

POST GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMME (CBCS)

M.A. IN ENGLISH

SEMESTER - IV

COR - 410

TWENTIETH CENTURY: FICTIONAL AND NON-FICTIONAL PROSE

Self-Learning Material



DIRECTORATE OF OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING

UNIVERSITY OF KALYANI

KALYANI, NADIA, WEST BENGAL

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Director's Message

Satisfying the varied needs of distance learners, overcoming the obstacle of distance and reaching the unreached students are the threefold functions catered by Open and Distance Learning (ODL) systems. The onus lies on writers, editors, production professionals and other personnel involved in the process to overcome the challenges inherent to curriculum design and production of relevant Self-Learning Materials (SLMs). At the University of Kalyani, a dedicated team under the able guidance of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor has invested its best efforts, professionally and in keeping with the demands of Post Graduate CBCS Programmes in Distance Mode to devise a self-sufficient curriculum for each course offered by the Directorate of Open and Distance Learning (DODL), University of Kalyani.

Development of printed SLMs for students admitted to the DODL within a limited time to cater to the academic requirements of the Course as per standards set by Distance Education Bureau of the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, India under Open and Distance Mode UGC Regulations, 2021 had been our endeavour. We are happy to have achieved our goal.

Utmost care and precision have been ensured in the development of the SLMs, making them useful to the learners, besides avoiding errors as far as practicable. Further suggestions from the stakeholders in this would be welcome.

During the production-process of the SLMs, the team continuously received positive stimulations and feedback from **Professor (Dr.) Amalendu Bhunia, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, University of Kalyani**, who kindly accorded directions, encouragements and suggestions, offered constructive criticism to develop it within proper requirements. We, gracefully, acknowledge his inspiration and guidance.

Sincere gratitude is due to the respective chairpersons as well as each and every member of PG-BoS (DODL), University of Kalyani. Heartfelt gratitude is also due to the faculty members of the DODL, subject-experts serving at the University Post Graduate departments and also to the authors and academicians whose academic contributions have enriched the SLMs. We humbly acknowledge their valuable academic contributions. I would especially like to convey gratitude to all other University dignitaries and personnel involved either at the conceptual or operational level at the DODL, University of Kalyani.

Their persistent and coordinated efforts have resulted in the compilation of comprehensive, learner-friendly, flexible texts that meet the curriculum requirements of the Post Graduate Programme through the Distance Mode.

Director
Directorate of Open and Distance Learning
University of Kalyani

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COR - 410

TWENTIETH CENTURY: FICTIONAL AND NON-FICTIONAL PROSE

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Total Credits - 4

Study Hours - 16

BLOCK - I

UNITS: 1 - 4

LORD OF THE FLIES

By

WILLIAM GOLDING

CONTENT STRUCTURE:

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Unit 1 (c): Brief Study of the Characters

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UNIT - 1

UNIT 1 (A): LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM GOLDING

Sir William Gerald Golding was a British novelist, playwright, and poet. He was born in Cornwall, England, to Alec Golding, a socialist teacher who supported scientific rationalism, and Mildred Golding, a supporter of female suffrage. He was educated at the Marlborough Grammar School, where his father worked, and later at Brasenose College, Oxford. Although educated to be a scientist at the request of his father, the young Golding developed an interest in literature. While his father had been an insistent atheist, Golding himself was a Christian, though he did not become a member of any established Church. He was a schoolmaster teaching English and music at Maidstone Grammar School during 1938-1940 and teaching Philosophy and English in 1939. During World War II, Golding joined the Royal Navy in 1940, took part in the action that saw the sinking of the German battleship *Bismarck*. Then at Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury, he taught English from 1945 to 1962.

In 1980, he was awarded the Booker Prize for *Rites of Passage*. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1983. As a result of his contributions to literature, Golding was knighted in 1988. He was a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. In 2008, *The Times* ranked Golding third on their list of “The 50 greatest British writers since 1945”.

During his days at sea, Golding had increased his knowledge of Greek history and mythology by reading. When he returned to his post at Bishop Wordsworth's School in 1945, he began furthering his literary career. He wrote three novels but all of those remained unpublished. In 1954, Golding finished *The Lord of the Flies* which was initially rejected by twenty-one publishers. At last Faber & Faber accepted the manuscript and agreed to publish it. *Lord of the Flies* tells the adventurous story of a group of British schoolboys stranded on an island in the Pacific who revert to savagery. Although it suffered initial rejection by many publishing houses, it became a surprise success. E.M. Forster declared *Lord of the Flies* the outstanding novel of its year. Initially, the story of a group of schoolboys stranded on an uninhabited island during their escape from war received mixed reviews and it did not sell many copies. But the teachers of literature at different universities were greatly impressed by the symbolism of the work and they started including the novel into their syllabus. As the novel's reputation grew, it drew many critical appraisals and scholarly reviews which gradually solidified its literary merit.

Golding continued to develop a similar thematic pattern regarding the essential violence and depravity in human nature in his next novel, *The Inheritors*, published in 1955. This novel deals with the last days of Neanderthal man. Some of his notable subsequent works include *Pincher Martin* (1956), the story of a guilt-ridden naval officer who faces an agonizing death, *Free Fall* (1959), and *The Spire* (1964), each of which deals with the inherent corruption of human nature. Both novels demonstrate Golding's belief that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey." *Darkness Visible* (1979) tells the story of a boy horribly burned in the London blitz during World War II. His later works include *Rites of Passage* (1980), which won the Booker McConnell Prize. It has two sequels, *Close Quarters* (1987) and *Fire Down Below* (1989). These three novels portray life aboard a ship during the Napoleonic Wars and the three of them comprise Sea Trilogy. In addition to his novels and his early collection of poems, Golding published a play entitled *The Brass Butterfly* in 1958 and two collections of essays, *The Hot Gates* (1965) and *A Moving Target* (1982).

In 1983, Golding received the Nobel Prize for literature for his novels which, according to the Nobel committee, "with the perspicuity of realistic narrative art and the diversity and universality of myth, illuminate the human condition in the world of today." In 1988 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. Sir William died in 1993 in Cornwall. At the time of his death, he was working on an unfinished manuscript entitled "The Double Tongue," which focused on the fall of Hellenic culture and the rise of Roman civilization. This work was published posthumously in 1995. Golding's extremely productive output—five novels in ten years—and the high quality of his work established him as one of the late twentieth-century's most distinguished writers.

UNIT 1 (B): CHAPTER-WISE DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Chapter One: The Sound of the Shell

On an unnamed tropical island, a twelve-year-old boy with fair hair climbs out of plane wreckage. At the lagoon, he encounters another boy, who is chubby, intellectual, and wears thick glasses. The fair-haired boy introduces himself as Ralph and the chubby one introduces himself as Piggy. Through their conversation, the readers get to know that in the midst of a nuclear war, a group of boys was being evacuated to an unnamed destination. Their plane crashed and was dragged out to sea, leaving the boys stranded on an unfamiliar island. Because

of the atom bomb's devastation, it's likely that no one knows the boys' whereabouts. Ralph, excited by the idea of living without adult supervision, immediately takes advantage of the freedom on the island but Piggy is less pleased. They discover a large pink and cream-colored conch shell, which Piggy realizes could be blown as a trumpet. He convinces Ralph to blow through the shell to summon any other survivors to the beach. The sound soon attracts other survivors boys between ages 6 and 12 from the crash. Among them are Sam and Eric, two young identical twins, and red-headed Jack Merridew, who is accompanied by a band of choir boys. Jack is revealed to be their leader. The assembled boys vote on a chief, choosing Ralph over Jack. Ralph suggests that Jack should remain in charge of the choirboys, designating them hunters. Then Jack, Ralph, and another boy named Simon go to explore the island and find food sources. On their return, they encounter a piglet caught in jungle vines. Jack pulls his knife but falters, and the pig gets away. But he vows that next time, he will show no mercy toward his prey.

Chapter Two: Fire on the Mountain

The explorers return and Ralph blows the conch to assemble all the boys for a meeting. Seeing that the meeting was leading to chaos, Ralph announces that they will have to establish rules, not only in meetings but also in everyday life. He says that only the boy holding the conch can speak and then he will pass it along to the next speaker. Piggy takes the conch and points out that no one knows their location which means they may be on the island for a long time. At this point, the group of the littlest boys pushes a representative forward- a small boy with a mulberry-coloured mark on his face. He claims to have seen a snakelike "beastie" or monster in the woods the night before. Though they are frightened, the older boys quickly reassure the littluns that there is no monster and the little boy's vision was only a nightmare. Ralph calms everyone and explains that the island is theirs and the goal is twofold: one, they should try to ensure their rescue, and two, they should try to have fun. Thinking about the possibility of rescue, Ralph, then, suggests that the group should build a large signal fire on top of the island's central mountain so that it might attract passing ships and planes. Jack leads the boys to collect dead wood and use the lenses from Piggy's glasses to focus the sunlight and set the wood on fire. In their reckless, disorganized efforts they create a massive bonfire and set a swath of trees ablaze. Piggy reprimands them for not only the waste of so much firewood but also the probable death of some of the littlest boys since some of them had been playing in the area consumed by the rapidly moving fire. He tells them furiously that one of the littluns — the same one who told them about the snake-beast — was playing over by the fire and now is missing.

Chapter Three: Huts on the Beach

The chapter begins with Jack alone on a pig hunt. The length of his hair and the tattered condition of his shirt indicate that weeks have passed since the boys were abandoned on the island. He hurls his spear at a group of pigs unsuccessfully. Frustrated that his day's hunt has ended yet again without a kill, he returns to the area where Ralph and Simon are constructing shelters out of tree trunks and palm leaves. Ralph, annoyed with Jack, implies that he and the hunters are using their hunting duties as an excuse to avoid the real work. Jack responds by commenting that the boys want meat. Jack and Ralph continue to bicker and grow increasingly hostile toward each other. Ralph is irritated not only because the huts keep falling down but also because none of the other boys besides Simon will help him, although they agreed to help build shelters. But now the boys are off playing, bathing, or hunting with Jack, even though they have failed to catch a single pig. Jack promises that soon they would be successful. Ralph also worries about the smaller children, many of whom are unable to sleep due to nightmares. After helping Ralph with the shelters, Simon sneaks off and wanders through the jungle alone. At first, he helps some of the littluns reach fruits hanging from a high branch. Then he looks around to make sure that he is not followed, walks deeper into the forest, and eventually reaches a thick jungle glade – a peaceful, beautiful open space full of flowers, birds, and butterflies. There he sits down, marvelling at the abundance and beauty of life that surrounds him.

Chapter Four: Painted Faces and Long Hair

The chapter begins with a general description of the routines of the boys in the island and their difficulties in adjusting with the daily rhythms of this tropical life. When the sea rises in the midday, the little boys are often troubled by bizarre images that seem to flicker over the water. Piggy dismisses these images as mirages caused by sunlight striking the water. We are introduced to Percival, the smallest boy on the island, who had previously stayed in a small shelter for two days and had only recently emerged. The littluns spend most of their days searching for fruit to eat and playing with one another. The large amount of fruits that they eat causes them to suffer from diarrhea and stomach ailments. They also remain collectively troubled by the nightmares and visions of the dreadful “beastie” which hunts in the darkness. Sometimes they occupy themselves by building castles in the sand. But two vicious older boys named Roger and Maurice, to express their superiority over the littluns, cruelly kick down their sandcastles. Jack, obsessed with the idea of killing a pig, camouflages himself by painting his face with clay and charcoal. Then he and several other boys enter the jungle to hunt. From

behind the mask, Jack appears liberated from shame and self-consciousness. Ralph believes that he sees smoke coming from a ship, but Simon points out that there is not enough smoke in their signal fire up in the mountain to get the attention of the ship. They hurry to the top of the hill, but it was too late to rekindle the flame. Ralph screams for the ship to come back, but it passes without seeing them. Frustrated and sad, he furiously blames Jack and his band of hunters, whose job it was to maintain the fire. From the forest, Jack and the hunters return covered with blood and humming a bizarre war chant. Their hunt has finally been successful as they are carrying a dead pig on a stick. Nevertheless, Ralph admonishes them for letting the fire go out. Jack and his hunters, who are overjoyed and crazed by the kill, ignore Ralph. Piggy begins to cry at their lost opportunity and blames Jack. The two argue, and finally, Jack punches Piggy in the stomach, breaking one of the lenses of his glasses. Maurice pretends to be a pig and the hunters circle around him. They start re-enacting the savagery of the hunt by wildly dancing and singing around the fire, "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in." Ralph declares that he is calling a meeting.

Chapter Five: Beast from Water

Ralph decides to call a meeting to bring the group back into order. He blows the conch shell and the boys gather on the beach. Ralph scolds the boys by pointing out how they have disrespected the rules: they refuse to work at building shelters, do not collect drinking water, neglect the signal fire, and do not even use the designated toilet area. He also reminds them that the fire is the most important thing on the island, for it is their means of escape. He then addresses the growing fear which is beginning to overwhelm many of the boys. The littluns, in particular, are increasingly plagued by nightmare visions. Ralph reassures them by saying that there are no monsters on the island. Jack begins to yell at the littluns for screaming like babies and not hunting or building or helping. He also tells them that there is no beast on the island. Piggy agrees with Jack, telling the kids that there is no real reason for fear unless it is of other people. A littlun, Phil, comes forward to describe a large and horrid creature that he saw moving among the trees. Simon reveals that he was walking in the jungle at night, going to his special place. Percival claims that a beast comes out of the sea and this idea terrifies all the boys. Suddenly, Jack proclaims that if there is a beast, he and his hunters will hunt it down and kill it. Simon explains that the boys themselves, or something inherent in human nature, could be the beast they fear. Jack aggressively undermines Ralph's authority and leads the boys onto the beach in a sort of tribal dance. Eventually, only Ralph, Piggy, and Simon are left. Piggy urges Ralph to blow the conch shell and summon the boys back to the group, but Ralph is afraid that

if they refuse to come, then they will become like animals. He tells Piggy and Simon that he might relinquish leadership of the group, but his friends reassure him that the boys need his guidance. Piggy warns Ralph that if he steps down as the chief Jack will do nothing but hunt, and they will never be rescued. Suddenly, the three boys are startled by an unearthly wail and they find that Percival still sobbing.

Chapter Six: Beast from Air

Ralph and Simon pick up Percival and carry him into a shelter. Unbeknownst to the sleeping boys, some military airplanes battle fiercely above the island. They neither hear the explosions in the aerial battle nor do they see a dead pilot dropping from a parachute on the mountaintop. The next morning, the twins Samneric (Sam and Eric), the two boys on duty at the fire, wake up and go to rekindle the signal fire. In the flickering firelight, they spot the twisted form of the dead pilot and imagine it to be the shadowy image of the dreaded beast. Immobilized by fear, they rush back to the camp, wake Ralph and tell him what they have seen. Ralph immediately calls for a meeting where the twins reiterate their claim that a monster assaulted them. They describe it as having teeth and claws and state that it followed them as they ran away. The horrified boys organize an expedition to search the island for the monster. They set out, armed with wooden spears, and only Piggy and the littluns remain behind. Despite Jack's hostility towards Ralph and his rules, Ralph not only allows Jack to lead the hunt but also decides to accompany the hunters. They soon reach a part of the island that none of them has ever explored before — a thin walkway that leads to a hill with small caves. The boys are afraid to go across the walkway so Ralph goes to investigate alone. Soon, Jack joins him in the cave. The two boys experience a brief rekindling of their old bond as they have fun together exploring the new mountain territory. However, some boys begin to play whimsical games and lose sight of the purpose of their expedition. Ralph angrily reminds them that their original goal is to find and kill the beast. He also commands them to return to the other mountain so that they can rebuild the signal fire. The boys get displeased by Ralph's commands but they grudgingly obey. Contradicting Ralph, Jack states that he wishes to stay where they are because they can build a fort.

Chapter Seven: Shadows and Tall Trees

Ralph is disheartened that the boys have become dirty and undisciplined. He gazes sadly at the vast ocean and considers it like an impenetrable wall obstructing any hope of escaping the

island. Simon joins him and he lifts Ralph's spirits by prophesying that they will leave the island eventually. That afternoon, Jack suggests that they should hunt the pig while continue to search for the beast. The boys agree and quickly track a large boar. Ralph, who has never hunted before, gets excited and caught up in the exhilaration of the chase. He throws his spear at the boar, and though it nicks the animal's snout only, Ralph is thrilled with his marksmanship nonetheless. Jack is wounded and he proudly presents his bloodied arm to the crowd, which he claims is grazed by the boar's tusks. After the boar gets away, the excited hunters re-enact the chase with a boy named Robert playing the role of the boar. They dance, chant, and ultimately it gets out of control as they jab Robert with their spears. Jack suggests that they should use a littlun next time as the hunted pig. While the boys laugh, Ralph is shocked at Jack's audacity and the increasingly violent behaviour of the hunters. As darkness falls, Ralph suggests that they should wait until morning to climb the mountain because it will be difficult to hunt the monster at night. Simon volunteers to cross the island alone and go back to the beach to inform Piggy about their hunters' whereabouts. Though the hunters are tired and afraid, Jack vows that he will go up the mountain to look for the beast. He mocks Ralph of being afraid. To prove his worthiness as a leader, Ralph agrees at last. Then Ralph, Roger, and Jack start to climb the mountain. After a while, Ralph, tired of Jack's continual mocking, challenges him to go alone and climb to the summit. Jack returns from the mountaintop terrified and claims to have seen the monster. Since Jack seems for the first time afraid, Ralph and Roger immediately climb up to have a look. There they see a large, shadowy form with the shape of a giant ape, making a strange flapping sound in the wind. Actually, it is the dead paratrooper that looks like an ape-like creature. Horrified, the boys hurry down the mountain to warn the group. By the time they reach the base of the mountain, darkness has fallen.

Chapter Eight: Gift for the Darkness

The next morning, the boys gather on the beach to discuss the monster. Jack assures the others that his hunters can defeat it. As Ralph dismisses this idea Jack tells the hunters that Ralph considers them as cowards. He proposes that Ralph himself is a coward who should be removed from his leadership role. The boys refuse to openly vote against Ralph and Jack storms away in tears. He asserts that he will no longer be a part of Ralph's group and anyone who wants the same can join him. Simon suggests they should climb the mountain and face whatever is there. But the other boys are too afraid to do so. Piggy, thrilled that Jack is gone, suggests that they should build a new signal fire on the beach. The boys start to build a new fire, but many of them sneak away to join Jack's group. Piggy tries to convince Ralph that they are better off

without the deserters. They wonder where Simon has gone and assume that he might be climbing the mountain. Piggy starts the fire with his glasses. But Simon goes to his hidden spot in the forest to rest. Jack gathers his new group and declares himself to be the chief. In the mood of celebration, they kill a sow by driving a spear into its anus. Then the boys leave the sow's head on a sharpened stake in the jungle as an offering to the beast, coincidentally in full view of the spot where Simon is sitting. As they place the head, the black blood drips down the sow's teeth, and the boys run away in fear. Ralph's group is startled as Jack approaches with his tribe. His hunters steal burning branches from the fire on the beach. Jack invites Ralph's followers to join him to the feast that night and even to join his tribe. The hungry boys are tempted by the idea of pig's meat. At the top of the mountain remains the pig's impaled head, now swarming with flies, at which Simon stares with rapt attention. Mesmerized at the sight, Simon believes that the pig's head speaks to him which he has dubbed as the Lord of the Flies. He thinks that it is calling him a silly little boy. The Lord of the Flies claims that he is the Beast, and he laughs at the idea that the Beast could be hunted and killed, for he is within every human being and thus can never be defeated or escaped from. Terrified and disoriented by this disturbing vision, Simon falls and loses consciousness.

Chapter Nine: A View to a Death

As a storm builds over the island, Simon regains his consciousness. He staggers toward the mountain and in the failing light sees the dead pilot with his flapping parachute. Watching the parachute rise and fall with the wind, Simon realizes that the boys have mistaken this harmless object for the monster. From his vantage point, he can see that most of the boys are at the fire at Jack's camp, so he heads there to give everyone the news that the beast is not real after all. Piggy and Ralph go to the feast out of curiosity and hunger. At the feast, Jack sits on a great log like a king on a throne, his face painted like a savage and garlanded like an idol. When he sees Ralph and Piggy, he orders the other boys to give them something to eat. He is languidly issuing commands and treating the boys like his servants. After the meal, Jack invites all of Ralph's followers to join his tribe, for he gave them food and demonstrated that his hunters will protect them. Most of them accept, despite Ralph's attempts to convince them. The storm breaks over the party and as it starts to rain, Ralph asks Jack how he plans to survive in the storm considering he has not built any shelters. Jack tries to reassure everyone by ordering his group to perform their ritual pig hunting dance. The boys begin dancing and chanting wildly, and they are soon consumed by frenzy. Suddenly, they see a shadowy figure creep out of the forest. It is actually Simon who crawls out of the forest and tries to tell them about the true

identity of the beast. In their wild state, however, the boys do not recognize him. Shouting that he is the beast, the boys descend upon Simon and start to violently tear him apart with their bare hands and teeth and ultimately kill him. The rain increases and the boys back off, leaving Simon's body on the beach. Meanwhile, the strong winds lift the parachute and the body attached to it and blow it across the island and into the sea, a sight which again terrifies the boys, who still mistake the body for a beast. At the same time, the strong tide, propelled by wind, washes over Simon's body and carries it out to sea, where a school of glowing fish surrounds it.

Chapter Ten: The Shell and the Glasses

The next morning, Ralph and Piggy meet on the beach. They are deeply ashamed of their previous night's behaviour. The two are now virtually alone except for Sam and Eric and a handful of littluns. Piggy, who is unable to confront his role in Simon's death, attributes the tragedy to a mere accident. But Ralph is consumed with guilt and insists that they have been participants in a murder. Piggy whiningly denies the charge and objects to the use of the term "murder". Piggy says that he participated in it only because he was scared, to which Ralph replies that he was not scared. He does not know what came over him. Samneric return to the beach and seeing them Piggy asks Ralph not to reveal to the twins that they were involved in Simon's death. All four appear nervous as they discuss where they were the previous night, trying to avoid the subject of Simon's murder. All insist that they left early, right after the feast. At Castle Rock, Jack begins to act like a cruel dictator to his own tribe members. Boys are punished for no apparent reason. The entire tribe, including Jack, is in utter denial that they had killed one of their own. They seem to believe that Simon really was the beast and that the beast is capable of assuming any disguise. Jack states that they must continue to guard against the beast, for it is never truly dead. He declares to the group that tomorrow they will hunt again. Reluctantly, Bill asks Jack what they will use to light the fire. Jack answers that he plans a raid on Ralph's camp to get fire for another pig roast. The hunters descend upon Ralph's camp at night and badly beat Ralph and his companions, who do not even know why they were assaulted. But Piggy knows why, for the hunters have stolen his glasses, and with them, the power to make fire.

Chapter Eleven: Castle Rock

The next morning, Ralph and his few companions try to light the fire but it is impossible without Piggy's glasses. Piggy, crying and barely able to see, suggests that Ralph should hold

a meeting to discuss their options. They decide that their only choice is to travel to Castle Rock and the four remaining biguns will ask Jack's tribe for the glasses back. Samneric express a real fear of approaching the other boys who have now become complete savages. Ralph decides to take the conch shell with him, hoping that it will remind Jack's followers of his former authority. When they approach the Castle Rock, Ralph blows the conch but Jack's hunters, unimpressed by it, tell them to leave and throw rocks at them. Suddenly, Jack and a group of hunters emerge from the forest, dragging a dead pig. He warns Ralph to leave his camp but Ralph demands the return of Piggy's glasses. Ralph struggles to make Jack understand the importance of the signal fire which holds the hope of their ever being rescued. But Jack orders his hunters to capture Sam and Eric and tie them up. Ralph finally calls Jack a thief, and Jack responds by trying to stab Ralph with his spear, which Ralph deflects. As Piggy tries to speak, holding the conch, hoping to remind the group of the importance of rules and rescue, Roger releases a massive rock down the mountainside in Piggy's direction. Ralph, who hears the rock falling, dives and dodges it. But the boulder strikes Piggy, shatters the conch, and knocks him off the cliffs to his death on the rocks below. A large wave quickly carries off his body. Jack screams in victory at Ralph and then throws his spear at him and the other boys quickly join in. The spear wounds Ralph but bounces off, and he flees into the jungle. Roger and Jack begin to torture Sam and Eric, forcing them to submit to Jack's authority and join his tribe.

Chapter Twelve: Cry of the Hunters

Ralph hides in the jungle and thinks miserably about the knack for inhuman violence that the boys have developed in this chaotic island. He decides to return to Castle Rock to try reasoning with Jack's group. In the night, he sneaks down to the camp and finds Sam and Eric guarding the entrance, having been forced to join the tribe. He tries to win back their loyalty in vain. They tell him that Jack plans to send the entire tribe after him the next day and give him a chunk of meat. Ralph finds a place in a dense thicket to sleep for the night. In the morning, he hears Jack torturing the twins to find out where Ralph is hiding. Several boys try to break into the dense thicket unsuccessfully. So they flush him out by rolling boulders into it and setting it on fire. Consequently, he abandons the hiding place and fights his way past Jack and his group of body-painted warrior-boys wielding sharp wooden spears. At last, he ends up on the beach, where he collapses in exhaustion, his pursuers close behind. Suddenly, Ralph looks up and surprisingly finds a British naval officer standing over him. The officer tells the boy that his ship has come to the island after seeing the smoke and blazing fire in the jungle. Jack's hunters reach the beach and stop chasing Ralph upon seeing the officer. The officer assumes that the

boys have been only playing games. The other boys start to appear from the forest gradually, and the officer begins to realize the chaos and violence among the stranded boys. He becomes reproachful and asks how could the English boys like them have lost all reverence for the rules of civilization in such a short period? Ralph insists that they were organized and good at first and then he begins to weep for the early days on the island, which now seems impossibly remote. He is overwhelmed by the knowledge that he has been rescued, that he will escape the island after coming so close to a violent death. He weeps for the end of innocence and the darkness of man's heart, and he weeps for the deaths of Simon and Piggy. All of the other boys begin to cry as well. The officer turns away, embarrassed, while the other boys attempt to regain their composure. The officer keeps his eye on the cruiser in the distance.

UNIT 1 (C): BRIEF STUDY OF THE CHARACTERS

i) Ralph

Ralph, one of the oldest boys on the island, is generally thought to be the protagonist of the story. William Golding describes Ralph as handsome, athletic, attractive, charismatic, and decently intelligent. Among many other qualities, his competency for leadership is noticeable from the very beginning of the novel. As soon as the narrative begins, he is quickly elected as the leader of the boys. With his keen sense of diplomacy and innate talent for leadership, he presides over the other boys with a natural sense of authority and never becomes absolutely autocratic. At first, Ralph gets irritated by Piggy's nonstop questions and considers his ideas to be dull. He even enjoys teasing Piggy in the beginning. But as the narrative progresses, Ralph realizes what an asset an ally like Piggy can be and he starts depending more and more on Piggy's intelligence. Ralph's relationship with Piggy remains the sanest and sensible bonding that we find in the novel. It is obvious that Ralph does not possess the kind of overt intelligence that Piggy exhibits but he also demonstrates adequate intelligence of his own and common sense.

For the most of the story, he remains calm, rational, responsible, and realistic. Being realistic is the dominant feature that sets him apart from others in the chaotic island. For example, he is the one who strongly believed that his father would find him and they would be

rescued. This is realistic because he knows that the people in charge of them would definitely find out their plane crashed and come looking for the boys. He again proves his capacity for rational thinking when he refuses to believe in the dreadful beast that everyone is so afraid of. He knows that there cannot be one such inexplicable creature on the face of the earth and there would definitely be some logical explanation behind its so-called existence. Ralph also knows that in order to survive on the island without adults, they must do certain things like building shelters, making the fire signal, gathering foods, keeping clean, arranging proper sanitation, having strong leadership and stable government. While most of the other boys are initially concerned with having fun and avoiding work, Ralph convinces everyone to build huts for their dwelling. Ralph is always conscious about their ultimate goal which is to get out of the island. He is seen all the time thinking and discussing ways to maximize their chances of being rescued. He is not at all a coward as Jack had tried to establish in front of the group on multiple occasions. He works vigilantly to keep the group's focus on the hope for rescue. When the time comes to investigate the castle rock, Ralph takes the lead alone, despite his fear of the so-called beast. He displays a strong sense of responsibility towards everyone in the group, especially the littluns.

He clearly demonstrates determination and self-sufficiency. A fine instance of his exhibiting independence is seen when he is the first boy to step up to become a leader. This proves his self-reliance because he immediately knows what rules to make up without other people telling him what to do. Another significant example is how Ralph does not choose to become barbaric and participate in the hysteria of Jack's tribe. For the most part, he stays on the side of civility, order, and discipline, even when he is the only person left in his group. He did not get involved with the first savagery and bloodlust of the boys when they injured Roger who was acting as the pig. Ralph successfully survived on his own when he refused to join Jack's tribe like everyone else and was hunted viciously for it. For all these reasons, Ralph's power and influence over the other boys were secure at the beginning of the novel. However, as the group gradually succumbed to savage instincts and barbarity over the course of the action, Ralph's position declined while Jack's rose. Eventually, most of the boys except Piggy left Ralph's group for Jack's, and he is left alone to be hunted by Jack's tribe.

At first, it looked like Ralph and Jack would be a good friend. Ralph became irritated with Jack when he and his hunters were too busy with hunting and having fun only. They also refused to abide by the rules he set and did not participate properly in building the shelters and keeping the fire going. Jack found Ralph annoying because he was their main obstacle in the

path of having reckless fun without any adult supervision. He found Ralph to be dictatorial who only focused on being rescued and tried to impose rules on them. After a series of disagreements, Jack started questioning him and then openly opposing his leadership. He even tried to kill Ralph. In this context, it is noteworthy that we have seen Ralph going through a severe change of heart and attitude towards life on the island. When they reached the island he was delighted with the fact that there was no grown-up present. Having started with a schoolboy's romantic attitude towards "adventures" he read in storybooks, Ralph eventually loses his excitement about their newly-gained autonomy. The island completely destroyed his innocence. Soon he started longing for the comfort and security of home. He starts missing the civilized world as life on the island becomes exhausting and lawless. He remembers the images of home and nation; recollects the memories of the peaceful life of eating cereal and reading children's books. He misses proper bathing, cutting hair, and grooming. Gradually his dreamy adventure transforms into a terrifying nightmare.

Once he lost his authority and everything around him turned chaotic, he also started to lose his power of organized thought. While he used to be always ready for their meetings with all his strategies and suggestions, later on, he started struggling to develop an agenda. He was often found staring at the vast sea with a vacant look in his once optimistic eyes. He became more and more lost in a blurred maze of vague thoughts. Being a leader his authority and efforts to run a stable government for collective welfare depended on his verbal dexterity. Ralph's loss of verbal ability and his lack of proper communication with the boys were the reasons what cost him his command over the group. In the beginning, Ralph was unable to understand why the other boys would indulge in bloodlust and barbarism. The hunters, whom he expected to behave like civilized British boys, started chanting, body-painting, and dancing like savages and it was a baffling sight him. Eventually, Ralph, like Simon, realized that savagery and evil exist inside everyone but he remained determined not to let this savagery engulf him. When Ralph hunted a boar for the first time, however, he experienced the exhilaration and thrill of bloodlust and violence. When he and Piggy attended Jack's feast, they were also carried away by the frenzy; danced with the group, and astonishingly participated in the killing of Simon. But it is also true that Ralph's strong morality soon made him realize what an atrocity they committed. He was the only character who identified Simon's death as a murder and tried to convince Piggy about the same. This firsthand knowledge of the evil that exists within him, as within all human beings, was both appalling and tragic for Ralph. Consequently, it shattered his world and submerged him into listless despair and misery for a time. Sir William Golding

created this allegorical microcosm of *Lord of the Flies* to serve as a cautionary tale to illustrate a deeper sense of morality. With his sound judgment and a strong sense of morality, Ralph remains the most civilized character throughout the novel. Due to his unflinching commitment to the ideals of justice and order, he represents the political tradition of liberal democracy. Ralph's story ends semi-tragically: although he is rescued and returned to civilization when he sees the naval officer, he weeps with the burden of his new knowledge about the human capacity for evil.

ii) Jack Merridew

The headstrong, cruel, sadistic, and egocentric Jack Merridew is considered to be the novel's primary antagonist and the antithesis of Ralph. Sir William Golding describes Jack as "tall, thin, and bony; and his hair was red beneath the black cap. His face was crumpled and freckled, and ugly without silliness. Out of this face stared two light blue eyes, frustrated now, and turning, or ready to turn, to anger." He was the former choirmaster and "head boy" at his school which gave him a previous experience of exerting militaristic control over others by treating the choirboys as his subordinates. At the beginning of the novel, Jack displayed no such inclination for savagery and cruelty but retained the instilled values of his civilized British world just like any other boy. The first time he attempted to hunt a pig, he was unable to kill it. We understand that he was still bound by the established rules of civil society and his struggle to murder a living thing evokes our sympathy towards him. But soon his basic instinct for savagery, violence, and sadistic pleasure takes control over his outward personality. He becomes obsessed with two things – hunting and power. His desire for power was clearly discernible when Ralph becomes the leader of the boys. He is noticeably furious after losing the election and continually tries to undermine Ralph's authority.

