



INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
IDE
Rajiv Gandhi University



MAENG-408
Fiction-II

MA ENGLISH
2nd Semester

Fiction II

**MAENG408
II SEMESTER**



RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

About IDE

The formal system of higher education in our country is facing the problems of access, limitation of seats, lack of facilities and infrastructure. Academicians from various disciplines opine that it is learning which is more important and not the channel of education. The education through distance mode is an alternative mode of imparting instruction to overcome the problems of access, infrastructure and socio-economic barriers. This will meet the demand for qualitative higher education of millions of people who cannot get admission in the regular system and wish to pursue their education. It also helps interested employed and unemployed men and women to continue with their higher education. Distance education is a distinct approach to impart education to learners who remained away in the space and/or time from the teachers and teaching institutions on account of economic, social and other considerations. Our main aim is to provide higher education opportunities to those who are unable to join regular academic and vocational education programmes in the affiliated colleges of the University and make higher education reach to the doorsteps in rural and geographically remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and North-eastern part of India in general. In 2008, the Centre for Distance Education has been renamed as "Institute of Distance Education (IDE)."

Continuing the endeavor to expand the learning opportunities for distant learners, IDE has introduced Post Graduate Courses in 5 subjects (Education, English, Hindi, History and Political Science) from the Academic Session 2013-14.

The Institute of Distance Education is housed in the Physical Sciences Faculty Building (first floor) next to the University Library. The University campus is 6 kms from NERIST point on National Highway 52A. The University buses ply to NERIST point regularly.

Outstanding Features of Institute of Distance Education:

(i) At Par with Regular Mode

Eligibility requirements, curricular content, mode of examination and the award of degrees are on par with the colleges affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University and the Department(s) of the University.

(ii) Self-Instructional Study Material (SISM)

The students are provided SISM prepared by the Institute and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC), New Delhi. This will be provided at the time of admission at the IDE or its Study Centres. SISM is provided only in English except Hindi subject.

(iii) Contact and Counselling Programme (CCP)

The course curriculum of every programme involves counselling in the form of personal contact programme of duration of approximately 7-15 days. The CCP shall not be compulsory for BA. However for professional courses and MA the attendance in CCP will be mandatory.

(iv) Field Training and Project

For professional course(s) there shall be provision of field training and project writing in the concerned subject.

(v) Medium of Instruction and Examination

The medium of instruction and examination will be English for all the subjects except for those subjects where the learners will need to write in the respective languages.

(vi) Subject/Counselling Coordinators

For developing study material, the IDE appoints subject coordinators from within and outside the University. In order to run the PCCP effectively Counselling Coordinators are engaged from the Departments of the University, The Counselling-Coordinators do necessary coordination for involving resource persons in contact and counselling programme and assignment evaluation. The learners can also contact them for clarifying their difficulties in then respective subjects.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Syllabi

UNIT I: Types of Novels

UNIT II: *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence

UNIT III: *The Power and the Glory* by Graham Greene

UNIT IV: *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster

UNIT V: *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker

Unit 1: Types of Novels

3.2 GENRES OF NOVEL

Novel of incident (1719–1731)

As a prolific prose writer and journalist, Daniel Defoe (1607 – 1731) contributed with *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* to the early eighteenth century English novels. *Robinson Crusoe* is a story and fictional autobiography of the protagonist who is a castaway who spent 28 years on a remote, tropical island near Venezuela, facing Native Americans, captives and persecutors before he is rescued. Alexander Selkirk, a famous Scottish castaway was the influence behind this novel who had survived for four years on the Pacific island called Más a Tierra later to be called Robinson Crusoe Island in 1966 in Chile. Defoe was inspired by the translations of Tufail's Hayyibn Yaqhdhan, a novel set on a desert island. It is also influenced by Cervantes as it is in the famous picaresque tradition.

Crusoe, a surname from German Kreutznaer or Kreutznar sets on a voyage from Queen's Dock in Hull, in August 1651. He is on a journey beyond his parents' wish who want him to stay home and pursue a career in law. His journey is perilous having borne a ship-wreck by a storm but he sails again. He is a passionate sailor who is abducted by sea pirates. They make him a slave to a moor where after two years' slavery, he is rescued in a boat with a boy called Xury. Later on, Crusoe is befriended by the captain of a Portuguese vessel off the west coast of Africa. That ship had to sail to Brazil. In Brazil, Crusoe becomes the owner of a plantation with the help of the captain. Years after, he participates in an expedition which is to bring slaves from Africa though in this voyage too, he faces ship-wreck in a storm when they are forty miles away in the sea on an island; Crusoe called it the island of Despair, in 1659. All people who travelled with him are dead except for three animals.

His tools from the sinking ship help him erect a habitation. Singly, he survives having searched means to stay on and creates a world to live with agriculture and animal husbandry. He keeps a parrot, reads the Bible and becomes religious. He is thankful to God for keeping him alive, though he misses human company. He meets native cannibals who visit to kill and eat prisoners. He decides to murder them first but later sensible wisdom dawns on him where he feels the cannibals did not commit a crime knowingly. He helps a prisoner to escape, tames him to learn English and converts him to Christianity. Now these two bring a crusade against the cannibals in favour of the prisoners. They come to know of other civilized men and Spaniards on that island before they leave for England. By this time his family had declared him

dead and left him no will. Crusoe returns to Lisbon to reclaim his estate in Brazil; he brings that to England. The rescued prisoner, Man Friday, now his faithful friend, accompanies him.

His *Moll Flanders* (1722), another fictional autobiography portrays much that Defoe underwent in his own life. It is the story of a girl born to a convict, who serves as a servant in a family, where she is married to one of the sons, after many adventurous happenings, she comes to know that her mother-in-law had actually been her biological mother, her husband her half-brother. She leaves that past to come back to England, leaving two of her own kids behind, and goes to Bath with a new husband. She develops some relationships there too like earlier. At 42, she has another lover who is a banker, then after him she again marries another. She has several children by many men here; later she turns a thief and calls herself Moll Flanders. In the end, she repents her misdeeds to reunite with her Lancashire husband. There is revelation of a long history and relations, wealth and plantations till she is 69 years of age. She returns to England. Defoe's characters are convincingly set in a solidly realized world. This was the first example of the Novel of incident (M.H. Abram). His novels are deeply realistic and portray lives of ordinary human beings. They are often deeply critical of the then English society. England and her colonies, voyages, continent tours, human greed, illegitimate child, nameless heirs of street, difficult struggling life, a strong moral instruction— all colour the canvas of Defoe's novels at one stroke. His realistic approach inspires later generations to keep his tradition alive.

Picaresque novel (1742–1768): Picaresque as a term means relating to an episodic style of fiction dealing with the adventures of a rough and dishonest but appealing hero. Its origin is from French, and Spanish picaresco, or picáro meaning 'rogue' in the sixteenth century. 'Picaro' means 'rogue' in Spanish. Such a story deals with the escapades of a careless young man who lives by his wits and is hardly subject to change of character through the succession of adventures which he undergoes. Spanish writer Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605) is its most celebrated example. 'Gil Blas' (1715) by Le Sage, a Frenchman is also a very famous picaresque narrative. This kind of novel is realistic in style, episodic in structure, and often satiric and ironical in tone. This is an episodic recounting of the adventure of a single hero or an anti-hero on the road. In England, the followers of this tradition were many and all presented stories through their own point of view adding some new element to it.

Henry Fielding (1707–1752): Fielding is one of the most well known figures of English letters. He was a great explorer of human nature and had wide experience of life. His works were lively and strong. Though in his lifetime, he was seen as 'dirty and low' as a writer, he appears to have influenced the authors of the following centuries. He had been the pioneer of English novels. His masterpiece *Tom Jones* (1749) is ranked by Maugham among the ten greatest novels of the world. His novels are categorized as novels of reason. He had lively realism, great play of humour, irony and satire; tolerance for human weaknesses, keen eye for humour, engaging narrative, gift of strong plot and theme, vivid characterization, and plenty of comic dialogues. Through Fielding's narrative – a reader is never bored. He was frank in describing human folly.

Fielding's Contribution: A sound technique and logical following of life are Henry Fielding's gift to English novels. Fielding influenced the posterity more than any

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other novelist of his age. As far as development of novel as a form of art is concerned, Fielding's contribution remains far above his contemporaries. He can be called the father of the modern English novel.

Realism: Fielding is a pioneer of realism in English literature. In fact, the English novel was born out of the characteristic of realism. He began novel writing late in reaction to Richardson's *Pamela* and sentimental novels of morality. It did not mean that he was immoral. His novels too instruct but with comic and humour. His sentiments are in the right place without exaggeration. His canvas is big with a wide range of characterization. His prose is realistic and at ease. Even tense or pathetic situations are imbued with irony and humour like in the works of Ben Jonson. His novels are pictures of his Age and people. He speaks his truth pungently but through the vein of comic. He speculates into the nature of man very deeply in an intellectual and moral way.

Humour, Comic and Irony: He is considered one of the greatest humorists of his age. In fact, it was after Fielding's political satires that the Licensing Act was passed. He had followed into Cervantes's footsteps. His humour has a wide range: it may be a humorous fight of his hero on a highway or the pathetic side of human life viewed ironically. His humour is subtle, not boisterous. It is soft, mild and unpretentious. His humour is not pungent but pleasant and full of irony. He his Tom Jones is considered among world's ten best novels. He considered his Joseph Andrews a 'comic epic in prose'. The character Parson Adams is influenced by Sancho Panza of Don Quixote. Fielding is considered 'a cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit that prevails everywhere strongly'.

Philosophy and Moral: Fielding began writing Joseph Andrews as a parody of Richardson's *Pamela*. He made Joseph Andrews Pamela's brother. It was in order to laugh at the exaggerated morality and sentimentality of Richardson. In Joseph Andrews, he shows an intellectual depth with greater human philosophy having broad insight into human nature. His characters are genuine products of higher intellect and observation of morality and ethics. It is inherent in their nature. Born in a rich family, Fielding himself had seen quite a lot of human life because of the vicissitudes that he underwent. His characters are generous, good humoured and thoughtful. They act with wisdom and presence of mind.

Gift of Solid Plot: Fielding is known for strong plot narrative. Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, Amelia, and Jonathan Wilde are all great examples of good plot-construction. Coleridge compared him with Sophocles and Ben Jonson in this regard. A strong plot means that a story never falls down the level of interest through different incidents. His novels are considered an 'amazing tour de force of plot construction.'

Art of Characterization: Plot moves through various incidents and characters. Fielding's characters are though sometimes caricatures like Andrews or *Shamela* (1741) but they are 'not men but manners, not an individual but the species.' There is a wide variety of characters in his novels. His characters create humour and amuse the readers through their nature and events both. His characters do not attack any idea but their behaviour and its outcome is humorous. Sometimes their activities are humorous like that of Parson Adams. His range of characters is comparable to that of Chaucer and Jonson.

Fielding's Works: Joseph Andrews (1742) is considered 'a comic epic in prose' by Fielding. It is his first published work. It is a satire about Joseph Andrews, the brother of Richardson's Pamela, and his adventures. In this novel, he targeted to satirize Richardson's exaggerated morality and sentimentalism portraying it in a man. It tells how Lady Booby aims at the virginity of Andrews and puts him under trial. She tries her best to separate him from Fanny, his beloved but after a lot of fun – the two are married at the end.

Jonathan Wild (1743) is a real story and a political satire aimed at Robert Walpole. It is considered a loose narrative inspired by his age. It is a great example of irony. Wild, born to a poor family, becomes a Thief-Taker General, who while working on the side of law became dishonest to fill up his own pocket. He is arrested, tried and executed. Tom Jones (1749) is divided into 18 books, making a huge novel that relates the history of a foundling. It is considered Fielding's masterpiece for which he has been placed amongst world's greatest novelists. Tom Jones, a ward of Squire Allworthy, falls in love with Sophia and he is a vigorous and lusty youth but honest and soft-hearted. Sophia is his neighbour and from a rich family and the elderly gentleman opposes their love but in the end they are united.

Tobias Smollett (1721–71): Smollett is considered a great novelist of the eighteenth century, after Richardson and Fielding, though his work is not considered as great as theirs. His novels are steeped in the picaresque style. His *Roderick Random* (1748), *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), and *Humphrey Clinker* (1771) are famous novels. As an artist, he was a realist gifted with a fine flow of narration and colourful events. He was a sharp observer of life and its rough sides. He put brutal and coarse facts of life into fiction. He is not as lively as others of his age but realistic in nature. His novels are full of new situations and events.

Lawrence Sterne (1713–68): Lawrence Sterne was also one of the four notable writers of the eighteenth-century English novel. *Tristram Shandy*, *The Gent* (1759–1767) is his masterpiece which is in nine volumes: a mixture of unconnected incidents; it comprises of fancies, knowledge of human life, humour, and pathos. His plot is scattered and his story develops late. Sterne is sentimental in his approach. He is still known by his streak of sentimentality. His art of characterization is wide and vivid.

The sentimental novel (1740–1780)

The sentimental novel is characterized as novel of character or psychological novel. Samuel Richardson is called the father of sentimental novel. His 'Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded' (1740) has been written in an epistolary manner which is regarded as the first English novel. Here Richardson has narrated the story of a meek and pious lady of low birth. He has depicted a rustic lady's emotions, who fights for her modesty in the presence of a dissolute master. She is, in the end, married to the same man who changes morally.

His other work was *Clarissa Harlowe* (1747–48) written in epistolary style in eight volumes. It is conveyed only through the exchange of letters. It is the story of a tragic heroine, Clarissa, who is a beautiful and virtuous young lady. She is a neo-rich whose grandfather has left property to her but only if she marries Richard Lovelace, an enemy of their family. Lovelace at one point of time, under his passion of love and hatred for her family, drugs and rapes her. She becomes more adamant and abhors

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him because he had put her into a brothel. She escapes from there and commits suicide. She makes a will which irrespective of her hatred is passed over to Lovelace. He becomes ashamed to see how Clarissa responded to his villainy — with a good heart — and that pains him very much. Lovelace feels ashamed of himself as he comes to know its purport. He goes to Italy, fights a duel and becomes injured on purpose and dies. His last novel is *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754) in which the hero is a virtuous Christian gentleman who has been very careful and scrupulous in his love affair.

Richardson's Gifts: Samuel Richardson has dwelt keenly into the female psychology. He was a great reader of human behaviour. He was also adept in describing the emotional problems of human life. He made a great effort in liberating novel as a form from a conservative outlook. He is known for his psychological analysis and introspection and social realism. His stress on morality and sentimentality made him popular across Europe. But he is often considered a writer of lengthy novels; his morality is considered smug or prudish. His description of the emotional details of the protagonist's psychology is a quality which makes him an immortal writer.

Lawrence Sterne (1713–68): Sentimental novels depend on emotional response of both the characters and the readers. The plot in a sentimental novel advances in an emotional manner rather than in action. Lawrence Sterne is a notable writer of this genre. His novel *Sentimental Journey* (1768) is a famous sentimental novel. Sterne's journey through France and Italy is the subject here. It is travel writing: a discussion of personal taste and sentiments of men's manners and morals over classical learning. The narrator is Reverend Mr. Yorick whose adventures are recorded in this book. This is an amorous tale representing a series of self-contained episodes. In style, it is more elegant than his *Tristram Shandy*, *The Gent* which is the story of the eccentric Shandy family.

Other Important Novelists: Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* (1771), Frances (Fanny) Burney's *Evelina* (1778) are good examples of this type. In *Evelina*, the heroine, intrinsically good and raised in a village, is educated and trained for proper living. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews* are stories of emotional and sentimental people. But they are a subtle comment on excessive emotionalism and sentimentality. These novels focused on the weaker society such as orphans and convicted men. It aimed at softer punishment and not a harsh one. Goethe's *Werther* (1774) and Richardson's *Pamela* are the greatest examples of the sentimental novel. The sentimental novel gave birth to the following generation of Gothic novel.

Gothic novel or novel of terror and romance (1717–1850)

Age of transition: Between the changes of the strict classical and realistic depiction of society in novels of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century where new liberties were taken regarding this form of art, we have the Gothic novel. The Gothic novel recalls the medieval set-up of Italy and has elements of romance in it. It deals with cruelty and sins of the hero. It is also associated with the Gothic architectural revival of distant past.

It portrays the appreciation of the joys^o of extreme emotion, mysterious atmosphere, thrill, fearfulness and calmness. English Gothic writers associated with

mediaeval gothic architecture and created an atmosphere where darkness dominated day and night. The pictures are full of terror having harsh laws of human nature enforced on certain characters by torture. It also embodied mysteries, fantasy, and superstition. Nature ruled such primitive buildings very harshly. The image of anti-hero prevailed in a mysterious, dark atmosphere in the gothic tales. The movement of classicism and realism prevailed into the eighteenth century English literature and in such a time, the gothic novel revived romanticism and the middle ages. Thus it was a reaction against the literature of the eighteenth century.

Horace Walpole (1717–97): Son of the Prime Minister Richard Walpole, Horace Walpole was a famous antiquary and originator of the gothic fiction and the harbinger of the great romantic age of English literature like his friend Thomas Grey. Rich and widely travelled, he and his friend Grey both looked beyond their age. The crass realism and mechanical depiction of the then literature forced these intellectuals to rebel against the set norms of poetry, drama and prose. His first novel, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered the first gothic novel. It was his reaction against the realism, sentimentalism and didacticism of the eighteenth century literature. For this he chose a set-up quite distant in the twelfth or thirteenth century Italy where mystery, romanticism and supernatural prevailed. It had the element of criminality in it. Walpole created a Gothic mansion at Strawberry Hill where Manfred, the lord of the castle, lived with his family. The beginning of the novel marked the wedding day of his sickly son called Conrad and Princess Isabella. After the wedding, Conrad is crushed to death by a huge, gigantic helmet which falls on him from above.

Manfred himself marries Isabella being afraid of his death as the ownership of this castle had to automatically pass on to its real owner and not to any member of the family. He divorced his wife Hippolita who could not become a mother. Isabella escapes to a church having been helped by Theodore, a peasant, to avoid Manfred's touch. Manfred ordered to murder Theodore taking the help of a Friar but Theodore is later recognized as the Friar's son by him at the point of his murder. There are people from other kingdoms who come to free Isabella. Manfred murders Mattilda in lieu of Isabella. At last, Theodore is revealed as a true Prince of Otranto and he marries Isabella. Manfred is murderous and he is repentant for his acts. It is a mixture of tragedy and comedy; mystery and romance; terror and crime. It has elements of supernatural and fantasy. In his presentation of horror, romance and mystery, Walpole is compared to Shakespeare. Though this type of novel is considered an escape from the real world – it had a trail of followers who tried their hands on the same line of plot.

Mrs. Ann Radcliffe (1764–1823): Mrs. Radcliffe began as an imitator of Horace Walpole but it was she who explored the wider range in the perspectives of the Gothic novel. She was more articulate and successful as a writer. Her famous novels *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1769) and *The Italian* (1797) are unique of this tradition of fictions. The *Mysteries of Udolpho* has the setting of Italy which is used for a formula or pattern to give the desired background to the story.

A beautiful youth is put into prison by a hard-hearted sadistic villain in a lonely castle. He is rescued by the hero who is not as heroic as traditionally heroes are. The heroes and heroines are almost the same in all of her works with a slight change in complexion and gait but not of heart. There are components in the story to evoke

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terror, like dungeons, secret vaults, hiding places and all these culminate to create the Gothic effect. She did not use supernatural as Walpole did. She explained what seemed supernatural but it was reckoned as something else at the end of the story when she revealed the truth. She also used the natural description to make her pictures more colourful. She dwelt on scenic beauty and its description more powerfully which Walpole did not. Walpole had widely travelled and had seen such constructed castles in reality and based his world of imagination on what he saw. But Mrs. Radcliffe had never seen about what she wrote.

So her picture of the gothic was her own creation based completely on her imagination and fancy. Both she and Walpole lacked the proper knowledge of history. The years referred to in her novels cannot be ascertained as real. She presents a mixture of the eighteenth century didacticism and sentimentalism with romance. In this sense, she differs from Walpole who constructed his world of gothic fiction with the essence of romanticism only.

Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818): Lewis's *The Monk* (1797) has different elements from Mrs. Radcliff's novels. It is a tale of blood and terror. The story is about Ambrosio who is a pious, revered monk of Spain and it is the story of his decline and downfall. He goes mad after physical lust for his student, Matilda, a woman in disguise of a monk who allures and tempts him to it. But once he comes into the trap of this indulgence and sin, he enjoys his lust which is fulfilled by a pupil every now and again. He becomes addicted to this fulfillment and makes the innocent Antonia his prey forcefully. Matilda helps him to do so because she is secretly empowered by Satan in the female form. She helps him to rape and kill Antonia. She causes Ambrosio's downfall from the beginning. The novel has some other Gothic tales within the story like *Bleeding Nun*. Ambrosio faces Inquisition and prefers an escape like Faustus by selling his soul to Satan. There is a devil which prevents Ambrosio from the final repentance and he has a prolonged, torturous end. Later on, the devil reveals to him that the woman he raped and killed was his own sister.

Minor Writers of the Age

Miss Clara Reeve (1729–1827): Ms. Reeve's *Champion of Virtue*, later to be called *The Old English Baron*, was inspired by the Gothic tradition. In it, she deals with a historical event like Walpole without the clear picture of history. Charles Robert Maturin (1782–1824) also wrote novels in the Gothic tradition. *The Fatal Revenge* (1807) was inspired by Mrs. Radcliff. His masterpiece is *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) which is considered as the greatest terror novel. It has a strong plot and a vivid analysis of motifs.

Mary Shelley (1797–1851): Shelley's wife, Mary Shelley, wrote *Frankenstein* (1817) which is a tale of terror having the elements of science in it. It is about the devastation caused by a machine man which itself is destroyed at the end. The theme has time and again been used by movie-makers and proved to be a successful and entertaining story. She was the only novelist of this period who seems to have inspired the entire generation of science fiction writers of the modern age.

William Beckford (1760–1844): Beckford is considered a novelist of very fertile imagination. His *Vathek* (1786) has been set in Arabia and he seems to be inspired by

oriental stories. The story belongs to *Vathek*, a Caliph and sort of Muslim Faustus who sells his soul to Eblis or the devil. It is his story of life till death and hell which is very much terror-evoking. The description of his death is a terrific and horrifying picture. The description of blood-shed and crime is woven into the very texture of the novel. The novel is in the tradition of gothic fiction.

The Historical Novel (1814–2010)

The historical novel is that which uses setting or background from the true history of a period and attempts to convey the spirit, manners, social, economic and political conditions of that age. The historical fact should be true to its existence and the past comes alive to the readers. It informs the readers about the period in which it is written. The recent award-winning novel *Wolf Hall* by Hillary Mantel is an example of a historical novel. It deals with the period of Cromwell and King Henry VIII. Thus the tradition of the historical novel has not died. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) was an attempt in the picaresque tradition and historical representation of the hero. The German author Benedikte Naubert (1756–1819) wrote around fifty historical novels. In technique, he focused his attention on the person of minor historical significance and explained the incidents and events which they experienced. The same trend was followed by Sir Walter Scott, the greatest of all English novelists of this genre. The historical novels began as a literary form of art in the nineteenth century England by Sir Walter Scott. Though Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe tried to base their Gothic novels historically, but their knowledge of history failed to give a true historical charm to their stories.

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) was a notable Scottish writer of the historical novel. He had explored the works of Shakespeare, the Bible, Spenser, Dryden, Swift, and historical stories keenly. He was the first English writer who had an international career and had followers in Europe, Australia, North America, etc. He was also a poet and playwright at the same time. Scott had worked throughout his life to revive the history of Scotland. Not only did he revive his country's historical past, but also made it live and presentable to the readers. He had studied his culture deeply and had a lively imagination to support the true facts. In other words, he made history live and walk in his times: he took real men from history and the dates and transformed them into interesting tales. But he did not transcend his time like Walpole. He had explored a lot in history. He was a voracious reader. Since he picked up history as his setting and filled in his ideas to bring alive those men and women, his novels are called historical romance. He began by translating works from German and first published his three-volume set of collected ballads, 'The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border'. Since then he delved deep into the historical past of Scotland to revive it in the memory of his generation. His historical figures of Scotland were men and women who were not famous. They were minor historical figures. This might be the influence of his age as the entire age of romanticism sought its refuge in humanism and upliftment of the society. As a novelist he had a wide range and his novels are popularly termed as Waverley Novel. They are a long series of publications. He did not write his name on his first venture as a novelist called 'Waverley' (1814). Later too, he used this phrase to denote his identification, 'by the author of Waverley', instead of his name. 'Waverley' (1814) is a tale of the Jacobite rising of 1745 in the Kingdom of Great Britain. The

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hero is Edward Waverley who had been bought up in a Tory family and so; he was sympathetic to the Jacobite cause. His novels became very popular. The time when he began writing, he became a popular subject of conversation in England and was a famous name at the Royal family because George, Prince Regent invited and dined with him. He was anxious to see the author of Waverley.

