. Persse's emotional outrage after seeing glimpses of Angelica in a porn movie and then at a strip club feels sad for the poor damsel. He, as the responsible glorious knight, must 'save' this lady in distress and just like he was determined to rescue his fallen cousin, he is determined to rescue Angelica too. The climax arising out of confused identity of the twin sister has a hilarious impact when Persse loses his long preserved virginity to Lily under the impression that she is Angelica. He is unable to discern the difference until Lily reveals her true identity as the twin sister to Angelica. When Persse becomes distraught after learning the revelation, Lily confuses him and also the reader by saying that she's really Angelica pulling his leg. Persse turns very happy. But again Lily confirms that she is actually Lily and not Angelica. This flickering confusion of identities not only adds to the humour of the situation but also to demonstrate that Persse is pursuing a 'dream', an idealised version of a woman.

Sex, sterility and fertility: Although the novel deals thoroughly with medieval Romance, it actually deals more with sex than romance. The novel deals very meticulously with sex and not romance as such -sex, in all possible circumstances between all possible combinations of characters.

There is good deal of allusions in the novel to Jesse Weston's 1920academic book - '*From Ritual to Romance'* through a significant, though not the major character -the spinster Miss Sybil Maiden. The book is a classic discourse on romance tracing its roots to pagan fertility rites associated with spring and the rebirth of the natural world and it supplied much of the material for T.S. Eliot's -*The Waste Land*.

The parodic reference to the pagan myth of the Fisher King through the parallel character of the ageing American academic Arthur Kingfisher is another. The pagan impotent King Fisher presiding over a barren country finds an exact recreation in modern sterile king of the literary world-Arthur Kingfisher. His inability to generate new insights into literature shows his intellectual sterility. He is presented at various intervals throughout the book, in various hotel rooms, being stimulated by his sexy Korean secretary, Song-mi Lee and failing forever to get an erection.

But, towards the end of the novel, he experiences a revival of virility not only sexual but intellectual and so he proposes to his secretary and announces to keep the UNESCO Chair for himself.

It is not only Arthur Kingfisher who experiences rebirth but all the characters in the novel. Persse experiences his first sex; Desirée Zapp realises her non-fiction book is good after all; the ageing English novelist, Robert Frobisher, who's been blocked for eight years, suddenly conceives the first line of a new novel, and so on. At the MLA convention, the characters experience of the fertility arising out of the sterility makes the ending of the novel a comically ebullient.

The business of literature: As a campus novel, one of the obviously important themes of the novel is the business of literature and therefore, the nomadic travel schedules and love/sex lives of a host of modern academics and writers who talk of nothing except literature, sex and literary theory and the resulting jobs and money and financial grants, dominate the text.

Since the novel is based entirely on characters from the academic world of literature and literary criticism who are attending conferences and writing papers the content of the novel becomes extremely academic with constant allusion to all the important critical theories and texts. Therefore, Lodge very appropriate creates his characters on literary archetypes and scattering the pages with all literary references.

The novel also provides insights, comments and asides on the competitive nature of the contemporary academic world while visualising the cut-throat competition to further develop and promulgate the next anti-humanist, technocratic and unconventional literary theory.

12.4 Humour and Satire in the novel:

Humour and satire go hand in hand in the '*Small World'*. It is a novel dedicated to satirising the industry of academic literary criticism and therefore, Lodge brings all the critical discourses into the novel. Lodge creates national stereotypes for his satire and each national stereotype advocates one particular critical approach. Satire often deals in stereotypes but the success depends on the caricature and vibrancy of the characters and although stereotypes often spark insult, it however, never fails to amuse if the animation is done proper. Lodge successfully animates his characters by providing them enough peculiarity and oddity that make them humorously unbelievable. The reader is also laughing constantly because one stereotypical character is bewilderedly confronting another stereotype. The humour in the novel arises from the contrasting blend of the ancient romance formula with the modern realities of academic life. The characters bearing the names of the popular literary figures from the past are created to re-enact their past role in the modern context and these stereotypical and allegorical characters provide much of the fun in the novel. Lodge's realistic Romance is populated by stereotypical and allegorical figures. The protagonist Persse is a knight errant echoing Perceval of Grail Legend, Angelica echoing angel is his illusive Dark Lady while Miss Sybil Maiden echoes Greek myth of the prophetic Sybil.

ersse in the very beginning itself receives instructions from experienced Morris Zapp, the cynical careerist who have he ambition to become the highest paid academic in the world. While Persse is bewildered to face the new realities of the literary profession, Zapp explains why the professors nowadays spend so much time globe-trotting from conference to conference rather than in the traditional pursuits of teaching and research - "Scholars these days are like the errant knights of old, wandering the ways of the world in search of adventure and glory". The parallel of the adventure of the knights from romance and the adventures of the

academics are presented to a comical effect while never failing to condemn the situation.