Though his first attempt at hunting was unsuccessful due to his hesitations soon he becomes a sadistic killer. When he is finally able to slay a kill for the first time it stirs up a crazy and violent streak in him. Thus begins his preoccupation with hunting and his sadism aggravates throughout the novel. Golding curiously mentions that Jack had a "compulsion to track down and kill things that were swallowing him up". The use of the word "compulsion" evokes the idea that this love for violence is not something Jack can control and it is something ingrained in his psyche. Another probable reason is that the other boys made fun of Jack when his first endeavour to kill the pig was ineffective. That failure somehow made him less

masculine in front of the whole group and proving his manliness made him maniac. That bloodlust and savagery quickly disseminate among other boys and his group of hunters launch a barbaric killing ritual. After killing a pig they start a war dance around the carcass chanting “Kill the pig, cut her throat, spill the blood”. This creepy and disturbing ritual, performed enthusiastically by the boys, proves how brute they can be and evil exist even among young minds like theirs.

The central conflict on the island ensues when Jack stops cooperating with Ralph and refuses to follow his rules. He is thrilled that there is no adult supervision on the island and wishes to enjoy freedom without any restriction or guilt. He periodically opposes the authority of the conch by saying that the established “conch rule” does not matter to him. The conch symbolizes order and limitation to him, both of which he does not want his impulses to be dominated by. This is an interesting transformation because throughout their entire boyhood, boys like Jack, have been restrained by the governing rules of their civilized society. However, on the island that moral and social conditioning speedily disappears from Jack’s character. He forgets his ethical lessons, cultural boundaries and societal civility. Naturally, he wants to retain this newly tasted independence and it is the reason behind his complete disregard towards keeping the fire going. He neither wants to be rescued nor focus on the greater good of the group. This attitude inevitably stirs an open clash with Ralph whose sole motive is to maximize their chances of returning home. While he was trying to impeach Ralph he proposed a rationale that his hunting skills should earn him the leadership because “He’d (Ralph) never have got us meat”. Eventually, Jack decides to leave Ralph's group and create one of his own by taking many boys with him. He convinces the boys to choose his side by luring them with the promise of the hunt. His preoccupation with hunting becomes an intoxicating obsession. He says, “Rescue? Yes, of course! All the same, I'd like to catch a pig first.” His followers are also exhilarated with the frenzy of the hunt and it is only a matter of time that they almost kill Roger just like a pig.

The bloodlust of Jack and his group intensifies with each killing. The more barbaric he becomes, the more he is able to exert his authority over the boys. He paints his face like a savage and the dictator in him becomes predominant. His love for power and violence appears to be somewhat connected as both capacitate him to feel elevated above others and exalted. As he acquires more control over the group and diminishes his rival Ralph’s leadership, his militaristic nature becomes autocratic. He assumes the title of “chief” and makes other boys his subordinates. He starts using some boys who would raise their spears together and declare

“The Chief has spoken.” Being a rule-breaker himself, he is manipulative enough to feign an interest in establishing some rules, but only to have the power of punishing others. He takes this role most seriously and establishes himself as a primitive leader of a jungle-tribe. On the night of Simon's killing, Jack is seen sitting near the pig-roasting fire over a large log with his painted face. He is garlanded like an idol to be revered and worshipped.

Near the end of the novel, he has severed every tie with logic or common sense. He becomes paranoid to preserve his power and starts feeding misinformation to the tribe. This is typical of any dictator who tries to control his subjects by controlling the information. By then he has learned to use the boys' fear of the beast to regulate them and have them under his thumb. This is even a subtle reminder of how religion indulges in the superstitious beliefs to manipulate the collective psyche. Golding's weaving of Jack's character development, from an innocent little choir boy to a barbaric villain, is fascinating indeed. As opposed to Ralph and Piggy, Jack represents anarchy. His return to civilization and further adjusting to that life will be troublesome naturally. Jack symbolizes the id of one's personality— he advocates the notion that one's base desires are should be followed, regardless of consequences or morals. Jack is the kind of person which Golding believed everyone would eventually become if left alone to set one's own standards and live the way one naturally wanted. Golding believed that the natural state of humans is chaos and that man is inherently evil. When reason is abandoned, only the strong survive. Jack personifies this idea perfectly.

iii) Simon

Simon, the most thoughtful character in the novel, epitomizes a kind of inherent human goodness and spiritual grace that is deeply affiliated to nature itself. The physical manifestation of this feature is frequently seen during his solitary nature walks in the jungle and the private bower where he spends time. While Ralph symbolizes the political and moral aspects and Piggy the scientific and cultural facets of civilization, Simon embodies the spiritual side of human nature. Like Piggy, he is an outcast – the other boys consider him weird and somewhat insane. This dreamy boy is also prone to occasional fainting spells. He is dissimilar to them not only due to his physical weakness but also for the concern that he feels for the vulnerable Littluns. He is the most generous of the Biguns and the children follow him most of the time while he picks fruits for them from the branches that they can't reach. Most of the boys abandon their civilized shell and moral exterior as they realize the ordered world of civilization can no longer

impose rules to suppress their basic instincts. We understand that morality is not ingrained in their nature; rather the adult world, with the threat of punishment, has severely intimidated and conditioned them to avoid their knack for criminality. But Simon stands on a different point of this spectrum because he acts righteously not out of any social conditioning but due to his absolute belief in the innate values of humanity.

Apart from being moral and just, he is also insightful and brave. It is Simon who always fearlessly walks alone in the jungle and he is the one who suggests that they should confront the “beast” by climbing the mountaintop. Likewise, his perceptive nature enables him to realize that the monster is not a physical beast but it is the ingrained evil and savagery hidden inside human beings. This idea of inherent evil within each human being is not only very close to Golding’s own philosophy but also the central thematic concern of the novel. Against this idea of vice, Golding posits the contrasting character of Simon, full of essential human goodness. When Simon tries to visualize how the beast might look like, “there arose before his inward sight the picture of a human at once heroic and sick.” This is nothing but Golding’s own idea of humanity degenerated by inherent flaws and corruption. Simon is the first boy to find out that the dreadful beast is nothing but the dead pilot. By courageously pursuing to confront the “beast” on the mountaintop, Simon fulfills his destiny of Revelation. When he attempts to inform others about the dead pilot they take him for the beast and murder him in frenzy. His inability to share the revelation with the other boys signifies that they are not ready for it. However, his brutal murder shows the scarcity of goodness amid the abundance of evil.

Simon is a prophet and a philosopher whose encounter with the “Lord of the Flies” is of paramount importance. The incident characterizes the goodness of humanity confronting the lowest. This is when he realizes how the beast lurks within each man. The intuitive nature of him goes unrecognized by the rest of the boys. Their failure to comprehend Simon and making him the outsider typify the place visionaries hold in society – on the peripheries, perpetually misunderstood and disregarded by the majority. Simon's role as a mystic and a visionary is established not only by his hidden place of meditation but also by the author's description of his eyes. While Piggy wears the glasses – representing one version of scientific vision – Simon's radiant and intense eyes symbolize the mystical version of the truth. His reputation as a mystic is again solidified when Ralph worries that they will never go back to England and Simon prophesizes "I think you'll get back all right." Though William Golding never made a direct connection between his novel and the Bible, the narrative frequently suggests that Simon is a Christ-like figure. The novel contains many subtle allusions indicating the Judeo-Christian

allegory. He stands as a counterpoint to the evil and barbarity that surround the island. Simon represents kindness, bravery, selflessness, innate goodness, and self-sacrifice. We often see him taking care of the Littluns, comforting, feeding, and protecting them. All these actions parallel the Biblical Christ's benevolence.

iv) Piggy

The chubby, bespectacled, talkative boy who symbolizes the voice of reason and civilization in the novel is Piggy. Though he dislikes being called “Piggy” we never actually get to know his real name. He is rational, sensitive, and meticulous and his intellectual talent attaches him with Ralph in particular, who starts admiring him gradually. Apart from Ralph, he was unable to make friends and blend in with the group. His asthma, weight, and poor eyesight were the reasons behind his hesitance to physical labour. These things also made him not only physically inferior to the other boys but also vulnerable to ridicule and exclusion. Though he was initially an outsider among the boys, they somewhat accepted him eventually as they discovered the use of his glasses to ignite the fire. Ralph was the first boy Piggy met on the island after the ill-fated crash and they remained loyal friends throughout the novel. He represents the adult world of logic and reason and most of the time it was his brain that sprouted the successful ideas promoted by Ralph. Ideas like using the conch to call meetings, building shelter for the group, and vigorously supporting the idea of signal fire were all developed and endorsed by him. Interestingly, his act of frequently quoting his aunt also provides the only female voice in the whole narrative. But it is also true that all his scientific and rational approach to problems would have been ineffective without Ralph’s leadership. He acts as Ralph’s most trusted advisor because he shares no rapport with other boys as well as lacks leadership qualities.

His independence from the group prevented him from being exposed to the mob mentality that grew afterward under the command of Jack. Nonetheless, he also could not escape the temptations of violence and savagery that gripped the island. Even Piggy and Ralph participated in the frenzied ritualistic dance and the unintentional killing of Simon. Though Piggy tried to convince himself and Ralph that it was an accident and not a murder, his participation in the hysteria and lack of remorse proves how everyone is partially susceptible to evil. His recurrent clashes with other boys inevitably culminate in his murder by Roger who intentionally drops a rock on him. This unthinkable brutal act indicates the ultimate triumph of savagery over civilized order. It is this moment when the boys’ last connection with their humanity and civilization is finally disconnected. He is the only boy who constantly worries

about protecting the rules of English civilization. He is concerned about what their parents and other adults would think of them when they would find them as savage, lawless boys. Speaking of the deaths of Simon and the littlun with the birthmark, he asks "What's grownups goin' to think?" as if he is not so much mourning the boys' deaths as he is mourning the loss of values, ethics, discipline, and decorum that caused those deaths. He symbolizes rules, discipline, order, and moral conduct and his situation worsens as the island becomes more and more chaotic. His nickname is emblematic of the real pigs on the island, hunted by Jack's men. Likewise, it foreshadows his eventual murder.

UNIT - 2

UNIT 2 (A): THE INHERENT EVIL WITHIN HUMAN BEINGS

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* stands as a haunting testament to the dark recesses of the human psyche, probing into the depths of our collective consciousness to expose the inherent capacity for evil that lurks within each individual. Set against the backdrop of a deserted island, the novel meticulously dissects the fragile veneer of civilization, revealing how its dissolution can pave the way for the unleashing of primal instincts and savage impulses. The novel raises several relevant questions regarding the nature of evil and its genesis in the human psyche. At the heart of the narrative lies the exploration of the nature of evil itself – its origins, manifestations, and the chilling realization that it is an integral part of the human condition. Golding paints a grim portrait of human nature, suggesting that beneath the thin veneer of societal norms and moral codes lies a primal darkness that threatens to engulf us all.

Drawing profoundly from the social-religious-cultural-military ethos of his own times, Golding conceived an allegorical microcosm of the same world he knew and lived in. The island and the boys and many other objects and events in the novel represent Golding's view of humankind in general and some characteristics or values found in the British culture specifically. The plot of the novel was driven by Golding's own consideration of the origin and expansion of human evil, a complex issue that involves scrutiny not only of human nature but also the causes, effects, and manifestations of evil. When *Lord of the Flies* was first released in 1954, Golding described the novel's theme in a publicity questionnaire as "an attempt to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature." The moral is that the shape

of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not only on any political system however apparently logical or respectable. Golding raises some fundamental questions: Is evil innate within the human spirit, or is it an influence from an external source? What role do the societal rules and institutions play in the existence of human evil? Does the capacity for evil vary from person to person, or does it depend on the circumstances each individual faces? These thematic enquiries are at the core of *Lord of the Flies* which, through detailed depictions of the boys' different responses to their situation, presents a unique articulation of humanity's potential for evil. On one hand, the narrative depicts a quest for order amidst all the disorder precipitated by the evil within humankind. On the other, the author tries to investigate the concept of evil through a socio-political prism that disputes the idea of man's innate nobility. Evil does not have to be introduced into the heart of man from without, it is always lurking within, awaiting its opportunity to take over, and we are never safe from its predations.

One of the most striking aspects of Golding's portrayal of evil is its genesis in the human psyche. Through characters like Jack, whose descent into savagery mirrors the broader trajectory of the group, Golding suggests that evil is not an external force but an intrinsic aspect of human nature. Jack's transformation from an obedient choirboy to a bloodthirsty tyrant underscores the ease with which individuals can succumb to their basest impulses when removed from the constraints of society. Golding delves into the capacity for evil in little children, challenging the conventional notion of innocence associated with youth. The boys in the novel are not immune to the corrupting influence of power and authority; rather, they embody the primal instincts and savage impulses that lie dormant within all human beings. Golding's portrayal of the boys' descent into barbarity serves as a chilling reminder of the fragility of innocence and the ease with which it can be corrupted by the allure of power and domination.

The terrifying fact that the main characters in *Lord of the Flies* are young boys suggests how the potential for evil is deeply ingrained in small children. For example, When Roger first arrives on the island; he is still within the moral restraints of his old civilized life. As he throws stones at a boy named Henry, he never directly hits him because that is something forbidden in a disciplined society. Although his inner vileness wants to hurt the child, the moral codes imprinted in his behavior remains somehow intact. When Jack splits from Ralph's group, Roger instinctively follows him and gradually every shred of that morality, associated with his past life, sheds off. During the pig hunting episode, Roger wants to harm the pig and pushes even harder when he knows the pig is in excruciating pain. He indulges in the pain he is inflicting,

satisfying the dark desires his heart yearns for. With the progression of the story, the desire to kill burns even stronger in him. He deliberately kills Piggy with no hesitation and without a hint of regret. This punctuates his internal violence and truly shows just how vile a man's heart can be.

Through characters like Piggy and Simon, who represent reason and morality, Golding suggests that while individuals possess the capacity for compassion and empathy, they are also susceptible to succumbing to the darker impulses within themselves. Even Ralph and Piggy, who struggle hard to maintain their sense of discipline and civility, ultimately participate in the mass murder of Simon. Both these representatives of order and humanity, also momentarily surrender to the thrill of violence, frenzy and mass hysteria. While Piggy tries to deliberately deny their participation and refuses to call it a murder, Ralph is devastated to realize that they are no better than Jack or Roger and possess darkness inside as well. The tragic fate of these characters serves as a poignant reminder of the destructive consequences of losing touch with one's humanity.

The novel ends with Ralph realizing and grieving the indelible mark of evil in each person's heart, an evil that he scarcely suspected to exist before witnessing its effect on the island. The boys discovered within themselves the evil urge to inflict pain on others and enjoyed the same. When confronted with a symbolic choice between civilization and savagery, they choose to abandon the values of civilization. This same choice is made constantly all over the world, all throughout history. Golding places supposedly innocent schoolboys in the protected environment of an uninhabited tropical island to illustrate the point that savagery is not confined to certain people in particular environments but exists in everyone as a stain on, if not a dominator of, the nobler side of human nature. Nevertheless, the novel is not entirely pessimistic in tone because Golding creates characters like Ralph, Piggy and Simon to symbolize man's capacity to fight evil. While evil impulses may lurk in every human psyche, the intensity of these impulses-and the ability to control them-appears to vary from individual to individual. Through the different characters, the novel presents a continuum of evil, ranging from Jack and Roger, who are eager to engage in violence and cruelty, to Ralph and Simon, who struggle to contain their brutal instincts. We may note that the characters who struggle most successfully against their evil instincts do so by appealing to ethical or social codes of civilization. They do not immediately embrace their darker side like the rest of the boys and assiduously cling to the societal and moral norms that govern human behavior in a civilized society. Though they constitute the minority, they are steadfast in their adherence to rules and

committed to the concept of “what’s right’s right”. Golding suggests that while evil may be present in all of us, it can be successfully suppressed both by the social norms that are imposed on our behavior and by the moral norms which we decide as inherently “good,” and internalize within our wills.

Central to the theme of inherent evil is the symbolism of the “beast,” which serves as a manifestation of the primal instincts and dark impulses that drive the boys towards savagery. Initially perceived as a physical entity lurking in the jungle, the beast gradually evolves into a metaphor for the innate darkness within human beings. As fear and paranoia grip the group, the beast becomes a catalyst for violence and irrationality, highlighting humanity’s susceptibility to succumb to base instincts when confronted with uncertainty and danger. E.C. Bufkin in his review of the novel examines how *Lord of the Flies* depicts universal evil as a beast concept and the boys represent “ordinary bestial man.” At first, this concept of a dreadful beast lurking in the dark exists in the littluns’ subconscious, disturbing their dreams and generating fear. They believe that the beast is a “snake-thing” and imagine that it comes at night to eat them. Golding underlines and Bufkin notes that the “beast is actually a man-made product of superstition, ignorance, and darkness-out of which it comes and in which it operates”. Gradually, this imagination of the beast appearing to the children acquires a more frightening image as the dead paratrooper on the hill. Golding makes it emphatically clear that man’s deep-rooted inclination for evil is by no means supernatural. The myth of the beast is carefully cultivated to disguise the boys’ violent acts behind a mask of self-righteousness. Their belief becomes stronger with each act of violence and the beast becomes a receptacle to vent their pent up savagery. In this context, it is noteworthy that Golding’s novel rejects supernatural or religious accounts of the origin of human evil. While the boys fear the “beast” as an embodiment of evil similar to the Christian concept of Satan, the novel emphasizes that this interpretation is not only mistaken but also, ironically, the motivation for the boys’ increasingly cruel and violent behavior. It is their irrational fear of the beast that increases the boys’ paranoia and leads to the murder and mayhem on the island.

Simon, the misunderstood mystic, finds out the truth about the dead paratrooper. The ‘Lord of the Flies’ communicates to Simon in the forest glade and says “Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!” Then it laughs at the boys’ efforts to externalize their savagery in the form of an animal or some other fearsome creature. He is the one to get the revelation that evil is an active element of human nature that seeks expression; the “beast” is an internal force, present in every individual, and is thus incapable of being truly defeated.

That the most ethical characters on the island - Simon and Ralph - each come to recognize his own capacity for evil indicates the novel's emphasis on evil's universality among human beings. 'The lord of the flies' then, as the pig's head claims one to be, maybe read as a symbol of the innate evil lying within every human soul. The fact that it is a lord but of the flies undermines the connotation of the word 'lord' which otherwise means one of noble rank. Metaphorically, these boys are somewhat like the flies that surround the pig's decaying head.

The ambiguous and deeply ironic conclusion of *Lord of the Flies* examines the social evolution of evil as the novel is set in the backdrop of a nuclear war. We cannot but wonder if the boys are mimicking the actions and attitudes of the adult world or are they conditioned by a world that advocates meaningless violence. The naval officer, who repeats Jack's rhetoric of nationalism and militarism, is engaged in a bloody war that is responsible for the boys' aircraft crash on the island and the same is mirrored by the civil war among the survivors. In this sense, much of the evil on the island is a result not of the boys' distance from society, but of their internalization of the norms and ideals of those society-norms and ideals that justify and even thrive on war. Are the boys corrupted by the internal pressures of an essentially violent human nature, or have they been corrupted by the environment of war they were raised in? *Lord of the Flies* offers no clear solution to this question, provoking readers to contemplate the complex relationships among society, morality, and human nature. Though Ralph is given a brief respite from the ordeals he faced on the island, there is no escape from the larger question of violence as he is returning to a world ruined by the ravages of war.

In essence, *Lord of the Flies* stands as a chilling exploration of the theme of inherent evil within human beings, offering a sobering portrayal of how the dissolution of societal norms can unleash the primal instincts and dark impulses that reside within us all. Golding's searing indictment of human nature serves as a cautionary tale about the fragility of civilization and the precarious balance between order and chaos within the human psyche. This novel challenges readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the nature of humanity, forcing us to reckon with the darker aspects of our own consciousness. As we grapple with the implications of Golding's vision, we are compelled to reflect on our own capacity for evil and the moral imperative to resist its seductive allure. *Lord of the Flies* stands as a stark reminder of the eternal struggle between good and evil that rages within each of us, urging us to confront our demons before they consume us whole. Golding's masterful exploration of inherent evil in the novel serves as a timeless meditation on the human condition, challenging us to confront

the darkness that resides within us all and to strive for the light of compassion, empathy, and morality in the face of overwhelming adversity.

UNIT 2 (B): HUMAN DEPRAVITY AND THE INNATE SAVAGERY

William Golding, who had been a naval officer during the World War and had witnessed quite a lot of action, wrote *Lord of the Flies* to explore the human savagery and depravity he had seen. The novel delves into the darkest corners of the human psyche, unearthing the primal urges and innate savagery that lie dormant within each individual. Through the lens of a group of stranded boys on a deserted island, Golding paints a chilling portrait of the human condition, revealing the ease with which civilization can crumble in the face of adversity, giving way to the raw brutality that resides within every human being. At the heart of the novel lies the theme of human depravity, which Golding explores with unflinching honesty. The boys' descent into savagery serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of societal norms and the thin veneer of civilization that separates humanity from its primal instincts. As the constraints of civilization erode, the boys succumb to their basest impulses, indulging in violence, cruelty, and chaos.

The basic question that people tend to ask is where did all these savageries come from? Post-war English generation was strategically taught that all of it came from them, the enemy, the Nazi Germans, those who bombed London—but this was an answer that did not satisfy Golding. He had not only been a naval officer but also a schoolmaster, and knew English boys categorically. We see at the beginning of the book, Jack proclaims “We’re English and the English are best at everything. So we’ve got to do the right things (*LF* 07). But it is precisely him who transforms into a tiny Hitler and leads the rest of the children into the paths of unthinkable evil. A band of British boys, when left to their own, constructs on the island a state which is not very different from the Nazi one. Obsessed with imaginary enemies, they accept a leader with total power; they suppress freedom, persecute dissenters and ruthlessly impose barbaric rituals. That is why perhaps the most compelling theme in *Lord of the Flies* is man’s innate savagery and the restraining influence that culture plays in our lives. Canonical literature has always focused on the nobility of human endeavour and Golding disputes this stereotype by emphasizing the dichotomy between man’s savage instincts and the refinement imposed by

culture. The novel focuses on man's overwhelming instinct for barbarity when freed from the confines of civilization.

Central to the theme of human depravity is the character of Jack, whose transformation from a choirboy to a bloodthirsty tyrant epitomizes the corrupting influence of power and authority. Initially, Jack adheres to the rules of society, but his desire for dominance and control gradually consumes him, leading him to abandon moral principles in favour of tyranny and brutality. His descent into savagery serves as a chilling reminder of the darkness that resides within every individual, waiting to be unleashed under the right circumstances. Ralph, Piggy and Simon symbolize the spirit of order, reason, morality, democracy and civilization. Jack and Roger, on the other hand, represent man's primal urges. As the narrative progresses, there is a marked shift in power politics and most of the boys choose to side with Jack. They paint their bodies and hide the shame imposed by the culture behind their masks of bestiality. The temptation represented by Jack's anarchic lifestyle proves too strong to be resisted and most of the boys join him. Golding thus projects man's nature as inherently evil and susceptible to savage yearnings.

Moreover, Golding explores the concept of primal urges, depicting the boys' regression into a state of primitive savagery as they are stripped of the comforts and constraints of civilization. Freed from the rules and expectations of society, the boys give in to their most basic instincts, hunting, fighting, and even killing with abandon. The hunt becomes a symbol of their descent into barbarity, as they embrace their primal nature and revel in the thrill of the chase. The novel also inspects the readiness and ease with which the boys adapt to their barbaric nature once the cover of culture is removed. Human morality is posited nothing but a "construct" that is nurtured by the codes of civilization. In the isolated island, the boys had access to far too much of absolute freedom— no rules, no regulations, no social pressures, no adult supervision. Subsequently, all sense of order and discipline seems to be breaking down. As Cassandra Clare observes, "Too much of anything could destroy you... Too much darkness could kill, but too much light could blind". Golding foreshadows the boys' slow descent from practicing civility into savagery through Piggy's rational voice: "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages? What're grown-ups going to think? Going off— hunting pigs..." (*LF* 99) This shows the process of degeneration of the so-called superior human beings first into bestiality and then into savagery.

The innate savagery within human beings is further emphasized through the symbolism of the “beast,” which represents the primal fears and dark impulses that lurk within the human psyche. Initially perceived as a physical entity lurking in the jungle, the beast gradually evolves into a metaphor for the boys’ own capacity for evil. As fear and paranoia grip the group, the beast becomes a scapegoat for their own depravity, allowing them to externalize their darkest impulses and justify their increasingly violent actions. The mythical ‘Lord of the Flies’ becomes the most prominent symbol of savagery in the novel. The beast is represented by the head of a sow which had been killed in an extremely brutal manner. It laughs at the boys’ efforts to externalize their savagery in the form of a fearsome creature. Simon has the revelation that evil is an active element of human nature that seeks expression. This expression is manifested in the constant bloodlust provoked by the violent killing of the sow and then in Simon’s brutal murder. With Piggy’s barbaric and intentional killing, at the hands of Roger, we see that the regression to savagery is complete. Ultimate depravity has crept in among the once innocent children.

Theodore Dalrymple notes “one of the most powerful carnivalesque elements in *Lord of the Flies* is that of the pig, which Golding uses symbolically to subvert dominant racial assumptions, in particular toward the Jews. This has alarming relevance to the atrocities committed against the Jews in World War II. The pig symbol is a major motif: as the locus of projected evil; as food for the schoolboys; as propitiation to the Beast; but more than anything, as the meat, the Jews do not eat”. This link between pig flesh and the Jews is reinforced by Golding’s choice of the novel’s Hebraic title. “Lord of the Flies,” as John Whitley renders it, comes from the Hebrew word *Beelzebub*. Peter Stallybrass and Allon White argue that the eating of pig meat during carnival time is an anti-Semitic practice. It is an act of contempt toward the Jews. White asserts how the pig becomes human and the human being becomes pig in the frenzied, carnivalistic debauchery of Jack and his totalitarian regime. The shadowing of pig hunt and human hunt, ending with Simon’s and Piggy’s deaths, and almost with Ralph’s, signifies the link between the pig symbol and the extermination of the Jews. The name “Piggy” does not merely imply obesity. He is always on the periphery of the group of schoolboys, always mocked, never quite belonging. . . . Piggy is alien or foreign. “There had grown tacitly among the biguns the opinion that Piggy was an outsider, not only by accent, but by fat, and ass-mar, and specs, and a certain disinclination for manual labour” (*LF*, 70). We find something of the stereotype of a Jewish intellectual in this description of the bespectacled Piggy, with his different accent and physical feebleness.

Paul Crawford highlights that in *Lord of the Flies*, Golding's critique of British imperial, proto-fascist history is powerfully registered by the Nazification of English schoolboys: "Shorts, shirts, and different garments they carried in their hands: but each boy wore a square black cap with a silver badge in it. Their bodies, from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks which bore a long silver cross on the left breast and each neck was finished off with a hambone frill" (*LF*, 20–21). Dalrymple reflects that Golding tries to subvert the dominant cultural notions of the superiority of civilized English behavior. "These are the kind of assumptions that buoyed the complacency of England, and indeed other Allied nations, namely, that the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis were an exclusively German phenomenon". But the novel overthrows the view that the "civilized" English people are incapable of the kind of atrocities carried out by the Nazis during World War II. The Beast is human beings in general, both Nazi-like, and English. He destroys the post-war English smugness about the belief of racial and cultural superiority, of scientific progress, notions casting long shadows over atrocities against the Jews carried out in World War II. He draws a parallel between the violent history of English imperialist adolescent masculine culture and the extermination of the Jews. Golding's critique is not directed exclusively at Nazi war criminality but at the postwar smugness of the English who too readily distanced themselves from what the Nazis did. He reminds them of their long infatuation with social Darwinism.

UNIT 2 (C): LOSS OF INNOCENCE

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* serves as a powerful exploration of the theme of loss of innocence, depicting the gradual descent of a group of British schoolboys into savagery and brutality as they struggle for survival on a deserted island. Through the experiences of the characters and the unfolding events on the island, Golding examines the complex process by which innocence is eroded and the darker aspects of human nature are revealed. At the very beginning, the boys find themselves stranded on an uninhabited island after surviving a plane crash, and their initial reactions reflect a sense of innocence, excitement, and optimism about their newfound freedom. At the outset of the novel, the boys are portrayed as innocent and optimistic, embodying the idealism and naivety of childhood. Their initial excitement at being stranded on a tropical island without adult supervision reflects their sense of adventure and

freedom, unaware of the challenges and dangers that lie ahead. The boys' initial response to their predicament is one of excitement and adventure. The absence of adult authority figures and societal constraints allows them to revel in their newfound freedom, exploring the island and indulging in activities such as swimming and climbing. Their sense of adventure reflects the natural curiosity and resilience of youth, as they adapt to their new environment with enthusiasm and optimism.

As they come to terms with their situation, the boys begin to form social bonds and establish a sense of camaraderie. Ralph's election as leader and the establishment of rules and roles reflect their desire for order and organization in the absence of adult supervision. The conch shell, used to summon meetings and maintain order, becomes a symbol of their collective innocence and democratic ideals, as they strive to create a miniature society based on cooperation and mutual respect. The conch shell, symbolizing order and democracy, becomes a manifestation of their collective innocence and hope for rescue. The boys' innocence is further reflected in their playful exploration of the natural environment of the island. They delight in the abundance of fruit, water, and wildlife, immersing themselves in the sights, sounds, and sensations of their tropical surroundings. Their interactions with nature evoke a sense of wonder and awe, highlighting their connection to the natural world and their capacity for joy and spontaneity in the face of adversity.

Despite their initial sense of adventure, the boys harbour hope for rescue and a return to civilization. Their efforts to build a signal fire on the mountain, using Piggy's glasses as a lens, symbolize their optimism and determination to attract passing ships and alert potential rescuers to their presence on the island. The fire becomes a tangible expression of their hope and longing for salvation, reinforcing their belief that they will eventually be rescued and reunited with their families. Crucially, during this initial phase, the boys remain largely unaware of the darkness and savagery that lie dormant within them and within the island itself. The absence of immediate threats and the presence of adult-like figures such as Ralph and Piggy provide a sense of security and stability, shielding them from the harsh realities of survival and the moral dilemmas that will later confront them.

This initial phase of innocence and optimism among the boys in *Lord of the Flies* serves as a poignant portrayal of the resilience and adaptability of youth in the face of adversity. Their sense of adventure, camaraderie, and hope for rescue reflect the innate optimism and idealism of childhood, while also setting the stage for the darker themes of the novel, including the loss

of innocence and the descent into savagery. Through their experiences on the island, the boys confront uncomfortable truths about human nature and the fragility of civilization, challenging readers to reflect on the complexities of the human condition and the eternal struggle between innocence and experience.

Gradually, the loss of innocence and the inclination towards violence among the boys become prominent in the narrative which illustrates the destructive power of human nature when left unchecked by societal norms and adult authority. The absence of adult supervision and societal constraints on the island leads to the erosion of the boys' moral standards. Initially, they attempt to establish rules and maintain order, symbolized by the conch shell and the election of Ralph as leader. However, as the boys' fear of the mythical "beast" grows and their survival becomes increasingly precarious, their adherence to moral principles weakens, giving way to impulses of violence and aggression. Fear and paranoia play a significant role in shaping the boys' descent into violence. The perceived threat of the "beast" and the isolation of the island intensify their anxieties and insecurities, leading to a breakdown of rationality and empathy. Jack exploits these fears to consolidate power and manipulate the boys into joining his tribe, using violence and intimidation to maintain control.