Scott's central interest was a subject related to chronicling. He did not center the novel on a certain character but on a historical period or event. As a novelist, his range is surprising for he wrote incessantly. In 1819, he chose a subject that related to England and not specifically Scotland in his *Ivanhoe*. This novel is about a Jew called Rebecca who is a sympathetic character. The novel came at the time of struggle for the Emancipation of the Jews in England. His *The Bride of the Lammermoor* is based on a real story of two lovers in the backdrop of Lammermuir Hills. In this novel, Lucie Ashton and Edgar Ravenswood promise each other in love but it is later discovered by Lucie's mother that the man is the enemy of their family. She forces her daughter to marry Sir Arthur Bucklaw, a rich inheritor. But Lucie, on her wedding ceremony stabs her groom, becomes mad and dies. Scott was a very famous author throughout his life and career as a novelist. He was popularly read and liked throughout the world. He was granted the title of Baronet for his excessive popularity and was regarded highly everywhere. He became Sir Walter Scott in 1820.

In service to his country, he organized the visit of King George IV to Scotland. He was a man on whom the glory of the importance of Scottish literature rests. It was in 1827 that he announced himself as a writer of Waverley novel publications. The following may be considered among his famous novels: *Waverley* (1814), *Guy Roy* (1818), *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Abbot* (1820), *Kenilworth* (1821), *The Talisman* (1825), *Scottish Borders*, *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828), *Anne of Geierstein* (1829), *Count Robert of Paris* (1831), *Castle Dangerous* (1831). The name *Waverley* which Scott chose for his title for the long series of publications is a local government district in Surrey, England.

Through his novels Scott aimed at exploring the history of the middle ages. Scott had also established a printing press. He was equally famous in the US in his times. Mark Twain, a popular American novelist, ridiculed Scott in his *Huckleberry Finn* by calling a sinking boat as Walter Scott. There have been critics who have praised and regarded his works optimistically but there were those who wrote against his popularity. In his lifetime, Scott was one of the most famous novelists of the world. He always served his country and men. He often fought for public causes. He never bored the readers by repetition. He did not describe his characters psychologically. He did not portray the troubles inherent in our life. His characters are often accused of being important only in the context of history but he himself condemns them by calling Waverley a 'sneaking piece of imbecility.' He did not care much for plot.

The period after Scott: Scott laid down the foundation of historical fiction in England but it spread its luminous wings towards countries such as France and Germany due to his influence. In England, Mrs. Anna Eliza Bray came to be known as Scott's successor whose novel, *The Protestant* (1828) depicts the persecution of the Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary Tudor. GRP James was also a famous minor writer who wrote almost hundred historical novels in the period of 1825 to

1850. William Harrison Ainsworth (1805–1882) was also a popular novelist for two decades whose first work was *Rockwood* (1834). Bulwar Lytton (1803–1873) wrote five historical novels among which *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) was the most popular. He stuck to moral instruction and historical truth in all his works. His historical novels therefore, are mere representation of facts and they are not as lively as Scott's. His novels are full of historical accuracy and details.

Some Victorian history novel writers used the theme of history for the sake of sectarian bias. Charles Kingsley's (1819–1875) *Hypatia* (1853) attacked the Roman Catholics. Newman's fiction called *Callista: A Sketch of the Third Century* represented the same genre. Thackeray's Henry Esmond (1852) is also a chronicle novel about the life of the eighteenth century England. Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Barnaby Rudge* are also the novels of this genre. George Eliot's *Romola* describes the life of Italy in the period of Renaissance. In the twentieth century, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863–1944) wrote *Hetty Wesley* (1903) and *The Splendid Spur* (1889); Jacob Wassermann (1873–1934) wrote *The Triumph of Youth*; Ford Madox Hueffer (1873–1939) wrote *The Fifth Queen* (1908); Ms Phoebe Gay wrote *Vivandiere* (1929).

There were many other minor writers of historical fiction also during the centuries after Scott. In the 21st century, Hilary Mantel (1952-), an Englishwoman, wrote *Wolf Hall* (2009) which is a historical novel. It won the Man Booker Prize for literature in 2009. This novel is set in the period from 1500 to 1535, a fictionalized biography which embodies the rapid rise of power of Thomas Cromwell, First Earl of Essex in the court of Henry VIII of England. It illustrates the old Latin saying 'Man is wolf to man'. The French writer Alexandre Dumas's (1802–1870) *The Three Musketeers* (1844) is a famous historical novel.

Romantic Novel (1775–1850)

In the history of England, Miss Austen has a great place as a novelist and critic of life whose accuracy about details is rare. Born in 1775 in Hampshire, England, Austen was taught by her father in her house. She lived in the country side for the most part of her life and hardly moved anywhere outside. Her books were taught in schools and made for popular reading but no one knew the name of the writer. Even her nephews did not know that they were reading their own aunt's novel in the school curriculum. She was rated below Maria Edgeworth or Fanny Burney in her age. But by the end of the Victorian age, she was immensely popular and the twentieth century established her fame as a novelist of the first rank in the world. She produced little but all her fictions work are keen and sensitively observed pictures of the society and human relationships. She wrote them charmingly and perfectly. It is very difficult to question her art as she is one of the most profound artists of the fiction world. Her pictures are carefully drawn from her own surroundings, based on the classical unities of time, place and action accurately. They depict human sentiments and actions based on reason. She points out human follies and mistakes embedded in behaviour. She is regarded as one of the best novelist of England even today. Her novels spoke of the manners of men and women.

What Congreve did in the field of drama, Austen has done in the art of novel writing. The word 'romantic' means that which is characterized or inclined towards sentimental and idealized love. Whatever is related to this saying in literature, art and

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music is called 'romantic'. So the fiction that depicts the theme related to love and union is called romantic fiction. Therefore romantic novels focus on the relationship of romantic love between two people which must end in an emotionally satisfying manner.

In such fiction, an optimistic end is always appreciated. In English literature, the trend of romantic novel was born in the beginning of the nineteenth-century. But Samuel Richardson is regarded as the progenitor of this trend through his '*Pamela*'. Love and courtship became centre of interest in almost all the novels of Jane Austen who was the pioneer novelist of this genre.

Almost all her works are good and make for pleasurable reading. As an artist she is perfect for she herself said: 'The little bit (two inches long) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect after much labour.'

Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855): Charlotte Brontë explored the depths of romanticism wrapped in passion and depth of emotionalism in love. As children, the Brontës were very sharp and disciplined kids nestled by a stern clergy father whose Irish sentiments never left him. Being the eldest surviving child, she played the role of a mother to her siblings and that careful depiction of a sensible young lady is overt in *Jane Eyre* (1847) her first novel. Ms. Austen's heroines thrive in a smug social circle but Charlotte Brontë's heroines are independent, earning and decision-makers for themselves. Jane Eyre is an orphan, left in the care of her maternal aunt, a very austere elite woman who tortures the child in the 'red-room' besides pampering her own ill-mannered children. She is put in a seminary which is equally bad and becomes a governess in future much like the author herself. She falls in love with the master of the family, a rich married man whose genetically mad wife is locked up in the same house and as she comes to know the secret, she leaves that place.

She wanders like a vagabond to be restored home by a clergy who is later discovered to be her own cousin. Meanwhile her paternal uncle leaves her a considerable estate. She escapes to her former lover discarding the proposal of the second lover-cousin and unites with him who has become handicapped in course of time. The story is full of passionate love, mystery, romance, chivalry, wooing, depicting love for spontaneity and independence in human nature. Her other important works are *Villette* (1853), *Shirley* (1849) and *Professor* (1857). Though Charlotte wrote very few novels they all cry for woman's emancipation, social-fetters, gender inequality, effect of Industrial Revolution, feminist appeal, frank portrayal and acceptance of a woman's love, etc. More so they seem to be dreams of an enthusiastic young woman full of burdens of life and responsibility who looks forward to a better future.

Emily Brontë (1818–1848): Emily Jane Brontë is one of the most unique women writers of her century. A thoroughly objective artist, Emily has just one novel to her name. In her novel, she chose the setting of Yorkshire where she lived and died. Her novel *Wuthering Heights* is set in the bleak Yorkshire moors where two prime mansions are the subject of the story: one is Wuthering Heights placed at the top of the moors where nature plays havoc and the house is furnished with only necessary comforts to survive; the second, Thrushcross Grange which is close to the territory of the village situated in the valley where all comforts are available. The former is occupied by the Earnshaws and the second by the Lintons. Their life is normal and steady until a

small, dark waif is picked and brought home by old Mr. Earnshaw. He is called Heathcliff, whose mutual and passionate affection for Catherine Earnshaw brings disaster to both the families. Heathcliff is bullied by Catherine's brother after Mr. Earnshaw's death. Hindley Earnshaw reduces him to the status of a servant, separates Catherine from him, and asks Catherine to be prepared for a better future with Edgar Linton, the son of the Magistrate. Heathcliff cannot bear this separation and Catherine's devotion to Linton and he neglects himself. Catherine chooses Linton to shock Heathcliff whereupon he leaves home to return three years later as a rich and educated man. He first shocks Catherine by marrying Linton's sister. Then he makes Hindley an addict of drinking and gambling and he also dies. He forces Edgar into death by abducting and forcing marriage of his daughter to his sickly son Linton Heathcliff. He brings up Hindley's son as an extremely boorish, uncultivated and uneducated youth and possesses both the properties. At last, he dies without making his will. The story is about thunders of atmosphere, passion, pathos, cruelty, emotion, metaphysics, horror, supernatural and mysticism. Emily's picture of life is stark, brave, exposed to nature, full of cruel realities, embittered and broken relations, and eternal love.

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Anne Brontë (1820–1849): The youngest amongst the Brontës, Anne was a soft, much cared for and frail child who grew up in a close family atmosphere and went out to earn her livelihood as her elder sister Charlotte. Anne wrote two novels *Agnes Grey*, and *Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Her *Agnes Grey* is the story much like her own about a young girl who goes to work in a family as governess and tacitly falls in love with a clergy man. But the man does not disclose his love for her. She has friends and rivals among those girls with whom she is working. Meanwhile her already sick father is dead and her brave mother opens a seminary at the sea-side where Agnes joins her. Accidentally she sees a clergyman while walking at the beach one day. He comes and introduces himself as a Rector — rich and affluent and in a mannered way asks the permission of her mother for her hand and marries her. *The Tenant* is a story full of tragic situations and pathos about an addiction-ridden hero whose nature resembled her own brother Patrick Branwell's. All the Brontë sisters pleaded for freedom of expression, informal representation of human nature, realism, poverty, broken family relations and stress on passionate love. Their novels are full of natural descriptions of beauty. Thomas Love Peacock (1785–1866) was also a famous author of this genre. His *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) and *Crotchet Castle* (1836) are notable romantic pieces of fiction.

Novel of purpose (1812–1950)

A social novel of purpose deals with a social problem and propagates a message. It is related closely with social criticism. When this style of writing began, it was meant for the middle class and the labour class people. The Industrial Revolution, the class difference, the ever-burdened dependent class came to be its subject. This genre of novel was used prominently by those who themselves had seen a hard, unendurable life. Social novel describes the foibles of the institutions of the society: like the effect of corrupt politics, the dominance of the elite or ruling class, plight of the downtrodden, etc. Such a novel depicts the experiences of real life with a little bit of melodrama or exaggeration in its texture to create reader's interest. It maintained the romantic style of freedom of subject and form. It is full of imagination and vivid characterization. Its dialogues are full of emotion, pathos and tragic descriptions.

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Novel of realism (1775–1925)

A realistic novel attempts to portray in fiction the effects of realism. They describe complex characters having more than one motive representing a certain social class who manage their society. They depict their interaction with the society, their faults, experience and everyday life. The tradition of the realistic novel came through Defoe and Fielding in the eighteenth century but developed in the hands of master novelists of the nineteenth century such as Jane Austen, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, William Dean Howells and Henry James in England; and Stendhal, George Sand, Balzac and Flaubert in France; and Turgenev and Tolstoy in Russia. In the novels of Jane Austen, Edith Wharton and John P. Marquand, there is focus on the customs, day to day interactions, manners and estimation of a particular social class. So they are called the novel of manners also.

In *Mansfield Park*, Fanny Price's problem to be adopted by some relative is the main issue. In the novel, we see the problem of financial insecurity and of adoption of a poor relative who is sent to different relatives for staying there and is treated as a burden everywhere. Her other novels are *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. All of them are fine pictures of an upper-middle class society reflecting the modes and manners. They are objectively crafted, fine pieces of art, firmly delineated and formally perfect. George Eliot (1819–1880) combines two important traits of which the first is a strong intellectual tendency to analyse the problems of life, and the second is to give solutions for them by instruction. Her novels are deeply imbued in the social life of the countryside: a true picture of men and their behaviour with a strong moral undercurrent in them. She instructs that our duty is the most important part of our life. She attaches value to the individual as a part of universal moral forces and tries to establish that moral law is the basis for human society. As Dickens portrayed the streets of London and Thackeray, the upper class gentry, George Eliot revived the realism-based depiction of the country life.

For her pictures of realism with a fine portrayal, she holds the prime rank among the novelists of the world. She started writing fiction in the second phase of her life when she produced *Adam Bede*, *Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner*. In her last phase, she wrote *Romola* (1862–63), *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871–72) and *Daniel Deronda* (1836).

Her novels of the first phase of writing depict the experiences related to the author herself, their stories and scenes are set in the rural England; their characters are the people of the Midlands whom she had seen and known. They are works of permanent value because of their picture of realism with spontaneity, naturalness and humour. The novels of the latter period reflect deep analysis of character not as vivid as the early country-life portrayals. They all reflect as she herself said—psychological realism. They present the inner struggle of a soul and open up motives, emotions and genetic influences which control human activities. She concentrates upon either the moral growth or decline or development of a soul and her characters show this particular trait essentially. The characters of *Tito* and *Romola* reflect such a growth from good to bad and bad to good. *Silas Marner* is considered artistically her most perfect work which embodies powerful, long-lasting effect of realism and it is the story of a poor weaver. Ms. Eliot is attributed to have given birth to the modern psychological novel.

Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) composed novels as 'Entertainment for an Idle Hour', much like Thackeray. His works reflect social realism. He is a formalist in art portraying society with a wide range of characters full of humour and their daily activities with utmost finery and polish of delineation. His notable work is *Barchester Towers* (1857) depicting the life of a Cathedral town with pictures of bishops, clergies, their families and dependents. Following the same ideals, he wrote *The Warden* (1855) and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867) and other novels of the same series portraying the social interaction of men and women true to the picture of real life. His novels display strong merit and powerful representation of an upper class social manners and characters.

Bulwer Lytton (1803–73) is regarded as the genius who portrayed the upper class social men and manners in his novels. *Pelham* (1828) is about a Byronic gentleman. He studies contemporary manners in the high society in his novels like Thackeray. *Ernest Maltravers* (1837), *The Caxtons* (1848–49), *My Novel* (1853) and *Kenelm Chillingly* (1873) explore deep social realism. Although he is most notably known for his romantic and historic fiction, he has contributed his best to the genre of realistic fiction.

Henry James (1843–1916) is considered one of the most celebrated writers of the twentieth century. He was a clever observer of the society and men and manners. He focused seriously on human thought and feelings. His novels are the picture of social contrasts and comparisons. He presents the study of people of many countries which were economically on the rise alike and juxtaposed them against each other in his work. His *Portrait of a Lady* (1880–81) is his masterpiece where the heroine makes a mistake by choosing an Italian husband owing to his formal refinement but the nature of the man is in reality different and disgusting. In his *The Wings of the Dove* (1902) and *The Ambassadors* (1903) again, James compares the 'unsophisticated vitality of America with the elegant decadence of Europe'. They present the picture of realism and human relationships. His technique of narration is known as 'point of view' which presents a character as a mirror who is 'the centre of consciousness reflecting upon the actions'. Strether in *The Ambassadors* and Isabel Archer in *Portrait of a Lady* are some examples. Arnold Bennett (1867–1931) portrays the daily life of society in *Anna of the Five Towns* (1902) and *The Old Wives Tale* (1908) as a master of realistic approach into fiction. He depicts the exact details of 'the nature of provincial life in the Potteries area of Staffordshire' where people, as in small places, make a big issue of even an inconsequential incident. He was often blamed for his materialistic outlook by Mrs. Woolf because his work focuses on the material realities of a certain social environment and the detailed happenings of the provincial life.

Novel of ideas (1811–1980)

In the novel of ideas, plot is subordinate to the philosophy of life. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) is an excellent observer of this mode of expression. He is considered the rival of Dickens. Thackeray is the second most popular novelist of the Victorian age. He belonged to a comfortable and rich family background. He was kind, good-humoured and respected what was pure and morally correct. He finds the society pretentious, deceptive and full of vanities, and pictured them in his novels. He dissects through the high society with realism and morality. Big lords and ladies are

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judged with cool observation by him and the reflection of their real life is mentioned in his fiction. He satirizes people who are morally impure and mercenary in their attitude and exposes their moral evil. Though he seemed to be influenced by Fielding and Swift but is devoid of their bitterness and coarseness of expression. His satire is mild and soft in tone. Both Dickens and Thackeray complete the picture of all the social classes of the Victorian England. *Vanity Fair* (1847-48) is considered his masterpiece which is a reading of the characters of his society. It depicts the famous journey of the Christian and Faithful to the Heavenly city. His *Vanity Fair* is the same that Bunyan used in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. In this fair there are many stalls which sell 'all sorts of vanities' and in our visit to different stalls, we come to know and meet different characters and items such as 'juggling, cheats, games, plays fools, apes, knaves, rogues, and that of every kind.' Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, unlike Bunyan's who made it a small stay in a long journey which we all have in order to grow or do better, is a longer stay where his characters spend a fair share of their lives.

The whole novel, without any specific hero, concentrates upon Amelia, a pure pious woman and Becky Sharp, 'a keen, unprincipled intriguer, who lets nothing stand in the way of her selfish desire to get the most out of the fools who largely constitute the society.' It is a powerful picture of social realism. *Pendennis* (1849-1850) is about a hero who is 'neither angel nor imp'. Here Thackeray presents a genuinely drawn young man of the society, taken exactly as he saw him—carrying carelessness, humility and selfishness. He pursues life for his own interests. It is a profound moral study. *The Newcomes* (1855) and *The Virginians* (1859) are his other works in which the former is a sequel to *Pendennis* and the latter to *Henry Esmond*. *Henry Esmond* is his attempt at the historical novel. His novels describe human weaknesses and follies. He is a social critic with profound realism.

He declared: 'I have no brains above my eyes; I describe what I see'. He was a gentleman and found voice in mild satire which is objectively and formally perfect. His novels portray the beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice. His chief weapon was irony and he used his novels to propagate ideas. But he wrote novels at his own leisure and its impact can be witnessed on the loose plot-structure that they have. His other famous work is *Book of Snobs*.

Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) was a modern satirist who propagated his message through his fiction. His *Crome Yellow* (1921), *Antic Hay* (1923), *Point Counter Point* (1928), *Brave New World* (1932), *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936), *Ape and Essence* (1948), *Island* (1962), etc are famous novels. In *Brave New World* he presented the picture of the future having test-tube babies called 'Soma Gas' and man overcome by his scientific inventions incapable to lead a natural life. He is intellectual and pedantic but rather disheartening to those who prize inventions as the way to growth. George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*, a very optimistic satire which reveals the effects of Communism. It is a lively picture of human life and is regarded as the best among his fiction.

Novel of nature (1840-1930)

The Victorian Age gave numerous profound and scholarly geniuses and trends of fiction writing to the English literature. One of those is the group of novelists who based their novels on nature and its guidance. The Victorian age was of questioning religion on the behalf of proliferating science. But amidst all these hubbubs of the city

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streets lay a few relatively prolific minds who chose to settle in the countryside and devote their power of expression to serve a specific purpose which contributed to the development of the area. They are often criticized for regionalism in literature. The novels of nature depict the portrayal of life around nature, in a country-setting, speaking of the naturally rustic but naïve folk. It also describes the lives of the cultivated people of villages, their day to day life and manners and their society, their aims, desires, etc. In this genre of novel, the most prominent author who revived devotedly the lost territory of England called 'Wessex' was Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), setting his fourteen masterpieces in the same region. He was a classicist, realist, lover of perfect form and applied direct and simple approach to life in all his novels. He presented man as an atom in this large universe and claimed to have aimed at no 'harmonious philosophy.' Man and his relationship with the universe is the subject that he penetrates very deeply into. He studies minutely the scheme of things and his observation of human life magnifies the powerful role of destiny which is mostly sombre and brooding in behaviour and that which forms their actions and events. All his characters are peasant stalks and the gentry at the countryside 'Wessex' where he hailed from. His novels depict 'a general drama of pain' arriving from the simplest causes. The portrayal of tragedy for which he is compared with Shakespeare, evolves from simple reasons and permeates through the leaves of the trees of the surrounding and the dusty roads along which his characters move and breathe. In his novels, nature and universe have voice and character-like stability in their presence and they are not silent spectators like the background. Like his architectural monuments, his novels too were perfectly crafted bit by bit, portraying the eternal essence of humanism, simplicity and power of our inborn nature. His genius as a narrator lies in the fact that he explores the psychology of his characters very deeply without inserting himself anywhere in the prose and makes use of gentle humour and innocence. His artistic language bestows life into his art of narration which puts soul into even the inanimate objects of nature. He is a keen observer of human life and presents its insignificance in front of the gigantic nature around us which are so mysterious, so large, so full of magnitude and power of devastation. But Hardy is a compassionate observer of mankind and is full of human sympathy with a broad outlook towards life. His heroes go out to study and come back to educate the rustic folk in the village like Clym Yeobright of *The Return of the Native*. His novels are a mixture of comedy, tragedy and tragic-comedy. His notable comedies are— *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), *Far from the Madding Crowd*, etc. His noteworthy tragedies are— *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Woodlanders*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Hardy's tragedies imitate Aristotle's principles of tragedy in his 'Poetics' in style. He is a classical and traditionalist writer. Nature is a strong force in his novels surpassing all human wishes and activities where men and women succumb to its greatness and become prey to its schemes at the end. In his tragedies, fate plays havoc in man's life, manipulates him and torments him to painful death. Everything goes out of man's power of handling, and even his actions, and they are governed by relentless fate. His 'Tess', one of the greatest examples modern tragedy, is the story of an innocent's descent from an ancient and respected family to being wildly crushed and 'deflowered' by Alec, the villain and a socially powerful man. By the freak of fate, she falls into his hands at the end and kills herself in search for peace.

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D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930) was also a lover of the philosophy of nature. All his novels are set in the atmosphere where flowers and men blossom naturally. Through his works, he gives a message to man to go close to nature which is fertile and reproductive. He portrays the infertility of man which is because he wants to grow with the gifts of science. Man behaves as machine in this modern world and has lost the real pleasure and importance of life. He condemns intellectual obstinacy which lacks power to penetrate deeply into human feelings and wishes, and suggests that human beings must acknowledge nature as their greatest ally and spend life close to it or cultivate naturalness in their personalities. They should seek pleasure in nature's society and power to live, and feel the pleasure of the senses. His message rebounds in all his novels. The then banned novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by Lawrence is a frank portrayal of sex and human desires related to that aspect of nature. His *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915), *The Trespasser* (1929) and *Women in Love* (1920) are considered his masterpieces. *The White Peacock* (1911), *The Virgin and the Gypsy* (1926) and *The Plumed Serpent* (1923) are also his famous works of fiction. Though his novels focus primarily on man and his sensual urge but via this theory, he instructs that man by his close association with nature can gain a healthy and fruitful life. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), the wife of an impotent industrialist called Conny, goes for union with her own game-keeper. He gives a theory that for the natural urges a person does not see who is cultivated or sophisticated and who is boorish. For that, physical strength is needed. Close to nature only a human being can have that pleasure and satisfaction of pleasures of life for which he or she craves but cannot fulfil singly. Through the description of sensual pleasure, he explores the mysteries of nature as in his *The Virgin and the Gypsy*. Lawrence presents nature as the generator of man and his protector. He believes that people who are uncultivated have greater potency, force and vigour. His novels are satire upon the crippled, machine-driven and upper-class sophisticated society. He was a follower of Charles Darwin and his theory of naturalism.