The characters in Lodge's novel are made casually to use the language of the romance: they are described to be 'lured' into situations, to experience 'peril' and think of each other as a 'sorceress' or a 'hero', or to cast 'spell' on each other and these small verbal details makes the modern academic romance a very comically enjoyable satire. The comical incidents which are confusingly large are scattered throughout the long novel and the novel doesn't just tell one story but it is a storehouse of multiple stories. The comic elements results from the seemingly innocent co-incidences, the situational incidents re-enactment of the roles from the allegorical past, the fusion of the language of the past with the present.

Whether pleasant or unpleasant, happy or tragic, coincidences supply much of the aesthetic surprises and in traditional narrative structures, it used to be an important trope for building up the plot structure. In the novels of Daniel Defoe, for example, the first great exponent of the novel form, coincidences functions as the emblematic of God's providential involvement in human affairs. When the characters are able to notice coincidences, they realise the divine purpose God imposes on to them like Robinson Crusoe sees a pattern of divine purpose when he notices the coincidences happening in his life. But, in Lodge's novel, co-incidences take place not to suggest divine interference but to signify parodic designs. Lodge's characters response to coincidences differently. When Persse goes to meet his aunt in Rummidge because his mother wanted him to, he bumps into Morris Zapp on the suburban streets of Rummidge. Zapp was on his way to meet his former landlord, and they both find that they are headed for the same road.

Zapp immediately responds with -"That's a remarkable coincidence," and even more coincidentally, they are actually headed for the same house. The discovery of the coincidence inspires Zapp to do "a little jig of excitement". Zapp is delighted to discover that Dr O'Shea, his old partner in drinking is also Persse's uncle. It also gives a warm confidence in Zapp as he confesses that he knows everyone worth knowing. In Lodge's novel, everyone sees coincidences differently. Zapp sees coincidences as an outcome of his own important position while seemingly innocent characters are much surprised at the coincidence. But, the reader can very well identify the author's intention in using the coincidences that will lead to a future revelation of a hidden purpose but which is something the characters themselves are unable to see. This innocence and inability of the characters to interpret the true purpose of the coincidences add to the humour and satire of the novel. The coincidental meeting of Zapp and Persse is a way to let the readers know of the fate of Persse's cousin Bernadette who was living with her parents-the O'Sheas when Zapp was their lodger. After getting pregnant by an unknown lover Bernadette has disappeared who returns later to play an important part in the story. The seemingly innocent coincidences holds clue to expose the personal hypocrisies of the characters.

The comical incidents are confusingly large are scattered throughout the long novel and the novel doesn't just tell one story but a number of independent stories. The humour therefore results from the seemingly innocent co-incidences, the re-enactment of the roles from the allegorical past, the fusion of the language of the past with the present.

12.5 Let's sum up:

The novel presents in a satirical vein the peripatetic, jet-setting lifestyle of the modern globe-trotting academics. The networks formed between these international colleagues are intriguingly comical and exposes the sexual tensions existing behind the novel. The coincidental meetings at the conferences around the world between these academics are deliberately set to resemble the tangled interlinking plot structures of late medieval and Renaissance romances. The entire novel is written in which themes and motifs and names and incidents borrowed from that old romance is recycled to provide the structure, characters and incidents of a 20th-century novel. In the 'Small World' Lodge creates what Zapp calls "the global campus" of photocopiers, long-distance telephone calls, frequent air-travels and international conferences, which in turn serve as the most overt manifestation of what Bakhtin calls "carnival freedom," -the dialogical bringing together of different social types, genres and subgenres, voices, discourses, and so forth, in an effort to challenge the monological authority of all forms. Lodge integrates in *Small World*, often parodically, a multiplicity of dialogized elements- from letters, pantomimes, conference papers, popular romances, and Romantic poetry to Marxist, structuralist, and deconstructionist jargons playing each against the others and thus denying to offer a single finality and interpretation. Everything in '*Small World'* has- as Bakhtin terms its - "de-crowning double." For example, erudite Angelica has her twin sister- porn-star Lily whom Persse confuses to be Angelica. His mistake in recognition derives from his interpretative choice, his assumption of the world as singular and recognizable rather than double and interpretable. In a similar vein, Lodge ironically denies and unsettles the very structure of the romance on which he fashions his academic comedy of manners.

12.6 Questions/ Exercises:

1. Write a note on the setting of the novel *'Small World'*.
2. Discuss the important of themes of the novel.
3. Write a note on the humour and satire of the novel.
4. Critically evaluate the strength of the novel.
5. Write short notes on the role and character of -
    - Persse McGarrigle
    - Angelical Pabst
    - Cheryl Summerbee
    - Arthur Kingfisher
    - Sybil Maiden

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