As the boys struggle to establish order and civilization on the island, they encounter the darker aspects of human nature, including fear, aggression, and cruelty. The emergence of Jack as a charismatic but ruthless leader marks a turning point in their descent into savagery, as he exploits their primal instincts and manipulates their fear of the mythical "beast" to consolidate power. The struggle for power and dominance among the boys exacerbates their inclination towards violence. Jack's charismatic but authoritarian leadership style appeals to the boys' primal instincts and desire for strength and security, leading to a schism between his tribe and Ralph's group. The boys' willingness to follow Jack and participate in acts of violence reflects the allure of power and the seductive nature of authority in the absence of moral guidance. As the novel progresses, the boys' moral compass begins to erode, giving way to increasingly violent and barbaric behaviour. The murder of Piggy and the attempt to hunt down Ralph exemplify the depths of their moral decay, as they succumb to the primal urges of power and domination. The absence of adult authority and societal norms leaves them adrift in a moral vacuum, where the boundaries between right and wrong blur.

As the boys succumb to their violent impulses, they begin to dehumanize others, particularly those perceived as outsiders or threats. The killing of the sow and the subsequent

impaling of its head on a stick, as well as the murder of Simon, exemplify the boys' descent into savagery and their loss of empathy and compassion. The "othering" of individuals who do not belong to their tribe serves to justify acts of violence and cruelty, reinforcing their sense of superiority and entitlement. The boys' inclination towards violence reflects a regression to primitive instincts and behaviours in the absence of societal norms and adult supervision. Freed from the constraints of civilization, they embrace their most primal urges and instincts, becoming hunters, warriors, and eventually killers. The descent into violence represents a regression to a state of nature, where survival is paramount and morality becomes secondary. Ultimately, the loss of moral compass and the inclination towards violence among the boys have tragic consequences. The murder of Piggy and the attempt to hunt down Ralph exemplify the depths of their moral decay and the brutality that lies beneath the surface of civilization. The arrival of the naval officer serves as a sobering reminder of the consequences of their actions and the irreversible loss of innocence that has occurred on the island.

The corruption of innocence is symbolized by the transformation of characters such as Ralph and Piggy, who initially represent reason, morality, and civilization. As they confront the brutal realities of survival and the unchecked aggression of their peers, their innocence is gradually stripped away, revealing the darker aspects of their own nature. Even the youngest boys, such as the "littluns," are not spared from the corrupting influence of the island, as they are swept up in the violence and chaos. The climax of the novel brings a stark confrontation with reality for the boys, as they are rescued by a naval officer who witnesses the chaos and destruction that has consumed them. The officer's presence serves as a jarring reminder of the innocence they have lost and the brutal consequences of their actions. The boys' tearful realization of their descent into savagery underscores the irreversible nature of their loss of innocence. Through the theme of loss of innocence, Golding offers a profound reflection on the complexities of human nature and the capacity for both good and evil within each individual. The boys' experiences on the island serve as a microcosm of wider human society, highlighting the fragility of civilization and the ever-present threat of moral decay.

Lord of the Flies provides a poignant exploration of the theme of loss of innocence, charting the gradual unravelling of childhood innocence and the emergence of darker impulses in the face of adversity. Through the experiences of the characters and the unfolding events on the island, Golding invites readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the human condition and the fragility of moral values in the absence of societal constraints. The text offers a chilling

exploration of the loss of moral compass and the inclination towards violence among the boys stranded on a deserted island. Through their descent into savagery, Golding illustrates the fragility of civilization and the darker aspects of human nature when left unchecked by societal norms and moral guidance. The novel serves as a cautionary tale about the destructive power of violence and the importance of moral values in maintaining social order and humanity's collective conscience.

UNIT - 3

UNIT 3 (A): RELIGIOUS ALLEGORY

As a popular literary device, an allegory is a narrative, whether in prose or verse, in which a character, place, or event is used to convey a broader message about real-world issues and occurrences. The allegorical device aims to deliver a secondary level of connotation other than the primary level of meaning, through symbolic figures or events. The two levels combine to create a deeper sense of implication that the author wishes to impart. Allegory is often used to project the author's moral or political perspective in a veiled manner. Characters in allegory generally become personifications of abstract ideals like virtues and vices, moral perspectives, religious tenets and so on. *Lord of the Flies* is a profound and multi-layered novel that can be interpreted through various lenses, one of which is as a religious allegory. By examining the characters, events, and symbolism within the novel, it becomes evident that the novel can be seen as an allegorical exploration of fundamental religious themes and motifs.

a) The Garden of Eden: As the novel begins, we see that the uninhibited tropical island is endowed with the pristine beauty and vitality of Eden. Many critics have opined that the island in the novel can be viewed as a metaphorical representation of the Garden of Eden from the Bible. That the island is meant to represent the 'Garden of Eden' is easily deduced from the following sentence: "The forest re-echoed; and birds lifted, crying out of the tree-tops, as on that first morning ages ago" (*LF* 02). Like Eden, the island is initially depicted as a pristine paradise, untouched by the corruption of civilization. But the Edenic grace of the island gradually metamorphoses into a sinister atmosphere that forms the ideal setting for the brutality espoused by the boys. Just as Adam and Eve's disobedience led to the fall of humanity, the boys' descent into savagery results in the degradation of their once idyllic environment. Golding's microcosm of the island closely mirrors the adult world wherein war and terror have

destroyed the remnants of human kindness. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* the angels fall from Heaven while a mighty war was happening in the paradise, and Golding has duplicated this situation, too; for the plane carrying the boys is attacked and shot down during the World War.

b) The Fall of Man: According to many critics, the symbolic movement of the boys, from innocence to evil, is actually a re-enactment of the Biblical Fall of Man and its consequences. In the beginning, the boys are “dropped from the sky”. The fall of the parachutist is also a sign “coming down from the world of grown-ups”, and later his corpse “swayed down through a vastness of wet air...; falling, still falling, it sank towards the beach...” Simon, after his hallucinatory conversation with ‘Lord of the Flies’, “fell down and lost consciousness” and when killed, he “fell over the steep edge of the rock”. Piggy also dies after being hit by the rock which fell over him from forty feet. In the last scene of the novel, we see Ralph has fallen and the naval officer looks down at him with astonishment. These are but a few of the many examples of literal “fall” images that run through the novel, suggesting the spiritual fall through physical actions of the characters. The initial innocence of the boys can be compared to the state of Adam and Eve before their fall from God's grace. Other critics have suggested that the boys might also represent the fallen angels who ultimately became devils. Jack and his band of the choir boys who used to sing songs of angels underwent a savage metamorphosis on the island. Their religious chanting of angelic songs became a ritualistic chant of paganism: “Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in!” Ironically, the choirboys become the most violent and sadistic in their metamorphosis into savages hunting and dancing in cannibalistic ecstasy. This is, however, not a “metamorphosis” in the proper sense of the term. They only lay bare their inherently evil nature hidden within their very minds. The choirboys soon lost their religious teachings and ethical traits because such qualities are not ingrained in them but imposed on them. The boys' gradual descent into savagery parallels the biblical narrative of humanity's fall from grace. As they succumb to their primal urges and abandon moral principles, they become increasingly disconnected from their humanity, mirroring Adam and Eve's expulsion from paradise.

c) Figure of the Christ – Redemption and Salvation: Most of the commentators have identified Simon as the Christ figure in the narrative whose actions closely mirror many Biblical incidents. Of all the boys, he is the one most troubled by the presence of evil within the group. He alone gets the revelation about the dreaded beast but he is tortured and killed cruelly for trying to reveal the truth. Simon's encounter with the ‘Lord of the Flies’ is reminiscent of Christ's conversation with the devil in the wilderness. While Christ attains

victory over the devil, Simon cannot boast of such a claim as he realizes that the evil he is trying to fight is within their hearts. Though he comprehends its real nature, he is helpless to act against it. Nevertheless, his spiritual fortitude urges him to warn his friends and it is during this attempt that he is murdered viciously. Simon thus dies for no fault of his own and his sacrifice does not liberate the other boys from their state of sin. In the end, Ralph weeps for the “end of Innocence” (*LF* 230) and this cry echoes the primordial wail of the Biblical man as his Eden is lost forever. Ralph’s idyllic Eden is lost to the boys and there is no promise of redemption as they have murdered their saviour. Despite the bleakness of its narrative, *Lord of the Flies* offers glimpses of redemption and salvation. Characters like Simon, who exhibit selflessness and compassion, represent the possibility of transcendence amidst the darkness. Simon’s Christ-like sacrifice and spiritual epiphany underscore the novel’s underlying message of hope amidst despair, suggesting that even in the face of overwhelming evil; redemption is possible for those who remain true to their moral principles.

d) Biblical Archetypes: Many of the characters in *Lord of the Flies* can be interpreted as biblical archetypes. Ralph, with his leadership qualities and commitment to order, can be seen as a representation of righteousness and morality, akin to biblical figures like Moses. Conversely, characters like Jack, who embrace violence and tyranny, embody the darker aspects of human nature, reminiscent of figures like Cain or Judas. The novel explores the eternal struggle between good and evil, a theme deeply rooted in religious mythology. The tension between Ralph and Jack symbolizes this conflict, with Ralph representing the forces of order and morality, and Jack embodying chaos and depravity. Their rivalry mirrors the biblical struggle between righteousness and sin, underscoring the pervasive influence of moral dualism within the narrative.

e) The “Beast” Symbol: The “beast” in *Lord of the Flies* can be interpreted as a symbol of temptation and evil, akin to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Initially perceived as a physical threat, the beast gradually evolves into a manifestation of the boys’ own primal instincts and dark impulses. Like the serpent tempting Eve with the forbidden fruit, the beast lures the boys away from righteousness and towards savagery. The title of the novel is also infused with Biblical allusions as to the eponymous ‘Lord of the Flies’ is a reference to Beelzebub. In the narrative, Beelzebub is the “beast” whose physical manifestation is the sow’s head impaled on a stick and covered with flies. The materialization of this devil coincides with the emergence of savagery in the boys. Simon’s conversation with the Beast is captured in a surrealistic passage that highlights how it is impossible to completely defeat the evil within them. The

Beast says to Simon, “Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!”(LF 161)

f) Original Sin: It is quite possible that the killing of the sow, to which the boys are “wedded in lust,” may be analysed in terms of sexual intercourse; as a symbolic, parodic re-enactment of the Original Sin. “The sow fell and the hunters hurled themselves at her. This dreadful eruption from an unknown world made her frantic; she squealed and bucked and the air was full of sweat and noise and blood and terror. Roger ran round the heap, prodding with his spear whenever pig flesh appeared. Jack was on top of the sow, stabbing downward with his knife. Roger began to push until he was leaning with his whole weight. The spear moved forward inch by inch and the terrified squealing became a high-pitched scream” (LF 58).

Lord of the Flies can be interpreted as a rich and layered religious allegory that explores fundamental themes of sin, redemption, and the eternal struggle between good and evil. Through its vivid characters, haunting imagery, and profound symbolism, the novel offers a powerful meditation on the complexities of human nature and the enduring influence of religious mythology on the human psyche. As readers delve into the depths of Golding’s allegorical masterpiece, they are invited to reflect on the timeless truths and moral dilemmas that lie at the heart of the human experience.

UNIT 3 (B): FEAR AND PARANOIA

Paranoia is a psychological state characterized by irrational suspicions and beliefs of persecution, threat, or conspiracy, often without evidence or justification. Individuals experiencing paranoia may interpret neutral or benign situations as being fraught with danger or malevolence, leading to heightened levels of anxiety, mistrust, and hypervigilance. Paranoia can manifest in various forms, ranging from mild to severe, and may be temporary or chronic in nature. At its core, paranoia involves a profound distortion of reality, where the affected individual perceives threats and dangers that are not objectively present. This distorted perception can lead to a range of behaviours, including avoidance, suspicion of others, and defensive reactions. Paranoia can also contribute to social isolation, as individuals may withdraw from interpersonal relationships out of fear of betrayal or harm. While paranoia is often associated with mental health disorders such as paranoid schizophrenia or paranoid

personality disorder, it can also occur in response to acute stress, trauma, substance abuse, or other underlying psychological factors. In some cases, paranoia may be a protective mechanism, allowing individuals to remain vigilant in potentially dangerous situations. However, when paranoia becomes excessive or irrational, it can significantly impair daily functioning and quality of life.

In William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, the theme of fear and paranoia plays a central role in driving the actions and behaviours of the boys stranded on the deserted island. As they grapple with the unknown dangers, mysteries and uncertainties of their environment and the internal conflicts within their group, fear and paranoia become pervasive, shaping their perceptions, decisions, and ultimately, their descent into savagery. The island itself is shrouded in mystery, with its dense foliage, hidden caves, and uncharted terrain creating an atmosphere of foreboding and uncertainty. The boys are confronted with the unfamiliarity of their surroundings, unsure of what dangers or threats may lurk beyond the confines of their makeshift camp. The absence of adult supervision and the isolation of the island amplify their sense of vulnerability, heightening their fears of the unknown. From the moment the boys find themselves stranded on the uninhabited island, they are plagued by this fear of the unknown and get paranoid easily.

As they struggle to make sense of their situation, paranoia and suspicion begin to take hold within their group. With the intensification of the fear of the unknown, anxiety and hyper-vigilance increase. They become increasingly paranoid, interpreting innocuous events and encounters as evidence of impending danger. Every rustle of leaves, every shadow in the night, becomes a potential threat, heightening their sense of unease and distrust. The constant state of alertness leaves them exhausted and on edge, further fuelling the cycle of fear and paranoia. The breakdown of trust and cooperation, particularly between Ralph's faction and Jack's tribe, leads to escalating tensions and rivalries. The boys become hyper-vigilant, constantly watching for signs of betrayal or threat from within their ranks, as they grapple with the fear of being overpowered or marginalized by their peers. The fear of the unknown fractures the trust and camaraderie among the boys, leading to the fragmentation of their group and the emergence of rival factions. Suspicion and paranoia take hold as they struggle to make sense of their situation, with each boy grappling with their own fears and insecurities. The breakdown of trust erodes the cohesion of the group, leaving them vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by those who seek to exploit their anxieties for personal gain.

Additionally, the fear of the mythical “beast” looms large in the minds of the boys, exacerbating their paranoia and anxiety. Initially dismissed as a figment of their imagination, the existence of the beast becomes a source of contention and fear as rumours and sightings spread among the group. The ambiguity surrounding the nature of the beast fuels speculation and uncertainty, leading to a climate of fear and suspicion as the boys grapple with the possibility of a tangible threat in their midst. This paranoia is weaponized by characters such as Jack, who exploit the boys’ anxieties for their own gain. He exploits their fear as a tool to consolidate his power and control. By preying on their vulnerabilities and inflaming their paranoia, Jack and his followers gain control over the group, using the spectre of the beast to sow discord and division among their peers. He capitalizes on this paranoia to instil loyalty and obedience within his tribe. The psychological warfare waged by Jack and his tribe exacerbates the atmosphere of paranoia, turning the island into a battleground of fear and suspicion.

The pervasive fear and paranoia on the island lead to the fragmentation of society and the breakdown of social order. The once-unified group of boys splinters into factions, each governed by its own set of rules and values. The conch shell, symbolizing order and democracy, loses its power to maintain cohesion as fear and paranoia drive the boys further apart, isolating them from one another and from their shared humanity. Fear and paranoia cloud the boys’ judgment and impair their ability to think rationally. As they become increasingly consumed by their anxieties and insecurities, they abandon reason and logic in favour of instinctual responses and impulsive actions. The descent into irrationality and hysteria exacerbates the cycle of fear and violence, leading to tragic consequences for themselves and for those around them.

Through the theme of fear and paranoia, Golding offers a profound reflection on the complexities of human nature and the fragility of societal order. The boys’ experiences on the island serve as a microcosm of wider human society, highlighting the inherent tensions between individualism and collectivism, freedom and control, and the struggle to navigate the uncertainties of existence in an unpredictable world. William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* presents a chilling exploration of the theme of fear and paranoia, illustrating how these primal emotions can shape human behaviour and lead to the unravelling of social norms and moral values. Through the experiences of the boys stranded on the deserted island, Golding invites readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the darker aspects of human nature and the enduring power of fear to influence our perceptions, decisions, and ultimately, our destiny.

UNIT- 4

UNIT 4 (A): A FREUDIAN PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF THE TEXT

Psychoanalysis is a set of theories and therapeutic techniques related to the study of the unconscious mind. This discipline was established in the early 1890s by the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud who retained the term psychoanalysis for his own school of thought. Freud believed that the human mind is responsible for both conscious and unconscious behaviours and decisions that it makes based on psychic drives.

1. The Id, Ego and Superego: Freud's structural model of the psyche defined and distinguished three distinct but interacting agents – id, ego and superego. He proposed that the human psyche consists of these three distinct components. Different characters and incidents in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* can be examined in this light of Freud's psychoanalytic theory. By delving into the characters' subconscious desires, fears, and motivations, one can uncover layers of meaning and symbolism that align with Freud's theories of the human psyche. Before analysing the characters and their manifestation of these three components, one must have a rudimentary knowledge of these concepts.

a) The Id: The id, according to Freud, is the primitive and instinctual part of the psyche that operates on the pleasure principle. This part of the unconscious seeks only pleasure and immediate gratification of desires. It holds all of humankind's most basic instincts, without any concern for consequences or morality. It is the most impulsive and unconscious part in the mind that is based on the desire to seek immediate gratification. The id does not have a grasp on any form of reality or consequence. The id is driven by unconscious urges and impulses, such as hunger, thirst, and sexual desires. It operates on a subconscious level and is not bound by social norms or rationality.

b) The Ego: The ego is the rational and conscious part of the psyche that mediates between the id and the external world. The ego is responsible for creating a balance between pleasure and pain. It has a better grasp of reality and understands that all desires of the id cannot be fulfilled. The reality principle is what the ego operates by to control the instinctual demands from the id. It takes into account the demands of the id, the constraints of reality, and the

standards of society. The ego helps individuals navigate the complexities of everyday life by finding realistic and socially acceptable ways to satisfy their desires. It balances the demands of the id with the constraints of the superego, striving to achieve a sense of harmony and stability.

c) The Superego: The superego represents the internalized moral standards and values instilled by society and authority figures, such as parents and teachers. It operates on the morality principle, enforcing rules, norms, and ideals of behaviour through feelings of guilt, shame, and pride. The superego serves as the conscience, guiding individuals towards moral behaviour and restraining the impulses of the id. It develops through socialization and internalization of cultural norms, shaping an individual's sense of right and wrong. Freud maintained that the superego is what allows the mind to control its impulses that are looked down upon morally. Without the superego, Freud believed, people would act out with aggression and indulge in other immoral behaviours because the mind would not have any way to differentiate between right and wrong. The superego is considered to be the “consciousness” of a person's personality and can override the drives from the id.

The id represents primal instincts and desires, seeking immediate gratification without regard for consequences. Characters like Jack and Roger embody the id, giving in to their savage impulses and embracing violence without remorse, overpowering the ego and the superego. Just as the id always works to gratify its own impulses without regard to the cost, Jack solely cares about his own pleasures as opposed to their collective rescue. Jack is not interested in obeying the rules established by Ralph. Much like the id, Jack focuses on immediate and primitive pleasures as opposed to a long-term plan. A person operating at the id level may be motivated by hunger, jealousy, or the desire for something, based on instinct. Jack is primarily motivated towards two things only – lust for power/control and hunger for hunting/killing. He shows no interest in the signal fire and spends all of his time hunting pigs and getting meat instead. Being motivated by the pleasure principle, he enjoys the idea of catching, controlling, and killing pigs. He also had an unquenchable thirst for power that made it difficult to accept Ralph's leadership. Driven by this unchecked desire, he turned from civilized to barbaric.

The first time he attempted to hunt a pig, he was unable to kill it. We understand that he was still bound by the established rules of civil society. When he is finally able to slay a kill for the first time it stirs up a crazy and violent streak in him. Thus begins his preoccupation

with hunting and his sadism aggravates throughout the novel. The bloodlust of Jack and his group intensifies with each killing. The more barbaric he becomes, the more he is able to exert his authority over the boys. He paints his face like a savage and the dictator in him becomes predominant. The boys with him also begin to act on the id of their personalities and also lost discipline and order. In the end, they seem to have lost every shred of humanity. Human lives became very cheap for them. For example, among all the followers of Jack, Roger can be taken as a prime example of acting under the sole influence of the id. Previously, he used to tease and hurt the littluns just for the sake of pleasure. Later, we see how id completely dominates his unconscious when he brutally hunts the mother-pig and ultimately murders Piggy intentionally.

Ego is “the part of the personality corresponding most nearly to the perceived self, the controlling self that holds back the impulsiveness of the id in the effort to delay gratification until it can be found in socially approved ways.” Freud describes the ego as being like a rider on a horse (the id), trying to hold the horse in check. Golding represents Ralph as a true embodiment of the ego. Just as the ego is the rational aspect of the mind Ralph’s rationality is exhibited in his role as a leader. He focuses mostly on the idea of being rescued and organizes the fires as a mode of getting the attention of a rescue ship. He works on building shelters for the members of the tribe. He attempts to keep meetings organized and establishes the rule of the conch to keep order. Ralph’s role as the ego perfectly portrays how the ego must always balance the id and the superego. Jack’s selfish desire for hunting and control epitomizes the id’s constant need to seek pleasure. As the chief, Ralph always strives to keep the boys as members of a civilized community on the island. Golding puts Ralph into situations where he must choose between pleasing Jack or listening to Piggy and Simon’s for collective well-being. Ralph, as the leader of the tribe, attempts to be the best human he can be and often follows the guidance of the superego. Although, like every person at one point or another, Ralph does succumb to the primitive desires that Jack embodies. He gives in to the pleasure of hunting and in that frenzied moment participates in the murder of Simon. But Ralph’s strong morality soon made him realize what an atrocity he had committed and he immediately regrets his actions.

Superego is “The part of the personality corresponding most nearly to conscience, controlling through moral scruples rather than by way of social expediency. The superego is said to be an uncompromising and punishing conscience”. In *Lord of the Flies*, Piggy and Simon are the two main characters who reflect Freud’s concept of the superego most of the time. The superego is the part of the mind that seeks to control the impulsive behaviour of the

id. It acts as an internal censor. Piggy aims to be that voice of reason but is only able to do so with the help of Ralph. He constantly reminds Ralph of their need to keep the fire burning and to take proper responsibility for the littluns. Piggy stands between Jack and his act of pleasure-seeking. Further, just as the superego must employ the ego to control the id, Piggy alone cannot control Jack and he must rely on Ralph to do so.

Simon also epitomizes the superego. He watches over the boys and always contributes to the wellbeing of their group. When the littluns were unable to reach the fruits, Simon picked fruits for them. It shows the helping nature of Simon which is obviously driven by his conscience. He employs both societal and moral rules and he is the one boy who never participates in destructive behaviors. He is also the only one to realize that the true beast is inside the boys. Simon's moral compass, much like the superego, allows him to see the inherent evil of mankind. The superego attempts to lead a person to the morally right pathway, much like Simon aims to show Ralph how he can do what's best for the tribe. He exhibited exemplary behaviour until his last breath.

Throughout the novel, it is depicted how the id is continuously trying to overpower the ego and the superego and the brutal murders of Simon and Piggy show the ultimate defeat of the superego. Morality, truth and conscience became the victim of the innate savagery of human nature and the id overpowered everything. Apart from developing the characters to illustrate the Freudian concept of the Human Mind, William Golding also attempted to analyse the vision of the beast in terms of Freud's psychoanalysis. Examined under the Freudian microscope, the dreadful beast can also be viewed as a manifestation of the id, the instinctual urges, fear and desires of the human unconscious mind. It terrifies the boys because the beast emerges from their own unconscious minds. Freud said that some events and desires can be too frightening or painful to acknowledge. He believed that such information is stored inside the unconscious mind through the process of repression. A Freudian explanation of why the boys felt such strong fear towards the beast is that their reality-testing apparatus had seized to function properly. If their reality-testing mechanism would have worked properly, the nightmares about the beast would not have become embodied. It is to be noted that the idea of the beast first appeared in the minds of the littluns. According to Freud, it is common that children feel the presence of an evil force threatening them when their parents are absent, and this is exactly what we see among the children on the island. The reason why the older children did not believe in the beast at first is that due to their age they had gotten further in their psychological development, and therefore their reality-testing apparatus worked better.

2. The Oedipus complex: The Oedipus complex is a key concept in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, named after the Greek myth of Oedipus, who unknowingly killed his father and married his mother. Freud proposed that during the phallic stage of psychosexual development (around ages 3 to 6), children experience unconscious desires for their opposite-sex parent and hostility towards their same-sex parent. During the phallic stage, young boys develop unconscious feelings of attraction towards their mothers. They may feel possessive of their mothers and wish to have her exclusive attention and affection. Similarly, girls may develop feelings of attachment and admiration towards their fathers. Simultaneously, children experience feelings of rivalry and jealousy towards the parent of the same sex. Boys may view their fathers as rivals for their mothers' affection and may feel competitive or resentful towards them. Similarly, girls may perceive their mothers as obstacles to their fathers' attention and may harbour feelings of resentment or hostility towards them.

At the heart of the Oedipus complex lies the relationship between father and son, a dynamic mirrored in the power struggle between Jack and Ralph. Jack embodies the primal urges and aggression associated with the id, while Ralph represents the ego, striving for order and rationality. Their rivalry for leadership mirrors the Oedipal conflict, with Jack vying for dominance and seeking to assert his authority over Ralph, the symbolic father figure. Throughout the novel, Jack's desire for authority and approval from Ralph is palpable, reflecting an unconscious longing for recognition and acceptance from a paternal figure. His relentless pursuit of dominance and control over the group can be interpreted as an attempt to prove himself worthy in the eyes of Ralph, mirroring the Oedipal desire to win the affection and approval of the same-sex parent. Conversely, Ralph's position of authority and leadership evokes feelings of hostility and rivalry in Jack, akin to the Oedipal resentment towards the same-sex parent. Jack's growing animosity towards Ralph stems from his perceived inadequacies and feelings of inferiority, driving him to rebel against Ralph's authority and assert his dominance over the group.

The conch shell, which serves as a symbol of order and civilization, can also be interpreted through the lens of the Oedipus complex. Its significance as a tool of authority and democracy underscores the boys' unconscious desire for structure and paternal guidance. The conch represents Ralph's authority and legitimacy as the symbolic father figure, further fuelling Jack's desire to usurp his leadership and assert his own dominance. The escalating violence and aggression on the island can also be viewed as manifestations of the boys' unresolved Oedipal conflicts. Jack's descent into savagery and his embrace of violence reflect his inability

to reconcile his unconscious desires with the reality of his situation. The brutal murder of Simon and Piggy symbolizes the boys' collective regression into primitive instincts and the destructive consequences of their unresolved inner turmoil.

3. The Death Drive: Freud introduced the concept of the death drive, also known as 'Thanatos', to explain the innate tendency towards self-destructive and aggressive behaviours in human beings. The death drive operates alongside the life instincts, known as Eros, which drive individuals towards self-preservation and the pursuit of pleasure. Freud proposed that alongside the desire for life and pleasure, human beings also possess an inherent urge towards destruction and aggression. This innate tendency towards death and destruction is known as the death drive. It represents the instinctual urge to return to an inorganic state, devoid of life and consciousness. The death drive is in constant conflict with the life instincts, creating a perpetual struggle within the psyche.

The death drive can manifest in various forms, including aggression, self-harm, and destructive impulses. It may lead individuals to engage in risky or dangerous behaviours, sabotage their own success, or harbour destructive thoughts and fantasies. Freud suggested that unresolved conflicts between the life and death instincts can contribute to psychological disorders and maladaptive behaviours. Freud's concept of the death drive plays a central role in psychoanalytic theory, influencing our understanding of human behaviour and motivation. It provides insight into the darker aspects of the human psyche and underscores the complexity of human nature. While controversial, the death drive remains a foundational concept in psychoanalytic thought, shaping our understanding of aggression, self-destructiveness, and the human condition.

Golding's *Lord of the Flies* provides a rich narrative landscape ripe for the exploration of Freud's concept of the death drive, a fundamental aspect of human nature that drives individuals toward self-destruction and aggression. Through the characters and events depicted on the deserted island, Golding offers a compelling reflection on the darker aspects of the human psyche, echoing Freud's theories of the eternal struggle between life and death. At the heart of Freud's concept of the death drive lies the primal urge for destruction and aggression, which manifests in various forms throughout the novel. The boys' descent into savagery and violence reflects their unconscious desire for destruction, as they succumb to their primal instincts and embrace the darkness that lurks within them. The hunt for the pig and the subsequent killing of animals and eventually other boys on the island serve as manifestations

of the death drive in action. The boys' relentless pursuit of prey and their enjoyment of the kill reflect their unconscious desires for destruction and domination. The act of killing becomes a ritualistic expression of their inner turmoil, as they channel their repressed aggression and aggression towards external targets.

Throughout the novel, violence and aggression abound, mirroring the destructive impulses of the death drive. Characters like Jack and Roger embrace violence with zeal, revelling in the power and control it affords them. The brutal murder of Simon and Piggy symbolizes the boys' collective regression into primal instincts and the destructive consequences of their unresolved inner turmoil. The "beast" in the novel can be interpreted as a manifestation of the boys' collective unconscious, representing the primal urges and dark impulses that drive them towards destruction. Initially perceived as an external threat, the beast gradually evolves into a symbol of the boys' own inner demons, highlighting the pervasive influence of the death drive on their psyche.

As the constraints of civilization erode on the island, the boys give in to their most basic instincts, unleashing the full force of the death drive. The breakdown of social norms and moral principles allows their repressed desires and impulses to rise to the surface, leading to chaos, violence, and ultimately, destruction. The disintegration of the conch shell, a symbol of order and civilization, serves as a poignant metaphor for the triumph of the death drive over the forces of life and reason. Through its vivid characters, haunting imagery, and profound themes, the novel serves as a powerful meditation on the complexities of human nature and the eternal struggle between life and death. As the boys grapple with their inner demons and confront the destructive forces that threaten to consume them, they offer a poignant reflection on the darker aspects of the human condition and the enduring power of the death drive.

A Freudian psychoanalytic reading of *Lord of the Flies* offers a fascinating insight into the complexities of the human psyche and the underlying motivations driving the characters' actions. Freud proposed various defense mechanisms that individuals use to cope with anxiety and conflict. In the novel, characters employ defense mechanisms such as repression, denial, and projection to protect themselves from the harsh realities of their situation. For example, the boys' insistence on the existence of the "beast" can be seen as a form of denial, allowing them to externalize their fears and avoid confronting the true source of their anxieties – their own primal instincts. By examining the novel through the lens of Freud's theories, readers can uncover layers of meaning and symbolism that deepen their understanding of Golding's

masterpiece. As the boys grapple with their inner demons and confront the primal urges that lurk within them, they offer a compelling portrait of the human condition and the eternal struggle between civilization and savagery.

UNIT 4 (B): SYMBOLISM IN THE NOVEL

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is a novel rich in symbolism, with various elements serving as potent metaphors that enhance the themes and deepen the narrative. From the characters to the setting to the objects found on the island, each symbol carries layers of meaning that invite interpretation and reflection.

i) The cosmic symbolism of the island

The underlying cosmic symbolism of the novel is built-up since the very beginning when the boys are dropped on an uninhabited tropical island in the Pacific Ocean. As the setting of the novel, the symbol of the island is central to the theme that the inherent evil lurking inside human nature can cause the ultimate destruction of innocence and beauty. Golding pursues on a long-established tradition by making the island “roughly boat-shaped”; and thus, implying that the children typify all mankind on their journey through life. The island as a ship is, then, a symbol of the world in microcosm.

The island functions as a microcosm of human society, encapsulating the complexities and contradictions of civilization. Just as society is governed by rules, hierarchies, and power dynamics, so too is the island. The boys' attempts to establish order and maintain a sense of social structure mirror the challenges of governing larger human communities. The island becomes a cosmic battleground where the forces of order and chaos collide. The struggle between Ralph's democratic leadership and Jack's authoritarian rule reflects the eternal conflict between opposing cosmic forces. This cosmic battle plays out in the hearts and minds of the boys, mirroring humanity's ongoing struggle to reconcile its primal instincts with its aspirations for civilization. The island serves as a testing ground for the boys' moral fabric, challenging them to confront their deepest fears, desires, and impulses. It becomes a cosmic crucible where their true selves are revealed, stripped of the trappings of civilization and confronted with the raw realities of existence. Through their experiences on the island, the boys grapple with

fundamental questions of identity, morality, and the nature of the universe. The island embodies the cyclical nature of life and death, with its lush vegetation and abundant wildlife juxtaposed against scenes of violence and destruction. The boys' struggle for survival mirrors the cosmic struggle between creation and destruction, growth and decay. The island becomes a metaphor for the broader cosmic cycle, reminding readers of the impermanence of existence and the inevitability of death.