Psychological novel (1890–1950)

The psychological novel is the product of modern outlook chiefly explored by the Georgians — Aldous Huxley, D.H Lawrence, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. They were all conscious innovators of the art of novel writing and added particular change of style into the art of narration. They were more interested in exploring human subconscious and noting image atom by atom as it falls to mind. They present the picture of the determination of characters as the subconscious receives images through our conscious. There the plot becomes dwarfed by the subject of psychological research. Sometimes it records merely the images one by one as they fall to human consciousness with little or no coherence as in *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf. Such a psychological research is called 'stream of consciousness' technique: it is an unbroken flow of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings in the waking mind (M. H. Abram). It describes long passages of introspection in which the narrator records in detail what passes through a character's awareness. They were all inspired by the psychological theory of Sigmund Freud. They adopted the method for freedom of expression. Their candid expressions, put innovatively, breaks all the conventional norms of novel writing. This form was used for spinning 'contemporary vision of

reality'. The vision was influenced by the theories of Henry Bergson and Freud. Bergson changed the old concept of Time and Freud, of human consciousness. The new concept of Time was that of continuous flow while the conventional one was that of a series of separate incidents. This was the contribution of Bergson and William James's scientific analysis of human consciousness. They believed that a human mind is open – to the past, present and future alike. It is changing still 'continuous, multiple yet one'. According to the theories of Marcel Proust (1871–1922), human mind can be very flexible and is exposed to the present and the recapitulation of the past simultaneously. It is intuitive. So the old concept of chronological fall of events in order was laid aside now. The theories of Freud and Jung, the psychologists, explored that the objective science could describe a man better where human consciousness could carry not only his own but all the ancestral experiences, and stressed on its flexibility and multiplicity. This consciousness could travel back and stay in the present observing events at the same time. This theory affected the art of characterization in the modern novel where the conscious handled the nature of man. Its best examples can be cited in D.H. Lawrence's novels as observed by E.M Forster 'the greatest imaginative writers of the twentieth century.' Technically Lawrence did not go as deep into the exploration of the conscious as Mrs. Woolf or Joyce. His *Women in Love* is an expression of deep symbolism where the pattern is in harmony but *The White Peacock* displays the Jamesian 'point-of-view' technique where the main coherence is the consciousness of one of the characters. His *Sons and Lovers*, *The Trespasser* and *The Lost Girl* express the conventional flow of events and the conscious and symbolism. He dwelt on man's psychological demands and settled his descriptions there, especially the suppression of sexual urges due to the modern outlook and demands of life. His novels are free and frank expressions of human urge of the subconscious which a man suppresses in order to show control over his purpose of existence in a civilized society. But it is the consciousness with which he is created. His notable fiction works are *Aron's Rod* (1922), *Kangaroo* (1923), *The Rainbow* (1915), *The Plumed Serpent*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

More subtle explorer of the subconscious was Dorothy Richardson's (1873–1957) *Pilgrimage*, a series of twelve novels where the first one called *Pointed Roofs* (1915), was the one which initiated this technique. James Joyce (1882–1941) experimented with the stream of consciousness technique most vigorously. He was an experimentalist, unconventional, complex and precise in details, among the modernists. He was linked with the Aesthetic Movement of the nineties which apparently resulted in his *Dubliners* (1914) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* published in *The Egoist* (1916). His *Portrait* is a rebel literature against the conservative Irish life and Roman Catholicism but it reveals that both very strongly influence him. *A Portrait* depicts the early to youthful years of Stephen whose wish to pursue education clashes with the traditional background of his family and its present condition. The novel describes his family background, atmosphere and love life and sex at sixteen. It ends declaring him a rebel in all. The language and style of narration are highly stylistic and technical. Its prose has musical effect. *Ulysses* (1922) is a continuation of Stephen's life embodying motives of 'Art for Art's sake' where Stephen returns from Paris after his mother's death having completed his education and decides where to start his career. The theme of these novels explores the Greek story of

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Telemachus. But Leopold Bloom having lost his son in infancy is the real hero here. Joyce was the inventor of the technique called 'epiphany.' He wove mythology and the present together, a method used by Eliot in his *The Wasteland* (1922). *Finnegan's Wake* (1939), written after 17 years of effort, is his last novel which depicts a Dublin Publican's life, his family and customers. It is through these that the author presents a complete picture of human life. The very title of the novel represents true Irish connotation of death, funeral and resurrection. It is a complex novel. Such books can be appreciated by the well-qualified, intellectual and learned class.

Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) was a very famous novelist who exploited the narrative technique stream of consciousness in each of her fiction works. Her novels represent the mind's experience. Her characters speak about their inner experiences. Mrs. Dalloway, the protagonist, recapitulates the time-scheme of one day in the life of an MP's wife. She is talking about a party that is to take place at night when an old friend whom she loved once has just arrived from India. The novel describes only what her conscious follows whether it is past or the present. The narrative looks incoherent and not so comprehensive though it is stylized particularly to display the stream of consciousness technique. In her latter novels, there is a message interwoven as in *To the Lighthouse*, a place on an island where the family of Mrs. Ramsay and a few close acquaintances arrive to celebrate holiday. This method of capturing the unconscious and conscious is quite improved here because it seems to relate itself to the plot in a harmonious manner. She has the gift of moral which Joyce lacked. His other prominent works are *Between the Acts*, *The Waves*, and *Orlando*. *The Waves* is called her most articulate exercise of all the artistic potentialities. Her novels show an experimentalist's way of expression with a new style and for this she is regarded amongst the most prominent and influential writers of the modern age.

UNIT 4 FICTION: TWENTIETH CENTURY - I

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Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Rise of the Novel
- 4.3 Graham Greene: The Power and the Glory
- 4.4 D.H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers
- 4.5 Summary
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- 4.7 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 4.8 Questions and Exercises
- 4.9 Further Reading

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The English novel was essentially bourgeois in its origins and through the eighteenth and nineteenth century, it was solidly anchored in a social world. Fortune, status and marital position were all important for the Victorian as for the eighteenth century novel. The novelist's world was an assured one, however much he or she might criticize or wish to reform it. The loss of confidence and sense of the common world had an effect on both the themes and techniques of fiction. The construction of the plot pattern based on subtle and private interpretations of the significant in human affairs would necessarily take the novel out of the public arena of value into which it had hitherto moved.

New concepts of time representing the continuous flow of the 'already' into the 'not yet' of retrospect into anticipation and Henri Bergson's concepts of *duree*, of time as flow and duration rather than as a series of points moving chronologically forward also influenced the twentieth century novelist particularly the handling of plot structure. Further, new psychological ideas emphasized the multiplicity of consciousness, the simultaneous coexistence of several levels of consciousness and sub-consciousness in which past experience was retained and by whose retention the whole of personality was colored and determined.

New concept of time came together with the new concept of consciousness to develop a new view of character. The truth about the character is a sum of her whole emotional experience and that sum is always there pervading and indeed constituting her consciousness for, on this view, a woman is her history, nothing is lost, and her reaction to every new event is conditioned by the sum of her reactions to all earlier events. Thus, retrospect is the very stuff of present consciousness. Development depth wise rather than length wise becomes the logical technique.

The novel had been moving towards a greater increase in psychological subtlety. Henry James in particular had brought a new precision and complexity into the description of states of mind. The isolation of the individual consciousness became a

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most important fact in a world from which public value seemed to have departed and where every individual is seen to be a prisoner of her unique stream of consciousness.

If the characteristic theme of eighteenth and nineteenth century novel was the relationship between gentility and morality then that of the twentieth century is a relation between loneliness and love. As E.M. Forster put it, the 'great society' is always the enemy; only the 'little society' or the intimate group of real friends who have somehow managed to break down the wall of individuality that separate them is worth anything—or is really possible as true society. The great society becomes a contradiction in terms. To D. H. Lawrence, the mystical awareness of the core of the otherness in the other person is basis of a true sex relationship. In this unit, we will discuss the works of two novelists—Graham Greene and D.H. Lawrence.

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the importance of the life and works of Graham Greene, with special emphasis on *The Power and the Glory*
- Discuss the importance of the life and works of D.H. Lawrence, with special emphasis on *Sons and Lovers*

4.2 RISE OF THE NOVEL

The foremost feature of modern writing, perhaps, could be that things not very often begin when and where they are expected or supposed to begin. Indeed the very concepts of beginning and ending become debatable, as Lawrence wrote 'In the beginning—there never was any beginning'.

There has perhaps never been so radical a change in any branch of literature, as that which came over the English novel in the first half of this century. Not only has it mirrored the change in the external world, like every art medium, but it has also developed internally. The traditional novelists took their stable society for granted. They never questioned its beliefs or values, and treated their characters in relation to the society. What is more important is the fact that these novelists were assured that their readers shared all their views, the basic assumption of the sanctity of social institutions, family, church etc. and necessity to conform to the rules of such institutions.

This opinion and approach to novel writing reached its peak in Victorian England. Yet towards the end of the nineteenth century, disillusion with bourgeois complacency and commercialism crept in, and this was a major external force in the rise of what you call 'the modern' novel. Ironically enough, it began with the Victorians themselves. George Eliot and Emily Bronte questioned the basics of an individual's links and society. Tennyson began to doubt the linear progress of his and his contemporaries' works. This generated interest in discovering new themes and new ways of expressing them and gradually the break with the past was achieved. Of course, there was now a startling jump from one type of novel to the other. The subject matter became increasingly critical of Victorian materialism, sex was no longer a taboo, but still the tradition was not completely done away with.

One cannot deny the presence of Victorian elements in the early works of all the major modern writers. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is in mainstream of typical Victorian fiction, despite his candid views on sexuality. This is particularly true of Forster and Huxley, who, one feels have never managed to make a complete break from traditional novelists. Affinities in both technique and theme have been studied between Lawrence and Hardy, Conrad and Dickens, Woolf and Sterne. Yet all these novelists—Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Conrad and Joyce—were steadily making time and paving the way for the modern novel.

This breakdown was the result not only of social and economic cause as the Industrial Revolution, but also related to remarkable discovery made in psychology and other areas. One such discovery was Henry Bergson's concept of *Law duree*. Bergson asserts that clock time is artificial, and that 'mental' time is the only natural time. Time, he said, is a continuous, heterogeneous flow, which cannot be characterized by separate moments.

According to this theory then a novel of linear progress, which moved from situation to situation in a fixed chronological statement, was not a 'real' rendering of human experience. Therefore, a new kind of narrative developed to capture the reality, the essence of human experience—since it emphasized fluctuating time, which constantly moved backwards and forwards. In such a narrative structure there is no tension between the past, the present and the future, because a character can proceed from one to another as often as he wants to. One of the first novelists to use this technique was Marcel Proust. His work influenced every major twentieth century English novelist as is evident from such works as *Nostramo*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and more.

Together with this new concept of time was the changing concept of human consciousness influenced by the work of Freud and other psychologists. The fact emphasized in this concept was the multiplicity of consciousnesses. That is to say, an individual's consciousness is the sum total of all that he has ever experienced and his cultural affinities with the members of his race. So, actually the past does not exist separately. What you term the 'past' exists along with the present determining every response of ours. So a novelist, who seeks to project the total view of his characters, has to effectively communicate the simultaneity of the characters' different levels of consciousness. Since the traditional novelist had not been faced with such a problem, the modern novelist had to evolve an appropriate technique. This resulted in the stream of consciousness technique.

These then are the three major forces that resulted in the growth of modern novel. They also influenced the major theme of modern literature—the theme of an 'individual's loneliness'. Since all beliefs in religion, family and other institutions were completely shattered; the modern writer was a completely isolated figure.

No longer could he depend on the stability of the conventions, he had to forge completely new relationships based on a different set of values. Since most modern novelists have undergone this experience personally, it forms the keynote of their major works. Thus, we have Lawrence and Joyce re-living their own experiences through the characters of their novels. In their works and in those of other major novelists, 'loneliness is seen as the necessary condition of man' (David Daiches).

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Yet their main preoccupation is not this isolation, but to find a way through which harmony can be achieved. A way through which a modern man cut adrift, can achieve satisfying relationships.

Each novelist views this problem in his own way. Lawrence believed that the solution lay in love which recognized the mystical core of otherness in the beloved. Therefore, we see towards the end of the century, the concept of what was significant in human experience changed under the influence of psychology and related fields of knowledge. No longer was a man's exterior personality or his behaviour in society considered important. Stress was now laid on his internal make up; the working of his mind, his responses to a world that was essentially hostile and his search for an identity in this world. The modern novel is the result of the novelists' efforts to deal with such problems, to define them and to suggest a possible solution.

Important Writers of this Age

Some of the important writers of this age were as follows:

Henry James: Born in New York, Henry James was educated in America and Europe. He became a prolific writer with novels, short stories, travel sketches, literary criticism and autobiography. He was also a friend of the New England group of writers. A study of James is important for the analysis of the modern novel for the reason that he was the first to view it as an artistic form. To him novel was primarily an art form to be judged solely by artistic canons, concerned, not with moral purpose, but with the objective and impartial presentation of the reality of life.

The key to James's choice of subject is to be found in his own life. An American fascinated by the charm of an older civilization finds a great many of his themes in the impact of one type of society upon the product of another, in the study of the processes of adjustment and their effect upon the development of an individual character. An intellectual and a member of an intellectual family, James throughout his novels portrays a life of the people such as himself. He is concerned with the man as a social being, not with the deeper relations of man with his God. There is not much of elemental passion in his novels because the chosen field is a sophisticated, intellectual society, except in so far as they are shown under the influence of mind. While identifying the good with the beautiful, he regards taste, artistic sensibility and individual integrity as the prime virtues. On the other hand he sees ugliness and meanness of spirit as the great evils.

James is often concerned in the development of a character as a part of the social group. He is absolutely not interested in the poor or in the unintelligent. His characters and figures are usually sensitive, refined, sophisticated, controlling impulse by reason and endowed with faculty for acute self-analysis. They are capable of viewing their own motives and reactions with a remarkable detachment and an equal degree of subtlety.

Joseph Conrad: He was a sailor and an adventurer and his works reflect this character of the author. He presents situations that cannot be really explained through the conventional and accepted notions. His method of writing a novel is best found in his preface to *The Nigger of Narcissus*: 'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is before all, to make you see.' The characters of Conrad's novels did not convey just a single point of

view but a variety of them. His technique of writing novels involved shifts of time as well as double narrator scheme. His novel *Heart of Darkness* is an excellent example of this.

Method used in the Modern Novel

As it has already been discussed, the modern novel emerged in altogether a different kind of environment with diverse changes in its themes and techniques, thereby defining the very concept of the novel.

Stream of consciousness

It is a psychological term that refers to a literary technique in the twentieth century and gained immense popularity within the genre of the modern novel. Leon Edel writes that 'between 1913 and 1915 was born the modern psychological novel—what we have come to call in English letters the stream of consciousness novel'. Robert Humphrey defines stream of consciousness fiction as the type, 'in which the basic emphasis is placed on the exploration of the free speech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily of revealing the 'psychic being of characters'. The use of this technique is coincidental with the turning inwards process of the English novel. It is a technique to document authentically the mental process or to capture 'the atmosphere of the mind'.

There are certain other techniques that are used in the presentation of stream of consciousness:

- **Interior monologue:** Robert Humphrey defines this technique as the method used in fiction for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely just as these processes exist at various levels of the conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech.
- **Montage:** The second method of montage is that in which the time element is fixed and the spatial element changes. This is known as space montage. This technique is also known as multiple-view, for at a given time, the consciousness of several characters can be described—their individual responses to the same stimulus.

Aspects that Characterize the Modern Experimental Novel

Two main aspects that characterize the modern experiment novel are as follows:

- **Absence of the hero:** The experimental novel has discarded the concept of heroism and the reader would seldom find a truly likable character. In the earlier novels the hero and the villain were obvious but now no character is all good or all bad, rather they have shades of grey.
- **Complexity:** Seeking to portray not so much what people do or say as what they actually are, the experimental novelist finds none of the old ethical simplicity but discovers a vast and chaotic world within even the outwardly mundane character. Change and alteration produce within a personality a ceaseless fluidity that destroys the old rigidity of character and reveals disturbing contradictions and complexities.

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- **Irrationality:** Increasingly, the experimental novel in exploring the inner life, has found that man does not act from reason, as earlier novels assumed, but rather is motivated by deep unconscious sources of primordial origin. Modern novelists can be divided into those who continue within a broad tradition of realism and those who experiment far more with the form of the novel.

Writers like John Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett, Graham Greene, Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing, and Ernest Hemingway are essentially realists. They are less intrusive than nineteenth century realists, presenting a credible picture in which we are not particularly aware of the narrator's presence. They deal with social, personal and ethical problems and offer us an entertaining, but at the same time, an instructive look at how people cope with life in the twentieth century.

Major Works of Short Fiction

Lawrence's theory of novel takes unswervingly from his notion of man and his relationship to the universe. Lawrence keenly believed that man was not an isolated being rather he was well integrated within the cosmos.

It will be useful to learn what a great literary figure like T.S. Eliot has to say about Lawrence, 'he was an impatient and impulsive man. He was a man of fitful and profound insights, rather than of ratiocinative powers and therefore he was an impatient man. He expressed some of the insights in the form least likely to make them acceptable to most of his contemporaries, and sometimes in a form that almost willfully encouraged misunderstanding... wrong he often was (I think) from ignorance, prejudice, or drawing the wrong conclusion in his conscious mind from the insights that came to him from below consciousness. It will take time to distance the superficial error from the fundamental truth. To me, also, he seems often to write badly; but to be writer who had to write often badly in order to write sometimes well.'

Lawrence did not believe in following the conventions of his time and his work was thus regarded as a revolt against the values and ideals of the nineteenth century.

During the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), England was going through a difficult phase. As a result of industrialization, life had become very mechanical and the vibrancy and vivacity had given way to artificiality and uniformity. Moreover, the society was compartmentalized in classes and these class barriers limited the growth of relationships between people. Above all, the state religion, Christianity, was turning cold with its restraints and prohibitions. Individuals were feeling suffocated as simple passions were repressed and the natural course of things were always interfered and judged.

Lawrence was in opposition to all these things and tried to rebel against the standards dictated by social authorities, especially those dealing with personal lives of individuals. As a result, you find Lawrence's inclination towards the psyche of a person, which has control over the behaviour and to some extent on the character of an individual. But Lawrence did not concern himself with the regular feelings and chaos experienced by an individual. His aim was to open the doors to the restricted areas of the human psyche and sexual experience was one of those areas that were forbidden from being openly discussed. An essential feature of his fiction is that the central character is always proceeding from a partial or mechanical existence into

organic wholeness. Lawrence used the novel as a carrier of his own interpretation of life, very much concerned with the basic problems of human existence and relationships among human beings. Therefore, the relationship between man and woman and their sexual conflict became a major part of his study.

He was quite inclined towards the study of the development of one's individuality but this study was not based merely on the intellectual abilities of an individual but also on the impulses and senses that play a significant role in shaping the personality of a person. Apparently, Lawrence's themes are concerned about the passions and instincts of the heart rather than the working of the mind. As F.R. Leavis puts it, 'Life is fulfilled in the individual or nowhere; but without a true marital relation, which is creative in more than the sense of producing children, there can be no fulfillment; that is the burden of Lawrence's art'. He allotted a superior position to the impulses and believed that intellect is responsible for eradication of life's excitement and destroys the liveliness.

Lawrence ardently believed in the presence of 'dark mystery' of life and he saw all living forms instilled with it. Lawrence was, in fact, of the opinion that the 'dark mystery' could not be known through intellect. Moreover, natural and untamed ideas cannot be accessible through the intellect but may be known through the instincts and intuitions.

From a literary point of view also Lawrence can be looked upon as a radical in the sense that he did not constrict his writing to the pre-laid rules or models. He questioned the traditional methods of novel writing 'he felt that novel could become more personal and less objective if he saw the possibility that language could describe in detail the personal experiences of emotion and passion as it were from the inside'. Lawrence was to a great extent influenced by Thomas Hardy. Hardy's novels are usually set against natural background, which plays an important role in the development of action instead of being just a background for the story. In case of Lawrence also the imagery is significant to bring out the essence of the scene and enhance the emotions and sentiments of the characters. For Lawrence a novel was a religious art in which he could speak of and to the whole man.

4.4 D.H. LAWRENCE: SONS AND LOVERS

D.H. Lawrence was born on 11 September 1885 in Eastwood England. He was a son of a coal miner who lived in a small mining town. His mother inculcated in him and all his siblings love of books and faith in religious beliefs. They were taught to strive always for self improvement. His mother wanted her children to move out of this mining class of which she felt she was a victim.

Lawrence nursed a desire to be a teacher. In 1906 he took admission in Nottingham University college. He wrote poetry and started work on his first novel *White Peacock*. He was inclined towards socialist ideas in the college. He graduated in 1908 but did not enjoy his college life. Lawrence started working as a teacher and gradually became a part of London literary circles. He was in an intense relationship

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with a woman called Jessie Chambers who was hated by her mother. During the First World War, his marriage to a German lady becomes a matter of controversy. On 2 March 1930, he died in Venice after a prolonged suffering from tuberculosis.

Lawrence drew so intently on his autobiography, on the passions and convictions that the circumstances of his own life had developed in him, that sometimes personal feeling spills over and the story is spoiled by an excess of emotion by spluttering outburst of hate or a murky, wrought, highly throbbing symbolism that suggest hysteria rather than artistic control. This was the penalty he paid for his kind of insight, which was intimately bound to his own needs and activities.

D.H. Lawrence also created a new kind of novel, though very different from Joyce's and his legacy, too, proved less available than might have been expected. *Son and Lovers* (1913) deals with ties connecting mother and son with an emotional precision and clarity of compelling detail that derive by part from the autobiographical nature of the novel; it is a striking achievement, though technically it shows nothing new. The theme involves exploration of family relationships of a sort in which Lawrence always retained a passionate interest. Ties of blood and call from the outside, the different ways in which maternal and filial love can operate and the stultifying or liberating effects of such love, the conflicting claims of protectiveness and self realization—these are characteristic Lawrentian preoccupations. In *Sons and Lovers*, the background conflict is that between the hero's working-class father and his refined middle class mother, the rift between the father with his coarse vitality and the mother who turns to her sons for emotional fulfillment denied from her husband. The resulting pressure on the hero is brilliantly shown in particular incidents and situations. The claim of sexual love then asserts itself and the tension mounts. The novel ends with the mother's death and a sort of liberation for the hero.



Fig. 4.2 D.H. Lawrence

In *Sons and Lovers* the mother is treated with great tenderness, in spite of Lawrence's clear acknowledgement of the effect of her love on her son's masculinity. But more and more the genteel culture for which the mother stood—as Lawrence mother did—came to represent death for Lawrence. In many of his latter works, especially in some

of his short stories, the deadening restrictiveness of middle class conventions are challenged by forces of liberations often represented by an outsider—a peasant, a gypsy, a working man, a primitive of some kind, someone freed by circumstance or personal effort from the distorting or mechanizing world that Lawrence saw in modern industrial society. Lawrence was not, however, a social reformer. His main interest was always human relationships, the problem of reconciling full self realization with true love of another.

The Rainbow (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) show Lawrence extending the scope of the novel though not by means of any immediately obvious innovations in techniques. Lawrence takes three generations and probing both vertically and horizontally explores with great power and subtlety all the basic human relationships between man and his environment, the relationship between instinct and intellect, the relationship between men and women, the relationship between the generations, the proper basis of the marriage relationship as he conceived it. This sort of novel had nothing to do with chronicle novel then becoming popular throughout Europe. It was rather, as per F R Leavis', a dramatic poem in which a passionate imagination, working through a prose sometime incantatory in its poetic movement, selected and presented the smallest incidents for its suggestive and symbolic power. The high poetic symbolisms go side by side with an acute surface realism, a sharp sense of time and place, and brilliant topographical detail.

Aaron's Rod (1922), draws heavily on Lawrence's own experience in Italy and elsewhere and on his relationship with his German-born wife. In spite of brilliant individual passages, the novel fails to convince as a sustained work because of the basic motivational force which operates on the principal characters projected directly from Lawrence's own life without being made convincing or even intelligible to the reader in terms of the novel. Problems of moral and political leadership as well as the questions of which partner should dominate in marriage were now much on his mind. These are seen, too, in *Kangaroo*, 1923, set in Australia and containing moments of brilliant insight into Australian society and psychology together with passages transcribed straight out of his disputes with his wife.

With *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1928, Lawrence returned to the central theme of his earlier novels—the possibilities of adequate human relationships in modern civilization—but in a story whose symbolic action is so crude and whose basic structure is so mechanical that it is great pity that, because of its frankness about sex, it remains the only one of his novels that most people read.

Much of Lawrence's writing reveals his deep sense of English provincial life in which—in spite of all his wanderings abroad—his sensibility was really deeply rooted, much as George Eliot's was. This sense of intimacy with the English lifestyle is found in *Women in Love* and together with his deep understanding of provincial middle class and working class patterns of thought and feeling and the relationship between them, in many of the short stories. *Fanny and Annie*, *Daughters of the Vicar*, *The Horse Dealers Daughters*, *The Fox*, *The Christening* and *Tickets Please* are some of the stories that reveal the deep Englishness of Lawrence.

Lawrence is less likely to fall into passages of murk or hysteria in his short stories because he has less space in which to maneuver and therefore works with

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more concentration. But the short stories are no less disturbing than the novels: Lawrence's aim is to project character and incident in such a way as to force on the reader a radically new apprehension of the meaning of human personality and human relationships. And the assault is frontal, not through the slow and complex accumulation of moving moments whose total effect might in retrospect seem to be challenging.

The Age

It is impossible for any writer to remain untouched by the social, political, intellectual and cultural environment of the times. Every writer depicts the characteristics of his age as he generally records life. In order to understand well the writings of an author, knowledge of the times in which he lived is essential. Hence, you shall study the social and the literary background that influenced the works of D.H. Lawrence.

The two important factors that influenced the social life and literary sphere of this period were imperialism that led to the two world wars and the wave of social unrest as a result of decline in religious faith and social or moral values.

The rapid growth of industrialization in England in the Victorian age marked the shift of England from an agrarian country to an industrial one, bringing about a rapid change in the social life of the people. By the end of the nineteenth century there was a total change towards urbanization with a breakdown of the agrarian way of life. The simultaneous coming up of industrialization and urbanization brought with it many problems. The industrial towns grew in a haphazard and congested manner. Often, there was absence of basic amenities leading to reduction of the living standards of people to almost inhuman conditions. There was a marked rise in vice and crime and a gradual decline in the standards of spiritual and ethical values.