The microcosmic aspect of the island is stretched further through the presence of all the four elements – earth, air, fire, water. The storm itself represents a warring interplay of them all. The physical island, itself representing the earth element, is surrounded by the other three. But in addition to that, the essence of the earth is also exhibited as the clay with which the boys paint their faces. The Signal Fire is the unequivocal fire element that symbolizes not only the beckoning for rescue to the civilization but also as a destructive force. And water and air are the elements from which the boys believe the beast comes. The dead paratrooper, whom they finally think to be the dreaded beast, came from the air and was carried away, by the wind, to the sea. Nature, with its untamed beauty and inherent dangers, serves as a potent cosmic force on the island. The lush vegetation, towering cliffs, and vast expanse of the ocean evoke a sense of awe and wonder, reminding the boys of their insignificance in the face of the natural world. Nature's indifference to human struggles underscores the novel's cosmic themes and highlights humanity's place within the broader cosmos.

The island also symbolizes the unknown and the unknowable, representing the mysteries of the universe that lie beyond human comprehension. Its remote location, surrounded by the vast expanse of the ocean, evokes a sense of mystery and wonder, inviting readers to contemplate the mysteries of existence and the limits of human knowledge. In essence, the island serves as a potent symbol with cosmic significance, embodying themes of order and chaos, civilization and savagery, life and death. Through its rich symbolism and evocative imagery, the island invites readers to explore profound questions about the nature of the universe and humanity's place within it. As readers navigate the cosmic landscape of the novel, they are compelled to confront the timeless truths and existential mysteries that lie at the heart of the human experience.

ii) The Storm

In the novel, the storm serves as a pivotal event that carries significant symbolic weight, shaping the narrative and reflecting the inner turmoil of the characters. As a powerful force of nature, the storm becomes a metaphor for the chaos, violence, and destruction that unfold on the island, while also serving as a catalyst for the boys' descent into savagery. The storm symbolizes the unleashed forces of nature and the uncontrollable power of the elements. As the storm approaches the island, it unleashes its fury, battering the landscape and threatening the boys' fragile sense of security. The raging winds and pounding rain mirror the growing chaos and violence among the boys, foreshadowing the darker events to come.

A storm accompanies the confused landing of the boys on the island, and later another storm develops in gradual stages that parallel those leading up to the boys' feast and the slaughter of Simon. After the slaughter of the sow, "high up among the bulging clouds thunder went off like a gun," and later "the thunder boomed again." In the next chapter, "over the island, the build-up of clouds" continues, and when the boys eat their kill they do so "beneath a sky of thunderous brass that rang with the storm-coming." After Jack's sneering declaration that the conch no longer counts, "all at once the thunder struck. Instead of the dull boom there was a point of impact in the explosion." The thunder becomes more violent as the boys become more violent and wild in their dance; and the dark sky, also, becomes "shattered" by "blue-white scar[s]." Then at last, after Simon has been killed, "the clouds opened and let down the rain...."

The storm acts as a catalyst for conflict among the boys, exacerbating tensions and accelerating their descent into savagery. As the storm rages outside, the boys' internal turmoil intensifies, reflecting the external chaos in their own behaviour. The storm becomes a metaphor for the brewing storm within the boys' souls, as they grapple with their primal instincts and moral dilemmas. The storm highlights nature's indifference to human struggles and suffering. As the boys huddle together in fear, nature rages on, oblivious to their plight. The storm serves as a reminder of the boys' insignificance in the face of the natural world, underscoring the harsh realities of existence and the brutal indifference of the universe. The storm serves as a foreshadowing device, signalling the tragic events that will unfold on the island. As the storm approaches, tensions among the boys reach a boiling point, setting the stage for violence and destruction. The storm's ominous presence creates a sense of foreboding, hinting at the darkness that lies ahead for the boys.

Despite its destructive power, the storm also carries elements of purification and renewal. As the storm passes, the air is cleansed, and the landscape is refreshed. Similarly, the

storm serves as a catalyst for change among the boys, forcing them to confront their inner demons and re-evaluate their priorities. In this sense, the storm becomes a symbol of catharsis and transformation. The storm reflects the psychological turmoil experienced by the boys as they grapple with their fears, desires, and conflicts. Just as the storm rages outside, a tempest brews within the hearts and minds of the boys, driving them towards violence and chaos. The storm becomes a mirror for their inner struggles, amplifying their emotions and pushing them to the brink of madness.

iii) The Conch Shell

The conch shell emerges as a potent symbol imbued with layers of meaning and significance in the novel. From the moment Ralph discovers the conch shell, it becomes a symbol of authority and democracy among the boys. The conch's ability to summon the group, its role in facilitating democratic decision-making, and its power to maintain order and civility on the island underscore its significance as a symbol of governance and leadership. Apart from representing the spirit of democracy and the voice of authority, it also stands for man's reasoning faculty and functions as an ordering principle. When Ralph and Piggy find the conch shell, they start using it to summon the other boys for meetings. It begins to serve as a tool for communication and unity, allowing the boys to come together, share ideas, and make collective decisions. "The conch rule" was established and it bestowed a sense of legitimacy to the one who held the shell. As the person is given the privilege to speak while holding the conch it becomes a symbol of free speech in democratic ethics. When held by the speaker, the conch confers authority and ensures that each voice is heard, regardless of rank or status. It becomes a symbol of equality and inclusivity, fostering a sense of community among the boys.

It can be noticed that though Ralph is comfortable wielding its influence, Jack is vexed by its presence right from the beginning. Ralph and Piggy try to cling on to the vestiges of democratic ideals by insisting on the shell's significance but Jack and his group constantly deride its authority. Despite its symbolic importance, the conch shell also highlights the fragility of social order and the limitations of human civilization. As tensions escalate and conflicts arise among the boys, the power of the conch begins to wane, signalling the erosion of democracy and the breakdown of authority on the island. Its eventual destruction symbolizes the collapse of order and the triumph of savagery over civilization.

Ominously, the breakdown of the conch, as well as democratic order, was foreshadowed by the remark made when the conch was first discovered: “Careful! You’ll break it”. Later, Roger hurls a great rock to crash down upon Piggy and, when it hits him, “the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist.” Piggy’s death and the subsequent destruction of the conch annihilate all traces of culture from the island. It heralds complete anarchy which is mirrored in the ensuing hunt for Ralph. In other words, order, rational behaviour, and benevolent authority have been completely smashed on the island: the quest has failed. The destruction of the conch shell marks a pivotal moment in the novel, symbolizing the loss of innocence and the descent into savagery among the boys. As Jack’s tribe rebels against Ralph’s leadership and embraces violence and chaos, the conch shell becomes a casualty of their rebellion, shattered into pieces along with their last vestiges of civilization.

Despite its destruction, the conch shell retains a symbolic resonance throughout the novel, serving as a reminder of the boys’ lost innocence and their potential for redemption. Its shattered remains serve as a poignant symbol of the boys’ collective failure to maintain order and civility, but also as a glimmer of hope for the possibility of renewal and reconciliation. Through its symbolism, the conch shell invites readers to contemplate the complexities of human nature and the eternal struggle between civilization and savagery. As the boys grapple with their inner demons and confront the harsh realities of existence, the conch shell serves as a potent reminder of the delicate balance between order and chaos, and the enduring power of symbols to shape human behaviour and society.

iv) Fire

Fire serves as a multifaceted symbol that carries profound significance throughout the narrative. From its practical utility as a means of survival to its symbolic resonance as a representation of hope, destruction, and the struggle between civilization and savagery, fire plays a central role in shaping the themes and events of the novel. Initially, fire symbolizes the boys’ hope of being rescued from the island. The signal fire is, in fact, a kind of portal to home, to civilization; a symbol of hope and communication. Ralph’s insistence on maintaining a signal fire reflects the boys’ desire to attract passing ships and return to civilization. Fire represents their connection to the outside world and their longing for salvation, serving as a beacon of hope amidst their isolation and despair. In the beginning, the boys diligently maintain

the fire to attract the attention of ships passing by. The fire signifies their fervent desire to escape from the island and return to the familiar and civilized world.

Fire also symbolizes the boys' attempts to maintain a sense of civilization and order on the island. The ritual of tending the fire becomes a symbol of their commitment to the rules and responsibilities of society. It represents their collective effort to uphold the values of civilization and preserve their humanity in the face of adversity. However, as their innate savagery asserts itself, the desire for a "return" vanishes gradually. The boys soon forget the purpose of the fire and ignore the duty to keep it ignited. Apart from Ralph and Piggy, all the others are content enacting the roles of little savages and are no longer interested in denouncing the nascent power of their bestiality. By the time the boys start to lose their hope in salvation and show off their wilder, primitive side, they begin to forget about the fire.

As the novel progresses, fire undergoes a transformation from a symbol of hope and civilization to one of destruction and chaos. Later in the novel, we see that due to the negligence of the boys, the fire starts burning out of control. The boys' inability to control the fire leads to disastrous consequences, culminating in the death of one of their own. Fire becomes a metaphor for the destructive potential of human nature, as the boys' primal instincts and inner demons are unleashed with devastating consequences. Fire becomes a catalyst for conflict among the boys, exacerbating tensions and fuelling their descent into savagery. The struggle to control the fire mirrors the power struggles and rivalries that emerge within the group. As the fire becomes a source of contention, it symbolizes the breakdown of order and the triumph of chaos over civilization.

Towards the end of the novel, fire serves as both a symbol of redemption and destruction. While the fire that destroys the island offers the boys a chance for rescue and salvation, it also represents the annihilation of their former selves and the innocence they have lost. Fire becomes a purifying force, cleansing the island of its dark past and offering the boys a chance for rebirth and renewal. It induces the idea of the destruction of purity, innocence and hope. In one way or another, the fire became both a symbol for salvation and destruction too, in a paradoxical way. Ultimately, fire serves as a reflection of human nature and the eternal struggle between civilization and savagery. It highlights the dualistic nature of humanity, with fire symbolizing both the potential for enlightenment and progress, as well as the capacity for destruction and violence. Through its symbolism, fire invites readers to contemplate the

complexities of human behaviour and the enduring struggle to reconcile our primal instincts with our aspirations for civilization.

v) Piggy's glasses

Piggy's glasses are one of the most dominant symbols in the novel signifying multiple connotations. They represent rational thinking and scientific spirit. As a symbol of reason, it is fittingly worn by the intellectual thinker of the group. The glasses symbolize vision and clarity of thought in a world clouded by chaos and confusion. As the only character with clear-sightedness and rational thinking, Piggy represents intellect and reason amidst the boys' descent into savagery. His glasses serve as a metaphorical lens through which the truth can be perceived, highlighting the importance of wisdom and insight in navigating the complexities of human nature. While the other boys indulge in running naked, having fun and hunting for food, Piggy is the one always observing. The usage of glasses is simple: we use them for looking. But here, it has a deeper meaning. Looking leads to vision, to sight, that can be easily interpreted as a metaphor for knowledge. Piggy knows a lot more than the others, such as how to use the conch and the need for installing order.

Piggy's glasses also serve as a practical tool for survival on the island. The glasses' ability to start fires is crucial for the boys' well-being, providing warmth, light, and a means of cooking food. Piggy's insistence on protecting his glasses underscores their value as a lifeline in the harsh environment of the island, highlighting the tension between practical necessity and symbolic significance. The power politics in the narrative revolves around the ownership of these glasses. One side of it is eventually broken in a scuffle following the failure of the passing ship to see any smoke on the island; later the remaining lens is stolen in a night raid led by Jack. The breaking and losing of the glasses indicate, symbolically, the breakdown of visionary reason. Piggy's resulting blindness corresponds to the darkness of eclipsing unreason. The fates of the conch and of the glasses, like their functions, are thus related to each other and to Piggy – all are ultimately broken. Piggy's bespectacled head, the source of all reasonable planning, breaks open after his fall- "His head opened and stuff came out and turned red." After this event reason no longer exists; for this fall destroys the conch and, by splitting his head, kills Piggy.

The fragility of Piggy's glasses mirrors the fragility of civilization and the delicate balance between order and chaos. As the glasses become damaged and eventually destroyed, they symbolize the erosion of rationality and the collapse of social order among the boys. The boys' inability to protect Piggy's glasses reflects their failure to preserve the values of

civilization in the face of primal instincts and inner darkness. The destruction of Piggy's glasses represents the loss of innocence and identity among the boys. As the glasses shatter into pieces, so too does the boys' sense of morality and humanity. Piggy's blindness without his glasses mirrors the boys' blindness to their own savagery and the consequences of their actions, highlighting the tragic consequences of their descent into darkness. The glasses also symbolize vulnerability and exploitation in a world where power dynamics and social hierarchies prevail. Their theft and misuse by Jack's tribe highlight the boys' disregard for reason and intellect, as well as their willingness to exploit others for their own gain. Piggy's helplessness in the face of this exploitation underscores the broader themes of injustice and oppression that pervade the novel.

vi) The Spiked Pig's Head

The spiked pig's head, also known as the 'Lord of the Flies', emerges as a potent symbol imbued with layers of meaning and significance. The bloody, severed and spiked head symbolizes the inherent evil and savagery within human nature. As the boys' hunt and kill pigs for food, their actions become increasingly brutal and sadistic, reflecting their descent into primal instincts and violence. The spiked pig's head serves as a tangible reminder of the darkness that lurks within them, confronting them with the reality of their own capacity for cruelty and destruction.

The spiked pig's head also represents the mythical beast that haunts the boys' nightmares and fuels their fears. As the embodiment of their collective anxieties and primal instincts, the pig's head becomes a symbol of the unknown and the unknowable, evoking a sense of terror and dread among the boys. Its grotesque appearance and decayed state underscore the boys' growing sense of unease and paranoia as they struggle to confront the beast within. The spiked pig's head becomes a catalyst for psychological terror among the boys, instilling fear and paranoia in their hearts and minds. Its presence symbolizes the breakdown of rationality and the triumph of primal instincts over reason, leading to a spiral of violence and chaos on the island. The boys' interactions with the pig's head underscore the psychological toll of their isolation and the darkness that threatens to consume them.

Jack impaled the severed head on a stick and placed it as a placatory offering to the imaginary beast they were so terrified of. This complicated symbol acquires greater implication in the novel when Simon confronts the sow's head in the glade. It seems to him that the spiked

head is speaking to him, telling him that evil lies within every human heart. This object is called the 'Lord of the Flies', and it is a repulsive sight: "dim-eyed, grinning faintly, blood blackening between the teeth". In this way, the 'Lord of the Flies', then, becomes both a physical manifestation of the beast – the embodiment and voice of evil and the demoniac. It is the Biblical Beelzebub, the lord of the flies and dung, the Prince of Devils. And it is the evil that is ingrained in every human being. The materialization of this devil coincides with the emergence of savagery in the boys, manifested in the acts that they commit. It is the principal symbol of fear and in the last chapter; it becomes the traditional symbol of death – a skull. The animal is distinguished from the human by the reasoning faculty which it lacks. And a human's loss of this faculty reduces him to the bestial level. Through the use of animal imagery Golding is able to keep constantly before the reader the motif of degeneration, the changing from the reasoning human to the unreasoning animal state. Ralph explicitly tells the other boys, by way of warning, that "we'll soon be animals" and the prediction becomes a reality. The spiked pig's head alludes to religious symbolism, particularly the concept of the devil or Satan. Its association with evil and temptation echoes biblical narratives of temptation and sin, inviting readers to contemplate the eternal struggle between good and evil. The dialogue between Simon and the pig's head further reinforces this religious imagery, with the pig's head taunting Simon with dark truths about human nature and the inevitability of death.

The spiked pig's head serves as a reflection of human degradation and moral decay in the absence of civilization and societal norms. Its decayed state mirrors the decay of morality and ethics among the boys, as they succumb to their most primal urges and abandon the values of civilization. The pig's head becomes a symbol of their descent into savagery and the loss of their humanity. The presence of the spiked pig's head serves as a foreshadowing device, signalling the tragic events that will unfold on the island. Its ominous appearance and ominous dialogue with Simon hint at the darkness that lies ahead for the boys, foreshadowing their descent into madness and the violent confrontation that will ultimately claim their lives. The pig's head becomes a harbinger of doom, warning of the inevitable consequences of their actions.

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ASSIGNMENTS

Essay type questions

1. Write a note on the theme of human depravity in the novel *Lord of the Flies*.
2. Develop an explanation of why some critics feel that William Golding's main theme is that evil is an innate trait of mankind. Give suitable references.
3. Identify some of the significant symbols in the novel and justify your answer by providing illustrative textual references.
4. How does the character of Ralph change by his unique experiences on the island?
5. Compare and contrast the characters of Ralph and Jack.
6. What is an allegory? Would you consider *Lord of the Flies* as a religious allegory? Substantiate your answer.
7. Examine the novel and its characters in light of the Freudian psychoanalytic theories.
8. Do you consider Simon as a Christ-like figure in the novel? Justify your claim with an analysis of the Biblical allusions from the text.
9. Two major symbols in the novel are the conch shell and piggy's glasses. Analyze the importance of these symbols.
10. The novel's narrative action draws and increasingly firm line between savagery and civilization. Do you agree? Discuss with close references to the text.

Short-answer type questions

1. Who is the titular 'Lord of the Flies' in the novel?
2. How did the British boys land on an uninhabited tropical island?
3. Write a short note on the setting of the novel.
4. How did Ralph become the leader of the boys?
5. How and why the signal fire was built?
6. Write a short note on the character of Piggy.
7. Interpret this infamous chanting "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!"
8. Was there an actual beast on the island? Analyse.
9. Critically evaluate Simon's encounter with the 'Lord of the Flies'.
10. How was Simon killed by the boys? What was Ralph's reaction to this horrific event?
11. Describe the awful murder of Piggy along with the destruction of the conch shell.
12. How the boys were finally rescued at the end of the novel?
13. Write short notes on:
 - i) The symbol of the storm
 - ii) The importance of the conch-shell
 - iii) Piggy's glasses
 - iv) The spiked pig's head

BLOCK - II

UNITS: 5 - 8

DUBLINERS

BY

JAMES JOYCE

CONTENT STRUCTURE:

Unit 5 (a): Life and Works of James Joyce (1882-1941)

Unit 5 (b): An Introduction to *Dubliners*

Unit 6 (a): A Brief Synopsis of Some Selected Stories from Joyce's *Dubliners*:

“The Sisters”

Unit 6 (b): “Eveline”

Unit 6 (c): “The Boarding House”

Unit 7 (a): A Brief Synopsis of Some Selected Stories from Joyce's *Dubliners*: “Clay”

Unit 7 (b): “A Painful Case”

Unit 7 (c): “The Dead”

Unit 8 (a): The Representation of Ireland in *Dubliners*

Unit 8 (b): Symbolism in Joyce's *Dubliners*

Unit 8 (c): Epiphanies of James Joyce

References

Suggested Readings

Assignments

UNIT - 5

UNIT 5 (A): LIFE AND WORKS OF JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

One of the most influential writers of the Modern era, James Joyce was born on February 2, 1882 at West Rathgar in Dublin, Ireland, to John Stanislaus and Mary Joyce. He was educated at the Jesuit boarding school Clongowes Wood College, near Clane, Co. Kildare, and from 1893, at the Jesuit day-school Belvedere College, Dublin, and subsequently at the Royal University of Ireland (1898-99) and University College, Dublin (1899-1902). A good linguist from an early age, he read and studied extensively, and in 1901, wrote a letter of profound admiration in Dano-Norwegian to the playwright Henrik Ibsen. Apart from Ibsen, he was influenced by Gerhart Hauptmann, Dante, George Moore, and W.B. Yeats (who treated him with considerable personal kindness).

Dissatisfied with the narrowness and bigotry of Ireland, as he saw it, Joyce went to Paris for a year in 1902, where he lived in poverty, wrote verse, and discovered the novel *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (1888) by Edouard Dujardin (1861-1949), which later became an inspiration behind his use of interior monologue. He returned to Dublin in 1903, on receiving the news of his mother's death. However, after a brief stay in the Martello tower (mentioned in his novel *Ulysses*) with Oliver Gogarty, then left Ireland for good with Nora Barnacle (1884-1951), the woman with whom he had spent the rest of his life. He first met Nora in 1904 when she worked as a chambermaid in a hotel and fell in love with her; she later bore him a son and a daughter. They lived at Trieste for some years, where Joyce taught English at the Berlitz school, before moving to Zurich in 1915. After the end of World War I, however, they settled in Paris.

Joyce's first published work was a volume of verse, *Chamber Music* (1907), which was followed by *Dubliners* (1914), a volume of short stories, published after great delays and difficulties, culminating in his final visit to Ireland in 1912, when the sheets were destroyed through the prospective publisher's fear of libel. When the stories finally appeared, they were greeted with much enthusiasm by Ezra Pound, in a review in *The Egoist*. Joyce's friendship with Pound greatly influenced his literary career and helped him to establish as a writer of repute. Another important ally whom Joyce met during this period was the independently wealthy Harriet Shaw Weaver, a business manager and later became the editor of *The Egoist*, and a lifelong benefactress of Joyce.

Joyce also met with difficulties at the time of the performance and publication of his play *Exiles*; it was published in 1918, staged unsuccessfully in the same year in Munich, and first performed in London by the Stage Society in 1926. A significant instance of his literary oeuvre, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a largely autobiographical work, was published serially in *The Egoist* in 1914-15 (part of a first draft, “Stephen Hero”, appeared in 1944), and in one volume in 1916 (New York) and 1917 (London). The novel, narrated mostly by an omniscient narrator, is a *Kunstslerroman*, dealing with the life of its protagonist and an artist, Stephen Dedalus. The novel reflects how an artist perceives his surroundings, as well as his views on faith, family, and country, and how these perceptions often conflict with those prescribed for him by society. As a result, the artist feels distanced from the world. Unfortunately, this feeling of distance and detachment is misconstrued by others to be the prideful attitude of an egoist. Thus the artist, already feeling isolated, is increasingly aware of a certain growing, painful social alienation.

By the virtue of a strong and influential support from Pound and Yeats, Joyce received a grant from the Royal Literary Fund in 1915, and shortly thereafter, a grant from the Civil List. Yet, despite the financial support and the growing recognition of his genius, he continued to struggle against poverty and suffered from a persisting visual problem. A severe attack of glaucoma in 1917 led to years of pain and some operations. Moreover, his daughter’s severe mental illness became a source of his trouble in the later years.

His other major work of fiction *Ulysses* first appeared in the *Little Review* (from March 1918 to December 1920), and was later published in a single book form in Paris on February 2, 1922, on the occasion of Joyce’s 40th birthday. The first UK edition of the book appeared in 1936. Originally constructed as a modern re-telling of Homer’s *The Odyssey*, the entire action of *Ulysses* takes place in and immediately around Dublin on a single day (June 16, 1904). The three central characters—Stephen Dedalus (the hero of Joyce’s earlier *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*); Leopold Bloom, a Jewish advertising canvasser; and his wife, Molly—are intended to be modern counterparts of Telemachus, Ulysses (Odysseus), and Penelope, respectively, and the events of the novel loosely parallel the major events in Odysseus’s journey home after the Trojan War. The novel was received as an instance of consummate power and stupendous scale by diverse writers including, T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, and Arnold Bennett.

Another small volume of verse, *Poems Penyeach*, was published in 1927, and his other work of merit, *Finnegans Wake*, extracts of which had already appeared as “Work in Progress” (from 1928 to 1937) was published in its complete form in 1939. *Finnegans Wake* is a complex novel that blends the reality of life with a dream world. The motive idea of the novel, inspired by the 18th-century Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico, is that history is cyclical. To demonstrate this, the book ends with the first half of the first sentence of the novel. Thus, the last line is actually part of the first line, and the first line a part of the last line. The plot itself is difficult to follow, as the novel explores a number of fractured storylines. The main tension, however, comes from the juxtaposition of reality and dream, which is achieved through changing characters and settings.

Joyce underwent surgery in Zürich for a perforated duodenal ulcer on 11 January 1941. He fell into a coma on the following day. He awoke at 2 a.m. on January 13, 1941, and asked a nurse to call his wife and son, before losing consciousness again. They were on the way to the hospital when he died 15 minutes later. Joyce was less than a month short of his 59th birthday. His body was buried in the Fluntern Cemetery, Zürich. James Joyce’s literary works have prompted a wide range of critical commentary in different languages, and he has remained a literary figure of global interest till date.

UNIT 5 (B): AN INTRODUCTION TO *DUBLINERS*

“Life we must accept as we see it before our eyes,” the young Joyce had announced, “men and women as we see them in the real world”; and that meant making art out of “the dreary sameness of existence.” It is this realism, which functions as a driving force in his *Dubliners*. Essentially, a collection of short stories, which, though were completed in the early years of the twentieth century, were not published until 1914 due to James’s ongoing tussle with the publishers over the frank sexual contents.

In 1905, Joyce, then a young man of twenty-three years of age, sent the manuscript of twelve short stories to an English publisher. However, the stories, though realistic and interesting, were not accepted by the publisher who was making unnecessary delay in his response, giving James ample time to add three more stories, "Two Gallants," "A Little Cloud," and "The Dead" in the course of the next two years. The fifteen stories in the collection represent a decaying

picture of the city of Dublin in Ireland, where Joyce himself was born, raised, and spent a major part of his life.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Dublin had been the second city of the British Isles and one of the ten largest cities in Europe. Its' marvellous architecture, an elegant layout, and a bustling port made the path for a dynamic and agreeable urban life. But her situation altered drastically in the latter half of the century as Belfast had outstripped her as the great city of Ireland, resulting in the devastating economic condition. Formerly fashionable Georgian townhouses turned into horrible slums, with inadequate sewage and cramped living conditions. Her ports were in decline, and chances for advancement were slim for the lower and middle classes. In those days, power rested in the hands of a Protestant minority. Therefore, to reflect the financial decay of the city, *Dubliners* dwells heavily on the themes of poverty, stagnation, hopelessness, and death. Joyce has observed this decay minutely and attempted to reflect this 'paralysis' in every single detail of Dublin's environment, from the people's faces to the dilapidated buildings, and many characters assume that the future will be worse than the present. It is important to note that most of the stories in the collection focus on members of the lower or middle classes. Thus, the characters of each story aptly suit the tragic fate of the city, of which they are parts. The connecting thread of the stories is a boy, who often acts as a narrator, who has reached the verge of adolescence and bears living testimony to the tragedy of the characters concerned, of people whom he had met, somewhere or the other, in the course of his life in the deadly city.

UNIT - 6

UNIT 6 (A): A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF SOME SELECTED STORIES FROM JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*: "THE SISTERS"

The first story of the collection "The Sisters" was initially published in *The Irish Homestead* on 13 August 1904, and then rigorously revised by Joyce in the subsequent years, before being published finally in *Dubliners* in 1914. It is narrated by a young unnamed narrator who tries to grapple with the death of his neighbour, an old priest named Father Flynn.

The opening paragraph of the story beginning with the sentence, "There was no hope for him this time: it was the third stroke", generates the ambivalent expectation in the boy narrator's

mind to see lighted candles from the priest's bedroom window shedding their reflection on the "darkened blind"(Joyce 7). The boy's ambivalent attitude to the dying priest is captured in the sentence, "Every night as I gazed up at the window I said softly to myself the word paralysis"(Joyce 7). It must be noted that the word "paralysis" that defines the physical inability of the old priest, also refers to the prevalent condition of Dublin, which has been paralyzed by the agony of tremendous financial insecurity. When the boy comes downstairs for supper, he finds their neighbour Old Cotter talking to his uncle and aunt. His uncle informs him of Father Flynn's death which they have learned from Old Cotter. The boy pretends that the news does not interest him as he is aware that he "was under observation" of Old Cotter and his uncle. His uncle admits that the priest had "taught him a great deal. ... and ... he had a great wish for him"(Joyce 8). At this Old Cotter expresses his reservations in a sentence as he says, "I wouldn't like children of mine ...to have too much to say to a man like that". He then clarifies his stand by placing his opinion that he thinks the .priest's company is detrimental to the growth of young children who, he thinks, should mix only with those of his age.

The boy, though angry with Old Cotter for his moralistic sermons regarding the adverse effects of the priest's company on the "impressionable" mind of children, couldn't help himself out from his attempt "to extract meaning from his unfinished sentences". He falls asleep and dreams of "the heavy grey face of the paralytic" following him with the desire to confess something. He feels haunted by the priest and is left in a state of wonder"while it smiled continually"(Joyce 9). Even in his dream he remembers that the priest died of paralysis.

On the following day, the narrator, accompanied by his aunt, visits the deceased's house to pay respects. They went inside the room of the priest where he was put to rest; his face bearing the note of relief. The priest's sisters, particularly Eliza, who appears to be the younger one, tries to unravel the mystery behind the mysterious behaviour of the priest, which was generated by a simple act of breaking an empty chalice leads to the priest's loss of vocation. She underlines the eccentricity in her brother's behaviour when she recounts how two priests discovered Father Flynn one night sitting "in the dark in his confession- box, wide--awake and laughing-like softly to himself". This idiosyncratic act, as Eliza adds, confirmed to all that something was seriously wrong with him and that might be the reason for his profound alienation from society. The story ends with Eliza's vague judgemental assertion that "there was something gone wrong with him"(Joyce 17).

UNIT 6 (B): "EVELINE"

The fourth story of the collection "Eveline" opens with the portrait of a pensive and exhausted protagonist, introduced in the typical Joycean style as "she", who is shown seated leaning her head against the dusty window curtains "inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne"(Joyce 37). The narrator's twice repeated representation of Eveline inhaling the "odour of dusty cretonne" makes it almost obvious that she does not detest her bleak and dingy surroundings despite her protestations to the contrary. She has grown so acclimatized to the dusty background that she is hardly aware of inhaling dust- particles.

Eveline is found in a nostalgic mood, revisiting the bygone days, and reviewing the sweeping changes that time has brought about in her family as well as in the neighbourhood. Suddenly she seems to remember her decision to leave her home to change the course of her life. However, she discovers herself firmly rooted in her home amidst the familiar objects occupying a vast portion of the room. She has almost developed a filial bond with the things she has been dusting for so long that the very thought of being divorced from them fills her with a pang of separation as "she had never dreamed of being divided" from them. One such object is the yellowing photograph of the priest, hung on the wall, above the broken harmonium, whose name has remained unknown to her.

The protagonist again reverts to the focal point, her decision to leave home, still unsure about it as she questions herself, "was that wise?"(Joyce 38). She tries to seek justification for her decision by hovering over the pros and the cons of her intended move. Though she knows that her home ensures her food and shelter; besides she lives with those whom she knows closely, still she is not sure about her move. Moreover, she is well aware of the hard work she has to do both at home and in the store she works in to ensure this security. She would miss her home but she is sure she would not regret leaving her working place as her colleague Miss Gavan does not like her. Although the thought may appear exciting apparently, the very thought of staying in a new place, at a new home in a far off alien country evokes fear in her mind as the hour of her departure seems approaching.

The readers are then introduced to Frank, her suitor, with whom "[Eveline] was about to explore another life". Eveline effusively describes him as "very kind, manly, open-hearted"(Joyce 39). Frank has promised to marry her and take her to Buenos Ayres where "he had a home waiting for her. The unfamiliar name of her potential destination and the romantic

life generates an amount of excitement in her mind, and make her revisit her first meeting with him and how their courtship developed gradually. In her impoverished and uneventful life, her visit to the theatre to see an opera *The Bohemian Girl* with him is a memorable incident which she recollects with happiness. The narrator underlines her ecstasy in the sentence: "... she felt elated as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him" (Joyce 40).

The romantic operas she has watched might have created an impression in her mind about the romantic hero which seems to befit Frank. The attraction for him is enhanced by his inexhaustible stock of stories about distant lands which exude an air of romance into the suffocating monotony of Eveline's constricted existence in Dublin. Her happy recollection of Frank is clouded by her remembrance of her father's vehement objection to her love affairs with a sailor expressed with a dismissive generalization: "I know these sailor chaps" (Joyce 40).

The narrative switches back to the present as the protagonist advances a few steps to pursue her ambition. The moment she gazes on the letter she has written to her father informing him of her resolution to leave, her determination suffers a setback to think of her old father who, she is sure, "would miss her" (Joyce 41). As she is lost in thought of her lonely old father, she hears a street organ playing the same melancholy tune as she heard on the last night of her mother's illness. It appears "strange" to Eveline that "it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. The remembrance of the promise she had made to her dead mother shakes her resolve more powerfully than her concern for her living father. Moreover, the memory of her mother's predicament, possibly wrought by her father's tyranny, appears to enact in her mind's eye what the future has in store for her if she fails to act now. Frank appears as a saviour to her, she emphatically proclaims to herself, "would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love too" (Joyce 41).