Acquisition of wealth became the ultimate objective of a gentleman's life. All human relationships came to be regarded in terms of money. The evil effects of industrialization are remarkably reflected in the works of the twentieth century novelists like Ruskin and Carlyle, who severely condemned the commercialization of this age. Certain spiritual values seemed to be vanishing with the gradual decline of the rural way of life and urban societies led to the establishment of material values in life. The new age, however, was not without its possible aspects. There came into being a welfare state—with the state taking on the responsibility for educating and ensuring the well being of the individual. However, writers continued to think that the agrarian way of living was the ideal form of life and their works mentioned agricultural life with nostalgia.

As a result of all these changes, there started a period of uncertainty and moral perplexity. The blind faith in social belief and tradition was given up with rational and scientific questioning. However, the Victorian writer in spite of this questioning was never critical of the very fundamentals of the social and moral order.

Among other changes, the most important change was the enhancement of the position of women. Women were no longer confined to the four walls of the house but had a significant role to play in the family and the society. The movement of women's liberation got a strong momentum with the spread of education and a tendency towards democratization. There was now a general allowance and encouragement for the women to go in for higher education and their right to vote was strongly advocated.

The tenets of Christianity were no longer accepted unquestioningly. Contemporary religious scholars and philosophers like Max Muller shattered the concept of supremacy of Christianity. The theory of evolution of Charles Darwin threatened the very basis of the Christian faith. Hence, the satisfaction of the Victorians was shed off and there was a gradual loss of faith in God and religion.

With weakening of religious faith under the influence of science and rationalism, public issues could no longer be moulded with religious controversies.

There arose a keen interest in the study of nature of man in philosophy and metaphysics. The assessment of human behaviour was greatly revolutionized with the psychological theories propounded by Freud followed by Jung and Bergson.

Freud declared man to be a biological phenomenon, a creature of instincts and impulses. He laid emphasis on the powers of the unconscious to affect the conduct of man. Now more emphasis began to be assigned to the study of the unconscious. The normal were also recognized to be anxious and abnormal to a certain extent. It was established by Freud and his followers that neurosis and other signs of abnormality are a result of repressed sex instincts. His theory of Oedipus complex was strongly propounded and thoroughly exploited by the twentieth century writers (like D.H. Lawrence). It became established that man's intellectual communications were actually the rationalizations of his emotional needs. Emphasis began to be placed on feeling and intuition rather than the intellect, which had all through been regarded as a means of true and real understanding.

The psychological theories of Freud and his followers were not only confined to the literary field, but also imparted a considerable influence on the private and family relationships. The theory of Oedipus complex led to the interpretation of various relationships in its terms. It is now believed that mothers could naturally be jealous of their daughters or daughters-in-law. Sons were supposed to have greater attachment for their mothers rather than their fathers. The daughters were bound to be more attached to their fathers. All such relationships were pervaded with sexual undertones. For instance, T.S. Eliot interpreted *Hamlet* in terms of Oedipus complex. All abnormal human conduct occurs from repressed sex instincts. It was believed that the behaviour of a man was the direct outcome of his early development as a child as the old authoritarian pattern of family relationships had broken up.

The questioning of authority and with dismantling of traditional patterns of human relationships, there was an environment of tensions and frustrations. The age became pervaded with the temper of anti-heroism. Various factors including unemployment and economic depression added to the hardship of life. The sense of security unlike the Victorian age was lost due to the shaking foundation of the social and political order and beside the forces of labour legislation, democratization and dissemination of scientific ideas added to the deteriorating situation. The evolution of strong durable convictions that form the basis of emotional stability was not allowed because of the rapid scientific advancement. Man lost faith in God and became rootless and this rootlessness brought its own problems and frustrations and thus, it led to severe anxiety that became the most important characteristic of this age. In the literary sphere there was a rapid decline in the literature that was produced because of the commercialization of the printing press. The cheap literature catered to the needs of

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the general public and they were abundant in vulgarity and brutality. The themes of popular literature were no longer touching upon human relationships but had taken over by violence, crime and mediocre love stories.

One could say that this age was noticeably an age of popularization and commercialization. Even the serious literature, in order to survive, had to adapt itself to this new world that lacked ethical values and principles.

Psychological theories of Freud and others made symbolism quite significant in presenting the literary work and also the stream of consciousness evolved as a very considerable literary technique. In addition, realism became a major part of literature instead of an inclination towards pastoralism and romanticism.

The works of D.H. Lawrence reflected the dehumanizing effects of modernity and industrialization.

Novels

Lawrence is perhaps best known for his novels *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Within these Lawrence explores the possibilities for life and living within an industrial setting. In particular, Lawrence is concerned with the nature of relationships that can be had within such settings. Though often classed as a realist, Lawrence's use of his characters can be better understood with reference to his philosophy. His depiction of sexual activity, though shocking at the time, has its roots in this highly personal way of thinking and being. It is worth noting that Lawrence was very interested in human touch behaviour and that his interest in physical intimacy has its roots in a desire to restore our emphasis on the body, and re-emphasize on the mind. In his later years Lawrence developed the potentialities of the short novel form in *St Mawr*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy* and *The Escaped Cock*.

Short Stories

Lawrence's best-known short stories include *The Captain's Doll*, *The Fox*, *The Ladybird*, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, *The Princess*, *The Rocking-Horse Winner*, *St Mawr*, *The Virgin and the Gypsy* and *The Woman who Rode Away*.

Amongst his most prized collections is *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*, published in 1914. His collection *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, published in 1928, develops his themes of leadership that he also explored in novels such as *Kangaroo*, *The Plumed Serpent* and *Fanny and Annie*.

Poetry

Although best known for his novels, D.H. Lawrence wrote almost 800 poems, most of them relatively short. His first poems were written in 1904 and two of his poems, *Dreams Old* and *Dreams Nascent*, were among his earliest published works in *The English Review*. His early works clearly place him in the school of Georgian poets, a group not only named after the reigning monarch but also to the romantic poets of the previous Georgian period whose work they were trying to emulate.

Just as World War I dramatically changed the works of many poets who saw service in the trenches, Lawrence's own work saw a dramatic change, during his

years in Cornwall. During this time, he wrote free verse influenced by Walt Whitman. He set forth his manifesto for much of his later verse in the introduction to *New Poems*.

Lawrence rewrote many of his novels several times to perfect them and similarly he returned to some of his early poems when they were collected in 1928. This was in part to fictionalize them, but also to remove some of the artifice of his first works. His best known poems are probably those dealing with nature such as those in *Birds*, *Beasts and Flowers* and *Tortoises*. *Snake*, one of his most frequently anthologized, displays some of his most frequent concerns.

Although Lawrence could be regarded as a writer of love poems, he usually dealt in the less romantic aspects of love such as sexual frustration or the sex act itself. Lawrence's works after his Georgian period were clear in the modernist tradition. They were often very different to many other modernist writers, such as Ezra Pound. Modernist works were often severe in which every word was carefully worked on and hard-fought for. Lawrence felt all poems had to be personal sentiments and that spontaneity was vital for any work. He called one collection of poems *Pansies* partly for the simple transient nature of the verse but also a pun on the French word *panser*, to dress or bandage a wound. *The Noble Englishman* and *Don't Look at Me* were removed from the official edition of *Pansies* on the grounds of obscenity, which he felt wounded by. Even though he lived most of the last ten years of his life abroad, his thoughts were often still on England. Published in 1930, just eleven days after his death, his last work *Nettles* was a series of bitter netting but often wry attacks on the moral climate of England.

Two notebooks of Lawrence's unprinted verse were posthumously published as *Last Poems* and *More Pansies*. These contain two of Lawrence's most famous poems about death, *Bavarian Gentians* and *The Ship of Death*.

Sons and Lovers: Summary

The novel is written in two parts. The first part focuses on Mrs. Morel and her marriage to a miner. He drinks, she argues, they have fights- even physical ones and their marriage is not a happy one. Mrs. Morel turns towards her sons for comfort and succor, especially to the older, William, who is her favourite. She gets very upset when he gets a job and moves to London, away from her. When William falls sick and dies she is destroyed until Paul, her second son falls sick too and almost dies. She then turns her attention to Paul and they have a close relationship from then on.

Paul loves a woman called Miriam Leivers who lives on a farm close by. They have a close relationship for years but because Mrs. Morel does not approve of Miriam, Paul's feelings towards her are not clear. Perhaps this is also the reason they do not marry. Paul meets another woman called Clara through Miriam. Clara is separated from her husband. As they become close, Clara discusses his relationship with Miriam and suggests that he should bring his relationship to the next level and consummate it. Paul returns to Miriam to understand how she feels. They consummate their love but Paul is not happy and he leaves Miriam realizing his love for his mother is the strongest. Miriam is unhappy but agrees to the breakup.

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for Miriam's family and Clara's husband, Baxter, Lawrence makes no attempt to extend the novel further in depth or breadth.

Going beyond mere connections between the characters, Lawrence casts over each an idea, so that when Clara Dawes and Miriam, for example, come together with Paul in the center, they do so as the meeting of two ideas, as well as two people. Similarly, Paul's parents have extension value beyond their singularly unhappy situation. If we compare the Morels with another finely drawn pair of parents, the Gants in Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, we immediately recognize the difference in Lawrence's intentions. The Gants are superb as characters; they live fully amidst their eccentricities and idiosyncrasies. In fact, these very qualities give them distinction and individuality, indeed make them live as particular people.

On the contrary, the Morels are always more typical than particular, more the semi-educated 'aristocratic' woman with the semi-articulate 'peasant' husband than people whose specific characteristics remain in our minds. What we do remember about Mrs. Morel is her moral tightness, a Puritanical strain that kills life; what we remember about Walter Morel is his easy-going sensuality, his physical being and black limbs. Our memory, then, is more of a stereotypical contrast than of distinctive qualities. The war between the parents is a war between, on one hand, culture and, on the other, half-culture, a war between mental consciousness and primitive animalism, a war between Spirit (intellect) and Soul (body), as Lawrence later defined these terms.

Likewise, the relationships between Mrs. Morel and Paul and between Paul and Miriam are also full of complex reactions. That is, Lawrence has removed the individual need, the individual reaction, the individual frustration and conflict to a more universal need and conflict. As yet, in *Sons and Lovers*, he is still concerned with certain particulars, perhaps because the novel is so clearly autobiographical; but by the time of *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, with autobiography behind him, Lawrence was ready to suggest only universal situations, and his characters are no longer within a realistic world. Cast over all is Lawrence's idea of life, his idea of reality. It is at this point that a novelist becomes a poet in its generic sense, a maker and creator, a seer and prophet. This tendency, not so apparent in *The White Peacock*, is already suggested in *Sons and Lovers*. The gospel of the twentieth century according to Lawrence is centered in the age-old conflict between mother, son, and potential daughter-in-law.

It is fitting that Lawrence should have attempted to universalize his material around Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex, a condition universal in the history of mankind. Along these lines, in his Foreword to *Sons and Lovers*, cast in a Biblically pompous language, Lawrence, among other remarks, said:

'...but the man who is the go-between from Woman to Production of the lover of that woman. And if that Woman be his mother, then is he her lover in part only; he carries for her, but is never received into her for his confirmation and renewal, and so wastes himself away in the flesh. The old son-lover take a wife, then is she not his wife, she is only his bed. And his life will be torn in twain, and his wife in her despair shall hope for sons, that she may have her lover in her hour.'

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Here we have the entire import of the conflict in the novel. Paul is a son-lover unable to bring to his 'wife' wholeness, and she in turn will remain unfulfilled until she becomes a mother-lover, and so on. Lawrence, who violently opposed Freud and his 'scientism', for reasons noted below, found in the Oedipus complex a type of universal interpretation that provided both continuity with the past and a means to comment upon the present. In brief, Paul's union with his mother both fulfills and emasculates him, both completes him and leaves him unfinished.

Working outward from the Oedipus complex itself, Lawrence was able to give shape to several general themes: in Mrs. Morel, we find the intellectually superior, physically soulless female whose sexual responses become increasingly more frigid. Opposite her is the sensual miner, Morel, close to the earth in occupation and spirit, open in his responses to life, fond of singing, dancing and drinking; a man slowly crushed to a non-entity by his wife's spirituality and withdrawal from his kind of reality. A possible domestic hero, he slowly disappears from the novel as Mrs. Morel possesses her sons in turn.

Morel, early in the novel, is described as 'soft, non-intellectual, warm, a kind of gamboling' creature; later, as: '... there was a slight shrinking, a diminishing in his assurance. Physically even, he shrank, and his fine full presence waned. He never grew in the least stout, so that, as he sank from his erect, assertive bearing, his physique seemed to contract along with his pride and moral strength'. Yet, Mrs. Morel continues to strive with him. Too much of a Puritan—part of her inheritance—and too full of her high moral sense to leave Morel, she tries to remake him through continual opposition and ridicule. Driven to fierceness by her realization that she had once loved this man, she bullies him with Puritanical strictures. She drives him to drunkenness, lying, cowardice, and then castigates him for sinning. Discontented with what Morel is and anxious to have him change, she destroys him while trying to ennoble him. In making Morel into a complete outsider—a shadowy householder who emerges from the mines only to disappear into the bars—she of course scars her own feelings; but she, unlike him, retains her worth. As Lawrence writes: 'She also had the children'.

As to Morel himself—whom Lawrence reveals only from the outside or from Mrs. Morel's point of view—we see the man reacting in the sole way he can, becoming a bully, a freak, a spiritual stone, and by so doing only aggravating the sterile relationship. Too much of a 'man' to accede to his wife's demands, he resists until, finally, his manhood breaks to pieces. Left alone, he has nothing to turn to; inwardly, he is empty of values, and, outwardly, his physical part, the flesh, has been denied. Just as Paul, after his mother's death, is to become a 'Derelict' (as Lawrence titled the final chapter), so Morel is already adrift in Mrs. Morel's wake. 'Morel made the meal alone, brutally. He ate and drank more noisily than he had need. No one spoke to him. The family life withdrew, shrank away, and became hushed as he entered. But he cared no longer about his alienation'. His only answer is to meet Mrs. Morel's gentility with his exaggerated vulgarity. Lawrence's very prose in the above passage is cruel in its brief frankness, in its description of a man now more animal than human.

So Morel is effaced—one part of the Oedipus situation has been fulfilled. The husband no longer rules the household: Lawrence emphasizes that Morel dominates

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only the hearth, the sole part of the home still sanctified for the male, while the rest of the social activity proceeds smoothly without him. Frustrated by her marriage, Mrs. Morel turns to her sons and gains husband substitutes, though only one at a time, for her high moral sense dictates monogamy. Once she 'seizes' William, the split in the family is irremediable, merely to be intensified as Paul succeeds to William's place. For his part, William finds himself involved in a frantic attachment to Lily, whose slipshod manner strikingly recalls Morel's own; yet William, tied as he is to Mrs. Morel, is unable to avoid an obviously poor match based solely on sexual infatuation. Disrespecting Lily as much as Mrs. Morel does Morel, William mocks his fiancée before his mother, and by so doing vide only temporary sexual satisfaction.

Recognizing this, Mrs. Morel warns him against marrying the girl – 'Nothing', she says, 'is as bad as a marriage that's hopeless failure' – but William has already been destroyed by his mother's influence. Split into parts, he cannot leave Lily because of her physical appeal or Mrs. Morel because 'he was accustomed to having all his thoughts sifted through his mother's mind'. Thus William as a unified person is destroyed; divided into pieces, he drives himself into a life whose substance he can neither order nor even understand. Destroyed young by his mother, William, suitably, dies under her care.

Shortly after William's death, Paul falls ill with pneumonia, and when he recovers, Mrs. Morel has captured his spirit, making him the successor to his older brother in her affections. In turn, Paul's illness saves Mrs. Morel by taking her mind off William. With the consummation of the new marriage, Part One of *Sons and Lovers* ends, to begin, in Part Two, with Miriam, who also, as Paul sees her, has the motherly instincts to possess him. Love, Lawrence recognized, was a prime requisite of life, but love means attachment, while life, real life, can take place only in the individual. Therefore, the conflict, inherent in all meaningful activity, is between love and life.

Lawrence wrote that the 'central law of all organic life is that each organism is intrinsically isolate and single in itself'. Yet the individual, he tells us again, can be fulfilled only through contact, specifically between a man and woman who must preserve the 'intrinsic otherness of each participant'. The love of both Mrs. Morel and Miriam, as Lawrence presents them, denies this 'otherness', and therefore their love forfeits the elements of a true feeling which would build, while theirs destroys and debilitates. Love is necessary, but too much love can cause death or strangulation. Thus the necessity of polarization and of real balance.

When Paul comes to Miriam, he is, of course, off balance. As long as his mother dominates him, he is unable to come to terms with Miriam, or, in fact, with any woman, except for physical necessity, and therefore his unsatisfactory relationship with Clara Dawes. Lawrence repeatedly warned, as if answering his puritanical critics, that the flesh was only holy if the spirit (intellect) were holy. The one without the other – Paul had only flesh in Clara Dawes – is as futile as spirit alone. The two together will bring out the god-hero in man, will dignify him, will enable him to flower in himself.

When Paul is with Miriam, he lacks completely this sense of fulfillment that he expects from life. He suggests what life should mean to him when he describes one of

his sketches to Miriam; she had remarked that one sketch in particular seemed so true, and he answered: It's because – it's because there is scarcely any shadow in it; it's more shimmery, as if I'd painted the shimmery protoplasm in the leaves and everywhere, and not the stiffness of the shape. That seems dead to me. Only this shimmeriness is the real living. The shape is a dead crust. The shimmer is inside really.

This 'shimmer' Paul quests for in painting and life, and while he wins first prizes in the former, he finds little satisfaction in the other. Unable to flower in himself, Paul can find no salvation in a single person. He is himself a flower plucked, not cultivated in its natural surroundings, therefore, his rage at Miriam's attitude toward flowers, and Lawrence's insistence on Mrs. Morel's garden and love of flowers. Both love flowers, particularly Miriam, not for themselves but as possessions, as beauty which they can control. In an essay on 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside', in *Phoenix*, Lawrence wrote of this connection:

'Now the love of flowers is a very misleading thing. Most women love flowers as possessions and as trimmings. They can't look at a flower, and wonder a moment, and pass on. If they see a flower that arrests their attention, they must at once pick it, and pluck it. Possession! A possession! Something added on to me! And most of this so-called love of flowers today is merely this reaching out of possession and egoism: something I've got; something that embellishes me.'

Thus, Paul turns to Miriam as she crouches and kisses the flowers, and angrily asks why she always clutches things and pulls the heart out of them. 'You wheedle the soul out of things ... I would never wheedle – at any rate, I'd go straight'. In a later scene, as Paul becomes the center of a silent conflict between Miriam and Clara, he also pulls out flowers in bunches, and when the latter asks him what right he has to do so, he answers that there are plenty for him to pluck and that their beauty pleases him. Here, he does not wheedle he 'goes straight' – Miriam will be his sacrifice, will be deflowered because he needs part of her. Then he turns to Clara and almost for the first time notices her breasts swinging in her blouse, her graceful arching back, her proud neck, her overall desirable figure.

Here, in one brief scene, is Paul's situation, caught as he is between his sense and his senses, between the influence of his mother and the real pangs of his own desire. Later, near the end of the novel, when Paul returns to Miriam, he realizes that marriage with her is still impossible, although it is also the only solution for both of them. As they go out, supposedly to part forever, he gives her flowers, dripping out of the jar, and she takes them, as she would have taken Paul himself, snipped off from his past and now drifting away into the dark.

According to the original of Miriam, one Jessica Chambers, whom Lawrence knew in his youth, Lawrence was so tied to his mother that he could not be normal with another woman. In her book on Lawrence, E.T., as she signed herself, claimed that his mother was both a parent and a lover; so that he constantly split his interest in women into spiritual (Miriam) and physical (Clara) attachments. In Miriam, he saw his mother and was unable to find sexual satisfaction, while after he married another woman (Frieda von Richthoven) for sex, E.T. claimed, Lawrence wanted to continue seeing her for the intellectual interests they shared. Accordingly, E.T. feels that

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Lawrence completely falsifies Miriam; he could not give of himself, and in order to put his mother on a pedestal, he presented a caricature of their real relationship. She remarks that it was impossible to tell Lawrence this, so attached was he to his mother; and so he came to Miriam as to a mother, making any sexual relationship psychologically impossible for him. In the book, Clara Dawes provides a sexual outlet, unobtained by Lawrence in real life until his marriage to Frieda, already the mother of three children by a previous marriage. So far as Lawrence falsified, E.T. stresses that no one would recognize that Miriam wanted a physical and spiritual relationship while he tried to make it entirely spiritual.

For psychological reasons, Lawrence legitimately made several changes in his affair with E.T.; however, the real point is not whether he changed the original relationship, but what significance he attached to the changes. Lawrence found in the disintegration of Paul a peculiar symbol of modern man, of all men who are unable to achieve a balance between sex and purpose in life. Assert one at the expense of the other, he repeated, and you fall either into collapse or sterility. 'You have got to base your great purposive activity upon the intense sexual fulfillment of all your individuals. That was how Egypt endured. But you have got to keep your sexual fulfillment even then subordinate, just subordinate to the great passion of purpose: subordinate by a hair's breadth only: but still, by that hair's breadth, subordinate'. These words from *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922) underscore Lawrence's insistent belief in the individual Holy Ghost, the voice of the self in its wholeness, which makes balance and proportion possible. In terms of Paul, purpose in life is fulfilled – first prizes in painting contests and supervisory position in his factory – yet he remains sterile, a typical twentieth century man Lawrence later labeled him. His mother, by spiritualizing sex, has made it meaningful only as love, family, babies, not simply as a means of fulfillment in which man proves his maleness and woman her femaleness.

Sons and Lovers: Characters

Gertrude Morel - She is the main character in the first part of the novel. She is unhappy with her husband and dedicates all of her attention and time to her children.

Paul Morel - He is the son of Gertrude and the author focuses on him in the second part of the novel. After his brother William dies his mother considers him her favourite and he has to balance his affections between his mother and the women in his life which becomes a challenge for him throughout the novel thereon.

Walter Morel - He is Gertrude's husband and a coal miner.

William Morel - The first son of Gertrude and Walter and his mother's favourite until he becomes sick and dies.

Annie Morel - She is Paul Morel's older sister. She joins with her brother Paul in deciding to give their mother an overdose of morphine when she is on her deathbed at the end of the novel.

Arthur Morel - Another son of the Morel family and younger brother of Paul, he is a minor character.

Miriam Leivers - She is from Willey Farm and a friend of Paul. She later becomes his first love.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. What do the sons think about their father?
5. What does Paul give Miriam as they supposedly part forever? What is the significance?
6. What does the mother's death at the end of the novel signify?

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ACTIVITY

What was the theme of Lawrence's novel, *Women in Love*, and how is the novel unique from his other books?

4.3 GRAHAM GREENE: THE POWER AND THE GLORY

Graham Greene is among the younger novelists who have taken a leading place in the world of fiction since the Second World War when the surfeit of horror and violence prepared a host of readers to look upon such experiences with the combination of outraged fascination, stoical equanimity and soul probing.

He was born on 2nd October 1904 in England. Going by the written records he did not enjoy his childhood and ran away from home. At school, he was a lonely child and feared his classmates' bullying. He was given psycho-therapeutic treatment in London. It was precisely here that his love for literature and poetry developed. The famous Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein were his mentors. It was in 1925 that he graduated from Oxford University. He was constantly travelling at this point of time and was also a member of the communist party for a short while. He dabbled in

editing in the Nottingham Journal and London Times. He wrote his first novel *The Man Within* in 1929. In 1990, he contracted a fatal blood disease and died on 3 April 1991 in Switzerland.

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Fig. 4.1 Graham Greene

Sin, suffering, betrayal, death are the themes that play an important part in Graham Greene's novels. He plunges his characters into depths of degradation, for example, in *Brighton Rock* and *Heart of the Matter* from which the characters can be redeemed only through divine compassion and salvation.

Roman Catholicism also comes into Graham Greene's novels. Greene is a tough writer of sophisticated adventure stories which he calls entertainment. In his more serious novels, he explores the disparities between human decency and theological virtue, between moral intentions and irreligious acts so as to shatter the complacencies of those religious readers who had always thought that good intentions on the humanist level were somehow related to divinely approved human behavior. There is another kind of probing into human nature and possibilities of heroism, made explicit in *The Power and the Glory* (1940).

Implicitly in *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) and with deliberate provocativeness in the *Quiet American* (1955), the psychological setups in Greene's novels are explored with both vigour and subtlety. The irony which often seems to be at the expense of values which the novel seeks to promote arises not only from his profound sense of paradox in human affairs but also from his refusal to be content with easy and obvious answers. His Catholicism was of a very personal kind.

DID YOU KNOW?

Greene worked for the Foreign Office during World War II and was stationed for a while at Freetown, Sierra Leone, the scene of another of his best-known novels, *The Heart of the Matter* (1948; film 1953).

The Power and the Glory: Summary

When the story begins we see the priest awaiting a boat that will take him away from the city. He is fleeing the police because he is a priest, a man of God, and religion has

been declared illegal in his state. While he waits for the boat he, also converses with a man called Mr. Tench. Soon he is called to the house of a dying woman in his capacity as a priest and thus fails to take the boat.