But her momentary excitement of beginning a new life with a romantic companion goes like a flick, as the time of their departure arrives. The last part of the story focuses on a silent Eveline muttering her prayers to God to direct her in her moment of crisis. The distress surging her mind makes her hear the whistle blown by the boat she is scheduled to board with Frank as mournful. Eveline grows too inert to listen to what Frank is telling her repeatedly and she guesses that he must have told her something about the passage. Her indifference to Frank becomes too evident when she clutches the iron railings so that Frank cannot forcibly draw her

into the boat. At that moment, she feels that the metallic bar might offer her more support and ensure her safety, than the warm clasp of her erstwhile suitor. His urgent call to her to board the vessel by seizing her hand arouses a strange sort of emotion in her as her perception of Frank has undergone a transformation. Her deemed saviour appears to Eveline now as her potential destroyer as she suspects “ ... he would drown her”. Eveline is seized by a feeling of anguish which she gives vent to in her repeated " No" followed by exclamations and the finally dismissive utterance: " It was impossible" (Joyce 42). She remains inert in her decision even before the caressing address "Evvy" made by the astonished and confused Frank. He goes on insisting her to follow him till the moment the boat leaves. At that instant, a complete metamorphosis overshadows her whole being, bringing in a total trans fixation. Her transformation is described in the following way: “She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal.” The climactic point of her metamorphosis is rendered in the concluding line of the story: “Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition” (Joyce 43).

UNIT 6 (C): “THE BOARDING HOUSE”

"The Boarding House" is the fifth story in order of composition; (the manuscript bears the date 1 July 1905) and is the seventh story in *Dubliners*. The story, on a simple note, deals with a domineering mother and her daughter who is too subdued to be a protagonist. The narrator writes in the introductory part, "She was a woman who was quite able to keep things to herself: a determined woman", and then "Mrs. Mooney ... was a big imposing woman"(Joyce 66). She appears to have inherited the aforementioned qualities from her father who was a butcher and was, by nature as well as by profession, a merciless man. It is this inherited mercilessness that marks her decisions and actions.

Mrs. Mooney has not wasted much time to seek separation from her bullying husband and drives him away forthwith from her house, keeping custody of their children. She, as it transpires in the course of the narrative, is an indulgent mother but very strict and cruel as a wife. Her business instincts, presumably inherited from her father, enable her to invest the residual amount she could retrieve from her not-so-much-earning butcher business, which was run by her drunkard husband, in setting up a boarding house.

The focal point of the narrative, is, however, not Mrs. Mooney, but her daughter Polly, who has the "habit of glancing upwards when she spoke with anyone, which made her look like a little perverse Madonna" (Joyce 67). The mother keeps a constant eye on the daughter and compels her to remain confined to the house to demolish the possibility of her separated husband's connection with her.

The narrator then divulges the perverted motive of the mother who exploits her daughter's liveliness to expand her business when he mentions that the mother's "intention was to give her the run of the young men". She is being referred as a "shrewd judge" who winks at Polly's presumably continuous flirting with her young boarders dismissing it as their pastime and hence not to be taken seriously. She seems to have studied them to realize that "none of them meant business"(Joyce 68).

Mrs. Mooney's confidence in herself and the irrefutable arguments she frames like a manipulative lawyer ensure her that she would win before she meets her adversary, who is, of course, the victimized Doran. Joyce underlines the essence of her argumentative character in the way she arranges her points:

To begin with she had all the weight of social opinion on her side: she was an outraged mother. She had allowed him to live beneath her roof, assuming that he was a man of honour, and he had simply abused her hospitality... He had simply taken advantage of Polly's youth and inexperience: that was evident. The question was: what reparation would he make? (Joyce 69-70)

Mrs. Mooney decides that the only reparation that can compensate for the irreparable loss of her daughter's honour is marriage. She appears sure about winning Doran's consent in marriage as he is a serious young man, quite unlike Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Meade, or Bantam Lyons, with whom her task, she knows, would have been much more difficult. The comparative merit of Doran undoubtedly establishes his superiority to other boarders and his temperament along with his sound financial status might be the rationale for her decision to trap him as her prospective son-in-law. But Mrs. Mooney's mention of three young men, presumably her boarders, seems to imply her daughter's wide circle of suitors who were allowed to pass time flirting with Polly by the indulgent mother.

Doran is soon introduced in the story as an "anxious" and an extremely nervous young man who is not even able to shave because of his "unsteady hand". His tense state of mind is easily comprehensible from the narrator's declaration that "every two or three minutes a mist gathered

on his glasses so that he had to take them off and polish them with his pocket-handkerchief”(Joyce 71). He remembers with agony the confession he made to the priest on the previous night and his sin was magnified in such a way by the priest that he had to give his consent to the reparation of marrying her. According to some critics, Doran is presented in the story as both the seducer and the seduced, thereby underlining the inherent contradiction in the story.

The so-called protagonist of the story, Polly, appears in the forefront at the closing section, immersed in a reverie, oblivious to her spells of crying a bit ago, and filled with hopes and visions of the future. Her reverie is broken by her mother's voice, calling her name in a loud tone, which brings back to reality. She is presumably suffused with ecstasy when she learns that Mr. Doran wants to speak to her. Then she remembers "what she had been waiting for"(Joyce 75), which is the concluding sentence of the story.

Unit - 7

UNIT 7 (A): A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF SOME SELECTED STORIES FROM JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*: “CLAY”

The tenth story of the collection, “Clay” deviates from the preceding stories in its minimal use of dialogues or direct speech and narration. The speeches that appear to be quoted are actually what Maria, the protagonist, recollects. But the title of the story betrays the most succinct use of metaphor which functions as the presiding image in the story.

The story "Clay", like its counterparts in *Dubliners*, does not yield to a well knit-plot which generally characterizes a conventional work of fiction. The narrative, instead, is delivered from Maria's consciousness, making it a pioneering work to employ the “stream-of-consciousness” technique which later became a hallmark of Joyce's fiction.

The story, in simple terms, does not contain a plot. It revolves around the life of its protagonist Maria, who works in the kitchen of an industrial laundry. She is like by everyone in the laundry because of her gentle nature and calm approach. The only retreat in Maria's monotonous life is to visit Joe and his nanny, who comprises of her family. However, her life takes a different

course after her visit on Hallow's Eve, and the scores of event make her realise the emptiness of her existence.

The protagonist is described by a third-person in the following way: "Maria was a very, very small person indeed but she had a very long nose and a very long chin. She talked a little through her nose, always soothingly: Yes, my dear, and No, my dear" (Joyce 110). The narrator repeats his observation on Maria "when she laughed ... the tip of her nose nearly met the tip of her chin", which is interpreted by critics as quite closer to the look of a witch. Again, the third-person narrator reports her thought after her encounter with the "elderly gentleman" on the tram: " ... she thought how easy it was to know a gentleman even when he has a drop taken"(Joyce 114). It might appear ironic that she hardly knows herself and the gentleman appears to have his hand in hiding the packet of cake Maria leaves behind on the tram.

In the closing part of the narrative, she sings the song "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls ..." by Balfe, referred to in "Eveline" too, but she skips the second verse and the narrator points it out in an assertive tone, "But no one tried to show her her mistake ... "(Joyce 118). In the crucial episode, the readers are as 'blindfolded' as Maria who cannot unravel the mystery of her initial mistake in the game when she lays her hand on a wet substance. The narrator is not there to reveal the secret of the commotion that it leads to. The readers have to construct the gap in the narrative by surmising that one of the next-door girls might have played a trick on Maria.

It is probably in her complacent state of mind despite the uncertain future she is progressing to that Joyce seems to portray the irrevocable working of the motif of paralysis that shrouds the consciousness of Maria in this story like her counterparts engulfed by it in the other stories of *Dubliners*.

UNIT 7 (B): "A PAINFUL CASE"

The next story of the collection "A Painful Case" is the seventh story in the order of composition and was completed in July 1905. However, Joyce's letter to Stanislas reveals his dissatisfaction over the story: "I wrote some notes for 'A Painful Case' but I hardly think the subject is worth treating at much length"(LII 182). Some critics have perceived "A Painful Case" is a story in which something happens and hence we may detect a 'plot' that characterizes

a happening' story, and it seems to satisfy, to some extent, the conventional expectations from a story.

Often delivered from the point of view of the narrator, and sometimes that of the protagonist, the narrative opens on an ironic note justifying James Duffy's selection of "Chapelizod" as a much better locale to live in as he wants to live far from the madding crowd of the city, and he dismisses all the other suburbs of Dublin as "mean, modern and pretentious"(Joyce 119). After a brief description of the essential items and furniture that James himself has purchased according to his requirements, the narrative sweeps into the interior of the house. "The lofty walls of his uncarpeted room were free from pictures", implying that he intentionally keeps the walls bare to match the ascetic atmosphere of the room. What appears striking in these opening lines is a passive tone of narration: "A bookcase had been made ... The bed was clothed with white bed-clothes ... The books on the white wooden shelves were arranged ..." (Joyce 119).

The second paragraph deals with the distinctive temperament that marks James Duffy, the protagonist, beginning with the narrator's informative assertion: "Mr. Duffy abhorred anything which betokened physical or mental disorder. A medieval doctor would have called him saturnine". Then, the narrator remarks that his face carrying "the entire tale of his years, was of the brown tint of Dublin streets". The colour 'brown' which recurs in *Dubliners*, is associated with paralysis, or, as Joyce denotes, bears the implication of a sterile mindset. As argued by a critic, in "A Painful Case", the colour seems to permeate the very face of the protagonist, that is, it is not confined to the streets and houses which assume brown in the preceding stories. Duffy appears, as the narrator comments, to be "ever alert to greet a redeeming instinct in others but often disappointed" (Joyce 120). This is perhaps the reason why "he had neither companions nor friends ..." (Joyce 121). These details provided by the omniscient narrator in third person prepare us to evaluate how Duffy handles probably the most important experience of his life, which could have brought about a drastic transformation in his life.

Though an apparently aimless person, Duffy's only "dissipation" of life, as the narrator informs, consists of his spending the evenings before his landlady's piano, roaming about the outskirts of Dublin and enjoying Mozart's music. On one of his visits to a concert, he happens to meet a lady whose remark on the empty house strikes him "as an invitation to talk". He initiates a conversation and comes to know that she is Mrs. Sinico. Despite getting ample opportunities of enjoying her company, Duffy remains formal in his approach, and hence, the relationship remains strictly confined to intellectual exchanges as befitting his temperament.

However, despite his resistance, he has no option than to submit himself to her desire as they are almost on the verge of experiencing a union with Mrs. Sinico “in the romantic backdrop of their interaction” in “the dark discreet room” of her house, in which “the music still vibrated in their ears”. Here, the narrator's voice is heard: “This union exalted him, wore away the rough edges of his character, emotionalized his mental life” (Joyce 123-4).

But the arousal of his rational self disabled him from pursuing the illicit relationship and they mutually agreed to snap off “their intercourse”. Leaving the trembling woman on the lonely streets of the night, Duffy walks away abruptly, fearing an outbreak of emotion on her part. After a few days, he is startled, at the same time agitated to hear the news of Mrs. Sinico’s suicide: He resents “the threadbare phrases, the inane expressions of sympathy, the cautious words of a reporter won over to conceal the details of a commonplace vulgar death ... ” He cannot help thinking that “not merely had she degraded herself; she had degraded him. He saw the squalid tract of her vice, miserable and malodorous” (Joyce 128).

After this episode, four years have passed, in the course of which Duffy has revisited the entire course of events, and can’t think about the mental trauma that Mrs. Sinico has gone some years ago which compelled her to take her own life. He also starts feeling that it is he who has taken life from her, and who is responsible for her death. This sense of guilt haunts him for quite some time. “He gnawed the rectitude of his life.; he felt that he had been outcast from life's feast” (Joyce 130). He is thoroughly shattered by the realization that Mrs.Sinico has been the only person who seems to have loved him, and he has rejected her love and “sentenced her to ignominy, a death of shame” (Joyce 130).

The closing paragraph of the story marks a change in style and tone of narration by showing the dawning of sense on Duffy’s deranged mind. He is found in the act of making a strenuous effort to recover his former self by starting to doubt “the reality of what memory had told him”. He seems to realize that he has been under a spell of illusory sounds and visions by revisiting his memory of Mrs. Sinico. Finally, the hardcore realist in him makes a comeback after waging a protracted war with the repressed contour of his mental realm. This is how Joyce seems to establish the ultimate victory of reason over emotion and thus he averts the expected melodramatic close of the story. But what Duffy cannot drive away from his mind is his loneliness which seems to differ qualitatively from the loneliness he derives from and relishes in the solitary abode he selects with care to avoid communion. The narrative closes with the

indirect discourse which captures his feeling of loneliness: "He felt that he was alone" (Joyce 131).

UNIT 7 (C): "THE DEAD"

The last story of the collection "The Dead" was written by Joyce in around 1907, when he was in a constant tussle with the publishers to give life to his stories in a book form and was in urgent need of financial assistance. This story deviates from the other stories in the collection in terms of its subject and style.

In a dramatic undertone, the story opens on the evening with Lily, the domestic assistant of the Morkans, welcoming the guests to the annual Christmas dinner party at the Morkans'. The party is given by the three ladies, aunt Julia, aunt Kate and their niece, Mary Jane, who are related to the protagonist Gabriel.

The story, which apparently lacks a plot, is delivered through the consciousness of Gabriel. As the story opens, the three ladies are found in a pensive mood, eagerly waiting for the arrival of their nephew Gabriel and his wife Gretta. When the couple finally arrives, it is already late enough. On his arrival at the scene, he is found to have a bitter experience with Lily as the latter rebukes him in some way. Lily informs Gabriel that his aunts are waiting for him and that he should hurry, he remarks, in an attempt to please her, " ... I suppose we'll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man ... ". To this, she replies with bitterness: "The men that are now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you". Her response appears humiliating to the protagonist and he "coloured as if he felt he had made a mistake ..." (Joyce 202)

The handsome young man Gabriel is then found in a nervous state as he rehearses the speech that he has prepared to deliver at the dinner table. When the supper is about to start, Gabriel thinks again about his speech, and gets momentarily distracted in the thought of the snowfall outside, as he wonders,

"How cool it must be outside! How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along by the river and then through the park! The snow would be lying on the branches of the trees and fanning a bright cap on the top of the Wellington

Monument. How much more pleasant it would be there than at the supper-table!" (Joyce 218-9)

Gabriel delivers a hyperbolic speech, praising Mary Jane as the youngest hostess whose playing of "her Academy piece" he bitterly criticized earlier.

The dinner rituals are held properly held, followed by social interactions, song, and dance. The party ended with Gabriel carving the goose and the deliberation of an emotional speech which brings tears in his aunts' eyes. On his aunt's insistence, Gabriel and his wife consent to stay in the hotel room for the night.

Inside the darkness of the hotel room in which the electric lights are not functional, Gabriel notices his wife is upset with the thought of something. With his heart filled with amorous feelings for her, he tries to establish a conversation with her, to which she clearly shows no interest. After a few moments of resistance, she breaks down completely and reveals that the last song of the party "The Lass of Aughrim." Has brought in her mind the memory of a boy named Michael Furry, whom she once knew, who used to sing that song, and now lies dead.

Gretta's confession of her love for Michael Furey breaks his illusions and makes him perceive himself as a "ludicrous figure, acting as a pennyboy for his aunts, a nervous well-meaning sentimentalist, orating to vulgarians, and idealizing his clownish lusts, the pitiable fatuous fellow he had caught a glimpse of in the mirror." Upon his enquiry regarding the cause of the boy's death, Gretta recalls the tragic event: it was winter, Michael was sick and was not allowed to go outside, nor to allow any visitor. Gretta was about to leave her grandmother's house in the pursuit of studying in a convent. She wrote a letter to the boy, informing him about her approaching departure, and promised to meet him when she would return in summer. On the rainy winter night before her departure, she heard a sound in her window. She went near it and opened it to find Michael standing there, shivering in the cold. Anxious of his feeble health, she urged him to go home, but the boy told her that he didn't want to live. Upon Gretta's insistence, he returned after a while but died within a week of Gretta's departure.

Gretta finishes the tragic tale and breaks into uncontrollable sobs. Later, when Gretta falls asleep, Gabriel wonders about the dead boy who had risked his life and died for Gretta's love. He also meditates upon the transient nature of human existence, thinking about his old aunts, who would be leaving the lure of earthly existence after some years, and he has to attend their funeral ceremony. Hence, on the night of festivity, Gabriel finds the loom of death hovering around his life, and realizes that the dead boy, Michael Furey has taught him the meaning of

the word “love”. He looks outside through the window to observe the snowfall, reminding him again of mortality: "His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead" (Joyce 255).

Unit - 8

UNIT 8 (A): THE REPRESENTATION OF IRELAND IN *DUBLINERS*

In a letter to his brother Stanislaus, dated 25 September 1906, Joyce expresses his feeling of humiliation on hearing a girl "sneering at [his] impoverished country".

“Sometimes thinking of Ireland it seems to me that I have been unnecessarily harsh. I have reproduced (in *Dubliners* at least) none of the attraction of the city for I have never felt at my ease in any city since I left it except in Paris. I have not reproduced its ingenuous insularity and its hospitality. The latter 'virtue' so far as I can see does not exist elsewhere in Europe. I have not been just to its beauty: For it is more beautiful naturally in my opinion than what I have seen of England, Switzerland, France, Austria or Italy ”(L II 166-67).

Joyce’s aim of writing *Dubliners*, as it seems, is to capture the decaying condition of Ireland which has to bear the dual burden of British colonialism which swept the country of its own cultural roots, and the ensuing financial restraint that heightened its misery all the more. The stories in the collection capture different facets of Irish society from the perspective of characters of varied socio-economic standards. The characters, in this sense, becomes a representative of the class to which they belong – Father Flynn from “The Sisters” is a representative of clergy, while Maria and Eveline carry the traits of typical middle-class ladies. Mrs. Mooney and her daughter Polly reflect the condition of women who are left with limited employment opportunities and thus, have to invest their energy and wit in pursuit of a secure life. The tragic fate of Mrs. Sinico shows the weakness of ladies prone to excessive emotion, which leads her to take her own life. Aunt Julia and Kate from “The Dead” represents the decaying condition of the Irish aristocracy. James Duffy and Gabriel from “A Painful Case” and “The Dead” respectively undergo a total transformation in terms of their mindscape, and thus reflects the transitory nature of human existence.

Dublin, in Joyce’s book, becomes s a “centre of paralysis”:

“Readers who encounter Joyce’s collection of short stories for the first time often come away with the impression that turn-of-the-century Dublin was an airless world, and that Joyce mercilessly arraigns its inhabitants for their helplessness.” (Mahaffey 2006: 2)

The environment in which Joyce wrote *Dubliners* heavily influenced not only the story and its characters, but the way he presented Dublin to the world. He said; “I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world” (Letters II: 122) . Therefore,

“To present Dublin is to present an emerging city, complete with newspapers, trams, electric lights, advertising, music halls, pubs, offices, and the kind of modern home life that attempts to serve as an oasis of calm in the jostling life of an urban centre” (Leonard 1998).

The period in which it was written was a period of stagnation for Ireland that began because of the Irish nationalist movement. The movement wanted independence from Great Britain because it was believed that they prevented their progress as a country and its politics, economics, and lastly their people. Joyce, fully aware of the situation Britain has put his country in, illustrated the “paralysis” that has taken over society in Ireland. He said; “my intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because the city seemed to me the centre of paralysis.” (Joyce, Letters II: 134) He chose Dublin to be the scene in his short stories because it represented everything that was wrong with his country; “I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city”. (Joyce: 45)

As Garry Leonard states,

“... in his obsession to present the *Dubliners* he knew, and not the Irish heroes he was told to read about, he crafted a style of story-telling that allowed the apparently trivial world of everyday living to become the stuff of comedy, pathos, and tragedy in a way every bit as resonant as the works of Shakespeare” (Leonard 2004:100).

Through this narrative technique, Joyce managed to successfully convey the perspectives and inner thoughts of his characters as they discovered the world.

In his introduction to Tomedi’s book, dedicated to Dublin, Harold Bloom asks: “Is a literary place, by pragmatic definition, a city?” (Bloom, 2005, p. ix). If the answer is yes, then

Dubliners are about the inhabitants of Dublin. But the relation between the fiction, the city, and Joyce himself had been so troublesome that it delayed the publication of the book for about ten years. Seamus Deane goes further than Bloom and states that Joyce's enterprise was founded on a paradox.

“Dublin was an absence, a nowhere, a place that was not really a city or a civilization at all. It was a Cave of the Winds, like the ‘Aeolus’ chapter in *Ulysses*, the home of the cosmetic phrase, the Dublin rouge on the faded cheek of the English language. Joyce wanted to dismantle its provincialism and its pretensions; yet he also sought to envision it as the archetypal modern city, as the single place in which all human history was rehearsed” (Deane 35-36).

According to Abbot and Bell (2001, p. 12), Joyce wanted Dublin of 1904 to be seen by readers without a map neither from any other source other than his book. *Dubliners* also relates the politics of its time, and it is what makes a collection a literary masterpiece of historical significance.

While Dublin in the stories represents the geographical place, Nicolas Pelicioni di Oliveira argues, it also has a metaphorical significance, representing colonial Ireland at a time of growing nationalist resentment of a deeply rooted betrayal.

As S. Deane reflects, (2004, p. 35-36), Joyce saw Dublin as a city that inhabited three spheres of civilization: the British Empire was the first one; the second was that of Roman Catholicism; and finally, ancient Europe was the third, and yet it had no artistic representation. Joyce wanted to portray the paralysis of his people by showing the endless, futile quest for an origin that had overtaken them, and he wanted to provide them with an identity securely their own. (p. 160). For Joyce, on the one hand the origin is beyond history, and history is a sequence of betrayals, the reason why Irish people would be leaderless, subjected to an authoritarian Church. The artist, on the other hand, in his quest for origin, is the only one who can provide spiritual life. With *Dubliners*, Joyce became part of the Irish Revival, forging a new representation for a country.

UNIT 8 (B): SYMBOLISM IN JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*

Symbolism can be viewed as a literary movement and as a stylistic device. As a literary movement of French, Belgian and Russian origin; it emerged in late nineteenth-century from poetry to other arts. It originated in the rebellion of various French poets who went against the rigorous conventions that dictated every aspect in traditional French poetry. "They attempted to evoke the ineffable intuitions and sense impressions of man's inner life and to communicate the underlying mystery of existence through free and highly personal use of metaphors and images." (Britannica 2013) It is both an artistic and a literary movement through which artists manage to convey ideas through symbols and emphasize the meaning behind different forms, shapes, and colours:

"Everything is a symbol, every molecule contains the handwriting of the universe ... and art, the expression of all symbols, ought to be an idealized drama, summarizing and annulling the naturalistic representations whose deepest meanings are found in the soul of the poet." (Facos 2018)

The writers use symbolism as a stylistic device in order to not only evoke curiosity and interest in one's work but also to devise a deeper, more complex level of meaning. As a philosopher A. Whitehead suggested in his work; "Symbolism is no mere idle fancy or corrupt degeneration; it is inherent in the very texture of human life. The Language itself is a symbolism." (Whitehead 1955) It is safe to say that this idea has indeed "permeated" into every field of art, in such a way that it has become an intrinsic part of not only literature but everyday communication. As stated before, symbolism is such a powerful stylistic device that enables artists to express themselves and their deepest thoughts cryptically. Everything in the universe is connected through a series of symbols and the artists are the key to discovering this whole new realm of possibilities. Their subject matter is generally identified by an interest in the occult, dreams, melancholy, death, and themes as such, so they often combined religious mysticism, the perverse and immoral matters in their work.

As previously said, many artists rely on symbolism, and one of them is James Joyce; a well-known author of Irish descent who advanced the modernist avant-garde. His work is considered to be one of the most influential and important that has ever been written. The stories in Joyce's *Dubliners* are replete with symbols which the reader needs to uncover. Dark colours permeate through the lives of Joyce's "Dubliners". The name of the Irish capital **Dublin** means **black**

pond and it comes from the Irish words **dub** or **dubh** [black, dark] and **linn** [pool]; linn also means period. This adds new meaning to Dublin and its turbulent history. A Pond is a small area of still water: there is no motion, merely stillness – a kind of paralysis.

“The Sisters”:

In “The Sisters,” the chalice symbolizes the relationship between the Catholic faith and the community portrayed in “The Sisters.” In Roman Catholicism, chalices are used during Mass and in communion ceremonies. They are used in moments when priests convene with their parishes, when members of the church are invited to partake in religious ritual, which creates the possibility for the chalice to represent the harmonious union between a priest and his parish. But in this particular story, the chalice is only introduced when readers learn that the priest in question, Father Flynn, has accidentally broken it—presumably due to his deteriorating health. The chalice also appears during the priest’s wake, as he has been placed in the coffin “loosely gripping” the chalice. In both of these moments, the priest’s poor treatment of the chalice symbolically represents his poor treatment, or inability to properly tend to, the relationship between the Catholic church and the people of the local community.

Father Flynn’s loss of a grip on the Catholic faith parallels his loss of grip on his health. Indeed, Eliza, one of Father Flynn’s sisters, seems to believe that the priest’s mental health began deteriorating as a sort of divine punishment for having broken the chalice. Joyce parallels Father Flynn’s health with the priest’s ability to function as a religious leader in order to drive home the point that just as it is time for the priest to die, it is also time for the Catholic faith to metaphorically die. Indeed, other characters such as Old Cotter and the narrator’s uncle seem to think that religious education and religiosity don’t have practical value in the modern world and discourage the narrator from spending too much time with Father Flynn. It is clear that the priest has been unable to effectively share the importance of the Catholic faith with his parishioners, demonstrating his inefficiency as a religious leader.

Additionally, Father Flynn’s snuff represents the priest’s corruption, and, by extension, the corruption of the Catholic Church as a whole. In the story, the narrator relates to readers how he would often supply the priest with his snuff, often helping him to prepare it because the older man’s deteriorating health prevented him from opening the packet himself. The narrator describes Father Flynn’s clumsiness as he uses the snuff, which causes him to spill snuff all over his “ancient priestly garments” and also gives him discolored, ugly teeth. In brief, Father Flynn’s snuff habit is extraordinarily inelegant, and undermines the objective of his traditional

priest's clothing, which is to make him appear to be a respectable, spiritual figure. However, Father Flynn's addiction to a material substance, which sullies his garments, prevents him from embodying that role. In a way, this serves to humanize Father Flynn. Although he is supposed to be such an important religious figure, his snuff habit demonstrates that he is just a human being like all of the other characters, subject to the same vices and bad habits as everyone. Still, even this characterization serves to undermine the authority of the Catholic church, suggesting that the Irish people shouldn't elevate priests to such positions of power when, ultimately, they are human beings, just as imperfect—if not more so, in Father Flynn's case—than the parishioners who idolize them.

“Eveline”:

Through the story “Eveline,” Joyce introduces his readers with women in Dublin who are trapped with the burden of responsibilities of family and social norms. The nineteen years old Eveline was trapped and paralyzed socially, sexually and spiritually because of living within the restrictive life style imposed on her by her father and dead mother. She longs for a change, for an escape from the same fate as her mother. Eveline's wish to escape her life can be read as her wish to escape Ireland and to escape from herself to one extent. This is the reason why Eveline was not able to get away, because, in the end, nobody can escape from themselves, not even her.

From the very beginning, Joyce presents the character of the father whose superiority and harshness toward Eveline set the background to as why she is not happy, and finally thinking about escaping. He symbolically portrays the picture of England; he is oppressive, bitter and detached. (Khorsand 2014: 99) The “relationship” they have does not even begin to resemble the one between a father and daughter. On the other hand, there is Frank, a symbol of freedom, but also the “unknown”. Although he was her escape, he was also an unknown image that sparked her fear of the uncertain outcome of their escape, and ultimately their future. “Frank is an idealized symbol of a person who has broken the capturing nets of—at least- nationality, and probably religion and language as well.

While analysing Frank's role in the story, it could be said that on a larger scale, “Eveline represents Ireland and he undeniably stands as a symbol of freedom. Eveline with her doubt and indecisiveness represents Ireland from that era; she represents the future of Ireland and all

the limitations and uncertainty that it might stumble upon when exposed to the opportunity of having freedom.” (Khorsand 2014: 100).

The Boarding House:

Mrs. Mooney’s titular boarding house is an integral component of the story. It is the text’s only setting and it also provides the space and context for the narrative to occur because it is likely that Mr. Doran and Polly would have never crossed paths if Polly’s mother did not need to take in lodgers in order to support their family. However, the boarding house has an additional, more symbolic purpose within the confines of the story outside of basic setting and plot structure. As a place where everyone knows everyone else’s business, the boarding house serves as a symbolic microcosm of Dublin. Various classes mix under its roof, but relationships are gauged and watched, class lines are constantly negotiated, and social standing must override emotions like love. The inhabitants are not free to do what they choose because unstated rules of decorum govern life in the house, just as they do in the city. Such rules maintain order, but they also ensnare people in awkward situations when they have competing and secret interests. Joyce solidifies that the boarding house is a symbolic microcosm of Dublin when he writes that Mr. Doran feels so trapped in his room in the boarding house that he contemplates running away. Many characters throughout *Dubliners* feel trapped by their native city and dream of solving their problems by fleeing Dublin. Joyce applies that same sentiment to Mr. Doran because he contemplates leaving both the symbolic and literal Dublin in order to avoid getting married.

There are a few repeated images that are utilized symbolically throughout the various stories in the collection. One of these repeated symbols is a window. Windows in *Dubliners* consistently evoke the anticipation of events or encounters that are about to happen. Windows also mark the threshold between domestic space and the outside world, and through them the characters in *Dubliners* observe their own lives as well as the lives of others. In the case of “The Boarding House,” the open windows represent the public knowledge of Mr. Doran and Polly’s affair. Mr. Doran and Polly’s amorous relationship has not been subtle and, as a result, people have been able to bear witness to their indiscretion the way one watches something through an open window. The language in this line is particularly revealing because the image of the lace curtains billowing out towards the street represents the private events from inside the boarding house that have been showcased to the outside world.

In “The Boarding House,” the cleaver—a large knife butchers use to cut bone—symbolizes the forceful and decisive power of social oppression. Mrs. Mooney, a butcher’s daughter who would have grown up around cleavers, left her alcoholic husband after he “went for [her] with the cleaver” one night. Here, the cleaver symbolizes the ways in which Dublin’s patriarchal society oppressed and even terrorized women in early 20th-century Dublin. Later, as a single mother and businesswoman, Mrs. Mooney learns to manipulate society’s oppressive rules for her own gain, and deals with moral problems—like Polly and Mr. Doran’s relationship—“as a cleaver deals with meat.”

“Clay”:

In the Halloween’s Eve game depicted in the story, finding a lump of clay symbolizes a player’s impending death. However, for Maria—who finds herself in the unfortunate position of selecting the clay—this may not represent literal death, but instead the death of her dreams for the future and the total stagnation of her life. While Maria wants to feel a sense of belonging (both through marriage and through connections to friends), she struggles throughout the story to acknowledge these desires, let alone to act on them. Because she is so hesitant to ever admit what she wants, it seems that her life might never change for the better (this is apparent in her refusal to live with Joe Donnelly, even though he repeatedly invites her and it seems as though she might like to accept). It is in this context that Maria selects the clay, which—although it foretells death—seems unlikely to point to Maria’s literal death. Maria, after all, examines her body earlier in the story and suggests that, even if she’s aging, she’s still perfectly healthy. Instead, the clay seems to suggest that, figuratively, her hopes for the future have died, and her life will continue on exactly as it is until the end. If Maria were able to articulate her desires and act on them to try to change her life, then she might have hope for the future. However, Joyce emphasizes the unlikeliness of this when Maria cannot even acknowledge that she has selected the clay: she never names it, instead thinking of it merely as a “soft wet substance,” which shows her inability to admit to her own unhappiness, an essential step in changing her life for the better. Her selection of the clay, alongside her inability to name it, suggests that her future is likely bleak—her life will continue in the same unhappy manner until she dies.

“A Painful Case”:

James Joyce scrupulously portrays Dublin at the turn of the 19th century, as "the centre of paralysis" (Joyce 1992: 83). Mr Duffy, in Joyce's story, is emotionally and spiritually paralysed but the reasons for his peculiar disposition are rather obscure and hidden – in other words they are kept dark. Duffy or Duff is a common surname in Ireland (it is also used as a first name) and "comes from the word dubh, 'black'.

Black is the predominant colour in "A Painful Case", along with other colours close in shade to black; blackness and deep dark tones permeate both the city and everyday living of Mr Duffy. Black means complete darkness, dark – something almost black, deep in shade, hidden, obscure – to be full of sorrow and suffering; also sadness and gloom, melancholy, something bad or evil. "As the colour of death and mourning, black has been adopted by Christians as a sign of death to this world (mortification) and thus of purity and humility" (Ferber 2003: 29). It could also symbolise a mortal sin. The death of Mrs Sinico (the word sin is hidden in her surname) seems to be the result of some kind of transgression or tragic flaw.

The darkness of the evenings that Mr Duffy and Mrs Sinico spend together in her cottage outside Dublin seems to be a very important element in the rather slow process of establishing their relationship. "Many times she allowed the dark to fall upon them, refraining from lighting the lamp. The dark discreet room, their isolation, the music that still vibrated in their ears united them" (Joyce 1996: 123-124).

"A Painful Case" opens with an extended description of Mr. Duffy's house. "Mr Duffy lives "in an old sombre house..." (119): sombre means dark in colour, dull (sad and serious, too); then, there is a black iron bedstead in his room, also a black and scarlet rug (scarlet often represents sin), and his hair is black, too. The black, cold night, when he realises that Mrs Emily Sinico is dead, "when he gained the crest of the Magazine Hill [...] and looked along the river towards Dublin..." (130), is of crucial significance. It is a painful, epiphanic moment: the dark night filled with flashes of insight, the point in time when he finally sees and understands "how lonely her life must have been" (130), and when he finally feels that he too is alone. For a moment, "She seemed to be near him in the darkness" (130).

There are some other colours that could provide the gamut of possible meanings in the story. "His face, which carried the entire tale of his years, was of the brown tint of Dublin streets" (120); and in Christian symbolism, brown is the colour of spiritual death and degradation. Mrs Sinico has dark blue eyes – blue is the colour of the clear sky, the deep sea, sadness. "Because

it is the color of the sky [...], blue is traditionally the color of heaven, of hope, of constancy, of purity, of truth, of the ideal” (Ferber 2003: 31).

The bookshelves in Mr Duffy’s room are of white wood; also a description of white bed-clothes and a white-shaded lamp is given. White stands for innocence and purity in Christian symbolism; it could refer to the purity of Mr Duffy’s thoughts, because books are usually associated with thoughts and ideas (intellectual aspects), and the books in his room are on the white wooden shelves. The lamp is white-shaded and thus it can furnish good bright light, which could signify a source of knowledge, wisdom, or spiritual strength (Mr. Duffy tends to be impeccably intellectual). White bed-clothes are certainly associated with bed, which is not only a piece of furniture for sleeping on but also the place regarded as the scene of sexual intercourse. The white could be an allusion to Mr Duffy’s chastity (celibacy, purity) or negatively, to his repressed or dead sexuality.

The presence of a small amount of red on Duffy’s bed shows the presence of some passion, but revealed almost accidentally or as an afterthought. Moreover, when his desk is opened, “a faint fragrance escape[s]” from “an overripe apple which might have been left there and forgotten.” This image hearkens to the biblical Garden of Eden and the forbidden fruit of sexual consummation. However, like this apple, Duffy’s sexuality has withered from its containment.

“The Dead”:

Like the other short stories in the collection, this story is also full of symbols that act on multiple dimensions. In “The Dead,” the caretaker’s daughter’s name is Lily. Lily, which is a kind of flower, has a Latin origin. In religion and art the lily symbolizes purity, and as the flower of the Resurrection and of the Virgin it is widely used at Easter and when people attend the funeral. This name is in accordance with the image of the mistress. “She was a slim, growing girl, pale in complexion and with hay-colored hair. The gas in the pantry made her look still paler.” (P163). So, in this respect, she symbolizes death.

Gabriel is the archangel who was the messenger of God. It symbolizes fire prince and death angel. In a famous film *The City of Angels*, the actor’s name is Gabriel. It was a romantic love story between human being and angel. Suffering his thousands of years’ life, the angel is willing to be a common people, thus he can enjoy the happiness, suffering the sadness, have joy and tears, just the same as Maggie. But when he becomes a real human, Maggie suffered a

car accident and lost her life. Gabriel in “The Dead” is a man suffering a lot, struggling in the world.

Here, Joyce uses Brown to symbolize paralysis and corruption. Goose is served as a main course in Christmas party, the color of which has the meaning of death and corruption. The host of the party let Gabriel serve the goose, and enjoy it among the guests. It seems that People share the goose together, but actually it symbolizes they enter into a state of paralysis.[2] The Dead includes three kinds of people. The first is who lost life such as Gretta’s first lover-- Michael Furey, Gabriel’s parents and grandfather and the descended excellent singers. The second kind is those who will lose life in the near future, involving the physically -old aunts and mentally -dead people such as the two aunts live in the new society, but cannot accept new things. The last kind is Mentally-dead people such as Gretta; she has a happy family, own a well-educated husband and two lively children, but indulge herself in past memory with her young lover, cannot help crying at the song and forget everything in reality. Mary, a 30-year-old lady, still single, live on playing the piano. After hearing the love story between Gretta and Furey, Gabriel feels excited: for he has never had such a feeling with any women.

In the story, snow becomes an important symbol. Through the subtle interpretation, the meaning of snow can help us understand the theme of the story better, and comprehend the author’s complex feeling towards Ireland. It appears as many as twenty-five times. The image of the snow first appears when Gabriel appears. Then the scope of snow enlarges gradually. At last, it extends to the whole Ireland. Snow symbolize a lot of things such as cold interpersonal relationship, boredom life style, negative life attitude, collapsed spiritual world and Snow melt into water, which is the origin of life. So, it also is the symbol of revived life. Lily and Gabriel’s conversation at the beginning of the story indicate the cold interpersonal relationship. Although they know each other, lily does not express her enthusiasm towards the guests, not to say the greeting as: “welcome”. She only gives the routine greeting on the weather, “still snow”, “yes”.

UNIT 8 (C): EPIPHANIES OF JAMES JOYCE

Derived from Greek, the word ‘epiphany’ means a sudden manifestation of a deity. In Christian theology, it also means the manifestation of a hidden message for the benefit of others, a message for their salvation. Joyce gave the name epiphany to certain short sketches he wrote

between 1898 and 1904, and the idea of the epiphany was central to much of his early published fiction.

Through his education at the Jesuit schools at Clongowes Wood and Belvedere College, Joyce was steeped in Catholic religious ideas. He even suggested that there was a certain resemblance between the mystery of transubstantiation in the Catholic mass and what he was trying to do as an artist, changing the bread of everyday life into something with permanent artistic life. In making this claim, Joyce envisaged himself as an artist/priest of the eternal imagination through whom the flesh becomes a word. It's no surprise, then, that he adopted the idea of epiphany to suit his own artistic ends.

Joyce himself never defined exactly what he meant by epiphany, but we get some idea of what it means from the way in which the character Stephen Daedalus defines it in "Stephen Hero", an early version of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Stephen says that epiphanies are a sudden and momentary showing forth or disclosure of one's authentic inner self. This disclosure might manifest itself in vulgarities of speech, or gestures, or memorable phases of the mind.

Joyce's brother Stanislaus saw the epiphanies as something more like records of Freudian slips. Writing after Joyce's death, Stanislaus claimed the epiphanies were ironical observations of slips, errors, and gestures by which people betrayed the very things they were most careful to conceal. Oliver St John Gogarty, a friend of Joyce's and one of the models for the character Buck Mulligan in *Ulysses*, thought that Fr Darlington of University College had told Joyce that epiphany meant 'showing forth,' and that an epiphany was a showing forth of the mind in which one gave oneself away.

Nonetheless, the notion of the epiphany remains slightly obscure and even somewhat confusing. For instance, in the course of Stephen Hero, Stephen tells Cranly that he believes the clock on the Ballast Office is capable of an epiphany, but neither Stephen nor Joyce make clear how this might be possible. Also, the word epiphanic has been used by scholars to describe the kinds of revelations that occur at the end of Joyce's short stories in *Dubliners*, and these moments of revelation are often called epiphanies. However, it is not always clear just what such epiphanic moments reveal or just how these so-called epiphanies relate to what Joyce called epiphanies.

Though the epiphanies proper were written between 1898 and 1904, Joyce may have been developing the idea for some time before that. His brother Stanislaus mentions a series of short

prose sketches written in the first person that Joyce began while still a sixteen-year-old student at Belvedere College. These sketches were called ‘Silhouettes’ and, though none of them are extant, they seem to have been similar in style to what Joyce later calls epiphanies. It may be that Joyce also got some of his ideas about epiphany from his reading of the Italian author Gabriel D’Annunzio. *L’Epifania del Fuoco* (“The Epiphany of Fire”) was the first part of D’Annunzio’s novel *Il Fuoco* (“The Fire”) that Joyce almost certainly read while attending University College. D’Annunzio’s writing also influenced the young Joyce’s early ideas on aesthetics and the role of art and the artist in society.

The epiphanies reflect aspects of Joyce’s life at the time when they were written, a formative period in Joyce’s life. They are like snapshots, recording specific and minute fragments of life and they are presented without commentary. Often these fragments appear without a given context, making it difficult to determine Joyce’s intention and meaning. Some of the epiphanies are rendered as a dramatic dialogue while others are simple prose descriptions or prose poems.

Several epiphanies center on social visits to the home of the MP David Sheehy. The Sheehy’s lived at 2 Belvedere Place, not far from Belvedere College. Richard and Eugene Sheehy attended Belvedere with Joyce, and Joyce regularly visited their house. There he became friendly with the Sheehy sisters (Hanna, Margaret, Mary, and Kathleen) and even developed a crush on Mary. Joyce’s friend Tom Kettle later married Margaret Sheehy, and another friend, Francis Skeffington, married Hannah. Margaret gave elocution lessons and wrote short dramatic sketches, and Joyce appeared on stage in one of her sketches, *Cupid’s Confidante*, when it was first performed in 1900.

One of these epiphanies records a guessing game, where Margaret Sheehy has an author in mind and the others are trying to guess who it is through a question-and-answer session. In the epiphany, Joyce claims to have known who she had in mind (the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen) but tells her that she got the age wrong. The epiphany gives us some insight into Joyce’s feeling about Dublin as an intellectual desert, where Ibsen’s name is known, even notorious, but nothing else is known about him. In another epiphany, Hannah Sheehy is asked who her favourite German poet is and replies Goethe, quite possibly because she knows no other German poet, again revealing something of the intellectual desert. Yet other concerns a teasing comment made about the ‘rabblement’ being at the door, a mocking reference to Joyce’s essay “The Day of the Rabblement” which was published in a booklet along with an essay by Francis Skeffington.

Closer to home, three epiphanies concern the death of Joyce's brother George in March 1902. One of these is a particularly dramatic sketch in which Joyce, playing at the piano, is questioned by his mother who emerges from the sick room and is concerned about what is happening to George. In fact, it records the moment when Joyce and his mother realize that George has just died. In another epiphany, Joyce records that everyone in the house is asleep and that his dead brother George is laid out on the bed where Joyce had slept the night before. Joyce says that he cannot pray for him in the way that the others do, and twice refers to George as 'poor little fellow'. Another epiphany records an exchange between Joyce and Skeffington, who apologizes for having missed the funeral. Skeffington appears to use the usual, clichéd formulae for expressing condolences, and these formulae contrast starkly with Joyce's own, more personal feeling of grief.

Some of the other epiphanies come from Joyce's time in Paris. One records prostitutes walking the streets and eating pastries, and this, in a more refined form, turns up later in Stephen Dedalus' reminiscences of Paris in *Ulysses*. He also has a dream-like epiphany of his mother, where his mother's image is confused with that of the Virgin Mary. This may have been written in response to letters from her about the hardships the family was suffering in Dublin.

Another describes Joyce, lying on the deck of a ship, hearing the voices of the choirboys from the nearby cathedral of Our Lady. Stanislaus claimed that Joyce wrote this about his journey home on 11 April 1903, after receiving a telegram from his father telling him that his mother was dying. There is another epiphany about a woman and a young girl making their way through a crowd at a funeral, and a reworked version of this appears in the 'Hades' episode of *Ulysses*. It's not clear whether the original epiphany related to the funeral of Joyce's mother or his brother.

It seems that Joyce circulated the epiphanies in manuscript form before he left Dublin in December 1902 to go to Paris. It also seems likely that he showed the manuscript of the epiphanies to the poet W.B. Yeats when they met in 1902. Later that year, as he was preparing to leave for Paris, Joyce gave Stanislaus (who was the keeper of the manuscript of the epiphanies) instructions that, in the event of his death, copies of the epiphanies were to be sent to all the major libraries of the world, including the Vatican. Stephen Dedalus somewhat disparagingly recalls a similar desire in the 'Proteus' episode of *Ulysses* where his epiphanies were to be sent to all the major libraries of the world, including Alexandria.

From Paris in February 1903, Joyce sent Stanislaus 2 poems and 13 epiphanies, with instructions on where the epiphanies were to be inserted into the existing manuscript. It seems that, even at this stage, Joyce was still considering publishing a book of epiphanies, just as he had planned to publish his aesthetic system as a book. However, he decided to combine his aesthetic system and epiphanies with the short essay entitled “A Portrait of the Artist” which had been rejected by John Eglinton (editor of *Dana*, and a librarian at the National Library of Ireland). All three elements were incorporated into *Stephen Hero*, on which Joyce started work in January 1904.

After January 1904, Joyce did not write any further epiphanies. However, that did not mean that the epiphanies were of no further use to him. In their book, *The Workshop of Daedalus*, Robert Scholes, and Richard Kain shows how individual epiphanies were incorporated into Joyce’s later works, including “*Stephen Hero*”, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Dubliners*, and *Ulysses*.

In manuscript form today, 22 epiphanies are in the collection at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and another 18 at Cornell University. Those at Buffalo are from Joyce’s own collection of manuscripts. Those at Cornell come mainly from Stanislaus Joyce’s commonplace book. There are indications from the page numbering on the Buffalo manuscript that there may have been at least 70 and possibly even more epiphanies originally.

At his most polemical Joyce could sound tough-mindedly disparaging about beauty as an artistic ambition, but the main solace to be found within the bleak world of his stories is the very great beauty with which he writes them; and, something like a Sickert painting, the paradoxical loveliness with which these impeded lives are portrayed comes from a kind of exquisite attention, wholly insignificant events dwelt upon with the same rapt fascination that previous generations of artists would have deployed on heroic or historic subjects. The great Joycean scholar Richard Ellmann put it best: “Joyce’s discovery, so humanistic that he would have been embarrassed to disclose it out of context, was that the ordinary is the extraordinary” (Joyce 8).

The position is ‘humanistic’: that is, wholly secular; there is nothing transcendental in this world-view; but when the young Joyce privately invented a new genre to capture this new-found extraordinariness, he adopted a religious word – epiphany. The epiphany (meaning ‘manifestation’) was originally the episode in the Christian story when the wise men first saw the infant Jesus: the moment is the first showing of the divine within the world, which is its

new home: Joyce takes that thought, but he relocates its spirituality wholly within the frame of the mundane. In his abandoned novel “Stephen Hero”, which he wrote alongside the short stories, he has Stephen, his spokesman, explain:

By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself'. The theory sponsors an artistic vocation: ‘He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments (Joyce 9).

Joyce duly collected real epiphanies, glimpses he witnessed of Dublin life, like pencil sketches for paintings. Some are short, atmospheric prose-poems, but the more impressive are captured fragments of talk, defamiliarised into art by their unexpected transcription:

Skeffington – I was sorry to hear of the death of

your brother....sorry we didn't

know in time.....to have been at

the funeral.....

Joyce – O, he was very younga boy....

Skeffington – Still.....it hurts.... (Joyce 10)

The book of epiphanies went nowhere, but the sketches showed the way to a larger art of poised, unfinished fragments: their memorable, studied inconsequence would become a defining quality of the short story as Joyce reinvented it in *Dubliners*. ‘Clay’ ends, exemplarily, with nothing like a normal ending to a tale, and the effect is very beautiful. Joyce borrows the worn language of his subjects, achieving an effect of terrific emotional restraint, barely hinting at a range of tragic possibilities (tears, losses, endings, calls for help) without confessing them: “and his eyes filled up so much with tears that he could not find what he was looking for and in the end, he had to ask his wife to tell him where the corkscrew was.” We discern a significance that is lost on the characters themselves. Joyce’s genius is here minimalist, exploiting the implication of understatement: he called the technique “a style of scrupulous meanness” (Joyce 11).

CONCLUSION

As viewed by the critics, the stories in *Dubliners* reflect Joyce's personal obsessions – fear of betrayal, the unfulfilled marriage, sexual frustration, thwarted ambition, the smothering effects of religion, cruel and casual bigotry, the wretchedness of wasted lives. The distinctly plain and pared-down prose of *Dubliners* he called 'a style of scrupulous meanness', but the spirit of compassion and imaginative empathy for his often-flawed characters is far from mean. This effect he achieves in part through the 'interior monologue' which he used most notably later in *Ulysses*. Because they are figures in a comedy, characters in *Ulysses* rarely excite pity, but there is hardly a story in *Dubliners* that fails to include figures inviting sympathy. The tiny ill-favoured workhouse laundress who at a children's party becomes the victim of a cruel joke, the hapless lodger inveigled into marriage, the poor girl who shrinks at the last moment from an elopement, the envious youth in awe of his suave companion's powers of seduction, a would-be poet bedazzled by a friend's boasts of wild times in London and Paris.

Joyce was clearly fascinated by the seamy underside of respectability. In 'The Sisters' the death of an old priest evokes in a young boy's mind a stream of associations – a meditation on the loneliness of a mind steeped in theological intricacy and burdened, it seems, with undisclosed sin. 'Araby' tells of a boy, besotted by a friend's sister and hoping to impress her with a gift from a charity bazaar, arriving there too late and short of money. In 'Two Gallants', a couple of ne'er-dowells set out callously to con a susceptible housemaid. 'A Painful Case' describes how a respectable but insensitive young man drifts into a relationship with a married woman and probably precipitates her suicide.

Undoubtedly the most perfect and most moving story in *Dubliners* is 'The Dead', the story of Gabriel Conroy's painful discovery that his wife, Gretta, has had a secret, unforgettable lover – a consumptive boy (Michael Furey) who died shortly after lingering at her gate one freezing night to confess his love. It was for her, she believes, that he died. This haunting memory, evoked by a song, leaves the wife overcome with guilt and sorrow, and her husband stricken by a sense of loss.

Joyce shows perfect mastery of atmosphere and moment in creating the prelude to this sad anti-climax – a Christmas occasion of good cheer, lively gossip, music and dancing, culminating in evocations of past delights and long dead pleasures. Following this brilliantly

achieved climax, the poignancy of Gretta's bleak memory and Gabriel's bitter realization brings both 'The Dead' and the whole collection to a sublime if melancholy conclusion.

The story's exquisite finale captures a sense of general despair – the snow-covered landscape mirroring also a man's desolation, his empty marriage and a nation rendered sterile. It is Joyce's vision of the Ireland, crushed by British imperialism and suffocating religion, from which he had so recently escaped.

“Snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.”

Joyce told his publisher, Grant Richards,

“My intention . . . was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis. I have tried to present it to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. The stories are arranged in this order.”

He wrote no further short stories. For him *Dubliners* was a phase in his writing career which was over and done with. Those of his admirers who expressed disappointment when he began the labyrinthine *Finnegans Wake*, wondering why he did not write another *Ulysses*, received a similar response. He never went back, once quoting Pontius Pilate to emphasize the point – ‘What I have written, I have written.’

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Assignments

Essay-type Questions

- 1) What are the major themes of the stories included in Joyce’s *Dubliners*? Discuss with reference to the stories prescribed in your syllabus.
- 2) Comment critically on Joyce’s art of characterization in *Dubliners*.
- 3) Write a note on the representation of Ireland in Joyce’s *Dubliners*.

- 4) How does Joyce capture the psychology of an adolescent boy in “The Sisters”?
- 5) Analyse the character of Eveline, and compare it with the character of Polly in “The Boarding House” and Maria in “Clay”.
- 6) How does Joyce address the element of death in *Dubliners*? Discuss with reference to “A Painful Case” and “The Dead”.
- 7) What are the various symbols that you can find in the stories included in Joyce’s *Dubliners*? Discuss.
- 8) Comment critically on the use of epiphanies in the stories of *Dubliners*.

Short Answer-type Questions

- 1) Comment briefly on the role of Father Flynn in the young boy’s life in “The Sisters”.
- 2) Why does Eveline chooses to remain in her familiar life despite being mistreated by her abusive father?
- 3) How would you perceive Mrs. Mooney’s act of conspiracy in the story “The Boarding House”?
- 4) In what way does the story “Clay” foreground the emptiness of Maria’s life?
- 5) Sketch the character of James Duffy from the story “A Painful Case”.
- 6) Comment on James’s use of symbolism in “The Dead”.

BLOCK - III

UNITS: 9 - 12

LITERARY OCCASIONS

BY

V. S. NAIPAUL

CONTENT STRUCTURE:

Unit 9 (a) : Introduction: Life and Works of V.S. Naipaul (1932-2018)

Unit 9 (b): Some Notes on the Diaspora and Expatriate Communities

Unit 10 (a): About Naipaul's *Literary Occasions*

Unit 10 (b): "Reading and Writing: A Personal Account"

Unit 11 (a): Naipaul on "East Indians"

Unit 11 (b): "Conrad's *Darkness and Mine*"

Unit 12 (a): Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*

Unit 12 (b): Criticism and Conclusion

List of References

Assignments

UNIT - 9

UNIT 9 (A): INTRODUCTION: LIFE AND WORKS OF V.S. NAIPAUL (1932-2018)

“I have always moved by intuition alone. I have no system, literary or political. I have no guiding political idea. I think that probably lies with my ancestry.”

-V.S. Naipaul, Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, 2001.

An esteemed novelist and travel writer of Indian descendants, Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born in Chauganas, Trinidad on August 17, 1932 to Seeparsad Naipaul and Droapati Capildeo. Naipaul’s grandfather had migrated to Trinidad from India in the 1880s to work as indentured labourers on the sugar plantations. In the year 1939, when Naipaul was six years of age, the family moved to a big house at the Port of Spain, Trinidad’s capital.

Naipaul started his formal education there, studying at Queen’s Royal College, before procuring a Government Scholarship to study at University College, Oxford in England in 1950. Since a very early age, and before he departed for England, Naipaul had nurtured a desire to become a writer. He started working for the BBC for a brief period before beginning his career as a writer engaged with colonial and postcolonial concerns. The writings of his early period contained various facets of life in Trinidad. His first novel *The Mystic Masseur*, published in London in 1957, centers around the life of a frustrated writer of Indian descent, Ganesh Ramsumair, who struggles to make his book published in Trinidad, but fails to become successful in the field of writing and turns to become a mystic and a religious healer. Naipaul’s next novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) describes the weird circumstances surrounding a local election in one of the districts of Trinidad. His next work was a collection of short stories entitled *Miguel Street* (1959) presents comic portraits of varied facets of life in Trinidad. Naipaul’s next work of critical acclaim was a novel titled *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), which, also set in Trinidad, reveals the tragi-comic life of a man (modelled on Naipaul’s father Seeparsad Naipaul) who is thwarted from achieving independence.

Naipaul's novel *Mr. Stone and the Knight's Companion* (1963) was the only work to be set in London, followed by *The Mimic Men* (1967), narrated by a failed politician on a fictitious Caribbean island.

After the completion of *A Flag on the Island* (1967), a collection of stories set in the West Indies and London, his works – both fiction and non-fiction – become more overtly political and pessimistic. His next novel *In a Free State* (which was awarded the Booker Prize in 1971), explores problems of nationality and identity through linked narratives about displaced characters. The novel entitled *Guerrillas* (published in 1975) depicts political and sexual violence in the Caribbean; *A Bend in the River* (1979) presents an equally horrifying portrait of emergent Africa. A mostly autobiographical novel, *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) reflects the growing familiarity and changing perceptions of Naipaul upon his arrival in various countries after leaving his native Trinidad and Tobago. His next fictional venture *A Way in the World* (1994) is historical like that of his earlier narrative *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969).

Naipaul's predominantly gloomy view of postcolonial societies can also be located in his travel and autobiographical books such as *The Middle Passage: The Caribbean Revisited* (1962) which covers a year-long trip across Trinidad, British Guiana, Suriname, Martinique, and Jamaica in 1961. His first visit to his native land India failed to leave much impact upon the mind of the young writer, but culminated in the form of a travelogue titled *An Area of Darkness* (1964). His stark disillusionment is reflected in the following lines:

India had not worked its magic on me. It remained the land of my childhood, an area of darkness; like the Himalayan passes, it was closing up again, as fast as I withdrew from it, into a land of myth; it seemed to exist in just the timelessness which I had imagined as a child, into which, for all that I walked on Indian earth, I knew I could not penetrate. In a year I had not learned acceptance. I had learned my separateness from India, and was content to be a colonial, without a past, without ancestors (Naipaul 1964).

His pessimistic portrayal of India remains prevailing in the subsequent parts of the trilogy, *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990).

His other travel narratives include *The Return of Eva Peron* (1980, which chronicles his visit to Argentina), *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981, about his travel across the South Asian continent after the Iranian Revolution), and *The Masque of Africa: Glimpses of African Belief* (2010).

Naipaul's recurrent themes of political violence, alienation, and homelessness have brought the grounds of his similarity with Joseph Conrad. His sequential novels *Half a Life* (2001) and *Magic Seeds* (2004) revolve around the life of an Indian named Willie Somerset Chandran in India, Africa, and Europe.

V. S. Naipaul was knighted in 1989, was awarded the David Cohen British Literature Prize by the Arts Council of England in 1993 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001. He holds honorary doctorate degrees from Cambridge University and Columbia University in New York, and honorary degrees from the universities of Cambridge, London and Oxford. He died August 11, 2018, only a few days ahead of his 86th birthday.

UNIT 9 (B): SOME NOTES ON THE DIASPORA AND EXPATRIATE COMMUNITIES

Since the latter decades of the nineteenth century, people from various European colonies had undertaken a journey to the plantation colonies in Surinam, Trinidad, and Guiana. These immigrants were appointed as indentured labourers in several plantations in exchange of a negotiable amount. These people, later categorised as members of Old 'Involuntary' diaspora would settle eventually in their host land and extend their family across generations. One of the esteemed Diaspora critic Sudesh Mishra has made a distinction between the old and the new diasporas in his essay "From Sugar to Masala: Writings by the Indian Diaspora" (2003). According to him, the old diasporas are those who migrated "semi-voluntari(ly)" as indentured labourers, during the era of colonial expansion (from around 1830 to 1917) to the plantation colonies such as Fiji, Mauritius, and Trinidad. The new diasporas, on the other hand, have migrated voluntarily, in the era of late capitalism, to the "thriving metropolitan centres" such as Australia, United States, Canada, and Britain for better prospects. He uses the term 'Sugar' to designate the old diasporas, and the term 'Masala' to refer to the new diaspora. Mishra distinguishes the old diaspora from the new in terms of their psychological and cultural practices:

If the old diaspora can be identified through its melancholic withdrawal into zones of exclusivity, the new diaspora can be identified through its conscious occupation of border zones, exemplified by the uneasy interaction between gender, class, ethnicity, nation-states (Mishra 285).

Mishra's essay significantly represents the transformation in the concept of 'home' for different categories of diasporic people: while 'home' for the people of sugar diaspora is indicative of a place for putting down the cultural 'roots', for the masala diaspora, 'home' is related to the rootlessness and the "constant mantling and dismantling of the self in makeshift landscapes" (Mishra 294).

Being a descendent of an Indian family in Trinidad, V.S. Naipaul falls into the category of 'Old' diaspora, or an 'expatriate' as he calls himself. While expressing his "Magnificent Obsessions" with India, he states:

Deep within the being of an expatriate writer, the alienation syndrome ensnares them. The authors themselves are caught up in the east-west bound, enshrouded in a mist of alienation. The peripheral eastern influence and the profound western ambience has synthesized many a times into a body of confused philosophy, which results in existential crisis, both for the author and the targeted nation! (Naipaul 17)

As a member of an expatriate community in Trinidad, and being dislocated from the country of his forefathers, Naipaul was always haunted by a sense of loss "some urge to reclaim, to look back" (quoted from Salman Rushdie's "Imaginary Homelands", 1991, 10). his insatiable urge of revisiting was combined with the realization that he could never really return to the country of his origin due to certain socio-psychological circumstances. Therefore, he chose to create "imaginary homelands" which he built upon his own perception of 'home'. Memory, therefore, becomes a tool for Naipaul to recreate his homeland, through his writings, as a means of staying closer to his cultural roots.

Unit - 10

UNIT 10 (A): ABOUT NAIPAUL'S *LITERARY OCCASIONS*

Published in 2003, his collection of essays entitled *Literary Occasions* takes us deeper into the life of V.S. Naipaul to have a glimpse of his process of becoming a writer. The book, in a series of fragments, offers us a composite picture of an individual, whose writings have opened up a new arena of viewing the world in the twenty-first century. As observed by Pankaj Mishra in his Introduction to the book:

To recognise the fragmented aspects of your identity; to see how they enable you to become who you are... this ceaseless process of reconstituting an individual self deep in its home in history is what much of Naipaul's work has been compulsively engaged in (Mishra).

Naipaul's *Literary Occasions* anthologizes eleven essays including "Reading and Writing: A Personal Account", "East Indians", "Conrad's Darkness and Mine" and his much acclaimed Nobel Prize Speech, "Two Worlds". In the initial pages of the book, he describes his childhood and adolescence in Trinidad and pays tribute to his father Seeparsad Naipaul, the first Indo-Trinidadian journalist and writer, whose literary ambitions remained confined to Trinidad.

The essays included in the collection, written on diverse aspects of literary discourse, enable the reader to launch an enquiry into the mysteries of written expression and of fiction in particular. Placing the great Nobel laureate at the very center of such an exploration, it would indulge us to look reveal the vital connection between memory, self-knowledge, and literary endeavour.

UNIT 10 (B): "READING AND WRITING: A PERSONAL ACCOUNT"

Published individually in 2002, and later included in *Literary Occasions*, Naipaul's essay "Reading and Writing: A Personal Account" is immensely autobiographical, taking us deeper

into the world of his childhood in Trinidad, his university days in England and the beginning of his career as a writer of literary pieces, both fiction and non-fiction alike. He begins the essay with an admission:

I was eleven, no more, when the wish came to me to be a writer; and then very soon it was a settled ambition. The early age is unusual, but I don't think extraordinary. I have heard that serious collectors, of books or pictures, can begin when they are very young; and recently, in India, I was told by a distinguished film director, Shyam Benegal, that he was six when he decided to make a life in cinema as a director (Naipaul 1).

The person who became an inspiration for young Naipaul, was his father Seeparsad Naipaul, whose great will, effort, and determination motivated him to [pursue the path of creativity. Seeparsad Naipaul, a journalist and a writer himself, worked diligently to shape the mind of his son Vidiadhar, which he says, "was soft and like melted iron". The father used to read paragraphs from various texts to his son, as he has recognized in "Reading and Writing" :

My father was a self-educated man who had made himself a journalist. He read in his own way. At this time he was in his early thirties, and still learning. He read many books at once, finishing none, looking not for the story or the argument in any book but for the special qualities or character of the writer. That was where he found his pleasure, and he could savor writers only in little bursts. Sometimes he would call me to listen to two or three or four pages, seldom more, of writing he particularly enjoyed. He read and explained with zest and it was easy for me to like what he liked. In this unlikely way—considering the background: the racially mixed colonial school, the Asian inwardness at home—I had begun to put together an English literary anthology of my own (Naipaul 2).

While talking about his ancestry as a second-generation diaspora in Trinidad, Naipaul talks about the cultural heredity of his people, whom he had observed from a close proximity in his boyhood days. As he writes:

We were an immigrant Asian community on a small plantation island in the New World. To me India seemed very far away, mythical, but we were at that time, in all the branches of our extended family, only about forty or fifty years out of India (Naipaul 2).

The country of his origin, India, was known to him only through the mythical tales and stories that his forefathers would narrate about their homeland. The version of India which was presented to Naipaul and the picture of his country that he had formed in his mind was largely imaginary, bearing minimum relevance to the actual country. In his childhood, he was told the story of the great Hindu epic *The Ramayana*, and had seen it to be enacted in the form of Ramlila:

The Ramayana was the essential Hindu story. It was the more approachable of our two epics, and it lived among us the way epics lived. It had a strong and fast and rich narrative and, even with the divine machinery, the matter was very human. The characters and their motives could always be discussed; the epic was like a moral education for us all. Everyone around me would have known the story at least in outline; some people knew some of the actual verses. I didn't have to be taught it: the story of Rama's unjust banishment to the dangerous forest was like something I had always known (Naipaul 3).