Since he is on the run from the police he hides in a barn on the lands of a rich plantation owner and in the process becomes acquainted with the landlord's daughter. However, he cannot stay in one place for too long for fear of being discovered and has to leave. He reaches a village where he had in the past worked as a pastor. He comes into contact with a woman called Maria, with whom he had been intimate at one time. He also meets Brigida, his daughter, born out of wedlock. He stays in the village for the night and wakes before sunrise to say mass with the villagers. At the end of the prayers, the lieutenant arrives with the police to search for the priest and arrest him. The priest goes to the town square ready to face his fate.

The villagers, however, protect the priest and do not betray him. The lieutenant does not recognize the priest and instead of arresting him takes another villager into custody as hostage. He threatens to kill the hostage if he finds that the villagers have hidden his quarry. The priest leaves the village and directs his steps to the town of Carmen. On the way he meets a man called the mestizo who joins him on his journey. The priest soon realizes that the mestizo is not a man to be trusted and could be accompanying him with the purpose of betraying him and getting rewarded by the police. The priest reveals his true identity to the mestizo, who has, however, become ill with fever by the second day of their travels and thus has no strength to continue to follow the priest when he changes his road. The priest has realized that entering into the town would mean certain arrest for him and thus the mestizo enters the town alone. The priest decides to return to the capital from which he had initially fled. He has changed his appearance and is wearing a drill suit. He tries to obtain a bottle of wine so that he is able to say mass. He comes into contact with a beggar along the way who takes him to a hotel. There, he takes the priest to a man who tells the priest that he can help him get wine.

The man sells the priest a bottle of wine and another of brandy. The priest offers to share the wine with him and the man proceeds to finish the entire bottle of wine, thus upsetting the priest's plans. The priest leaves the hotel but is caught with the bottle of brandy by an official. The priest flees through the city streets chased by the official and even tries to hide in the house of Padre Jose but is ultimately captured and jailed. In jail he talks to the other prisoners and tells them that he is a priest. Another woman prisoner, who has also been jailed for possessing items of religious use, enters into an argument with him. On the following day the priest is told to clean the prison cells. In the process he meets the mestizo who, however, does not betray the priest. The priest again meets the lieutenant, who, for the second time fails to recognize him, and thus the priest is freed.

That night the priest stays at an abandoned estate of the Fellows and then travels to a deserted and abandoned village. He encounters an Indian woman whose son has been killed by the gringo, an American outlaw who is fleeing the police too. He goes with the woman to the burial land and leaves her there. He is now very tired and has almost lost the will to continue to run for his safety and his life. Yet he wanders on and ultimately meets a man called Mr. Lehr. Mr. Lehr tells him that he has crossed over into a state where religion has not been declared illegal and he is thus safe.

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The priest stays with Mr. Lehr for a few days to recover from his ordeal and then plans to leave for Las Casas. However, before he can leave, the mestizo comes and tells him that the gringo has been fatally wounded by the police and is asking for someone to confess to. The priest realizes that this could be a trap. Yet he agrees to go with the mestizo across the border into the state from where he has fled. He meets the gringo who refuses to repent and dies. As the priest has feared, the lieutenant comes and arrests him. The two men discuss at length about their respective beliefs and then the priest is taken to the capital city for his trial. On the eve of the execution, the lieutenant goes to Padre Jose to see if he would come to hear the confession of the priest in prison. The Padre refuses and the lieutenant returns to the prison with a bottle of brandy for the priest. That night the priest attempts to repent for his sins and finds that he is unable to do so. He wakes up the next day, fearing his execution.

Mr. Tench sees the execution from the window of the jefe's office. That same night the boy hears about how the priest was ensnared and taken to his death and realizes that he has become a martyr and a hero. He dreams about the priest that night and is awakened by the sound of knocking at the door. When he opens the door he sees a man asking for shelter. When the boy learns that he is a priest he immediately lets him in.

The Power and the Glory: Themes

The Power and the Glory, which is probably Greene's most elaborate and complex novel, has generated extensive critical discussions and comments. The novel has been defined as an allegory, a morality play, or a modern parable and identified with other related genres. These critical classifications suggest a tribute to the structural and artistic perfection of the work, but they also invite the inevitable criticism of excessive didacticism, contrived and improbable situations, manipulation of protagonists and 'flat' characters.

The allegorical and symbolic interpretations of the novel are undoubtedly valid and illuminating, but the exclusive emphasis of critics on these aspects does not do justice to the novel. *The Power and the Glory* ranks amongst the best novels of the century primarily because it is work of deep psychological and human relevance (rather than a philosophical or theological treatise), and because the whisky-priest is an authentic, complex human being.

His personality develops and changes before our very eyes, and he enlists our sympathy and admiration as an Everyman or another embodiment that a philosophical idea could never do. This is probably the secret of the extraordinary appeal that *The Power and the Glory* has had for many readers who do not necessarily subscribe to any of the theological or philosophical attitudes that have been regarded as 'the message' of the novel. The conflict of ideologies, the theological argument, the allegorical significance of characters and events are clearly all there, but these aspects of the novel cannot be taken as substitutes for the human factor which is the core of the novel.

This section deals with the development of the whisky-priest throughout the novel as it is delineated through his encounters with the other characters and the children in their world. This significance of children and childhood in Greene's novels.

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and particularly in *The Power and the Glory*, has been noted by various critics, but it seems that the relationship between the encounters with children and the development of the priest has largely been overlooked. The opening scene of *The Power and the Glory* is set in a dusty, hot and godforsaken Mexican town. The buzzards, a recurrent image of death, hover above the town. This is the setting of a wasteland, a spiritual desert, where man is left by himself. The whisky-priest is introduced as 'a small man in a shabby dark city suit' holding an attaché case and a cheap novel under his arm. He calls himself 'a quack' - a title that would probably suit the lieutenant's feelings about priests. There is no aura of martyrdom or sainthood about him. He looks 'disreputable' and 'weak', and his 'hollowness and neglect' give him an air of 'somebody of no account who had been batten up incidentally'. He seems to have been caught up in a situation of which he is an entirely passive victim.

The introduction of the priest as a pathetic victim of fate, a man of no substance or significance, has probably been the cause for the critical comments about his being 'pushed' or 'driven' by forces other than his own free will. It is true that at this stage, the priest is a mere victim of circumstances, but as the story of his pursuit unfolds, he develops and grows in stature until his death. However, this first introduction of the priest as a shabby, frightened little man, should also serve as a counter-weight to the opposite critical view which regards the priest as a Christ figure.

The author does not refer to the central character as 'the priest' until Part II, and compels the reader to resort to the circumstantial clues for identification whenever he enters the scene, each time as an apparently new character. How, then, does the protagonist eventually become worthy of his role? How does he become a priest, a father? The process of his development is marked by his encounters with the children in the novel. The first child who appears on the scene is an anonymous little boy, who has come to summon a doctor or a priest to the death-bed of his mother, and prevents the escape of the priest to freedom. The priest—or 'the stranger' as he is still called by the author—feels compelled to follow the child, but he does it with an 'unwilling hatred' of the boy and with a sense of desperate resignation.

In the next chapter of the novel, we are introduced to Luis, the little boy who represents the world of tomorrow. Luis' life is crossed by the priest and by the lieutenant, and it is his soul that is at stake in the struggle between them. At this point in the story, the lieutenant and his vision of the world defeat the priest and what he stands for. Luis is impatient with the pious story of the young martyr whose saintly unblemished figure is entirely incompatible with the reality he knows: Padre Jose, the renegade priest, and the frightened whisky-priest who had found shelter in their house. These two representatives of faith do not answer the boy's need for a model.

The lieutenant is paradoxically more of a priest-like figure. He is a man of integrity and dedication, his ambition is totally disinterested and he has 'the dignity of an idea'. He, too, seems to be chained to his people unwillingly. He is celibate, his room is 'as comfortless as a prison or a monastic cell', and he feels 'no sympathy with the weakness of the flesh'. The scales are clearly tipped against the pathetic little man, who smells of wine and giggles a great deal. Luis looks up to the lieutenant who stands for action, vigour and dedication.

Coral Fellows is another child whose soul is in abeyance, waiting to be moulded and given direction. 'She was very young - almost thirteen - and at that age you are

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not afraid of many things, age and death, all the things that may turn up ... Life hasn't got at her yet: she had a false air of impregnability'. Coral protects her parents in her precocious way. Her insistent common sense and practicality are infallible. In some ways, she is not unlike the lieutenant. 'She was as inflexible as the lieutenant: small and black and out of place among the banana groves. Her candour made allowances for nobody'. Captain Fellows is painfully aware that 'at any moment now a word, a gesture, the most trivial act, might be her sesame - to what?' He flinches away when he realizes that she is of an age when Mexican girls are ready for their first man. The affinity of sexual puberty and the loss of this uncompromising innocence—which, for Greene, is the equivalent of ignorance—is particularly significant when one bears in mind that the lieutenant is celibate, whereas the priest has been guilty of fornication. It seems that Greene reverses the orthodox Christian convention. Celibacy or virginity are equated with dangerous or destructive innocence-ignorance, whereas sexual experience—even if it is illicit—is related to a better insight and understanding of other human beings.

The next scene provides us with a foil which brings out clearly the significance and the depth of the commitment of the priest and his acceptance of his role. Padre Jose, the renegade priest who had married his housekeeper and became a government pensioner, has been introduced in the second chapter as a pathetic victim of fate, no better and no worse than the whisky-priest who had also sinned against his church. Both of them seem at first to be almost equally unworthy of their vocation, equally pitiable and helpless. In the third chapter, a vast difference is seen between the two priests. Padre Jose refuses to say a prayer for the soul of a dead child.

He withdraws into his contemptible shell of safety, leaving a world empty of hope for those who were once his people. 'Suddenly and unexpectedly there was agony in the cemetery. They had been used to losing children but they hadn't been used to what the rest of the world knows best of all - the hope which peters out'. But the encounter between Luis and the lieutenant ends with more than a hint of failure: 'the lieutenant put out his hand in a gesture of affection - a touch, he didn't know what to do with it. He pinched the boy's ear and saw him flinch away with the pain'. This gesture, intended as a gesture of love but inflicting pain and arousing fear in the boy, is highly symbolic.

Part II of the novel marks a transition in the development of the priest, as he is now called by the author for the first time. It is also the first time that the reader is let into the mind of the protagonist who has so far been described only from the outside. In part I of the novel, the reader could learn about the protagonist only by his gestures, his expressions and his words. These are the only indications of his character and state of mind.

The meeting of the priest with his daughter, Brigida, brings about the ultimate realization of his guilt and unworthiness. 'She has been sharpened by hunger into an appearance of devilry and malice beyond her age'. When she hears him cry out with grief at the news about the hostages who died for him, she laughs. Her laughter, shrill and malicious, is an echo of the laughter of the children behind the window of Padre Jose. It is the hostile, harsh mockery of those children who had been deprived of any hope or grace in the abyss of degradation and despair. Brigida who had been deprived of a spiritual and real father is, at that point, devilish and repulsive.

The moment of trial comes when the police arrive, making an 'absurd show of force'. Here, again, it is the children who stand at the core of the struggle. Brigida, curious and unafraid, touches the leather boot of the lieutenant in a gesture which resembles the devoted gesture of Luis when he touched the lieutenant's pistol. Both children are attracted by these symbols of power. In this case, too, the lieutenant responds to the gesture of the child; he looks at her 'with dark affection', and makes her the object of his argument as he tries to persuade the villagers to give away the priest. As the argument fails, the lieutenant scrutinizes the villagers' faces one by one, hoping to recognize the priest amongst them. But the hollow, stubbly face of the man who is standing before him does not resemble the plump complacent features of the priest in the picture. The transformation is complete. The priest has become a man of his people.

The last trial of the priest's new identity is Brigida's answer. When she identifies him as her father, the lieutenant lets him go, knowing that a priest cannot be a father. Ironically, it is precisely because he has fathered a child, that the priest can be a father to his people. He knows their suffering as one of them, he shares their vulnerability, and he is bound to them by a deep, humble commitment. The last meeting of the priest with his daughter takes place on the rubbish heap where he discards another relic of his past – his attaché case. Brigida appears in this episode as the real child that she might have been if she had been allowed to. It appears that critics who subscribe to the allegorical interpretation of the novel have tended to overlook this scene when they labeled Brigida as the 'bad daughter', who had been born out of sin. In this episode, one catches a glimpse of the child behind the precocious face of the girl.

The meeting of the priest with the half-caste marks a further stage in his development. He immediately recognizes the mestizo as his Judas, but – as R. W. B. Lewis observes – does not follow the analogy by regarding himself as a Christ figure. He is aware of the danger in this man, but reproaches himself for being 'proud, lustful, envious, cowardly and ungrateful'. He feels 'guilty at his own lack of trust'. He remembers and dreams of his old life in the parish, his ambition for power, his love of authority and his greed. The priest feels humble and unworthy even before the half-caste and his attempt to escape this Judas is easily thwarted by an appeal to his Christian faith. 'Christ had died for this man, too: how could he pretend with his pride and just to be any more worthy of that death than this half-caste? This man intended to betray him for money which he needed, and he had betrayed God not even for real lust'.

Coral, the priest's 'spiritual daughter', had summarized Hamlet's dilemma; the prince of Denmark has 'doubts about his father'. Coral was probably referring to Hamlet's own dead father, but Hamlet's problem is a metaphysical doubt about a metaphysical, spiritual Father. Part IV of the novel takes us into the spiritual desert that the priest had left behind him. The buzzards are everywhere. Captain Fellows feels that he and his wife 'had both been deserted'. He remembers his dead daughter, Coral, who seems to have been 'told things' by the priest. Mr. Tench also thinks of 'the little fellow' who 'had spoken English'. The adults whose lives have been tedious and empty, associate the priest with their children, who are not theirs any longer. The whisky-priest... however drunk, scared and insignificant – had been a representative of the Father in Heaven. Now that he is gone, they feel deserted, like orphans.

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Luis, the little boy, feels the loss most heavily. 'There were no more priests and no more heroism... Ordinary life pressed round him. He felt deceived. He felt cheated and disappointed because he had missed something'. But then he hears the knock on the door and the new priest comes in – an anonymous stranger with a small suit-case, who looks like a reincarnation of the dead whisky-priest. The stranger introduces himself: 'My name is father...', but the boy opens the door and kisses his hand before he can give himself a name. Luis welcomes the anonymous stranger who has committed himself to fatherhood. The priest has been resurrected.

The Power and the Glory: Characters

Priest

The priest is the protagonist of the story. He is simultaneously fighting two battles, one on the outside with the authorities whom he is fleeing and the other within himself as he tries to reconcile himself with his sins and his identity as a priest. The priest is not a perfect hero. He has his faults and he is very human. He can be cowardly, selfish and inclined to be a pleasure seeker, unlike what a priest should be. Ever since religion has been outlawed, he has had struggle and the hardships he has faced in his life on the run have turned him into a stronger, hardier individual. Yet within, he is a strong critic of himself and has feelings of guilt for his past life and carries a sense of being not worthy of being a priest.

The most amazing thing about Greene's characterization of the priest is that he reveals to us the man's human nature and the faults that we do not expect in a man of God, and then slowly but surely wins the reader over to sympathize with the priest and not only to sympathize but to admire him, as he depicts the priest conquering his weaknesses and becoming a true hero. The most important scene is towards the end of the novel when the priest agrees to go with the mestizo back to the state where he is a pursued man to hear the confession of a dying man. He does not completely understand the true impact of his actions, nor their real worth. He gets feedback from people who have been disappointed by him in some way, like Maria or Brigida, his daughter, or the pious woman. He does not understand the impact on people who have been changed or touched merely by coming into his life at some point, like Mr. Tench or the boy. Since he is not aware of the positive impact he has had on people he remains a humble man and does not have any idea of the essential value of his life. The priest also feels that he can never fully repent for his affair with Maria who subsequently bore Brigida, the daughter he loves very much.

The lieutenant

The lieutenant is a man who has a deep and abiding hatred of the Catholic Church. He will go to any length to arrest and execute the priest and thus eliminate the last remaining clergyman from the state. He is a man of discipline and is a just and upright man. He believes in political ideals that will help to create a tolerant state where all are treated equal. Yet in his zeal, he employs means to reach that goal that are the very antithesis of it. The most glaring example of this is when he decides to take hostages and kill them if the villagers do not tell him about the priest's hiding place. This is hardly likely to inspire trust and confidence in the people. Yet he is not an unkind person.

After he has had the long discussion with the priest, he actually seeks out someone to hear his confession and even obtains a bottle of brandy for the priest.

His views of the priest are coloured by his affiliations to a political cause and yet when he speaks to the priest he is disturbed for he realizes that he is an intelligent, kind, humble man and not the stereotypical Catholic clergyman he had been expecting. At the end of the novel when his mission of capturing the priest is accomplished, he does not experience the sense of achievement he should have, rather there is a sense of loss and sadness. He is troubled by thoughts whether he has done what is right by capturing the priest and ultimately executing him.

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The mestizo

The mestizo, who betrays the priest, has an important role. As per the Christian imagery he plays the role of Judas who betrayed Christ. Yet, while his aim is to get the priest arrested and killed, he offers the priest opportunity after opportunity to prove his worth as a man of heroic character. When they first meet, the priest cares for him and sends him to town on a mule. When the mestizo traps him and lures him back into the state to be captured he actually offers the priest a chance to irrevocably commit himself to the lofty ideals that as a priest he should aim for. The mestizo actually asks the priest to pray for him. The priest offers him advice out of his hard earned sagacity that forgiveness has to be earned and worked for within one's soul. He himself has attempted to do that and yet does not find a priest to confess to and that troubles him. The mestizo has the priest to confess to, yet he has not done the soul searching that true confession requires. In a way the mestizo is the antithesis of the priest. The priest can look at him and see in him what he once was and thus can also sympathize with him.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. At the beginning of the story, why is the priest fleeing the police?
2. Which incident brings about the ultimate realization of the priest's guilt and unworthiness?
3. As per the Christian imagery, who plays the role of Judas in this story?

4.5 SUMMARY

- In this unit, we have critically analysed the work of two novelists-Graham Greene and D.H. Lawrence. All three are writers of the twentieth century.
- *The Power and the Glory*, which is probably Greene's most elaborate and complex novel, has generated extensive critical discussions and comments. The novel has been defined as an allegory, a morality play, or a modern parable and identified with other related genres.
- *The Power and the Glory* ranks amongst the best novels of the century primarily because it is a work of deep psychological and human relevance (rather than a philosophical or theological treatise), and because the whisky-priest is an authentic, complex, human being. His personality develops and changes before our very eyes, and he enlists our sympathy and admiration as an Everyman. This is probably the secret of the extraordinary appeal that *The Power and the Glory* has had for many readers who do not necessarily subscribe to any of the theological or philosophical attitudes that have been regarded as 'the message' of the novel. The conflict of ideologies, the theological argument, the allegorical significance of characters and events are clearly all there, but these aspects of the novel cannot be taken as substitutes for the human factor which is the core of the novel.
- *Sons and Lovers* uses the Oedipus complex as its base for exploring Paul's relationship with his mother. Paul is hopelessly devoted to his mother, and that love often borders on romantic desire. Completing the Oedipal equation, Paul murderously hates his father and often fantasizes about his death. Paul assuages his guilty, incestuous feelings by transferring them elsewhere, and the greatest receivers are Miriam and Clara. However, Paul cannot love either woman nearly as much as he does his mother. Lawrence adds a twist to the Oedipus complex: Mrs. Morel desires both William and Paul in near-romantic ways, and she despises all their girlfriends.

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4.6 KEY TERMS

- **Bourgeois:** related to or characteristic of the social middle class
- **Stream of consciousness:** is a narrative device used in literature to depict the various feelings and thoughts that pass through the mind. Was coined by William James

4.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. He is fleeing the police because he is a priest, a man of God, and religion has been declared illegal in his state.
2. The meeting of the priest with his daughter, Brigida, brings about the ultimate realization of his guilt and unworthiness.
3. The mestizo, who betrays the priest, has an important role. As per the Christian imagery he plays the role of Judas who betrayed Christ.
4. The sons hate their father and are jealous of him.
5. As they go out, supposedly to part forever, Paul gives Miriam flowers, dripping out of the jar, and she takes them, as she would have taken Paul himself, snipped off from his past and now drifting away into the dark.
6. The mother's death at the end of the novel signifies a sort of liberation for the hero.

4.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the role played by the mestizo in *The Power and the Glory*?
2. What was the role of Brigida in bringing out the priest's guilt?
3. Define the theme of *Sons and Lovers*.
4. Write a note on Paul's relationships with Miriam and Clara.
5. Describe the marital relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Morel.

Long-Answer Questions

1. The priest is not a perfect hero. Discuss.
2. Explain the power and the glory from the perspectives of various characters in Greene's novel.
3. Lawrence could be cruel to his characters in terms of the description of their weaknesses. Explain this statement with the help of examples from the novel.
4. Trace the rise of the novel in the twentieth century.

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5.3 E.M. FORSTER: A PASSAGE TO INDIA

Edward Morgan Forster was born on 1st January, 1879 to middle class parents in Dorset Square, London. He was the only child of Alice Clara 'Lily' (née Whichelo) and Edward Morgan Llewellyn Forster, an architect. Before he turned two, his father had died of tuberculosis. He attended Tonbridge School as a day scholar. His experiences there were not good; in fact he caricatured his experiences there which he termed 'public school behavior' in several of his novels. He attended King's College, Cambridge, from 1897 to 1901 and enjoyed himself thoroughly. While here he was a member of the Apostles, a discussion group. Many of its members later formed the

Bloomsbury Group, of which Forster was a peripheral member in the 1910s and 1920s. *The Longest Journey* (1907) is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences.

After leaving university, he travelled in continental Europe with his mother. Around this time he started writing short stories. *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), and *A Room with a View* (1908) are set in Italy where he lived for some time. He returned home to England in 1907 and wrote *The Longest Journey*. He also delivered a series of lectures at Working Men's College. He published *Howard's End* — his most mature work in 1910.

He travelled to Egypt, Germany and India with the classicist, and his mentor at King's College, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson. The First World War saw him serving as a volunteer for the International Red Cross in Alexandria, Egypt. After the war he worked as a journalist in London. He returned to India in 1921 and worked as the private secretary to Tukoji Rao III, the Maharajah of Dewas. *The Hill of Devi* (1953) is his non-fictional account, containing letters and reminiscences, of this period. Prior to his arrival in India he had started on a draft of *A Passage to India*. Dissatisfied with his work he set it aside. He returned to the novel when he was back home in London. He completed the novel in 1924. This was his most famous work. In fact he won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction and the Femina Vie Heureuse in 1925 for this novel. It was in 1925 again that he gave the William George Clark lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge. These were later compiled and published as *Aspects of the Novel* in book form. In 1928, *The Eternal Moment*, a collection of short stories was published.

He worked as a broadcaster during the Second World War with BBC Radio. He was awarded a Benson Medal in 1937. Forster was a homosexual and lifelong bachelor. He was involved in a long term relationship with a married police officer, Bob Buckingham. He lived with his mother in West Hackhurst until her death in 1945. He later moved to his own residence in Chiswick. He was elected as an honorary fellow of King's College, Cambridge in 1946. He declined knighthood in 1949 and was made a Companion of Honour in 1953. In 1969 he was made a member of the Order of Merit. He died on 7 June 1970 at the age of 91 from a stroke while he lived in Coventry. He was a humanist and is known for his ironic and well-plotted novels examining class differences and hypocrisy in early 20th-century British society.

The British Raj in India

The British came as traders to India. They were not the first Europeans to land here and faced competition in establishing a trading empire from the Portuguese and the French. They quickly realized that one way to maintain monopoly over Indian resources was by gaining political supremacy in the country. To this end they soon started involving themselves with the internal affairs of the country. To this end they started making fortifications around major ports and trading centers under their control. By the time the British came on the scene Mughal Supremacy was already in decline and the various principalities were involved in a power struggle. They came to the Europeans for arms, ammunition and strategic support. This gave the Europeans, especially the British who followed this policy dedicatedly, a footing in Indian affairs. Soon the British were a monopolistic power in India, and the East India Company a

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power center. This was cemented when Warren Hastings became the first governor-general of India in 1774. The Revolt of 1857 exposed the festering dissatisfaction of the Rulers and the people of India to the policies perused by the Company. In response to this British government took over rule of India, with power in the hands of the British Parliament in 1858. The administration of India passed under the hands of the British State and Indian rulers were rewarded for their loyalty to the British crown. In 1877 Queen Victoria was declared Empress of India. The advent of the two World wars and the formation of the Congress and the Muslim League finally led to the freedom of the country in 1947 with the creation of Pakistan and India.

Summary of the novel

A Passage to India is divided into three parts. The first section 'Mosque' is a description of the city of Chandrapore. The division of the city into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth and sky. The author seems to suggest that just as the earth and the sky are together but there is an insurmountable difference between the two; similarly no matter how closely the Indians and the British may be there is an inherent separation between the two because of their different states of existence in the colonial experience. One is the ruler and the other is the ruled and this colors all their interactions whether they are aware of it or not.