The Classical Hindu epic was regarded with high esteem in the island country because the immigrants from India, those who had arrived there several years ago as indentured labourers, would feel some sort of association with the epic-hero Rama. As Rama was banished from his land as a result of some conspiracy and was compelled to live fourteen years in exile, the members of Old involuntary diaspora would regard themselves in similar misery, living the life in perpetual exile with the regard for their ancestral country as their actual home and the place of eventual return.

As Naipaul's father got the job of a reporter in a local newspaper, the family shifted to another house in the city, moving further away from their relatives and, by extension, from their cultural roots:

When my father got a job on the local paper we went to live in the city. It was only twelve miles away, but it was like going to another country. Our little rural Indian world, the disintegrating world of a remembered India, was left behind.

I never returned to it; lost touch with the language; never saw another Ramlila (Naipaul 3).

It was by the virtue of his father's motivation that encouraged him to create his own literary anthology that Naipaul decided to become a writer. As he reminisces,

My private anthology, and my father's teaching, had given me a high idea of writing. And though I had started from a quite different corner, and was years away from understanding why I felt as I did, my attitude (as I was to discover) was like that of Joseph Conrad, himself at the time a just-published author, when he was sent the novel of a friend. The novel was clearly one of much plot; Conrad saw it not as a revelation of human hearts but as a fabrication of "events which properly speaking are accidents only." "All the charm, all the truth," he wrote to the friend, "are thrown away by the...mechanism (so to speak) of the story which makes it appear false" (Naipaul 4).

In his literary endeavour, he acknowledges the debt of the modernist writer Joseph Conrad whom he viewed as his prime motivation :

For Conrad, as for the narrator of *Under Western Eyes*, the discovery of every tale was a moral one. It was for me, too, without my knowing it. It was where the Ramayana and Aesop and Andersen and my private anthology (even the Maupassant and the O. Henry) had led me. When Conrad met H.G. Wells, who thought him too wordy, not giving the story straight, Conrad said, "My dear Wells, what is this Love and Mr. Lewisham about? What is all this about Jane Austen? What is it all about?" (Naipaul 4).

The next section of the essay moves forward to offer us a glimpse of Naipaul's student life when he procured a Government scholarship to study at a University in England for a tenure of maximum seven years:

When I won my scholarship—after a labor that still hurts to think about: it was what all the years of cramming were meant to lead to—I decided only to go to Oxford and do the three-year English course. I didn't do this for the sake of

Oxford and the English course; I knew little enough about either. I did it mainly to get away to the bigger world and give myself time to live up to my fantasy and become a writer (Naipaul 4).

In the course of his stay in England, as a fellow of Oxford, he was still haunted by a sense of blankness regarding what to write and how to write. He voiced his feeling thus:

At Oxford now, on that hard-earned scholarship, the time should have come. But the blankness was still there; and the very idea of fiction and the novel was continuing to puzzle me. A novel was something made up; that was almost its definition. At the same time it was expected to be true, to be drawn from life; so that part of the point of a novel came from half rejecting the fiction, or looking through it to a reality (Naipaul 5).

Even after the completion of his three-year-long course, he was left to wonder how to begin the process of writing. He left Oxford and came to London to get some clue regarding the initiation of his literary career, and occupied the basement of the house of his cousin, a student of law, and an admirer of his creative impulse.

After a rigorous attempt at writing in the course of his five-month-long stay in London, he managed to write nothing.

And then one day, deep in my almost fixed depression, I began to see what my material might be: the city street from whose mixed life we had held aloof, and the country life before that, with the ways and manners of a remembered India.

It took him four long years to determine the subject of his writing, to realize that he can represent the life of the people of his own community. He recalled:

To get started as a writer, I had had to go back to the beginning, and pick my way back—forgetting Oxford and London—to those early literary experiences, some of them not shared by anybody else, which had given me my own view of what lay about me (Naipaul 5).

In the process of telling the tale of his people, Naipaul thought, fiction would be an appropriate genre, taking him “as far as it could go.” Moreover, his prior experiences of traveling at different plantations at the Caribbean islands and the “old Spanish Main’ would provide him an opportunity to deliver the narratives in the form of a travelogue. Thus, he admits: “Fiction, the exploration of one’s immediate circumstances, had taken me a lot of the way. Travel had taken me further” (Naipaul 6). It was by the chance “accident” of being under the plea of a publisher in the United States, that he had to try his hands at writing pieces of non-fiction.

The essay “Reading and Writing” thus takes us deeper into the personal foray of V.S. Naipaul as he recalls his struggle in the pursuit of becoming a writer. The autobiographical piece, beginning at the colonial setting of Trinidad to offer a glimpse of the culture and experience of the immigrants, takes the reader to an imaginary trip to England where he had spend some years before becoming a writer. As argued by a critic while writing a review of the essay, “The book gives us glimpses of the young, vulnerable, intelligent boy who grew into a wonderful writer over time.”

Unit - 11

UNIT 11 (A): NAIPAUL ON “EAST INDIANS”

In this short essay written originally in 1965, V.S. Naipaul locates the history of his forefathers, the community of expatriates in the plantation colony of Trinidad. From the perspective of a postcolonial writer, Naipaul observes that the relationship between the “metropolitan and, ” the “colonial” or the colonizer and the colonized is based on the element of “mutual distrust”, because one category can neither completely rely on, nor completely demolish the existence of the other in the equation of power. A significant reason behind this distrust is the element of confusion inherent in the identity of the colonized native. Though the image of an American (be he a Greek American or a Latin American) is fixed, the image of an Indian o East Indian generates a sense of wonder in the mind of the colonizers. As he writes, “...to be Latin American or Greek American is to be known, to be a type, and therefore in some way to be established. To be an Indian or East Indian from the West Indies is to be a perpetual surprise to people outside the region” (Naipaul 1).

The idea of West Indies brings into our mind the discovery of Christopher Columbus, slavery, and the “naval rivalries of the eighteenth century”. But, Naipaul observes, when we think about the East, we will definitely have the image of the Taj Mahal and Hindu religious men. He reveals, “To be an Indian from Trinidad is to be unlikely. It is, in addition to everything else, to be the embodiment of an old verbal ambiguity” (Naipaul 1).

There was a time, Naipaul states, when everything “Oriental” was perceived to be imported from India or Turkey. “So Long as the real Indians remained on the other side of the world, there was little confusion” (1). It all began since the middle of the nineteenth century; by that time, slavery had been abolished and the Africans refused to work for their white masters. In an attempt to cope up with the ensuing crisis and the shortage of workforce in the plantation colonies at Surinam, Guiana, Trinidad, and Mauritius, the European colonialists started hiring workers from China, Portugal and India, who were identified as indentured labourers. Above all the rest, the Indians succeeded the most in acclimatizing with the climactic condition and other factors. Naipaul writes,

The Indians fitted. More and more came. They were good agriculturalists and were encouraged to settle after their indentures had expired. Instead of a passage home they could take land. Many did. The indenture system lasted, with breaks, from 1845 until 1917, and in Trinidad alone the descendants of those immigrants who stayed number over a quarter of a million (Naipaul 1).

Those immigrants from India were initially known as “Hindus” as the country was previously called “Hindustan”. But, it created a feeling of grievance among the inhabitants, since many immigrants followed the religion of Islam. Naipaul then states,

In the British territories the immigrants were called East Indians. In this way they were distinguished from the two other types of Indians in the islands: the American Indians and the West Indians. After a generation or two, the East Indians were regarded as settled inhabitants of the West Indies and were thought of as West Indian East Indians. Then a national feeling grew up. There was a

cry for integration, and the West Indian East Indians became East Indian West Indians (Naipaul 2).

In a conglomeration of varied cultures in the host land, the Indian immigrants eventually lost their original identity:

East Indians, British Indians, Hindustanis.... these Indians of Trinidad are no longer of Asia. The temples and mosques exist and appear genuine. But the languages that came with them have decayed. The rituals have altered (Naipaul 2).

However, the Indians or “East Indians” continued their social and religious practices to maintain an association with their cultural roots. Naipaul has addressed the dual process of acclimatization and deculturalisation that the East Indians have experienced upon their arrival and settlement at different plantation colonies, resulting in the eventual feeling of dislocation from their traditional and cultural roots.

UNIT 11 (B): “CONRAD’S DARKNESS AND MINE”

Through the phase ‘Conrad’s darkness’, Naipaul makes a direct allusion to the famous novella, *Heart of Darkness*, which, like his novel, *A Bend in the River*, is set in the African Continent. Like Conrad, Naipaul represents Africa as a place of darkness; everything he observes seems to confirm his pessimistic view. In his “Naipaul in Africa : The Razors Edge” (2001), J.M. Coetzee observes that in Naipaul’s books, “Africa is seen as a dream-like and threatening place that resists understanding, that eats away at reason and the technological products of reason” (Coetzee 10). In an interview, Naipaul once remarked that:

In Africa you can get a profound refusal to acknowledge the realities of the situation; people just push aside the real problems as if they had all been settled. As though the whole history of human deficiencies was entirely explained by the interlude of oppression and prejudice, which have now been removed; any

remaining criticism being merely recurrence of prejudice and therefore to be dismissed (cited in King, 1993: 116).

His later reading of the *Heart of Darkness*, though a book about Africa, gave him the first glimpse into the dark continent, that “demoralized land of plunder and licensed cruelty.” Naipaul was deeply impressed by Conrad – the exile, the outsider, the traveller who had been everywhere before him, to the “dark and remote places” of Asia and Africa, where the people “are denied a clear vision of the world.” Here is a very concise and clear-cut explanation of his way of approaching a writer like Conrad:

To understand Conrad, then, it was necessary to begin to match his experience. It was also necessary to lose one’s preconceptions of what the novel should do and, above all, to rid oneself of the subtle corruptions of the novel or comedy of manners. When art copies life, and life in its turn mimics art, a writer’s originality can often be obscured. To take an interest in a writer’s work is, for me, to take an interest in his life; one interest follows automatically on the other. And to me there is something peculiarly depressing about Conrad’s writing life. (Naipaul 1).

In his essay “Conrad’s Darkness and Mine” he describes how he reacted to Conrad’s descriptions in the *Heart of Darkness*, arguably Conrad’s most successful book:

“The African background-“the demoralised land” of plunder and licensed cruelty- I took for granted. That is how we can be imprisoned by our assumptions. The background now seems to me to be the most effective part of the book; but then it was no more than what I expected. The story of Kurtz, the upriver ivory agent, who is led to primitivism and lunacy by his unlimited power over primitive men, was lost on me” (Naipaul).

Conrad became a driving inspiration behind Naipaul, as he pays a visit to different parts of the globe and witnesses the massive exploitation of the colonialists in the once colonized lands. On his visit to his ancestral land, of which he had imagined a utopian picture for some thirty years of his life, he was met with a growing feeling of disillusionment, leading him to categorize the territory as an “Area of Darkness”. Despite his Indian descent, he cannot possibly overlook the country’s dirty neighbourhoods, populated with starving, sick, poor beggars. To Naipaul, the experience of poverty to its extremes is more than painful. The Indian

environment is, for him, an unbearable collection of squatting people in the streets, of sleeping homeless, and of decrepit beggars impossible to avoid. Naipaul did not need much to realize that

India is the poorest country in the world. Therefore, to see its poverty is to make an observation of no value; a thousand newcomers to the country before you have seen and said as you. And not only newcomers. Our own sons and daughters, when they return from Europe and America, have spoken in your very words..." and to finally conclude that beggary in India will never be properly understood by Europeans. All those beggars asking for baksheesh are an unavoidable reality of India, for the simple reason that, once you give to a beggar, you perform an "automatic act of charity, which is an automatic reverence to God (Naipaul AD).

From his description cited above, one can readily understand that his attitude towards his motherland and her people is predominantly that of an orientalist. The reason which turns *An Area of Darkness* into a dystopia is not only about India's inability to rise to the standards of the Western world, but also about the incapacity of the writer to pursue a childhood myth. The writer's imaginary world defines his identity. However hard he tries, he cannot identify with the people around him:

In India I had so far felt myself a visitor. Its size, its temperatures, its crowds: I had prepared myself for these, but in its very extremes the country was alien. Looking for the familiar, I had again, in spite of myself, become an islander: I was looking for the small and manageable (Naipaul AD)

Despite being criticized as a "third worlder denouncing his own people (by Edward Said, cited in Wise 1996: 59-60), Naipaul maintains that he had not meant the book to be an attack on India, but

as a record of my unhappiness. I wasn't knocking anybody, it was a great melancholy experience actually. Mark you, it's full of flaws: what it says about caste is influenced by ideas I had picked up here, British ideas. I think differently about caste now. I understand the clan feeling, the necessity of that in a big country. And the book was bad about Indian art. I should have understood that art depends on patrons, and that in Independent India, with the

disappearance of independent royal courts, the possibility for art had been narrowed – instead of thinking that this was rather terrible, that there was no art. It will nag at me now, it will nag at me for some years (Naipaul AD).

After making an in-depth analysis of the literary works of Joseph Conrad, from his short stories like “The Lagoon” and “Karain” to his more mature works like *Nostromo*, *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*, Naipaul states about Conrad’s limitations:

My reservations about Conrad as a novelist remain. There is something flawed and unexercised about his creative imagination. He does not—except in *Nostromo* and some of the stories—involve me in his fantasy; and *Lord Jim* is still to me more acceptable as a narrative poem than as a novel. Conrad’s value to me is that he is someone who sixty to seventy years ago meditated on my world, a world I recognize today. I feel this about no other writer of the century. His achievement derives from the honesty which is part of his difficulty, that “scrupulous fidelity to the truth of my own sensations” (Naipaul 136).

In this notable essay “Conrad’s Darkness and Mine”, Naipaul relates how his restless emigration to England precipitated his thoughts about the hideous simplicity of beliefs and actions. Like Conrad his predecessor, it is Naipaul’s position as a circumnavigator which makes him reflect on similar issues:

Conrad - sixty years before me, in the time of a great peace - had been everywhere before me. Not as a man with a cause, but a man offering, as in *Nostromo*, a vision of the world’s half-made societies as places which continuously made and unmade themselves, where there was no goal, and where always something inherent in the necessities of successful action ... carried with it the moral degradation of the idea. Dismal, but deeply felt: a kind of truth and half a consolation (Naipaul 163).

Unit – 12

UNIT 12 (A): CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND NAIPAUL'S *A BEND IN THE RIVER*

In his essay “Reading and Writing: A Personal Account”, V.S. Naipaul has talked about his indebtedness to Joseph Conrad whose writing style and art of fiction have created immense impact in his young mind. In 1974, Naipaul writes an essay entitled “Conrad’s Darkness” in which he tries to define indebtedness to the esteemed modernist writer, which is also “an account of his difficulty” (CD: 205). Observing many links between himself and his literary forerunner, Naipaul writes, “Conrad’s value to me is that he is someone who sixty or seventy years ago meditated on my world, a world I recognize today. I feel this about no other writer of the century (CD: 219). In his essay entitled “Conrad’s Darkness and Mine”, Naipaul makes a comparative analysis of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and other tales with his own version of stories and novels concerning what he views as “darkness”.

Heart of Darkness, a novella by Joseph Conrad was published serially in 1899, and in book form in 1902. The tale, written at the height of British colonialism, reflects Conrad’s own horrifying experience as he worked briefly in the Belgian Congo in 1890. The novella incorporates the narrator Charles Marlow’s journey on another river. Travelling in Africa to join a cargo boat, Marlow grows disgusted by what he sees of the greed of the ivory traders and their brutal exploitation of the natives. At a company station, he hears of the remarkable Mr. Kurtz, who is stationed at the very heart of the ivory country and is the company’s most successful agent. Leaving the river, Marlow makes an arduous cross-country trek to join the steamboat which he will command on an ivory-collecting journey into the interior, but at the Central Station he finds that his boat has been mysteriously wrecked. He learns that Kurtz has dismissed his assistant and is seriously ill. The other agents, jealous of Kurtz’s success hope that he will not recover, and it becomes clear that Marlow’s arrival at the Inner Station is being deliberately delayed. With repairs finally completed, Marlow sets off on the two-month journey towards Kurtz. The river passage through the heavy motionless forest fills Marlow with a growing sense of dread. The journey is like “travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world.” Ominous drumming is heard and dark forms glimpsed among the trees. Nearing its destination, the boat is attacked by tribesmen and a helmsman is killed. At the Inner Station,

Marlow is met by a naïve young Russian sailor who tells Marlow of Kurtz's brilliance and the semi-divine power he exercises over the natives. A row of revered heads on stakes around the hut give an intimation of the barbaric rites by which Kurtz has achieved his ascendancy. Ritual dancing has been followed by human sacrifice and, without the restraints imposed by his society, Kurtz, an educated and civilized man, has used his knowledge and his gun to reign over his dark kingdom. While Marlow attempts to get Kurtz back down the river, Kurtz tries to justify his action and his motives : he has seen into the very heart of things. But his last words before dying are : "The horror! The horror!" Marlow is left with two packages to deliver, Kurtz's report for the Society for Suppression of Savage Customs, and some letters for his Intended. Faced with the girl's grief, Marlow tells her Kurtz died with her name on his lips.

Conrad himself described the novella as "A wild story of a journalist who becomes manager of a station in the (African) interior and makes himself worshipped by a tribe of savages. Thus described, the subject seems comic, but it isn't."

Reminiscent of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* (1979) chronicles a physical as well as a psychological journey of the protagonist while exploring themes of exile and corruption, both personal and political alike. The novel's opening lines are: "*The world is what it is; men who are nothing, who allow themselves to become nothing, have no place in it.*"

Set in an unnamed African country after independence, the novel is narrated by Salim, an Indian Muslim merchant and a shopkeeper in a small but developing city into the heart of the continent. Being raised in the community of Indian traders on the east coast of Africa, Salim buys a shop in Central Africa from his friend Nazruddin at the "bend of the river" (ostensibly the River Congo). On moving into the new territory, he finds the town in a desolate state, almost like a "ghost town"; barfing traces of European settlement which was then in a status of ruin as a result of a violent encounter between the colonizers and the natives. Salim opens a store supplying the basic needs of the local people and receives Metty as his assistant.

One of his steady customers is Zabeth, a "marchande" from a village and a magician as well, who has a son, Ferdinand, by a man of another tribe. Zabeth asks Salim to help him get educated.

The town gradually develops into a trading center as Government agencies spring up, bringing the European salesmen and visitors to its core. Shortly thereafter, Salim is visited by his friend

Indar, who grew up with him on the east coast, then went to England to study and now has become a lecturer at the new institution. He takes Salim to a party in the Domain to meet Raymond, who had been the advisor and mentor of the President and his young wife, Yvette. Salim gets lured by Yvette's youthful beauty and establishes an adulterous affair with her, which eventually breaks off. Soon, the town is hovered by unrest as the local people grew ferocious of the dominating attitude of the President. In a state of confusion, Salim travels to London, where he meets Nazruddin, who had moved to Uganda after selling off his business and then went to Canada, which he left and finally landed up in London where he became a landlord. After his engagement with Nazruddin's daughter, Salim returns to Africa. Upon arrival he learns that his business has been expropriated under the President's new programme of "radicalization" and transferred to Théotime, a "state trustee", an ignorant and lazy person who retains Salim as a manager and a chauffeur. With the realization that he has lost everything, Salim is betrayed by his former shop assistant Metty, and is arrested. He is presented to the commissioner, Ferdinand, who has moved up in the administration after receiving training in the capital. Ferdinand tells him that there is no safety, no hope, and that everybody is in fear of his life: "We're all going to hell, and every man knows this in his bones. We're being killed. Nothing has any meaning." He sets Salim free and tells him to leave the country. Salim takes the last steamer before the President arrives. During the night there is a battle on the ship, as rebels try to kidnap it. The attack is repelled, but the attached barge, full of Africans, is snapped loose and drifts down the river.

UNIT 12 (B): CRITICISM AND CONCLUSION

"I began as a comic writer and still consider myself one," Naipaul wrote in the foreword to the 1983 edition of *A House for Mr. Biswas*. "In middle age now I have no higher literary ambition than to write a piece of comedy that might complement or match this early book."

In *Naipaul: An Introduction to His Work*, Paul Theroux describes Naipaul as completely dedicated to his art. Naipaul's characters Ganesh (*The Mystic Masseur*), Biswas (*A House for Mr. Biswas*), Ralph Kirpal Singh (*The Mimic Men*), and Mr. Stone (*Mr. Stone and the Knights Companion*) are all writers who, like Naipaul himself, participate in the "thrilling, tedious struggle with the agony and discouraging, exhilarating process of making a book." Naipaul

considers extensive travel essential to sustaining his writing and to releasing his imagination from deadeningly familiar scenes.

Consequently, Naipaul has received wide critical attention. He is the subject of a number of full-length critical studies and innumerable articles, and his books have received front-page reviews. Irving Howe has called him “the world’s writer, a master of language and perception, our sardonic blessing.” Writer Elizabeth Hardwick considers the sweep of Naipaul’s imagination and the brilliant fictional frame it encompasses unique and without equal in contemporary literature. Writer Paul Theroux considers him superior to existentialist author Albert Camus in his treatment of the theme of displacement. Critics and students of Naipaul place him in the company of such masters of fiction as Joseph Conrad—whom Naipaul admires intensely—and Graham Greene. In fact, critic Michael Thorpe has stated that Naipaul is Joseph Conrad’s heir as a political novelist. Moreover, even his critics praise his mastery of English prose. For example, in 1987 Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, a Caribbean-born poet who rejects many of Naipaul’s views, described Naipaul as “our finest writer of the English sentence.”

Thus, as observed by a critic, Sir Naipaul will be remembered as a magical craftsman of English prose leaving behind a complex, challenging library of work which - despairing of the limitations of fiction to describe reality - occupying a space between imagination, travel-writing and autobiography in his attempt to capture the complexities of the modern world. He saw himself as a lone, stateless observer; free of ideology, politics and illusion. For the Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, Naipaul represented third-world people "not with sugary magic realism but with their demons, their misdeeds and horrors - which made them less victims and more human. “But to his detractors, Naipaul was essentially political; bearing witness against the post-colonial world with great writing but shielded from criticism by virtue of being 'one of them'.

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ASSIGNMENTS

Essay-type Questions

1. Write a note on the concept of 'home' as perceived by the members of expatriate communities.
2. What inspired Naipaul to become a writer and how did he manage to achieve his aim? Elucidate with reference to his essay "Reading and Writing".
3. What was Naipaul's stake on the community of East Indians in the plantation colony of Trinidad?
4. How did Naipaul perceive 'darkness' and differentiated it from that of Conrad?
5. Comment critically on the role of memory in the writings of Indian diaspora with particular emphasis on Naipaul.

Short Answer-type Questions

- 1) What role did Seeparsad Naipaul play in the life and writing a career of his son Vidiyadhar?
- 2) In which famous writer did Naipaul find his prime motivation?
- 3) Why did Naipaul say, "To be an Indian or East Indian from the West Indies is to be a perpetual surprise to people outside the region"?
- 4) Why did he consider his ancestral country India to be an "Area of Darkness"?
- 5) Comment critically on Naipaul's narrative technique in the essays that you have studied.

BLOCK - IV

UNITS: 13 – 16

STEP ACROSS THIS LINE

BY

SALMAN RUSHDIE

CONTENT STRUCTURE:

Unit 13 (a): Life and Works of Salman Rushdie

Unit 13 (b): Brief Introduction to *Step Across This Line*

Unit 13 (c): *Step Across This Line*: A Critical Understanding

Unit 14 (a): Brief Introduction to “Influence”

Unit 14 (b): Defining the Idea of ‘influence’

Unit 14 (c): Concept of ‘fluidity’ in “Influence”

Unit 15 (a): Brief Introduction to “Crash”

Unit 15 (b): Understanding the Role of Media through “Crash”

Unit 16 (a): Brief Introduction to “On Being Photographed”

Unit 16 (b): A Critique of “Photography” as Performance

Conclusion

References

Assignments

Unit - 13

UNIT 13 (A): LIFE AND WORKS OF SALMAN RUSHDIE (1947 -)

Life:

Sir Ahmed Salman Rushdie is a British writer of Indian origin, born in Mumbai, then called Bombay, in British India, on 19th June 1947. His schooling was initially in Cathedral and John Connon, Mumbai, and thereafter at Rugby School in the United Kingdom. Later he attended King's College in Cambridge, where he majored in History. He became a British citizen in 1964. After graduating in 1968, he worked for a time in TV in Pakistan. He was also an actor at the Oval House in Kennington and from 1971 to 1981 Rushdie worked intermittently as a freelance advertising copywriter for Ogilvy and Mather, and Charles Baker. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes him as "Indian-born writer whose allegorical novels examine historical and philosophical issues by means of surreal characters, brooding humour, and an effusive and melodramatic prose style. His treatment of sensitive religious and political subjects made him a controversial figure".

He won the Whitbread Award in 1988 with his fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses*. The publication was controversial and many Muslim leaders called on his death by issuing a *fatwa*. The book was banned in India and South Africa. Since then, Rushdie has lived away from publicity, hiding from potential assassins, but he has continued to write and publish books. In September, 1998, the Iranian government announced that the State was not going to put into effect the *fatwa* or encourage others to do so. Rushdie decided to end his hiding and, in early 2000, he moved from London to New York. In the meantime, in 1983 Rushdie was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, the UK's senior literary organization. Since 2000, Rushdie has lived in the United States, where he has worked at Emory University.

Literary Works:

Salman Rushdie is an author of sixteen novels and a short-story collection. He has also written five non-fiction books, and co-edited two anthologies. His first novel, *Grimus*, appeared in 1974, but Rushdie owes his reputation to his second book, *Midnight's Children* (1981), a rich novel that explores the experience of growing up in post-independence India. He won the Booker Prize (1981), the Booker of Bookers (1993), and the Best of the Booker (2008) for *Midnight's Children* and comparisons were made with the works of García Márquez and

Kundera. In 1984 he produced *Shame*, a complex narrative combining satire, fantasy, and political allegory. The 1980s also saw Rushdie's emergence as a journalist, writing widely on political, cultural, and racial issues.

He subsequently published *The Satanic Verses*, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, *Fury*, *Shalimar the Clown*, *The Enchantress of Florence*, *Luka and the Fire of Life*, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*, *The Golden House* and *Quichotte*, the last having made it to the Booker Prize shortlist in 2019. *East, West* is his only short story collection. *Joseph Anton: A Memoir*, *Imaginary Homelands*, *The Jaguar Smile*, *Step Across This Line*, and *Languages of Truth* comprise his non-fiction writing. *Mirrorwork*, a collection of contemporary Indian writing, and *2008 Best American Short Stories* were anthologies co-edited by him. *Midnight's Children* was made into a play as well as a film. Rushdie adapted it for the theatre, and the Royal Shakespeare Company performed the play in London and New York. In 2012, Deepa Mehta adapted this book into a film, and Rushdie had written the screenplay. Both *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and *Shalimar the Clown* had operas adapted from them. *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* was adapted into a song and Rushdie penned down the lyrics.

The latest novel by Rushdie titled *Victory City* (2023) is about mythmaking, storytelling and the enduring power of language. It is also a triumphant return to the literary stage for Rushdie, who has been withdrawn from public life for months, recovering from a brutal stabbing while onstage during a cultural event in New York last year. "Victory City" builds on many of the themes that have long preoccupied Rushdie — the power of myths and legend to shape history, the conflict between the forces of multiculturalism and pluralism versus fundamentalism and intolerance. In some ways, it's a shift back to Rushdie's earlier works — richly imagined, magical realist narratives set in India — and marks a return to his literary roots.

Awards:

Booker Prizes aside, Salman Rushdie has received several honours and awards for his writing. The more significant of these are as follows: he is Fellow of the British Royal Society of Literature, and Commandeur in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He has been awarded the Whitbread Prize for Best Novel twice; the Writers Guild Award; the James Tait Black Prize; 'Author of the Year' prizes in Britain and Germany; the Crossword Book Award in India; the European Union's Aristeion Prize for Literature; the Premio Grinzane Cavour from Italy;

Golden PEN Award; PEN Pinter Prize; Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award; and the James Joyce Award of University College, Dublin. This is more a representative than a comprehensive list. Rushdie has also been conferred doctorates and fellowships by a dozen universities, European as well as American, and an honorary Humanities Professorship in MIT. In June 2007, Queen Elizabeth II knighted him for his services to literature. In 2008, *The Times* ranked him thirteenth on its list of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945.

UNIT 13 (B): BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO *STEP ACROSS THIS LINE*

The three essays “Influence”, “Crash”, and “On Being Photographed” were published in the book titled *Step Across This Line*, Salman Rushdie’s first collection of non-fiction in a decade. This collection of essays has the same energy, imagination and erudition as his astounding novels along with some very strong opinions. *Step Across This Line* showcases the other side of one of fiction’s most astonishing conjurers. On display is Salman Rushdie’s incisive, thoughtful and generous mind, in prose that is as entertaining as it is topical. The subjects of Salman Rushdie’s this collection of non-fiction range from The Wizard of Oz, U2, India and Indian writing, the death of Princess Diana, and football, to twentieth-century writers including Angela Carter, Arthur Miller, Edward Said, J.M. Coetzee, Arundhati Roy to the struggle to film *Midnight’s Children*. In a central section, ‘Messages from the Plague Years’, Rushdie focuses on the fight against the Iranian fatwa, presenting texts both personal and political, which show for the first time how it was to live through those days. The title essay was originally delivered at Yale as the 2002 Tanner lecture on human values, and examines the changing meaning of frontiers in the modern world -- moral and metaphorical frontiers as well as physical ones. Rushdie’s exploration of the theme of frontiers includes crossing them, breaking taboos, and – in the light of September 11 – the world of permeable frontiers in which we all live.

The collection chronicles Rushdie’s intellectual journeys, but it is also an intimate invitation into his life: he explores his relationship to India through a moving diary of his first visit there in over a decade, “A Dream of Glorious Return.” *Step Across This Line* also includes “Messages from the Plague Years,” a historic set of letters, articles and reflections on life under the fatwa. Gathered together for the first time, this is Rushdie’s humane, intelligent and angry

response to a grotesque threat, aimed not just at him but at free expression itself. Salman Rushdie's non-fiction writing is incisive, committed, and often very funny. Rushdie's first book of essays, *Imaginary Homelands*, offered a unique vision of politics, literature and culture in the 1980s. *Step Across This Line* does the same, and more, for the last decade of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.

Roughly one-fourth of these essays deals with the response of the media, various governments and Rushdie himself to what he calls the "unfunny Valentine" he received on February 14, 1989, from the Ayatollah Khomeini: the fatwa calling for his death. Everyone, it seems, had a script for Rushdie to follow, though none of these fantasies resembled the rather simple one the author fancied (and which seems to have been realized), which is that his problems gradually disappear and he be allowed to resume a more or less normal writerly life. To paraphrase an idea that appears in several of these essays, the problem is that frontiers cross us rather than the other way around: we are going about our business when our country is divided (as happened to Rushdie's native India in 1947) or we encounter a shocking work of art or our enemies declare they will kill us. Many respond to unnerving changes by embracing religion, but, says Rushdie, "ancient wisdoms are modern nonsenses"; in place of sectarian fervour, he recommends intellectual freedom, a simple concept yet a rigorous practice, as this book proves. These essays range over literature, politics and religion, as well as Rushdie's two private passions, rock music and soccer. They are united by a play of sparkling intelligence seasoned with sly wit, qualities that would serve the world at any time in its long, flawed history. After all, says Rushdie, the story he loved first and still loves best, perhaps the story of all humanity, is *The Wizard of Oz*, a fable that tells us the grown-up world doesn't really work, that adults can be good people and still be bad wizards. (Sept.)

UNIT 13 (C): *STEP ACROSS THIS LINE*: A CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

In the first of his two non-fiction compilations, titled *Imaginary Homelands*, Rushdie raises issues that were to preoccupy him in his writings well into the future. "Censorship", for instance, aptly points out, in what may well be the thesis statement of Rushdie's professional life, that "the worst, most insidious effect of censorship is that, in the end, it can deaden the imagination of the people. Where there is no debate, it is hard to go on remembering, every

day, that there is a suppressed side to every argument”. And this is why, as the essay of the title remarks, literature is valuable because it “can, and perhaps must, give the lie to official facts”. The essay also wonders about the role and responsibility of writers of the diaspora, of whom Rushdie has been, and continues to be, among the foremost. This book has essays on the authors whom Rushdie engages with, from Anita Desai, Rudyard Kipling, Nadine Gordimer and Graham Greene to Julian Barnes, Kazuo Ishiguro, Italo Calvino, Umberto Eco, Gunter Grass, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Mario Vargas Llosa among others.