Dr Aziz is a Muslim doctor who works in a government hospital under the supervision of Major Callendar. He is friends with Hamidullah, an Indian barrister who has lived in England and Mahmoud Ali, an influential landowner. They form the troika that is representative of the diverse Indian experiences and expectations in the colonial setup. They are unhappy with the indignities Indians suffer at the hands of the British officers and their wives. This is further exemplified by the fact that the opening chapters of the novel focus on a discussion they are having regarding the various officials who govern under the aegis of the British Empire. The Empire is represented by Mr. Turton, the Collector; Major Callendar, the English doctor; Mr. McBryde, the police magistrate; and Ronny Heaslop, the city magistrate and the latest official to assume duties in Chandrapore. Interestingly, just as the Indians are discussing them, so are they exploring the nature of the relationship the British have with the natives. Cyril Fielding, the English principal of the government school, Mrs. Moore Ronny's mother, Professor Godbole and the English missionaries, Mr. Graysford and Mr. Sorley form a group that lies beyond the simple framework of the ruler-ruled axis. Fielding because he owes allegiance to neither group; Mrs. Moore because she has just arrived to the country and looks at it with tinted glasses; Professor Godbole because he shares neither a religious nor a race affinity with either group; and the missionaries because they are not interested in the power that the Empire gives the White man- they are more interested in converting the 'misguided' Indian to the path of the Lord.

The novel begins with Aziz being summoned by Major Callendar. In typical fashion he is late and finds the Major gone. He was spending time with his friends and could not leave them; it would not have been polite. The Major however considers it a slight since Aziz did not come on time. Since he was late for his club he left without leaving any message. Since both the men are operating under different cultural mores neither is right or wrong. This incident serves to highlight the difficulty in

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developing an understanding of someone who is different from you as well as the need to do so. Once such awareness develops it will prevent unnecessary bad blood from developing. On his way back home two English women co-opt his tonga for their use and he is forced to walk. It is at this time that he meets Mrs. Moore at the mosque. Impressed by her innate understanding of him and of Moslem custom; he calls her an Oriental. This however is problematic title; it seems to imply that her understanding however humane is nevertheless coloured by her own racial and gender identity. Meanwhile Adela Quested, Ronney's fiancée wishes to see the 'real India.' Mr. Turton agrees to indulge her when he suggest they organize a bridge game where she could meet the approved socially upper-class Indians. The idea is that it is only the Britishers who reside in close proximity of the Indians who see them for what they are and for everyone else they are novelty items. This further raises questions regarding the humanism of the reformists who do not understand why being an Indian in a colonial experience actually means. At the same time it also highlights the fact when Indians consider themselves to be 'friends' with the British that may not be the case. The novel forces us to look beyond labels. Later on when Mrs. Moore tells her son of her encounter with Aziz he is dismissive of him. This derision parallels the one that Aziz and his Indian friends express towards Ronney in the beginning. The point however is that both are prejudicial and not based on a true understanding of the individual. At the tea party that the Turtons give for Adela the two groups—Indian and British—do not interact. Only Cyril seems to bridge the divide. He invites Mrs. Moore and Adela for tea to his home. When they return home and discuss the party Mrs. Moore is again aghast at her son's insensitivity. She quotes the bible in an attempt to tell him the God is love and expects us to love all our neighbors. Ronney humors his mother telling her that she is old and thus her opinions are outmoded. When the two women go for tea to Fielding's house they meet Aziz and Godbole. Impressed by her kindness Aziz invites her to visit the Marabar Caves near the city. Dismayed by it Ronney arrives to pick them up and is dismissive of the two Indians. Meanwhile Adela tells him that she cannot marry him. They reconcile later when they go for a ride with Nawab Bahadur. Their automobile is involved in an accident and an animal dies.

Aziz too organizes a tea party for Mrs. Moore. After this party he purposely detains Fielding and shows him a picture of his dead wife. Showing the picture of one's wife is considered a big compliment for an Indian because it is something very personal and Indian men are especially protective about their women, who are, in fact kept behind a purdah usually. Aziz also mentions that once such a gesture is made, the other man can be called a 'brother'. The affection and trust between Fielding and Aziz continues to grow and results in a strong bond. They have some traits in common—sympathetic hearts and cultured minds—and each has the maturity to appreciate unfamiliar traditions and culture. To begin with, these attributes can be a foundation for a strong friendship and it is difficult to imagine how time, situations and culture differences will affect their bond.

The next section 'Caves' begins with a detailed description of the caves. They are hollow caverns that rise from an otherwise flat area outside the city of Chandrapore. Aziz invites the two women and Fielding and Godbole for the trip. The latter two miss the train and Aziz is left in charge. The final leg of the journey is completed by

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an elephant ride. This serves to further defamiliarize the journey and its end, the caves, for the two women. During the elephant ride, the women experience a spiritual silence which reinforces the air of elusiveness and illusoriness. While Aziz himself knows nothing about the caves, he frequently thinks of Professor Godbole, who is spiritual and likely to know much more about the mysteries hidden in the caves. There is an omen of the impending disaster when Aziz agrees to 'wait' and passes it off as a usual Indian tendency. While on the trip, Mrs. Moore experiences detachment from any kind of human activity. She gets the revelation that 'though people are important, the relations between them are not.'

When they reach the caves Mrs. Moore is perturbed by the crowds and terrified by an echo that she hears. She refuses to go further. Aziz and Adela proceed on the journey alone. At this time she asks him about how many wives he has. This upsets Aziz who rushes blindly into a cave to recover his composure. She does not realize that her question has brought a tussle between his westernized education and thinking and his native roots to the fore. As a westerner he ought to believe in monogamy, but as a practicing Muslim polygamy is a fact of life for him. This leaves Adela to wander the caves alone. In these unfamiliar surroundings she is supposedly assaulted by someone. As she rushes out of the caves hysterically, Nancy Derek, an English companion to a maharani, meets her. She escorts her to Chandrapore. Aziz has no idea that this has happened. When he returns to the station he is confronted by Mr. Haq, the police inspector, who arrests him for assaulting Adela. Fielding who is present at this time refuses the charge and sides with Aziz. He is seen as a traitor to his race and loses the support and sympathy of his compatriots. Adela's supposed assault becomes an excuse for the British officials to exercise authority over their Indian subjects with Aziz as the 'example'. The animosity that simmers under the surface emerges and the two nationalities are at loggerheads with each other. Forster shows the strength of mob psychology when emotions that have been held in check have something to feed upon. Fielding is the only one who seems immune. This happens because he looks at people as individuals and not as types: he knows that Aziz is incapable of the crime of which he is accused, and has to be defended. He goes to Mr. Turton and pleads his case, but the collector loses his cool at what he sees as Fielding's betrayal of his race. McBryde isn't as emotional about the case. Nevertheless he has his own take for it. He believes that it is the climate of the country that makes Indians criminals. Since Aziz is an Indian it implies that he is guilty of the crime and needs to be punished. He is upset by Fielding's defense of Aziz primarily for official reasons: if Fielding refuses to come into the English camp, he will weaken English rule, and McBryde says they can afford no 'gaps.'

During the trial evidence to prove his guilt is brought against him. A letter that a friend in Kolkata sent to Aziz is discovered. The friend is rumored to be a brothel-owner. Fielding does raise an objection to using the letter as evidence but McBryde changes tack cleverly. However, something worse happens; the photo of Aziz's wife which he keeps hidden from everyone is confiscated. Ironically while the British build their case on facts the Indians are in the grip of fear. Their fear incapacitates not only them but also prevents Fielding from mounting a cohesive defense for his friend. The novelist uses this instance to point out the fact that British rule in India is predicated on fear. As long as the Indians will continue to be fearful of the former the Raj shall

endure. The conclusion of the novel becomes important in the light of this. Aziz who had moved from a feeling of fellowship towards the British to a feeling of revulsion and hatred to them after this experience undergoes a transformation. He loses his fear and realizes that there is a future for himself, his children and his countrymen which they can chart without any fear of the British. The very fact that he can posit such a possibility is the beginning of the end of this fear psychosis and the movement towards true freedom.

The English, however, believe Adela, support and sympathize with her and push for a quick conviction. Mrs. Moore is devastated by this turn of events. She refuses to believe that her friend could have done such a reprehensible deed. At the same time she refuses to stand by him publicly in the court of law. Her son arranges for her travel back home to England but she dies on the way. She wishes to withdraw from the situation much as Godbole has. Godbole realizes that good and bad are part of the same coin and refuses to be drawn into controversy. Mrs. Moore doesn't share this equanimity and her sense of the world has been shattered in the caves. She literally doesn't know what to do except leave for home. Her name however lives on as legend in Chandrapore simply because of the friendliness she showed towards Aziz. The question of the veracity of this friendliness is never answered. At the same time the fact that she dies implies an acknowledgement by the narrator that while we may feel empathy for others on an individual level the forces of imperialism by their very nature strip this feeling when one interacts with the other in the public realm. As the trail nears the atmosphere in the town becomes increasingly volatile. Turton wouldn't mind violence being inflicted on the natives, but he doesn't allow it since it would reflect badly on him as an administrator. Similarly the Indians become restive. During the month of Moharrum the Muslim women declare that they will not break their fast until Aziz is released. The British too see him as the embodiment of all that puts the virtue of English womanhood (represented by Adela) under threat. By this time the two are mere pawns in a larger game. Adela's inner conflicts become irrelevant. Surprisingly Adela recovers from her shock and sets the matter right at the trial. She states that Aziz did not accost her in the caves. The moment she does this she is rejected by her peers who see her as a traitor. She loses the most in the story, she does not belong in India, and after this incident neither does she belong with her compatriots. She knows the extent of their depravity and cannot condone it. Her statement leads to her ostracization by the British. Ronney breaks their engagement and she leaves for England. Fielding succeeds in convincing Aziz to drop the defamation suit he had filed against Adela. After Adela changes her stance the Reaction of the British is along expected lines. The English are furious because the outcome of the trial weakens their political superiority and their prestigious social position. It is the reaction of the Indians that is surprising. Although Aziz has been exonerated by her testimony he feels no admiration or appreciation for her efforts. He charge has tainted his honour and nothing can redeem it. Also it is difficult to feel gratitude for Adela because she is too cold and distant for the emotional and volatile Indians. While they could and did understand Mrs. Moore's subtle emotional trauma, her unfeeling desire to do right is beyond them. Fielding, who always knew that her claim was false, cannot feel sorry for her abandonment by the British. Another fallout of the trial is the increasing volatility of the crowd. Aziz's victory unleashes the crowd's resentment against their colonial masters. Both Hindus and Muslims join forces and a rebellion seems imminent.

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However the weather plays a fortuitous role and the heat dissipates. It takes the crowd's belligerence with it and things return to normal. One significant change is that Nawab Bahadur recants his title and goes back to his name Zulfiqar. Perhaps the events of the trial make him feel that reconciliation between the nationalities is futile, and that the name bestowed upon him by the English no longer has meaning.

The only refuge left Adela is Fielding's cottage. Everyone else has abandoned her. Although he doesn't like her he cannot help but admire her relentless and honest efforts to recount what happened to her in the caves. This is indicative of another cultural difference between the two nationalities. While most Indians may prevaricate and refuse to see or acknowledge the truth in all its unvarnished details, the British do not. Either they have the strength to do so or are unimaginative enough not to look beyond the obvious to the ultimate truth. (This ultimate truth, which Godbole seems to have grasped, and Mrs. Moore has understood instinctively is that truth and falsehood are two facets of the same coin and ultimately do not matter.) Whatever may be the case it is this quality that helps them persevere and build the Empire that they have. Therefore if the Indians are to attain freedom they need to take a cold, hard look at their own faults and dreams and work accordingly.

Adela agrees with Fielding that they will never know exactly what happened that day, and that given the events as they have unfolded, it may not even be relevant any more. After the trial is over Aziz decides to sue Adela for defamation. The conversation between Fielding and Aziz here reveals that his time in prison has made Aziz bitter, hard and blunt. He has acquired a very Western approach to things: instead of letting things be and happen as they would, he wants to take charge of the situation and demand recompense. The fact that it is Adela's statement that has set him free is meaningless. When Fielding draws his attention to his divergent reaction to Mrs. Moore and Adela he denies any oscillation. He refuses to accept that his affection for the former when she has done nothing for him, and his hatred for the woman who helped him gain his freedom are irrational responses. Fielding is successful only when he reminds Aziz of his feelings for Mrs. Moore and the suggestion that she would want him to forgive her and get on with life. Later Hamidullah tells Aziz that there is a rumor going around that he is having an affair with Adela. He is angry at Fielding for not telling him about it. This rumor breaks the fragile trust between the two friends: Aziz thinks that Fielding wants to marry Adela and keep her money for himself. When he tells his suspicion to Fielding the latter calls him a 'dirty rotter.' They try to rebuild their friendship when they discuss poetry, but something essential has been lost.

Meanwhile Ronney gets to know that his mother has died. He feels guilty for her untimely demise but later rationalizes it by suggesting that she brought her fate on herself when she developed fellow-feeling for Aziz and other Indians. He decides to break off his engagement with Adela. His decision is based on the fact that he realizes that she will prove to be a liability in his career as a sahib in India: after her statements in court he can never actually rely on her to side with her own kind no matter what the case and what the facts may be. This dispassionate argument reveals that Ronney has become the prototype of the 'twenty-year official', who will chart a successful career in India. Incidentally, Fielding is also reinstated to the club by the lieutenant governor. He had lost his membership when he sided with Aziz and actively campaigned to

prove his innocence. He is reinstated into the club under the argument that since he was not actively involved in the events as they unfolded in the caves it would hardly be fair to make him an outcast. This begins his restoration in his own people and culminates in the end of the book when he returns back to England a married man with a substantial post in the British educational hierarchy.

The third section is called 'Temple.' In this section the story moves to Mau. Two years have passed. After the trial Fielding had returned to England and married. He is now back in India on a tour to inspect the government schools in central India. His tour takes him to Mau. Godbole is minister of education here and Aziz the personal physician of the Rajah of Mau. When Aziz comes to know that he has married he assumes he has married Adela and cuts all connection with him. The section opens with a depiction of the celebration of Janmashtami, the birth of Krishna. The celebration of Janmashtami is marked by chaos and disorder. There is an underlying unity and harmony within this chaos. This is in marked contrast to Christianity where harmony is a marker of order. This contrast between the external chaos of Hinduism and the external harmony of Christianity is done to point out the fact that while Christians talk of peace and transcendence the Hindus and Indians see to have achieved it. 'Talkative' Christianity coined the phrase 'God is love'. Hinduism practices it. Love exists and dominates the scene. The celebration of Janmashtami is significant. Krishna's life celebrates the amorous and sexual aspects of existence as well. Also, Radha's love for Krishna transcends mere love for a man to include love for a god and all of creation. When Godbole goes into a trance during the festivities this point is hinted. True faith is one which includes the body and yet goes beyond it. When he remembers Mrs. Moore and her wasp in this trance it suggests that Godbole recognized her sympathy with the tenets of Hinduism intuitively. While Godbole is supervising the temple choir he finds himself in a trance-like state where he remembers Mrs. Moore and a wasp. This leads to a contemplation of God's Love. Her statement the 'God is Love' is repeated in the Hindu ceremony although through an error in its printing it becomes 'God si Love.' Aziz has remarried and lives in Mau with his wife and children. Aziz has found a measure of peace in Mau. He doesn't try to understand the Hindus and continues to write poetry where Islam is a strong presence.

Although he doesn't embrace Hinduism he looks at the celebration with a tolerant eye. He has become thoroughly disillusioned by the British Empire and finds a semblance of peace and contentment away from the sway of the Empire in Mau. On the flip side he has let his medical practice degenerate until he becomes a glorified medicine man. It is only when he meets Fielding that he realizes that the latter has married Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella and is in India with her son Ralph as well. Aziz and Ralph become friends. Fielding and Stella and Ralph and Aziz go on a boat ride during the festival. There is a storm and in the melee their boats capsize. They are rescued and the English return home to their guest house. Meanwhile Aziz tells Ralph the King has died; however, the information has not been made public otherwise it would stop the celebrations. The information will be decimated once the festival is over. The arrival of the floods point out to the important role nature plays in the novel. The floods also look back to the floods which marked the birth of Krishna and heralded the death of evil. *Similarly the floods in Mau renew this promise of life and the celebrations continue. The fact that the king has died and the celebrations do not stop*

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points out to the innate love of life that the Indians have. This also points out the fact that unlike the British, for the Indians religious matters take precedence over political ones. Whether this is good or bad seen in the light of the colonial experience is left to the reader to decide. This is just something else the two nationalities differ inherently in. The collision of the boats, one carrying Aziz and Ralph, the other Stella and Fielding, with the holy tray borne by the servitor, serves again to emphasize the 'muddle' of India; it is not a dignified climax to the ceremony, but the Hindus are not unduly disturbed by it, or by the downpour which follows. It also serves to ease the tension between Fielding and Aziz.

Stella and Ralph are deeply affected by the festival and Hinduism, but Fielding is unaffected. Later when the floods recede and Fielding inspects the school he finds that it has been converted to a granary. In his humanism he doesn't act on this. Before they finally leave Fielding and Aziz go on a horse ride. They start one of their conversations about the Anglo-Indian issues that they used to have earlier in Chandrapore. However, they are different men now. Aziz says that the only way for the Indians is to unite and drive the British out. Fielding is not a mere Principal any more, as an official he is the de facto representative of the Empire. The friends realize that their allegiances and beliefs have changed and they can no longer enjoy the friendship and camaraderie they had earlier and so must part ways. This is symbolized further when in the last scene of the novel the two friends come to a narrow path and their horses have to separate in order to pass. One conception that Forster propounds is that life comes full circle. When Aziz meets Ralph, for him it is a new beginning again after letting go of Fielding. Aziz also correctly predicts that the youth of India will drive the British out of India.

Themes in *A Passage to India*

Nature

Nature is a living presence in the novel. Forster uses the sky to connect the two groups-Indian and British. The overarching presence and power of the sky is contrasted with the discordant affairs of earthbound men. The sky's power is embodied in the changing seasons which in turn have the ability to govern men's actions on the ground. In his notes Forster had noted that the three sections of the book contrasted with the three seasons found in India. The first section refers to the cold season, the second to the hot and dry season while the third refers to the rainy season. One can see the changing passions and opinions of the characters as the novel progresses. In the first section they are subject to their prejudices and are blind to all else. In the second section an awareness of the other is initiated and in the third section there is a willingness to acknowledge, if not live with, this otherness.

Natural imagery is also used to suggest a universality of experience. If the British Empire rests on the fundamental belief that the white is superior to the brown and thus is fated to rule the latter, this argument is undercut by Mrs. Moore's reactions to the moon. She looks at it and wonders if the same moon doesn't shine in the British sky back home. The image of the moon seems to suggest an undeniable similarity of spirit among all creation animate and inanimate under the sky and the need to find and foster it since only this will lead to a growing sense of fellow feeling among men. This

idea is extremely important because time and again in the novel the novelist shows the reader the divisive and dehumanizing effects of colonialism and the need to end it.

Inter-racial relationships

The novel centers around the possibility of maintain viable inter-racial relationships in a colonial setup. The narrator is not blind to the faults of either party and depicts them unflinchingly. While the Indians are shown to be an intelligent and a perceptive people who generally accept the treatment meted out by the British with a humorous cynicism, nevertheless their inability to put up a united front prevents them from formulating any viable strategy for resisting and undermining their rule. Similarly though the British believe in the idea of fair play and of treating their fellow men humanistically, the colonizing experience has stripped them of all fellow feeling. Ronney and other Englishmen in Chandrapore see all Indians as types: they are automatons who are lazy and will not work until forced to do so under the threat of reprisal. Such an attitude precludes the possibility of any meaningful relationship developing between the two parties. This is further highlighted by the fact that the moment Fielding becomes a representative of the crown during his tour to Mau he cannot indulge in the type of conversations he had with Aziz in Chandrapore. A consciousness of their races and their respective positions in this binary relationship precedes all interactions. Hamidullah says the same when he recounts that while in England he could indulge in some sort of equal relationships with his British friends such a thing is not possible in India because here the British are the Sahibs and the Indians the servants. SO much so that even the most accomplished of them is merely tolerated and not welcome amongst their midst. The fact that most of the Indians are well educated but are forced to serve under British officials who rarely make any effort to consider the Indian viewpoint about anything adds insult to injury.

Another fact that the novel highlights is the insidious nature of the colonial experience. Mrs. Moore's and Adela's experience and the condescension that the Turtons show is indicative of the fact that every newcomer to the colonial experience is devoid of any baggage and makes overtures of friendship. However, inevitably he or she is o-opted into the system and loses any desire to do so. The two women are at the beginning of this transformation and Ronney is the final product. Mrs. Moore's death stops this process and freezes her as a friend in the minds of the Indians. The novel lays the same question when Ralph and Stella are introduced to the scene. They are influenced by Janmashthami festival in Mau but whether they will take it to the next level is left unanswered. The parting of ways of the two friends Aziz and Fielding seems to suggest that such reconciliation is not possible as long as racial exploitation continues.

Religion

You will encounter the interplay among the three main religions—Islam, Christianity and Hinduism—prevalent in India. Islam is portrayed as having deteriorated in its faith and only relying on the splendor of its past. Muslim people are shown bickering about trivial issues during religious ceremonies when they should be sincerely paying homage to their faith. As a result, they have become more westernized and non-serious about the observing the rites and rituals. Even Aziz, who is the representative

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Muslim in the novel seems to be skeptical about Islam and writes poetry that only talk about the magnificence of Islam in the days gone by. He seems to be deeply sad about this deterioration. Even for Christianity, a character like Mrs. Moore seems to have become a skeptic enough to call it the 'little talkative Christianity.' He uses biblical allusions to ironically point out to the fact that the religion professes faith in that which it itself does not practice. This indictment is even more severe for Britishers in India for whom matters of religious importance are less important than matters of state and political power. Godbole is the main proponent of Hinduism in the text. During the Krishna festival the religious fervor of the Hindus reaches such a crescendo that the object of worship ceases to matter. All that is important is the worshipper and his act of worship. It is in this point of time that they transcend their material reality and approach the divine. In the ceremony there is elation, high spirits, and seriousness. A combination of these elements indicates that a religion should be indicative of the whole life and not just selective parts. The biblical passage 'God is love' has an error in spelling, but none in practice. The faces of the Hindus are composed and tranquil, because 'religion is a living force to the Hindus,' and among its views, one of the most important is the 'peace that passeth understanding.' However, Hinduism also has its own flaws; Forster describes the case of Mau, where although Muslims and Hindus live in peace, the Brahmins and non-Brahmins are unable to.

Key Characters

Mrs. Moore

She, along with Aziz, is an individual of spirit and determination. Since the conflict between the Western and the Oriental mind is at the core of the novel, Mrs. Moore's ability to cross the line is important. She is predisposed to understanding the 'other'. This may not have come to much use in her case: after the incident in the Caves she becomes morose and peevish. Nevertheless it is her name that helps clear Adele's mind and reveal the truth; again it is her idea that God is good that Godbole remembers during the Janmashthami festival in Mau. At the same time the novel makes it very clear that he simplistic Christian values, which in one sense are based on a very linear view of the world, are incapable of grasping the multiplicity that is India and of the dehumanizing politics behind the colonial enterprise. Though Forster highlights Mrs. Moore's receptivity to Hindu philosophy, he does not make her adopt Hinduism. Though she senses the universality of all creation, she does not consciously subscribe to it; though she feels at one with the heavenly bodies and, at the other end of the continuum, takes delight in the lowly wasp, she cannot conceive of a religion that is adequate to teach such a concept, and this disheartens and frightens her.

Ronny Heaslop

Ronny Heaslop is the typical public school product which Forster derided. He is someone who has internalized the accepted mores and codes of behavior. He does not challenge the status quo. He is representative of the average Englishman in the Civil Services in India: pictured as the 'rubber-stamp' product of an education system that rewards blind obedience. He has internalized the idea, represented by other colonials like Turton, Callendar and McBryde that he is superior to the natives simply by virtue of his skin color. This in turn makes him blind to the mistreatment of the natives. It is

because of this reason that he is dismissive of Aziz and cannot understand or appreciate what it is that Moore sees in him. It is his inability to understand that his behaviour is morally reprehensible that precludes any possibility of transformation. He is also a typical case study on the dehumanizing effects of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized. The narrator seems to be suggesting that a change in the tone of racial relationships should not be expected from parties who stand to gain from its continuation. Instead the change agents have to be located outside; the efficacy of such agents is left open to question as is delineated by the development of Mrs. Moore's and Fielding's characters.

Adela Quested

As her name suggests Adela is someone who is a 'Questioner.' She is on a quest in the novel: her aim is to find the 'real India.' It is interesting to note that while Ms. Moore arrives at an instinctive knowledge of India and its mysticism, Adela arrives at this knowledge through a more rational and conscious approach. They serve as foils to each other. Her role is important in two ways. Firstly, the novelist makes it clear (especially through Turton's reactions) that almost every new arrival to India looks at the country and its people as an exotic entity. In light of this, the colonial argument seems to be that once this tourist realizes that the country is not exotic but is 'really' peopled by citizens who are lazy and in fact is a land that is mysterious and wild and needs to be tamed, they will be so-opted into the colonial exercise and will support it wholeheartedly. The second role that she performs takes off from this: what happens when someone from the mother country refuses to buy the colonial propaganda, looks beyond the obvious and accepts the country and its people for what they are. When this happens the colonizers are revealed to be the exploiters that they are. Suddenly therefore the Empire instead of being a benign and civilizing influence becomes an exploitative and suppressive instrument. It is for this reason that Adela is cosseted and receives the support of her contemporaries when she believes that she has been molested in the caves. The British see this as an attempt to challenge the Empire which needs to be nipped in the bud. However when she retracts her claims not only does she put her erstwhile supporters in a bad light; but more importantly she reveals the fact that for all its vaunted ideals of fair play and justice, the British legal system and society firmly believe that these ideals do not apply to native Indians who they genuinely believe to be an inferior species. Thus the film of humanism is ripped apart to reveal the crass commercial greed that lies beneath.

Physically she is a plain woman and it is her innate honesty and courage that mark her as being different from the others. When she arrives she is betrothed to Ronney, but it soon becomes clear that the marriage will never happen: while Ronney is happy to follow orders if it results in social approval and prosperity, Adela can never approve of something unless she believes in its veracity and truthfulness completely. It is this aspect of her personality that is given a fillip by Mrs. Moore's instinctive humanism and gives her the courage to withdraw her complain. As a foil to Mrs. Moore it becomes clear that any understanding of the country that Adela arrives at will remain incomplete simply because you can never understand a nation and its people on a purely rational level, some kind of instinctive emotional bonding is necessary. Mrs. Moore succeeds in this and so is remembered by the natives even though she refuses to testify in Aziz's favor. Therefore even though she cannot

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countenance the snobbish ways of the British in India she finds herself incapable of apologizing to Aziz. Her lack of sensitivity is pointed up when Fielding has to suggest that perhaps she should apologize to Aziz. She is willing to make amends, but she does not have the compassion to do it without being told. Her remorse is of the head, not the heart; her primary feeling is one of guilt for having been the cause of so much trouble to everyone

The Missionaries

They perform two important roles. The missionary compound is outside the city. This seems to suggest that their work is divorced from the action of other British in India. This however is not the case: within the politics of the novel and the colonial experience itself the erasure of identity of the native is extremely important. Religion is a marker of identity. When the missionaries Mr. Sorley and Mr. Graysford attempt to convert Indian to Christianity, they are in effect imbibing British mores and values into the natives. So their activities can be seen as a corollary to colonization: the colonization of the mind and spirit is important to ensure that the Empire is not challenged and continues to prosper. In light of this the Janmashami festival becomes important. It is during this festival that the multiplicity of India is exposed in all its glory and the British masters are left with no other option but to realize that it can never be fully tamed and suppressed.

Another important function they perform is that they highlight the essential theological and ideological difference between the two cultures. On the face of it both assume that everyone and everything is equal in the eyes of the Creator. For the Indians this means that plants, animals, insects and inanimate objects are imbued with God's divine presence and therefore are subject to his grace and love. The missionaries find this belief hard to stomach. They find it difficult to bestow God's grace on the wasp while the Indians feel no such apprehension. This is indicative of the different world view that these societies profess. While for the Indians everything is a part of them and they are a part of everything, for the Western mind some things are indisputably external to their make-up and identity. This inclusive ability of the Indians makes it possible for them to recover from slights and to look beyond the apparent to the possible. Therefore Aziz can be friends with Fielding and Mrs. Moore. However for the British the idea of exclusion demands that they will instinctively reject anything that doesn't jell with their world view; for this reason Ronney is dismissive of all Indians and it is also the reason why Adela is rejected once she withdraws her claims.

Doctor Aziz

Aziz can be seen as Forster's spokesman in the novel. He is highly affectionate in nature and extends his friendship to Mrs. Moore quickly. He is a doctor and so in a sense is representative of the civilizing influence of the western world. At the same time he is deeply suspicious of it and its plans for the natives and their civilization. In other words, he is also a man who is conscious of his culture and is proud of it. In other words he is a representative of the newly educated Indians: who ponder which path to take, and accept the western mores uncritically to accept their past eliminating the new learning and ways completely. By the time the novel ends he has reached

some sense of balance. He uses his skills as a doctor to cure Ralph from a wasp bite and in doing so acknowledges the Western influences in his life. At the same time he has married again and has children, also he talks of a time when a British will no longer have hegemony over India. This implies that he has reached a state of acceptance of his past and acknowledges that it will play a crucial role in whatever future he builds for himself. Through him the novelist seems to be saying that the colonial experience is an integral part of the native psyche and cannot be wished away. The need therefore is to construct a new identity that merges the pre-and post colonial identities so that the natives and the colonizers can forge a new future for themselves.

His name encompasses the beginning and end of all human emotions. This is evident in the story as well. While he loves his dead wife and remembers her often he is no morbid. In fact he visits brothels frequently. His religion is important to him only for patriotic reasons, in relation to the past glories of Islam. He is tormented and delighted in turn by his ability, or inability, to relate adequately to other people. He is lively, high-spirited, and cordial to a high degree. When he is found to have erred, he is extremely susceptible to criticism. He seems to be genuine person, however, and is unquestionably loyal to those he calls friends. A example of this is that he remains affectionate towards Mrs. Moore throughout and remembers her fondly after she dies.

Professor Godbole

He stands out as the enigmatic Hindu. An upright follower of his religion, who insists on even eating separately from the rest of the group.

Forster has picked Godbole to represent Hinduism among representative of all religions. Hinduism seems to stay in the background until the very end of the novel, however, a careful examination of the other two sections shows that it was always there as an undercurrent. Godbole's song seems to have a deep impact on both Adela and Mrs. Moore, just like Hinduism impacts the book. In Forster's words, 'Ever since Professor Godbole had sung his queer little song, they (Mrs. Moore and Adela) had lived more or less inside cocoons.' The cocoon here signifies the dormant nature of the women which will soon be awakened and blossom like a butterfly. However, ironically, both ladies awaken to disturbing, rather than beautiful, experiences. While Mrs. Moore is terrified into complete indifference, Adele experiences the darkness of the cave, and the subsequent trial.

Even if it seems that Forster is in awe of Hinduism and Godbole, the truth is that Forster never claims that Hinduism is the perfect religion. However, he certainly seems to admire many of its views and practices and one can never call Forster a 'preacher.' Forster redeems himself from being partial towards any religion or being a preacher by showing Godbole as a person who stays aloof from the mainstream and so cannot serve as a medium for promoting universal understanding. It is actually someone like Fielding who can be instrumental in breaking national and racial barriers. However, the world would be unbalanced if there were only people like Fielding. It is obvious that Forster respects human qualities on many levels and also he is not so simple a writer that he would suggest a black-and-white solution for the world's problems.

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There seems to be some significance attached to names in the novel, such as the name 'Godbole' which starts with the word 'God', and the character is very religion-oriented, or at least God-oriented.

Cyril Fielding

Cyril Fielding is a man of the world. He is different from other white men in the novel since he is the only one who judges on merit. He becomes friends with Aziz since he recognizes a kindred soul in him. In contrast Ronney derided the latter simply because he has not buttoned his shirt properly. He is the principal of the local school. In a sense he stands outside the colonial exercise: he is imparting native children an education similar to that the white children are receiving in England. For this reason he is unpopular with the other British: they fear he is giving them a glimpse of a better world. Paradoxically he too is serving the interests of the empire. It is in his role as an educator that he is aligning the minds of the young to uncritically accept British mores as desirable. This in turn means that as adults their allegiance will be with the British and their ethos which they will see as superior to their own native one. Thus instead of using education to question the veracity of racial discrimination and colonization; they will not only accept it as a fact but serve to propagate it. The fact that a large number of Indians served in the lower echelons of the Civil Services and administration in the British Empire serves to prove this point. The fact the Fielding is not as insidious as he appears in the beginning is proven by the fact that he re-appears in the third part of the novel as the inspector of schools in Mau. This implies that he has the approval of the establishment in his activities. Nevertheless through him the novelist does point to the possibility of forging new identities and futures through a critical approach to education. Aziz, during the course of the novel is an example of this. Although he marries a British girl and aligns himself to the establishment; the fact that his wife Mrs. Moore's daughter implies that he is aware that the spiritualism of Hindus offers a way to assess life which though he may not completely comprehend, is not without merit. Forster leaves the reader to speculate about what might happen if Fielding should become interested in the spiritual side of life. Adela is said to get the worst of both worlds; Fielding, endowed as he is with natural graces, could very well find the best of both worlds. With a combination of human and spiritual understanding, Fielding would certainly be the man 'most likely to succeed' in promoting world understanding. Fielding is the key figure who develops with the novel. He not only crosses racial and national lines, but he responds as though they did not exist. He professes atheism, but by the end of the novel he has at least become personally aware of spiritual influences: puzzled by the pleasing change in his wife after the encounter with Hinduism, but intrigued by whatever it is that the Hindus seem 'to have found.'

The Caves

Physically the caves are mysterious: they are old and their walls are highly polished. In contrast there are no shrines in the caves and entrance is rough-hewn and manmade. In other words the caves serve no purpose and there is no reason to visit them. Despite this a large number of people do so. There is something mysterious, almost sinister about the caves and visitors come away with uncertain impression. The narrator makes

it clear that the caves contain 'nothing', they are nothing. Godbole refuses to analyse the caves. In the Hindu mystical thought they could be taken to mean the total negation of the self and the complete rejection of all material things. This could explain Mrs. Moore's disquiet with the echo. For all her humanism she is firmly placed in the Western milieu which places great importance on material success and the self. The echo, in light of this argument, can be seen as Hinduism's claim that western ideology is flawed. Mrs. Moore is discomfited by the caves because they remind her of her instinctive realization that her world view and, more importantly religious beliefs, may be insufficient to understand this new world she is encountering. The caves, which suggest infinity and menacing mystery when seen close-up, become 'finite and rather romantic' seen from a comfortable distance.

It should be noted that the caves do not affect everyone equally. Mrs. Moore reacts violently to her experience in the first cave; Adela does not react until she reaches the second one, and her reaction is different; and Aziz and Fielding seem unaffected.

Hamidullah

Hamidullah is a Cambridge-educated Indian who experienced real camaraderie and friendship with the British during his years as a student. When he first came back home he could not reconcile that friendliness with the oppressive and dismissive behavior of Englishmen in India. This difference arose because in India they were at a superior social position, the British are the rulers and can dictate the course of events. All his life he did not discount the possibility of amicable relations between the British and the Indians despite the unique position as the ruler and the ruled. Aziz's incarceration and the unjust accusations levelled against him destroy all faith in the British. This is highlighted when he renounces the name Bahadur and goes back to his given name Zulfiqar.

Themes

Racial division

The first and most obvious link is with the racial division that the novel partly deals with. Indian Chandrapore is separated from the Civil Station peopled by the Anglo-Indians. The Civil Station, appropriately, stands on a rise above the 'low but indestructible' Indian town geographically as in status. There is mention of the *maidan* on which Aziz and a subaltern will play polo in temporary oblivion of racial division. The Civil Station contrasts with the Indian town in its 'sensible' organization; instead of litter and rotting corpses, we have 'a red-brick club' and 'roads that intersect at right angles'. It is screened from Indian Chandrapore behind the exuberant vegetation, suggesting perhaps that the Anglo-Indian world may be cut off from the realities of the native culture. Such is also the implication of the idea that newcomers do not understand what Chandrapore is, and are rather impressed by it until driven down into it to 'acquire disillusionment' – and here, in a sardonic phrase, is part of the fate of the earnest Adela who desired to see the real India.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

19. How is Chandrapore depicted in the novel?
20. Explain the significance of Janmashtami in the novel.
21. Which novel written by Forster is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences?

ACTIVITY

Conduct a research on E.M. Forster's relationship with India and his visits to India.

UNIT 5 FICTION: TWENTIETH CENTURY - II

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Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 Alice Walker: *The Color Purple*
- 5.3 E.M. Forster: *A Passage to India*
- 5.4 Summary
- 5.5 Key Terms
- 5.6 Answers to 'Check your Progress'
- 5.7 Questions and Exercises
- 5.8 Further Reading

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The Color Purple was Alice Walker's third novel. It was published in the year 1982. The novel was not just a financial success but also a critical one. It came to be considered a milestone in Walker's creative journey. In addition to praise, the novel invited a lot of criticism for dealing with controversial and unorthodox themes. Many critics were opposed to her manner of portraying black men, which was thought to be negative. The novel was made into a film in 1985 directed by Steven Spielberg. While the movie brought more fame, Walker was criticized for improper portrayal of men in her novel. On the other hand, she was appreciated for her real depiction of black women. The use of the epistolary technique was welcomed by critics.

Walker's ability to incorporate the language of the black folks also caught the attention of the critics. Walker's involvement during her early days in the civil rights activities that took place during the 1960s, finds resonance in the novel. In *The Color Purple*, as found in her other works, Walker focuses on the issue of dual repression faced by black women in the American context. Walker argues that black women are marginalized by the callousness of the white community, and also face discrimination from black males. The civil rights movement affected Walker's critical perception regarding racial problems at home, simultaneously drawing her attention towards the African continent. During the 1960s, an extraordinary interest in ethnic and racial tradition brought many African Americans to investigate their origins in Africa. The central theme of *The Color Purple* identifies Walker's desire to reflect a positive side of life, even when faced with harsh conditions.

Her central character emerges a winner by fighting adverse situations and characters. Even the other significant theme of the good overpowering evil is undoubtedly another reason for the book's great success.

A Passage to India was published in 1924, and had the unique distinction of being E. M. Forster's first novel in over a decade, as well as his final novel. The novel is multi-layered and makes abundant use of symbolism, thus becoming nuanced and rich in its content. Ostensibly, the main theme of the novel is the state of India at the

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time when it was colonized and the difficult relationships and undercurrents between Indian and British people. It also seems to explore the complex issue of founding friendships despite cultural differences. Besides this, the novel seems to be concerned with faith—which may be religious or faith regarding social traditions. To convey his own skepticism regarding inter-cultural friendships, Foster uses Dr. Aziz, who is eager to form friendships with British people but ends up in trouble, when he is accused of rape a young English lady.

5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- State the importance of the works of Alice Walker, with special emphasis on *The Color Purple*
- State the importance of the works of E.M. Foster, with special emphasis on *A Passage to India*

5.2 ALICE WALKER: THE COLOR PURPLE

Alice Walker (born 1944) is a prominent American novelist, short story writer, essayist, biographer and poet who owns the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for her work, *The Color Purple* (1982). Walker hailed from a family of sharecroppers. She went to study at Spelman College and Sarah Lawrence College. Her first published work was a book of poems, *Once* (1968). This collection narrates her journey to Africa and her experiences of civil rights movements. Her next publication, *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* (1973), was also a collection of poems. It was Walker's mouthpiece for identifying the plight of those who struggle against racism and oppression.

Walker's first novel appeared in 1970, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*. The narrative of this novel revolves from 1900 to 1960s. It tells the story of three successive generations of farmers belonging to the coloured community. In 1973 came her short story collection, *In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black women*. This collection recounts the legacy of black women and their sufferings. Even her next story collection, *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down* (1981) wanders along the similar territory as the previous collection.

Walker bagged the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *The Color Purple*. This novel is about the life a coloured woman, Celie who is overburdened with sufferings and find a means of expression when she starts writing her despairing situation to God through her letters addressed to Him. This novel revolves around Celie's letters to God and Nettie, her sister and also Nettie's communication with Celie through letters. Her work *Langston Hughes: American Poet* (1974) is a biography of the American poet Langston Hughes. In her next novel *Meridian* (1976) Walker focuses on civil right workers of the 1960s. Walker published the two poetry collections *Good Night, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning* and *Horses Make A Landscape Look More Beautiful* in 1979 and 1984 respectively. In 1983 came out her essay collection *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*.

Her works

Novels

- *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970)
- *In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women* (1973)
- *Meridian* (1976)
- *The Color Purple* (1982)
- *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down: Stories* (1982)
- *To Hell With Dying* (1988)
- *The Temple of My Familiar* (1989)
- *Finding the Green Stone* (1991)
- *Possessing the Secret of Joy* (1992)
- *The Complete Stories* (1994)
- *By The Light of My Father's Smile* (1998)
- *The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart* (2000)
- *Now Is The Time to Open Your Heart* (2005)
- *Devil's My Enemy* (2008)
- *Everyday Use* (1973) Short stories, essays, interviews

Poetry

- *Once* (1968)
- *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* (1973)
- *Good Night, Willie Lee, I'll See You in the Morning* (1979)
- *Horses Make a Landscape Look More Beautiful* (1985)
- *Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems* (1991)
- *Absolute Trust in the Goodness of the Earth* (2003)
- *A Poem Traveled Down My Arm: Poems And Drawings* (2003)
- *Collected Poems* (2005)
- *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing: New Poems*

Honours and Recognition

- Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Color Purple* (1983) (first black woman writer)
- National Book Award (1983) (first black woman writer)
- O. Henry Award for "Kindred Spirits" (1985)
- Honorary Degree by the California Institute of the Arts (1995)
- 'Humanist of the Year' by American Humanist Association (1997)
- The Lillian Smith Award from the National Endowment for the Arts

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- The Rosenthal Award from the National Institute of Arts & Letters
- The Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, the Merrill Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship
- The Front Page Award for Best Magazine Criticism from the Newswoman's Club of New York
- Induction to the California Hall of Fame in The California Museum for History, Women, and the Arts (2006)

Characters in *The Color Purple*

1. **Celie** – The poor, illiterate black woman and also the protagonist and narrator of the novel
2. **Nettie** – Celie's younger sister who is prettier than her. She moves to Africa to preach and faithfully writes letters to Celie for decades.
3. **Alphonso** – He is Celie and Nettie's stepfather, who the sisters think is their real father. He remains an abuser till the end.
4. **Mr. Johnson/ Albert** – Celie's husband who abuses her for years but gets transformed at the end and seeks friendship.
5. **Shug Avery** – A beautiful blues singer who becomes Celie's friend and then her lover. She nurtures Celie physically, emotionally and spiritually.
6. **Eleanor Jane** – The mayor's daughter who develops a strong attachment to Sofia who works as a maid in their house.
7. **Germaine** – The younger man who manages to win Shug's heart.
8. **Harpo** – Celie's oldest stepson who owns the local juke joint.
9. **Miss Millie** – The mayor's racist wife
10. **Kate** – Mr. Johnson's sister who insists that Celie should stand up for herself.
11. **Olivia** – Celie's daughter
12. **Adam** – Celie's son
13. **Sofia** – Harpo's wife. She is headstrong and independent.
14. **Squeak** – The nickname of Mary Agnes, Harpo's bi-racial girlfriend.
15. **Tashi** – The girl from Olinka village who finally marries Adam, Celie's son.

DID YOU KNOW?

Alice Walker, an eight year old at the time, was injured when her brother accidentally shot her in the eye with a BB gun. She became blinded in one eye as a result. Her well-known biographer, Evelyn White suggests that this event had a large impact on Walker, especially when a white doctor in town swindled her parents out of \$250 they paid to repair her injury. Walker refers to this incident in her book *Warrior Marks*, a chronicle of female genital mutilation in Africa, and uses it to illustrate the sacrificial marks women bear that allow them to be 'warriors' against female suppression.

Critical Commentary

Fiction: Twentieth
Century - II

Letters 1-10

The letter-writing structure of *The Color Purple* gives the impression of a daily diary, since Celie tells her narrative through confidential messages drafted to God. Therefore, Celie narrates her life's experiences with honesty. As a financially backward African-American woman of the countryside of Georgia and being a sufferer of domestic violence, Celie is voiceless and left alone in society. However, Celie's messages empower her to shatter confidentially the voicelessness that is usually inflicted upon her.

Celie's confessional narrative reminds one of the African-American slave narratives which took shape during the nineteenth century. These former slave narratives, which took the form of a piece of music or a rhythmical motion, a form of storytelling or other artistic creations, ruptured the muteness inflicted on the black community. Though dissimilar from Celie's messages, these slave narratives were engaged in symbols, icons, comedy, and other techniques to obscure their accurate intent. Slaves took these steps to stop the masters from understanding the slaves' skills to convey, articulate, and consider their discontent, but Celie takes no such defensive measures. Celie's messages, though absolutely candid and confessional, are at times difficult to interpret because Celie's skills to narrate her life experiences are highly limited. When Celie's cursing mother requests who fathered Celie's baby, Celie recollecting Alphonso's order to remain silent, declares the baby is God's because she has no clue what other explanation could be given.

Similarly, Celie does not know what to narrate about her mother's death, or about her violent life, or her stolen babies. Celie understands how to state the issues plainly, but often she does not understand how to interpret them. Despite the mishandlings she endures, Celie has little knowledge of injustice and expresses little or no anger.

Walker's use of Celie's own voice, even though underdeveloped, allows Walker to narrate the past lives of black women in the countryside of South in a sensitive and practical way. Unlike a historian's consideration, which can be protective and overly analytical, Celie's messages offer a strong first-person narrative of the tales of racism and sexism. Celie's lucid narrative introduces us to her isolated world with expression that uncovers both painful and detached numbness: 'My momma dead. She die screaming and cussing. She scream at me. She cuss at me.'

Like her voice, Celie's trust is significant but underdeveloped. Celie relies thoroughly on God as her listener and source of empowerment, but she at times forgets the distinction between God's agency and that of Alphonso. She confides that God, and not Alphonso, murdered her baby, and she does not make any association with the injustice she is familiar with in her life, and the power of God to overturn or stop this injustice.

Letters 11-21

In this part, Walker starts to evolve the concept that a person can attain power by reinforcing his/her own voice. The Celie we have seen so far is absolutely devoid of

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power. She is vitally an object for others. She is very passive in her interactions, particularly those with men. However, Celie displays she understands that others perceive her as a powerless object when she confides to Sofia that she is envious of her aggressive, self-defensive personality. When Kate tells Mr. Johnson that Celie desires new apparel, Celie is shown that Mr. Johnson conceives of her as hardly anything more than dirt, saying that when he examines her, it's like he's looking at the soil, seeking to work out if it desires anything.

Initially, Celie's recommendation that Harpo should abuse Sofia appears to be unlike her, but we soon realize that it is an outcome of the cyclical environment of misuse and oppression she has been exposed to. When Harpo asks Celie for her recommendation, Celie is granted an uncommon exercise to take part in the command and misuse of a woman other than herself. In her flaw and agony, Celie seizes this opportunity, but she quickly recognizes that it is a 'sin against Sofia's spirit'. Celie explains her own behaviour with astonishing sophistication, revealing and confessing to Sofia that she gave those recommendations because she is envious of the way Sofia fights back when confronted with abuse.

Sofia's observation that Celie has close-knit connections with her five powerful sisters suggests that deep bonding among women can prove to be a mighty weapon to battle sexism and abuse. Celie first observes Sofia's assertiveness and autonomy when Sofia encounters Mr. Johnson and withstands his attempts to command her. Sofia refutes Mr. Johnson's allegation that she is in problem and thus will land up on the streets. Sofia denies despairing at her own pregnancy and rejects Mr. Johnson's acts to make her miserable. Likewise, Sofia's denial to stop communicating when Mr. Johnson or Harpo goes into the room illustrates that she does not consider her persona as a woman to be taken lightly just because of her dependence on men. Sofia's defiance of the culture of patriarchy astonishes Celie.

Walker contends that mastering one's own story and finding somebody to hear and reply to it are vital steps in the direction of self-empowerment and autonomy. Celie's need for voice becomes more evident in this part, as Nettie observes that viewing Celie with Mr. Johnson and his young children is like 'seeing [Celie] buried'. Nettie is the first woman who insists Celie to fight back. Celie's explanation to Kate that she does not want to fight because it is too dangerous appears laid-back and self-defeating, but Celie is right—there are important, probably even deadly dangers inherent in resistance. Walker discovers this tug and pull between security and hazard all through the novel.

Celie is also reluctant to oppose because she needs the instruments to fight back successfully—namely, an essence of self and a proficiency to conceive and articulate her own story. Nettie tries to assist and get involved in creating Celie's sense of self by saying to Celie Mr. Johnson's praises, which Celie admits boost her self-image. Soon after, Celie starts her first efforts at self-expression when she intends to express gratitude to Kate for buying her a new dress. She becomes discouraged and flushed, incapable to find the words. Celie's struggle to assert her own sentiments, and her admission that she feels she deserves more than she has, are significant first steps in Celie's path to empowerment. Yet simultaneously, Celie's inability to express her sentiments of thankfulness to Kate, illustrates the depth of Celie's need for self-awareness.

Celie has problems characterizing, understanding and talking about herself because, as she confesses to God, she has fallen completely numb in the face of adversity. She confesses that to get over this disability, she imagines she is a tree. Rather than cope strongly with adversity, Celie has discovered it is simpler and less troublesome to become wooden—to stay stone-faced and unthinking instead of trying to contemplate, understand, or narrate.

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Letters 22-33

Here, as in the earlier segment, Celie is not able to correspond what she feels with what she says. When Shug comes and wants to care for her, Celie feels ecstatic, but she expresses nothing because she is not aware of anything and because she feels she is not in a position to speak. Celie has been voiceless for so long that she has adapted herself to believe that she has no voice of her own. Her natural response is to say nothing.

However, Celie soon realizes that her awareness of herself varies from the way other people suppose her to be. Reacting on the way she is and on people like her, Celie expresses, 'I might as well be under the table, for all they care. I hate the way I look, I hate the way I'm dress.' These reflections of self-awareness represent the baby step that Celie takes as she progresses towards empowerment.

As her understanding of self resurfaces, Celie gradually understands the inherent gaps and shortcomings in the men who try to dominate her. She also learns to counter her oppressors in an assertive manner. Analysing Mr. Johnson, Celie critically points out that he has a frail chin and wears unwashed clothes. Losing her temper at Mr. Johnson's father for his heartless remarks about Shug, Celie retaliates secretly but assertively. She plans to spit in the aged man's drinking water and threatens to put Shug's urine in his cup whenever he pays them a visit next. Celie in addition, displays her confident self when Harpo requires her suggestions regarding Sofia. Surprisingly here, Celie finds exact remarks to verbalize her accurate emotions, and she advises Harpo that causing pain to Sofia is not the right way to approach things.

Walker's thought of the mixed, multilayered natural world of closeness between women arises through Celie and Shug's relationship. Alice Walker explains sexuality and sexual preference as a parameter of possibilities and not just an alternative to two contradictory choices. Thus, like competition, sexuality can be difficult to explain, and may turn out to be more multifaceted than a conservative understanding of just heterosexuality or homosexuality. Celie's emotions for Shug have sexual undertones, but they also have their foundation in fellowship, gratefulness, solidarity, and liking. Celie does feel sexually excited on seeing Shug unclothed. But it is as sacred as her emotions of maternal tenderness that she nurtured for Shug as Celie had confessed to God when explaining how she interns Shug to bring her back to health.

Letters 34-43

Continuing with the tendency glimpsed in her preceding notes, Celie starts to take more serious approach in understanding herself and the environment she is part of. When Celie informs Shug that Mr. Johnson abuses her for 'being me and not you' she illustrates that her self-analysis is progressively turning intense and critical.

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One motivation that can be a cause for Celie's critical self-assessment is the sexual awareness that she gathers as she gets familiar with Shug's education. Shug affirms Celie is still innocent and rechristens her as Miss Celie, providing Celie a new persona both metaphorically and literally. Shug's identification that Celie is a virgin and the new title Shug bestows on Celie are significant steps towards Celie's empowerment and in her process of narrating her story it gives a boost to her self-esteem. Shug's rechristening of Celie defies the traditional concept of the issue of virginity. Shug reconstructs the notion of virginity in her own way. According to her, virginity is not lost when a man and woman develops a physical relation rather it is lost when a woman decides to indulge in pleasure of sex and finds it emotionally and physically appealing.

By reconstructing the definition of virginity, Shug boosts Celie to glimpse life from a different perspective where she should be in command of events. The sudden change of perspective provided by Shug to a woman with two kids as virgin, points out to a certain desire to unravel the hidden aspects of Celie's life. Shug makes Celie understand that there are alternative ways to live a life than to surrender to the existing social norms. Identification with these thoughts plays a major role in Celie's movement towards liberation.

Yet Sofia's penalty underlines that rebelling against and questioning existing perspectives often demands a lot of sacrifice. Sofia, who is physically sound, has an adoring family and a comfortable life does not conform to the white society's stereotypical notion of the suppressed coloured woman. Sofia asserts her disinterest to fall prey to the expected stereotypical role by responding to Miss Millie's job prospects with a definite "Hell no". However, this refusal leads to Sofia having a cleft skull, broken ribs, a body marked with bruises, and twelve years of servitude. Similarly, when Squeak opposes the action taking place by attempting to free Sofia from jail, she is raped. It is clear from the narration that whereas Walker views challenging the irrational orthodox outlooks as vital, she does not unnecessarily desire to romanticize the pains and paint a rosy picture as if it is devoid of agony or consequences.

Fortunately, Sofia and Squeak are not defeated by misfortunes. For Walker, the most important aspect of triumph is the power to narrate one's own life, and both Sofia and Squeak retain their voice. Sofia continues with her opposition even when she is made to serve Miss Millie's maid. Similarly, when Harpo endeavours to inform others of the incident of Squeak's rape, Squeak cuts him off, nudging him to keep the knowledge to himself because she intends to tell her story in her way. Just as Celie's new name endows her with the power to reinterpret her surroundings, Squeak's renaming unleashes her talent that was long buried within her. She starts singing.

Letters 44-60

After hearing Celie's narration, Shug makes Celie express herself emotionally. When Celie eventually articulates the difficult times she has survived, she does not respond like 'wood' rather she sheds tears when she understands the unhappiness of her own history. Even though Celie's latest life is a miserable one, it is way better than her previous life because of her increasing sexual and emotional connection with Shug. Celie's self-esteem evolved as an outcome of her observation and discovery through

Shug. Shug represents everything that Celie is not. Through Shug's perspective, Celie sees the likeness of her own suffering. Gradually, Celie's and Shug's influence on each other soon turns reciprocal. They start imitating each other. Celie's nurturing qualities are adopted by Shug while Celie has become assertive on being influenced by Shug.

This connection between Celie and Shug is centralized around the concept of storytelling. Innumerable times Celie informs how much she and Shug converse with each other. Their strong connection is a significant step which is radically different from Celie's previous silence. Nettie's communications furthermore foreground a narrative that was buried by silence. In discovering the notes, Celie revives Nettie's interred voice and starts to feel liberated. However, only with Shug's assistance Celie could decipher the meaning and the disconnected aspects of her life that she was unable to understand so far. The news of Nettie being alive has a positive impact on Celie. She gets exposed to the oppression and suppression that exists outside her life, in the continent of Africa.

Nettie's notes furthermore inform Celie's of the larger world one is part of. As of now *The Color Purple* was limited to exploring the lives of a few people residing in a little village in country of Georgia. Nettie's notes not only brings Celie out of her closed world but also relates her personal grief with the general suppression and exploitation that one comes across in rest of African countries.

Another significant component of Nettie's exposure was her meeting with the liberated blacks who are economically well placed in the Harlem district of New York. The concept of economically prosperous and free blacks is mostly unheard of in Southern world especially for coloured women like Nettie and Celie, who are used only to living a doubly colonized life both with their white masters as well as their coloured male counterparts. We realise that Nettie's knowledge of liberated blacks has made her more confident. Even though initially Celie does not understand this but the Harlem empowerment news too has a positive impact on her individuality and her subconscious mind.

Letters 61-69

Every now and then in *The Color Purple*, Walker reminds the readers that storytelling and communicating are vital to the understanding of self. We have glimpsed difficulties in the novel due to improper/lack of communication arising between Celie and Alphonso; between Celie and Mr. Johnson; amidst Nettie, Samuel, and Corrine; and between Celie and Nettie. As the story progresses, we see some of these distances are mended as narrative of some kind or the other takes place. One comes across communication in various forms. Celie discovers Nettie's notes, Samuel informs about his young children to Nettie, and Celie exchanges this narrative with Alphonso, discovering in the process the reality of her own life and the history of her family. Apart from highlighting these unsuccessful communications which was central to the above mentioned relationships, Walker points out towards larger communication difficulties in the world which nearly remain unaddressed. She points to the more serious problems of unsuccessful association between men and women; between Americans of black and white origin, between coloured people in America and Africans, and between Africans and European colonizers.

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Celie seems to grow more independent with the revelation of her family history. She stops depending on God for emotional and moral support. In her last letter, she tells God 'You must be asleep'. Instead she starts addressing letters to Nettie. Nettie also has turned into a different being. She has become more articulate. She has developed a strong intellectual faculty which her life as missionary has bestowed on her. Nettie is assertive in her dissatisfaction over native Africans self-centeredness and sexist attitude. By addressing the plights of women in Olinka community Walker highlights a more serious problem. Though the people of Olinka community are suppressed by the white masters (the rubber industry), the community itself is segregated between the oppressor and the oppressed. The internal domination along with Olinka's cold attitude towards the culture of African-American slavery makes the whole notion of oppressor and oppressed very complicated.

Letters 70-82

In this part, Walker presents individual religious conviction as a significant constituent to develop a powerful self. Celie has until now visualized God as someone who is placed in a distance and is probably unconcerned towards her pleadings. For her, God transforms into a white man who is no different from the other men that she has come across and who does not bother to hear the 'poor coloured women.' This concept of God visualized by Celie—and, ironically, by Nettie, Corrine, and Samuel during their missionary philanthropy—is not an exact view. In imagining God as a white man who is not concerned about her, Celie indirectly acknowledges white and male suppression and presumes that her voice can never be heard.

A significant aspect of Celie's empowerment is her new acquired financial independence. Celie's apparel design is a mode of creativity which helps one to express herself. But it also translates into entrepreneurship and paves the way towards self-sufficiency. Celie has taken stitching conventionally a household chore, and transformed it into an equipment of independence. Walker suggests that such financial self-reliance is vital for women to liberate themselves from dominance.

When she gets her family's ancestral house, Celie's life comes full circle, her self-reliance evolving into a completely independent woman, with her own finance, enterprise, article, and group of friends.

Letters 83-90

Celie's final letter gives us a glimpse of the maturity and growth her character has undergone. By introducing the aspect of writing as a key component in the process of Celie's evolution, Alice Walker underscores the significance of literacy and makes an indirect allusion to African-American slaves who are not allowed to study, to read or compose. That way they were marginalized by keeping them away from knowledge. Celie and Nettie wield the power of literacy to battle oppression. They managed to survive over the years by writing to each other which was the only way to fight oppression. Even though Celie is comparatively inferior in terms of imagination to her sister, she too learns a lot from her act of writing. In this way, Walker propounds that knowledge and awareness is vital and redeeming for every individual and should not be seen as a barricade creating a hierarchy between the educated and the uneducated.

Though Walker celebrates heterogeneity and individuality in *The Color Purple*, the work finishes with the acknowledgement that not all dissimilarities can be assimilated. Along with the novel's significant conciliation, for example between Celie and Mr. Johnson, there are some unanswered issues at the end of the novel. Problems continue to remain between the Olinka community and the rubber company and between Nettie and the traditional Africans. Similarly, Sofia has her doubts that she and Eleanor Jane can truly accept each other. Even Eleanor Jane's gradual sympathy with Sofia's anger is not sufficient to change the cruel past that Sofia has endured.

Walker's wants to highlight that certain differences are really unbridgeable. Though at the outset Walker's outlook may appear rather pessimistic, yet it is significant to understand that *The Color Purple* is a narrative about successful changes. Though certain issues remain unanswered as the novel comes to an end, we came across the metamorphosis of a deprived, despised woman of colour into an economically successful entrepreneur who takes pleasure in her own sexuality and is surrounded by a supportive and like-minded community.

The Society and *The Color Purple*

Alice Walker, through her epistolary novel, *The Color Purple*, intends to educate readers on various aspects of the societal problems. This approach to creativity reminds one of the novelist, Ishmael Reed. Reed is a coloured American. Reed's works mostly satires that threw light on the existing racial problems and social issues. *The Color Purple* underlines the fact that men are not aware of the requirement and the realities of women. It also deals with the theme of women helping and supporting each other to overcome and survive the problems of life.

The kind of female bonding that one comes across in *The Color Purple* is also reflected in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970), the autobiography of Maya Angelou. In her work Angelou celebrates the mother-daughter relationship. Although no concrete dates/years are provided, we can still identify that the novel is set sometimes in the early part of the twentieth century, sometimes between 1910 and 1940. African Americans underwent a lot of economical constraints.

But with the emergence of twentieth century, many opportunities could be availed by them to reach the path of success. Many got education and a lot many migrated from the rural South to the developing industrial North. Those who migrated carried their cultural heritage along with them, especially their songs and their stories. By the 1920s the Jazz Age had started taking shape. In this emergent culture, African-American culture and tradition came together to constitute what we call 'The Harlem Renaissance'.

In *The Color Purple* such changes are subtly expressed. The entrepreneurial abilities of Harpo finds shape as he sets up his own juke joint. Moreover, here he employs the already famous blues singer Shug as a means to popularize his shop. Shug's achievement is reflection of the age in which Celie is composing her letters for we are told she hums Bessie Smith, and wants to wipe off anxiety about the bygone times or the impending years. As we reach towards the end of the novel, the movement of opportunity is unexpected; Celie starts her own business. Celie initiates her business from the same place where her father survived and earned. Thirty years prior to Celie

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starting up her business, her father's was brought to an abrupt halt by white rivals who were keen to keep him out of race. In this new era, Walker tells us there is no reason to be concerned about Celie's opportunities, and we as readers are sure that Celie will continue to be prosperous.

When Walker's novel came out in 1982, one of the most significant and talked about aspect of the book was the way language was used. Mel Watkins of *The New York Book Review* had written that the novel 'assumes a lyrical cadence of its own... The cumulative effect is a novel that is convincing because of the authenticity of its folk voice.' The language was seminal to Walker's novel. She once recounted that after she finished her novel she sent it to a prominent women's magazine concerned about black women but they rejected the novel explaining that 'black people don't talk like that' (Garrett & McCue, 1990, p. 229). The later success of the novel identifies such statement to be unfounded, because it is Celie's specific voice that identifies her difficult situation and echoes the lives of many African Americans of her time.

Women Bonding

Throughout *The Color Purple*, Walker depicts female bonding as an alternative way for women to build the courage to narrate stories to each other. As a result of this storytelling, the session becomes their weapon to resist suppression and dominance. Bonding between women translates into a form of shelter which is filled with nurturing and caring concerns and helps to recover from aggressive male dominance.

Female relationships are multilayered: sometimes they are motherly, sometimes sisterly. Sometimes they also represent in the form of teacher and pupil. Some of them have strong sexual undertones, and some reflect happy friendship. Sofia asserts that her ability to stand against the wrong doers comes from the support she gains from her sisters. Nettie's closeness with Celie helps her survive her years in the strange and unaccustomed culture of Africa. Samuel highlights the strong bonding that Olinka women share with each other that helps them survive through the polygamous world. Most importantly, Celie's bonding with Shug helps Celie emerge into a stronger being who is self-reliant and independent.

Tradition and Change

The Color Purple presents many characters who come out of the traditionally sanctioned gender defined roles. Sofia is full of strength, Shug never shies away from displaying her sexual desires, and Harpo almost throughout comes up as an insecure person. Under a traditional parameter a man is always expected to be secured, a woman is expected to be weak and less demonstrative of her sexual desires. But these characters bring out those aspects of their gender sanctioned roles which are not stereotypical. This display of gender deviant traits also at times throws light on other aspects of gender roles. For example, we see a strong sexual attraction developing between Celie and Shug despite the fact that they have had men in their lives and are opposite in nature.

Deviation from sanctioned gender roles sometimes creates unexpected situations. Harpo's insecurity regarding his masculine abilities has bearing on his marital life and leads him to make efforts to abuse his wife Sofia in a desperate

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attempt to prove his manliness. Similarly, Shug's uninhibited display of her sexual powers and her constant challenge to male social world earns her names like being called a tramp. In her novel, Alice Walker tries to underline the multifaceted meaning that is associated with gender and sexuality. They are neither mere words nor do they have a uni-linear approach to certain social functions. They are more complicated than they seem on the surface. Walker's novel calls for our attentions to understand the dynamics of male-female, female-female and male-male relation.

In *The Color Purple* sewing plays an important role. It is emblematic of the creative powers of women. If they are capable of channelizing their creative power effectively they can become powerful. Sewing is a traditional form of creativity which women indulge in within their domestic confines.

Sofia and Celie reach through a process of peace after their difference of opinion is expressed over Harpo episode, by preparing a quilt. The quilt symbolizes unity within diversity. A quilt is created by putting together various patterns and it is mostly a collaborative effort. It is a process which helps people to be bound together. Like the patchwork one finds in a quilt, as the novel progresses Celie finds herself being surrounded by people who are diverse in their approach and thoughts but are closely bound by their family and love for each other.

Another significant function of sewing is revealed in the novel when Celie starts her own pants-sewing enterprise. With the support from Shug, Celie challenges the perception that sewing is an unimportant aspect of women's labour. She turns this art into a promising, and powerful medium of gaining economic access.

Communication

Alice Walker uses the epistolary mode of narration to highlight her idea of importance of communication. Celie pours out her heart in the letters she addresses to God. Celie perceives God as her audience and supporter even though she is not sure who God is. Her impression of Him as a white man 'don't seem quite right' even to her, yet she continues with the image until Shug insists Celie to visualize God as a different entity—Not just as 'he' but as 'it' a neutral person. But soon her communication with God ceases as she emerges as an independent woman, one with a mind of her own.

Nettie describes her experiences through letters to Celie. For both the sisters, letters are symbolic of power and the act of letter writing empowered them. But their real redemption takes place only when their letters are reciprocated. Though speaking out (through the act of writing) provides a sense of power, it cannot achieve its full potential unless there is someone to share it or listen to it or there is an audience. When Celie fails to reply back to Nettie she feels caught up in the maze of life. Celie is the only person she could share her life with and if Celie does not answer then she is completely at a loss. Nettie is torn between the disinterested imperialist and the self-centered Olinka villagers. Nettie feels herself liberated only after she was able to narrate her experience to Celie.

Yet when Shug and Celie are told of the world outside, they feel odd. The information they got from Nettie sounded 'crazy' to them. Communication broadens their scope of knowledge and paves a way for imagining an oppression free future. But what is important here is that the story being set in a small closed community

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finds itself cut off from the world outside. There is no communication with the world beyond the enclosed confines of the small town. Once the people come across the larger world their ideas change and they are willing to take risks and chances for a better life. Walker universalizes the theme of need to exchange ideas by broadening the location of the events taking place and exposing her characters to the world which exists beyond their cocooned selves.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Which was Alice Walker's first published book?
2. What is the significance of the collection *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* (1973)?
3. Name the biography that Walker composed.
4. Which were the honours that Alice Walker was awarded, as the first black woman?
5. Which award did Walker receive for *Kindred Spirits*?
6. Who is Kate?
7. From which village does Tashi hail?
8. Who is also addressed as 'Pa'?
9. What kind of a singer is Shug Avery?
10. What does Celie's confessional narrative remind one of?
11. Why does Celie recommend Harpo to abuse Sophia?
12. What had Celie started to believe in the early part of the narrative?
13. Why is Shug's renaming of Celie important?
14. Whose notes inform Celie of the world outside?
15. With which community did Nettie interact?
16. Why is Celie's final letter important?
17. The *Color Purple* has its origin in which tradition?
18. What does Harpo's insecurity lead to?

5.4 SUMMARY

- *The Color Purple* is often seen as a 'woman's novel'. For Walker, women-oriented writings concentrate on African-American women living in twentieth-century America. In such novels, more often than not we encounter women who fight all odds to justify their own and their families' survival. In their fragmented communities, these women tend to be motherly characters who wish to protect and secure their families for the sake of their posterity. Other prominent authors apart from Toni Morrison who have dealt in this tradition of writing include Zora Neale Hurston and Maya Angelou. Their female characters always tend to be couped up and subjugated for a long while before they manage to retaliate, fight and learn to survive.
- *The Color Purple*, like the slave narratives, emerges from the rich African oral traditions which include the methods of storytelling and song composing. The Africans transported to America nearly always as slaves were barred from communicating in their own mother tongues (just the way Celie's speech was suppressed), so they invented alternative means of conveying themselves, especially through acting and singing. Their narratives were lived in the plantation and narratives of their native Africa. These stories continued from generation to generation and soon turned out to form the core of most of African-American storytelling tradition. In her process of storytelling, Celie made sure that her life as a black woman living in early twentieth-century America is conveyed and documented for future generations.
- The British came as traders to India. They were not the first Europeans to land here and faced competition in establishing a trading empire from the Portuguese and the French. They quickly realized that one way to maintain monopoly over Indian resources was by gaining political supremacy in the country. To this end they soon started involving themselves with the internal affairs of the country. To this end they started making fortifications around major ports and trading centers under their control. By the time the British came on the scene Mughal

Supremacy was already in decline and the various principalities were involved in a power struggle.

- *A Passage to India* is divided into three parts. The first section 'Mosque' is a description of the city of Chandrapore. The division of the city into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth and sky. The novel begins with Aziz being summoned by Major Callendar. In typical fashion he is late and finds the Major gone. He was spending time with his friends and could not leave them; it would not have been polite. The Major however considers it a slight since Aziz did not come on time. Since he was late for his club he left without leaving any message. Since both the men are operating under different cultural mores neither is right or wrong.
- The next section 'Caves' begins with a detailed description of the caves. They are hollow caverns that rise from an otherwise flat area outside the city of Chandrapore. Aziz invites the two women and Fielding and Godbole for the trip.
- The third section is called 'Temple.' In this section the story moves to Mau. Two years have passed. After the trial Fielding had returned to England and married. He is now back in India on a tour to inspect the government schools in central India. His tour takes him to Mau. Godbole is minister of education here and Aziz the personal physician of the Rajah of Mau. When Aziz comes to know that he has married he assumes he has married Adela and cuts all connection with him.

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5.5 KEY TERMS

- **Epistolary:** Literary works in the form of letters
- **Coloured:** A person who is wholly or partly of non-white descent
- **Protagonist:** The main character in a drama or other literary work
- **Narrator:** The process of telling the particulars of a story
- **Narration:** A spoken or written account of connected events
- **Slave narrative:** A literary form which grew out of the experience of enslaved Africans
- **Racism:** Discrimination or prejudice based on race
- **Sexism:** Prejudice or discrimination based on sex, especially against women
- **Metaphor:** One thing conceived as representing another
- **Stereotype:** Qualities of specific types of individuals
- **Satire:** Literary work where human vice or folly is attacked through irony, derision, or wit
- **Womanism:** A form of feminism focused on the conditions and concerns of black women

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- **Monopolistic power:** monopoly means exclusive possession or control. The British had slowly and gradually gained control of the entire Indian Territory as a colony in the early 20th century.
- **Janmashtami:** A celebration commemorating the birth of Krishna. It is held every year in India.
- **Colonialism:** It is the establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition and expansion of colonies in one territory by people from another territory, as the British and India.

5.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Alice Walker's first published work was a book of poems, *Once* (1968).
2. *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* was Walker's mouthpiece for identifying the plight of those who struggle against racism and oppression.
3. *Langston Hughes: American Poet* (1974)
4. Walker was the first black woman to be awarded with Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Award.
5. Walker received O. Henry Award for 'Kindred Spirits'.
6. Kate is Mr. Johnson's sister. She insists Celie should stand up for herself.
7. Tashi is the girl from Olinka village.
8. Alphonso is also addressed as 'Pa'.
9. Shug Avery is a blues singer.
10. Celie's confessional narrative reminds one of the African-American slave narratives which took shape during the nineteenth century.
11. Celie's recommendation to Harpo to abuse Sophia is an outcome of the cyclical environment of misuse and oppression she has been exposed to.
12. Celie has been voiceless for so long that she has adapted herself to believe of having no voice of her own.
13. Shug's rechristening of Celie is important because it defies the traditional concept of the issue of virginity.
14. Nettie's notes inform Celie's of the larger world one is part of.
15. Nettie interacted with the Olinka community.
16. Celie's final letter gives us a glimpse of the maturity and growth her character has undergone.
17. *The Color Purple* emerges from the rich African oral traditions which include the methods of storytelling and song composing.
18. Harpo's insecurity regarding his masculine abilities has a bearing on his marital life and leads him to make efforts to abuse his wife Sofia in a desperate attempt to prove his manliness.
19. The division of the city of Chandrapore into various sections inhabited by various people along religious and race lines is underscored by the separation of earth

and sky. The author seems to suggest that just as the earth and the sky are together there is an insurmountable difference between the two; similarly no matter how closely the Indians and the British may be there is an inherent separation between the two because of their different states of existence in the colonial experience. One is the ruler and the other is the ruled and this colors all their interactions whether they are aware of it or not.

20. The celebration of Janmashtami is marked by chaos and disorder. There is an underlying unity and harmony within this chaos. This is in marked contrast to Christianity where harmony is a marker of order. This contrast between the external chaos of Hinduism and the external harmony of Christianity is done to point out the fact that while Christians talk of peace and transcendence the Hindus and Indians see to have achieved it. 'Talkative' Christianity coined the phrase 'God is love'. Hinduism practices it. Love exists and dominates the scene. The celebration of Janmashtami is significant. Krishna's life celebrates the amorous and sexual aspects of existence as well. Also, Radha's love for Krishna transcends mere love for a man to include love for a god and all of creation. When Godbole goes into a trance during the festivities this point is hinted.
21. *The Longest Journey* (1907) is set in Cambridge and draws from his own experiences.

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5.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Sofia is unjustly imprisoned. Explain.
2. Write a short note on Mr. Johnson.
3. How does Celie succeed in overcoming her low self-esteem?
4. How does the death of Celie's mother change Celie's relationship with her family, with herself, and with God?
5. The main subplot revolves around Nettie in Africa. How does this relate to and impact the main plot of Celie?
6. Describe the role of caves in the novel, *A Passage to India*.
7. What is the significance of Mrs. Moore's death in the novel?
8. What is the significance of the name 'Adela Quested'?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Trace the development of Albert's character. How does he change and why?
2. Narrate some instances of racism in the novel.
3. Why is *The Color Purple* a feminist novel?
4. List, analyze, and evaluate the various gender crossings in the novel.
5. Write a note on the female bonding as it appears in the novel.
6. Write a note on the representation of society as it appears in *The Color Purple*.



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