The essays, speeches, and opinion pieces assembled in his next non-fiction compilation titled *Step Across This Line*, written over a span of ten years, Salman Rushdie continued to cover an astonishing range of subjects. The collection chronicles Rushdie’s intellectual odyssey and is also an especially personal look into the writer’s psyche. With the same fierce intelligence, uncanny social commentary, and very strong opinions that distinguish his fiction, Rushdie writes about his fascination with *The Wizard of Oz*, his obsession with soccer, and the state of the novel, among many other topics. Most notably, delving into his unique personal experience fighting the Iranian fatwa, he addresses the subject of militant Islam in a series of challenging and deeply felt responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The book ends with the eponymous “Step Across This Line,” a lecture Rushdie delivered at Yale in the spring of 2002, which has never been published before and has prompted a lot of discussion since its publication. In that eponymous essay Rushdie writes:

“For all their permeability, the borders snaking across the world have never been of greater importance. This is the dance of history in our age: slow, slow, quick, quick, slow, back and forth and from side to side, we step across these fixed and shifting lines”. —from Part IV

With astonishing range and depth, the essays, speeches, and opinion pieces assembled in this book chronicle a ten-year intellectual odyssey by one of the most important, creative, and respected minds of our time. *Step Across This Line* concentrates in one volume Salman Rushdie’s fierce intelligence, uncanny social commentary, and irrepressible wit. This collection is, to quote Rushdie’s words, a “wake-up call” about the way we live, and think, now. He further states that:

“To cross a frontier is to be transformed....The frontier is a wake-up call. At the frontier, we can’t avoid the truth; the comforting layers of the quotidian, which insulate us

against the world's harsher realities, are stripped away and, wide-eyed in the harsh fluorescent light of the frontier's windowless halls, we see things as they are".

He himself crosses over the frontier and sees and tells things as they are, inviting readers to "step across this line" with him.

The mechanism adopted by Rushdie to present the 'harsher realities' of the world through his fiction has been elaborated upon in an interview with J. F. Galvan that was later published as "On Reality, fantasy and Fiction: A Conversation with Salman Rushdie". In that interview Rushdie explored the possibilities of unfolding 'intensified' reality through fiction. He said:

"What the use of metaphorical elements can do in a fiction is to make a kind of compression of reality, and make it more intense, intensified, so that when the reader reads the book he experiences the real world more intensely than we normally do, you know, and that something of that extra intensity stays with you afterwards, you see; it becomes a sharp way of perceiving the world".

The value that Rushdie attaches to the genre of fantasy is eloquently articulated in "Wonder Tales", the first essay in *Languages of Truth* (2001), where growing into adulthood entails regrettable disillusionment with stories. Expectably, Rushdie makes an ideological observation out of this. Children fall in love with stories, and their imagination helps them to inhabit the worlds of their loved stories, and then create some. But as children grow up, their relationship with stories gets strained, and eventually, non-existent.

"I believe that the books and stories we fall in love with make us who we are...the act of falling in love with a book or story changes us in some way, and the beloved tale becomes a part of our picture of the world, a part of the way in which we understand things and make judgements and choices in our daily lives".

It can be one amongst many of the possible reasons for Rushdie to try his hand with the non-fiction format that opened up avenues to bring forth his opinion on many of the contemporary issues without the necessity of using metaphors or other such literary devices frequently adopted in writing fictions. Thus, one can say that Rushdie's collections of essays are a great help to any understanding of his evolving political and literary views.

Unit - 14

UNIT 14 (A): BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO “INFLUENCE”

This essay was first delivered by Salman Rushdie as a lecture at the University of Torino before being incorporated in the compilation titled *Step Across This Line*. He begins the essay by quoting the Australian novelist and poet David Malouf who once said that “the real enemy of writing is talk”, further specified that by pointing out “particularly of the dangers of speaking about work in progress”. This, according to him, encourages him to not talk about his present work in progress and rather focus on something that he finds to be very important to talk about. He chose to dwell on his idea of “influence” that happens to the authors organically after reading the works of other writers or even at times after watching cinema. This idea of integration and influence of the works previously created by other authors is integral to Rushdie’s idea of creating new literary works. In his incessant habit of creating images, Rushdie goes on to explain this idea with the help of a complex yet well-knit image:

“The young writer, perhaps uncertain, perhaps ambitious, probably both at once, casts around for help; and sees, within the flow of the ocean, certain sinuous thicknesses, like ropes, the work of earlier weavers, of sorcerers who swam this way before him”.

There was a time when Rushdie, the real-life storyteller, has been suffering from a kind of disability, imposed by real-life followers of Khattam-Shud, the archenemy of stories in the land of Kahani. The story of Haroun and Rashid Khalifa in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, written by Rushdie in his forced exile, deals with the theme of a writer's freedom to make up stories and the influence of the already spun stories. Rushdie's predicament in this case is the latest replay of the age-old battle between the proponents of freedom of speech and its enemies. Plato, in his Dialogue, sought to banish poets from his ideal society because of his concern with the impression that false stories might create in the minds of readers and listeners. It is a similar fear and concern on the part of certain self-proclaimed upholders of universal truth that has led to Rushdie's banishment. Thus the ultimate appeal of stories lies not in what they actually say but in what sentiments they evoke. The way words exert influence on Rushdie's favourite topics. In Haroun’s story Rushdie provides a child's-eye view of the intricate and often intangible nature of inter-personal communication.

Salman Rushdie addresses the relation between his writing of fiction and his place in the world in a more direct manner. Despite his use of fantastic characters and events, Rushdie suggests that the context of writing simply cannot be ignored, rather it has to be faced directly in order to allow one's work to fit in with the heightened awareness typical of the contemporary world. In other words, the reality effect of his writings would fail to operate if his political, cultural, economic and social circumstances were not included in his books: "Sometimes one envies Jane Austen her fine disregard for the Napoleonic Wars. Today, with the television bringing visions of the world into every home, it seems somehow false to try and shut out the noise of gunfire, screams, weeping, to stop our ears against the inexorable ticking of the doomsday clock" (Rushdie 1991: 37).

Rushdie's narrative is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of formidable challenges. His return to the public sphere, especially after the Iranian government's declaration in 1998, marked a significant moment in his reintegration into public life. Despite the lingering threats, Rushdie emerged as a vocal advocate for artistic freedom, actively supporting persecuted writers and artists worldwide. His engagement in literary festivals and public lectures not only signifies his personal triumph over adversity but also his steadfast commitment to combat censorship.

UNIT 14 (B): DEFINING THE IDEA OF 'INFLUENCE'

Defining the process of weaving stories with extant strains of thoughts and ideas and fusing them with fresh strands of thought sets the premises for Rushdie to further dwell with the role played by the new writer. He thus goes on to elaborate upon this extensively, saying:

"Like the figure in the fairy tale who must spin straw into gold, the writer must find the trick of weaving the waters together until they become land: until, all of a sudden, there is solidity where once there was only flow, shape where there was formlessness; there is ground beneath his feet".

In writing Rushdie is fond of quoting (openly or not) many authors who distinguish themselves by an unconventional representation of the world - Sterne, Carroll, Kafka, Grass, García Márquez, only to name a few - but more than intertextuality is at stake. If we think of literary influence not as a passive phenomenon but as an active operation of

identification with formal strategies suitable to one's cultural identity, we can conclude that Rushdie consciously subscribes to this "other great tradition", which he construes as an inherently reformistic one. However, sharing an anecdote of the other extreme, he goes on to warn that "[I]f influence is omnipresent in literature, it is also, one should emphasize, always secondary in any work of quality. When it is too crude, too obvious, the results can be risible".

In putting forth the demarcating traits between 'influence' and 'imitation' Rushdie cites the example of his novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* from which he draws the analogy of floating stories too. He declares that he has "sought to portray a little of the cultural cross-pollination without which literature becomes parochial and marginal". In fact, he Salman Rushdie drawn on both Indian and Western literary traditions in his novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* to emphasize the influential bearing that stories have on their authors and readers. The novel is Rushdie's first book intended for children, but it contains meanings on many levels that are accessible to different groups of readers depending on their varied experiences and ways of understanding the story.

As an Indian man living in Britain and writing in English, Rushdie faced the challenge of writing for audiences with a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, which at once allowed him access to a huge selection of inspiration in his writing, while also limiting the amount of understanding that individual readers may take from the novel because most people will not pick up on elements of the novel that come from other backgrounds than their own. He uses wordplay and puns that reference both Western and Hindustani words and cultural jokes, along with many references and allusions to other stories from Indian, European, and American traditions. Rushdie's many sources of inspiration serve as an excellent example of one of the major points that he expounds in the novel, which is that the classic stories of all societies are important to the cultures that they come from both for preserving that culture's traditions, and because they are the foundation of everything that has come after them. At the same time, he takes the opportunity to place a timely and much required warning saying that "[T]he frontier between influence and imitation, even between influence and plagiarism, has commenced of late to be somewhat blurred".

The Sea of Stories is constantly changing as parts of stories are recombined and repurposed within new tales, just as Rushdie's novel does with the many works and tropes that it references. Rushdie's idea that stories are both a product of and a tribute to their predecessors is a theme that resonates throughout the novel, as it combines elements of classic Western and Indian

stories and means of storytelling to become, itself, an example of the very concept that the Sea of Stories represents.

UNIT 14 (C): CONCEPT OF 'FLUIDITY' IN "INFLUENCE"

Dwelling upon the idea of 'influence' Rushdie meticulously explores the concept of fluidity or smooth infusion of the old with the new. Thus, he says:

“By using what is old, and adding to it some new thing of our own, we make what is new. In *The Satanic Verses* I tried to answer the question, how does newness enter the world? Influence, the flowing of the old into the new, is one part of the answer”.

Ever since Ayatollah Khomeini sentenced Salman Rushdie to death in 1989 for, in essence, remaking the story of the Prophet Muhammad in *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie has repeatedly explored in his works how bringing newness into the world and securing the right to freedom of expression both require challenging traditional assumptions about textual purity. This theme in Rushdie testifies to the real-world implications of current efforts in textual scholarship to represent texts not as authoritative repositories of sacrosanct wisdom but as, in John Bryant's word, “fluid” conveyors of ever-shifting intentions and meanings.

To illustrate how “newness enters the world”, Rushdie suggests that innovation is rooted in the inherent vagaries of textual transmission, as well as in the human compulsion to counter those vagaries by revising narratives that fail to meet the needs of whoever claims authority over them. In response to Khomeini's fatwa, Rushdie only heightened his commitment to advocating that such authority should reside with everyone, in examples ranging from his depiction of a world where narratives literally flow from a cosmic wellspring in his 1990 children's novel *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* to his following statement on the lessons of the fatwa from his 2012 memoir *Joseph Anton*:

“We should all be free to take the grand narratives to task, to argue with them, satirize them, and insist that they change to reflect the changing times. [. . .] In fact, one could say that our ability to re-tell and re-make the story of our culture was the best proof that our societies were indeed free”.

This theme in Rushdie that bringing newness into the world and securing the right to freedom of expression both require challenging traditional assumptions about textual purity testifies to the real-world implications of current efforts in textual scholarship to represent texts not as authoritative repositories of sacrosanct wisdom but as, in John Bryant's word, "fluid" conveyors of ever-shifting intentions and meanings. In *The Fluid Text*, Bryant theorizes a concept he calls "textual fluidity" that encompasses many of the volatilities involved in the evolution and transmission of ideas through language and thus, I argue, corresponds with Rushdie's notion of the mechanisms that make novelty possible. Bryant defines a fluid text as "any literary work that exists in more than one version" where "the versions flow from one to another", and he stresses that "all works — because of the nature of texts and creativity — are fluid texts" (2002).

What makes Rushdie's novels as mediated reality significant is his mastery of the art of storytelling. He once informed an interviewer that his parents were great storytellers: his mother as a keeper of family stories and his father as a teller of serial tales generously using material from the storehouse of the Arabian Nights. Of course, there are many other sources - Persian, Indian, and European - that have possibly influenced Rushdie: *Mantaq Uttair*, *Panchatantra*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Tristram Shandy*, and works by modern playwrights and novelists. Perhaps the greatest influence of all on him seems to be that of his own ears: he is a lover of gossip, a trait he likely inherited from his mother, the keeper of "family" stories. Incidentally, Rushdie himself is a member of three "families" - India, Pakistan, and England - and, like his characters Saleem Sinai and Omar Khayyam Shakil, a child of "three mothers." He is a master craftsman who knows how to combine fact with fantasy and present linear stories disguised as nonlinear narration. He consciously uses ingredients of fiction that interest readers everywhere: mythical and grotesque characters, vampires, demons and witches, magic and miracles, murders and suicides, physical fights and bloodshed, and satiric treatment of historical personages familiar to readers.

There are also numerous other devices that Rushdie employs successfully: he establishes interesting and intriguing relationships between the narrator and the listener in the novel (for instance, the role of the illiterate Padma in *Midnight's Children* as the listener- prompter) and also between the author and the reader (this is especially so in *Shame*, where the author continues to intrude and involve the reader in the "gossip"); he uses a *dunya dekho* ("see the world"), peepshow-wallah attitude toward the presentation of the events and characters (the perforated sheet that reveals the body of Naseem bit by bit to her doctor and future husband,

and the role of Lifafa Das in showing the world to children and adults by using his peepshow); he generously mixes autobiography, gossip, and personal intimacy with irony and self-mockery, maintaining a comic stance even while narrating serious and tragic events. Interspersed with all these elements are the "thought forms" communicated directly and obliquely. The story is the thing, but behind it lies hidden the thought and design of the artist giving it shape, courting the reader to see bit by bit the subtle experiences, thoughts, and people, and establishing connections between fact and fantasy. By tracing the evolution of his stories through multiple versions and considering his revisions in light of his conception for East, West as a whole, we learn that Rushdie employs textual fluidity as both a multivalent literary motif and an empowering compositional strategy, often in ways that function together to expand the work's interpretive possibilities and yield a deeper understanding of the fluidities not only of language but also of concepts vital to identity for him and his characters, especially East, West, culture, and race.

Unit - 15

UNIT 15 (A): BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO "CRASH"

"Crash: The Death of Princess Diana" is not merely Salman Rushdie's commentary on one of the most discussed incidents of the last decade of the twentieth century but is also a pertinent critique on the gradually increasing interference of the paparazzi in the lives of the popular personae. This issue raised by Rushdie has become all the more relevant in the twenty first century with the advent of the mobile camera and the slow but gradual blurring of the personal and the social life of every individual, more so of the celebrities. He brings in the reference of J.G. Ballard's "Crash" which was adapted as a film by David Cronenberg which, according to him, "caused howls from the censorship lobby, particularly in Britain". His sharp critique of the 'gaze' of the public in general over the lives of the celebrities results in his comparison of the celebrities to commodities. In fact, he openly calls out this 'celebrity fetish' – as he defines it- and the glamourising of the consumer technology in the form of the motor car to be ultimately the outcome of the routine eroticisation of that culture. Rushdie starkly points out that "Ballard's novel, by bringing together these two powerful erotic fetishes—the Automobile and the Star—in an act of sexual violence (a car crash), created an effect so shocking as to be

thought obscene”. While pointing out the death of princess Diana as one such obscene act, Rushdie’s deliverance also incorporates his unmatched reasoning for substantiating his point.

Diana, Princess of Wales, died in the early morning of August 31 1997, after the Mercedes she was travelling in crashed at high speed in the Pont D’Alma underpass in Paris. A French inquiry in 1999 blamed chauffeur Henri Paul - who died along with Diana and her boyfriend Dodi al Fayed - for the crash. The inquiry concluded that Paul had taken a cocktail of alcohol and prescription drugs, and was driving too fast. The verdict of the jurors, closing a six-month inquest that has heard from more than 240 witnesses, implicated the paparazzi and Paul citing negligence as the cause of death. However, for Rushdie the more important concern has been the running away of the car carrying the princess from the paparazzi that ultimately resulted in the crash causing their death. Hence, he explicitly articulates the absurdity of the incident saying:

“To die because you don’t want to have your picture taken! What could be more meaningless, more absurd? But in fact this frightful accident is freighted with meanings. It tells us uncomfortable truths about what we have become.”

As he rightly points out, this incident is fraught with meanings and a sharp observation on the way the society at large started not only being influenced but also getting imbued in the consumerist culture that was turning everything including people into commodities. This consumerist culture enhanced the fast blurring of the private and the public spheres that earlier used to be clearly demarcated, especially for the celebrities.

However, the most remarkable part of this essay comes when the author compares the death of the princess with a ‘sexual assault’ rendering her as the object of desire and the camera to be the symbolic representation of her ‘persistent suitor’ incessantly pursuing her. The camera imagined to be the role of the suitor has been personified as well as has been capacitated with the power of disturbing her persistently with “unwelcome attentions”. Interestingly, the camera is only the microscopic emblem of the hidden but strong desire of the patriarchal society at the macroscopic level represented through the persona of the individual suitor. The irony, however, remains in the fact that Rushdie could detect the possibility of the camera becoming the tool of objectification at a time when the pursuit of information about celebrities was considered to be legitimate. The problem encountered by the celebrities because of this gaze of the camera constantly objectifying them turns double fold if the celebrity is a woman. Hence, the

comparison of invading through one's personal life and denying the celebrities their personal space with the sexual assault seems relevant and pertinent.

The comparison, however, is not self-sufficient since the camera is after all an object itself and needs the human intervention to function. Nevertheless, the critique is finally unleashed upon the society at large, especially the never ending eagerness to know about the celebrities and their personal life. Thus, Rushdie's sharpest criticism comes out:

“The Camera is not, finally, a suitor in its own right. True, it seeks to possess the Beauty, to capture her on film, for economic gain. But that's a euphemism. The brutal truth is that the camera is acting on our behalf. If the camera acts voyeuristically, it is because our relationship with the Beauty has always been voyeuristic. If blood is on the hands of the photographers and the photo agencies and the news media's photo editors, it is also on ours”.

It is the voyeuristic desire of the society that works as incentive for the photographer and encourages him to run after the object her unwaveringly to the fatal accident causing her death. Hence, in the consumerist culture the producer of these commodities, in this case photographs, are not to be solely blamed since they only produce as there is a market for such products.

Finally, Rushdie's dissection of the social reality brings out the fact that it's all about 'control' that both the 'object' of desire and the 'suitor' with the gaze are fighting over. The celebrities too participate in this game of pursuit willingly to encash upon this consumerist culture at times. So did the Princess when she calculatedly posed in front of the camera in a certain way to evoke particular emotions in the public. The paparazzi culture has been promoted by the celebrities themselves when the camera and its gaze can be controlled according to the desire of the celebrity. Rushdie concluded the essay by bringing in some highly debatable yet pertinent issues concerning the control exerted by the individuals, the paparazzi community and broadly the Royal authorities to proclaim that probably the Princess was not only escaping from the random and off guarded portrayal of her by the paparazzi in her death but also from the control of the Royal family while she was alive. Hence, the symbiotic coexistence, contribution and attempt to control the consumerist market by the Royal authorities and the players of that market has been unfurled by delving deep into this tragic yet ironic incident that turned out to be one of the most discussed events of the twentieth century.

UNIT 15 (B): UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF MEDIA THROUGH “CRASH”

In an interview titled “A Touch of Vulgarly” with Laura Miller published on 16th April, 1999 Rushdie explained this further saying that we “can't, nowadays, separate our private lives from the public sphere in the way that Jane Austen's characters could. The public sphere has intruded in our lives...”. In the same interview, while sharing his immediate response to the death of princess Diana, Rushdie clarified that he had already started brooding over the issue of the public gaze in the era of television and other such medium of audio visual representation of incidents taking place in the public sphere. It is quite surprising to know that the draft of *The Satanic Verses* which was prepared by Rushdie before the death of princess Diana had to be revised after that fatal accident took place, since it incorporated a passage about what television sees and how it sees it. In fact, this incident that ‘shocked’ him resulted in his absorbing “everything that happened in the aftermath of her death and rewrite and revise the book in the light of that” considering the centrality of this issue to the book.

“One of the characters in the book talks about the feedback loop. After Diana's death, there clearly was, for five minutes, a very large, spontaneous outpouring of grief, which took everybody by surprise, including most of the media. Nobody expected it to be that big. But the moment that this, if you like, pure, unmediated phenomenon had been recognized, the weight of media attention hurled at it -- within 48 hours -- created a different phenomenon. Instead of responding in a completely uninstructed way, people were doing what they'd seen on television. The thing had become a quotation of itself. This is the loop. And that loop has now become so tight, because of the speed of mass communications, that it's very difficult to separate an event from the media response to it”.

The role of media thus has become a defining one in the determining the outcome of events in the face that media can leave a lasting impression on people’s minds, at times even manipulating them. This control not on the incident but on the responses it can generate that Rushdie has been talking about. The audio-visual representation of any event thus determines how people across the world would react to that. The death of Princess Diana has been taken almost as a case study to prove this point.

The entire spectacle-the need to know every intimate detail of the princess's death, the various reconstructions of the crash in every medium, and of course the endless photos, many of persons taking photos-is indeed the most obscene celebration to date of a celebrity's death and of the media's power, making the question of the relation between the aesthetic and ethical spheres a timely one. Perhaps more than the writing of any other cultural theorist, Baudrillard's bears witness to such phenomena. In the neoprimitive climate of his "universe of simulation," the Princess Diana spectacle can be seen as a high-powered symbolic exchange with the dead and with the power of death through the ritual sacrifice of a media icon. The question of whether Baudrillard's theory advocates or criticizes this savage new world lies at the heart of the controversy surrounding his work, and it is of general importance to those who are concerned with the relation between theory and ethics. As for a literary analogue to the Princess Diana phenomenon, J. G. Ballard's *Crash* was quickly named by Salman Rushdie in an article titled "Crash" that appeared in an issue of the *New Yorker* devoted entirely to the princess's death.' Ballard's *Crash*, written in 1973 and made into a movie in 1997 by David Cronenberg, depicts characters who push their fascination with things like the death of a celebrity in a car crash to an absurd limit, using such events as models for a new form of sexuality deriving not from nature and life but from technology and death. Princess Diana aside, popular fascination with violent deaths and technological disasters is a major theme in both Ballard's and Baudrillard's work, so it is not surprising that the two names are often associated.

The powerful role that media plays in determining the public response to any incident has taken a big leap with the unforeseen advancements in technology especially in the twenty first century. Ironically, the concerns expressed by Rushdie were only aggravated in the days after this essay. This was taken to a new height after the French government had taken the extraordinary step of opening the underpass in which Princess Diana died to members of the public. This was reported by newspapers across the world in October, 2007. Thus, the secret desire of the public to know about the Princess even years after her death was understood and worked upon by the French government substantiating what Rushdie expressed his concern about years ago.

Unit - 16

UNIT 16 (A): BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO “ON BEING PHOTOGRAPHED”

Amidst the plethora of diverse subjects that Rushdie has dealt with in his non-fiction compilation *Step Across This Line* photography can be considered to be of grave importance for him. The nuances of photography, on being photographed to be more precise, grapples the author’s attention in an eponymous essay. The same issue has been explored extensively again with reference to a particular scenario in the context of the death of Princess Diana. If the death of Princess Diana while running away from the paparazzi gives us a glimpse into the intruding nature of the photographer and in turn of the common people through the photograph into the life of the celebrities, “On Being Photographed” captures the language, subject matter and other such concerns. In the introductory section of the essay Rushdie claims that there is “something predatory about all photography”. He then goes on to proclaim that the “portrait is the portraitist’s food”. After putting lots of effort the photographer earns the photograph as the prized possession by the end of a hectic process. To explain this further he brings in the analogy of the animal head displayed on the wall as a decorative element screaming out the prowess of the owner as a hunter.

However, Rushdie’s concerns for photography must not be entirely understood from the present day availability and naturalisation of this art. Before photography gained its familiarity amongst common people there were apprehensions about the capacity of the photographer of capturing some essential parts of the subject who was being photographed. Expectedly, Rushdie here cites the example of the fictionalised portrayal of the real life incident with his grandmother depicted in *Midnight’s Children* “because she believed that if he could capture some part of her essence in his box, then she would necessarily be deprived of it”. This apprehension of the subject can be understood considering the novelty of the act for such subjects. However, mastery of performance over this art to the extent of exploiting it to one’s one benefit can be deciphered the moment the subject of photography gets replaced. This can be explored with the following example:

“Models know how to look, the good ones know what the camera sees. They are performers of the surface, manipulators and presenters of their own extraordinary outsides. But finally the model’s look is an artificiality, it is a look about how to look”.

For the professionals the camera and its angle is to be explored, understood and be played according to its performative aspects towards its maximum utilisation. Hence, the crux of this entire exercise is to understand “what the camera sees”. The clarity over the functionalities of the art of photography extends a sense of empowerment for the subject posing before the camera. This enables the expert model to dictate the position, angle and the focus to ‘create’ an alternative reality.

Rushdie made another remarkable comment to expose the inherent façade of this exercise when he said:

“Garry Winogrand, quoted in Susan Sontag’s *On Photography*, says that he takes photographs “to find out what something will look like photographed,” and these professional subjects are similarly trapped—they can never step outside the frame. They become quotations of themselves. Until the camera loses interest, and they fade away. The story of Faust does not have a happy ending”.

Thus posing before the camera, determining its angle and to felicitate a synergy between these two, seen from Rushdie’s perspective, can be termed to be a vicious cycle or ‘trap’ that the professional expert chooses to play until the camera decides to stop capturing him/her. Basically, then the camera exudes a false sense of empowerment to the professional model. It is interesting to note here that these remarks when looked at retrospectively may appear to be overloaded with a sense of foreboding. These remarks made by the author in the pre-globalisation era with the foresight of what was to take place as the aftermath of globalisation and the consequent expansion of the consumerist economy appears to be almost a warning to the contemporary world.

In the final section of the essay, the author speaks volume about the art of Richard Avedon, one of the greatest American photographers of the last century, who once took an unforgettable portrait of Salman Rushdie. The author sat for Avedon in London on September 26, 1994, five short years after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran placed a fatwa on the author for his portrayal of Muhammad in *The Satanic Verses*. The subject sits centered in his frame, flush with the camera, staring directly into the lens. Under two thickly arched eyebrows his ever-drooping eyelids frame a gaze at once incredulous, subversive, and strangely hypnotic. The portrait is hard to reconcile with the exuberant wit and wordplay exemplified by so much of Rushdie’s work. The author is, first and foremost, a playful yet captivating storyteller; his ever-imaginative magical realism has often led critics to trumpet his tales as diversions for all

generations. Yet dark threads weave consistently through his writing, and his best novels—most notably the Booker Prize-winning *Midnight's Children*—contain indirect yet sharp political and religious critiques.

UNIT 16 (B): A CRITIQUE OF “PHOTOGRAPHY” AS PERFORMANCE

Photography was first introduced to India by the British shortly after its invention in 1839 for the imperialist purpose of topographical surveying. Photographs also featured prominently in British travel guides, which served to create a predictable and repeatable pictorial journey through the subcontinent that rendered India transparent to Western tourists as an extension of the Empire. By the time of the Calcutta International Exhibition in 1883, the colonial counterpart to London's Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace three decades earlier, photography had come to play an important role in the colonial establishment's ability not only to catalogue data regarding all aspects of Indian society, but also to display its “indexical power” and ability to “order reality”. Photography came to be associated in India with the imperialist “intoxication with precision and exactitude both descriptive and spatial” and was viewed as complicit in the dehumanizing statistical ‘efficiency’ of colonial government.

The manipulation of photographs as part of the spectacle's validation of ideology and commodification of culture is a recurring motif in both the political history of India and Rushdie's non-fiction. Thus the photograph plays a substantial role in framing Rushdie's critique of spectacle, and it is through Situationist critiques of photography articulated by Susan Sontag and John Berger that Rushdie has been most influenced by Debord's discourse. Sontag and Berger both echo the vocabulary of Debord's concept of *détournement*, the process whereby the “despotism of a fragment imposing itself as the pseudo-knowledge of a frozen whole” is restored to “its context, its own movement and ultimately the overall frame of reference of its period”.

One of the most influential thinkers of her time and a prolific commentator on art and culture, Sontag was among the first authors who wrote about photography's ability to **deceive**. She focused on moral and aesthetic issues related to the medium, including its power to idealize and shock, but also to work as a propaganda and memorial. In *On Photography*, Susan Sontag describes the photograph similarly as a “fragment”, a “quotation [. . .] open to any kind of

reading”, falsely regarded as a “piece of reality”. Sontag makes the argument that photography can be a way for many people to discover beauty, in a way very similar to what Plato has talked about. Sontag goes so far as to say that if we are taking a picture of something ugly, it is because we see something beautiful within what is normally perceived as ugly. In that way, photography is perhaps better than any other medium at helping us discover what is beautiful.

Just as Debord accuses the spectacle of naturalizing a socially conditioned way of seeing, Sontag writes that “photographs have become the norm for the way things appear to us, thereby changing the very idea of reality and of realism”. It is through photography, Sontag concludes, that “history is converted into spectacle”, “people become customers of reality”, and “every subject is depreciated into an article of consumption [and] promoted into an item for aesthetic appreciation”. Applying the concept of *détournement* to photography, Berger argues that photography must be represented in a “radial system” of words and other images to ensure that it serves as a contextual aid to social and political memory and is not used to construct a linear narrative that substitutes in a fascist manner for memory.

However, Salman Rushdie brings out the other side of the story, the concerns of the subject of photography if the subject is not a professional model in particular. The thoughts that cross the mind of such a subject mostly revolves around hiding certain aspects with the hope that the “worst bits haven’t been emphasized too much”.

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on Rushdie’s legacy, it’s evident that his impact transcends literary achievements. He embodies the indomitable quest for expression and understanding, continuing to inspire conversations about the essence of freedom and the transformative power of storytelling. His life story encourages us to uphold the values of dialogue and openness, essential to a liberated and dynamic society. The essays from *Step Across This Line*, discussed here, serves as a rallying cry for the defense of artistic and intellectual liberties, compelling us to remain vigilant against those who seek to suppress innovative and critical expressions. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, Rushdie’s work and life remind us of the courage it takes to live and speak authentically. His enduring influence emphasizes the importance of fostering an environment where diverse voices flourish, contributing to a more nuanced

understanding of freedom and its implications in our lives across ages. Through Rushdie's example, we learn the significance of celebrating creativity, advocating for a world where not just tolerance, but celebration of differences, paves the way for a richer, more enlightened global community.

Nevertheless, *Step across This Line* balances such want of critical breadth by offering fine essays on the motion-picture version of *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and on authors such as Angela Carter, Arthur Miller, and Edward W. Said. Equally beautifully written are Rushdie's reflections in the section "Messages from the Plague Years," where he recounts his days under the fatwa. Rushdie is an avid proponent of freedom of expression in the third world and is always willing to lend his support to a persecuted author. He has come to the defense of other controversial writers and activists--for example, Michel Houellebecq of France, Taslima Nasrin of Bangladesh, and Ken Sarawiki of Nigeria--and has written to champion their right to dissent. The letter he wrote to espouse the cause of Nasrin is republished in *Step across This Line*. "A Dream of Glorious Return" describes his trip back to India in 2000 after the fatwa--the title, Rushdie does not forget to remind his readers, echoes words from *The Satanic Verses*. The trip was an emotional one to Rushdie because he went back to India after thirteen years; it was memorable also because his son Zafar accompanied him.

Salman Rushdie remains an immense figure in postcolonial and postmodern studies. Regardless of the controversies he raises, he is an acknowledged master of storytelling, one who boldly experiments with new techniques, questions long-held beliefs, and opposes dogmatism in his fiction. In an interview he elaborates upon this:

"I've always been somebody who values the idea of independent thought, and I just want to think things out and say what I think, and then people can decide whether that's left or right, and I frankly don't care. I'm just trying to understand the world I live in and respond to it as truthfully as I can".

The essays discussed here substantiate this attempt on his part to break down the nuances of some of the important incidents of his contemporary age. These explorations, very much like his fictional writings, are written in typical Rushdie style with his sharp ironic commentary on the social realities and their artistic representation.

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ASSIGNMENTS

Essay-Type Questions

- 1) Discuss Salman Rushdie's idea of influence on a writer.
- 2) What according to you is the crux of Rushdie's take on 'fluidity' in creative writing?
- 3) Discuss with reference to the text Rushdie's understanding of the death of Princess Diana by car crash in the context of the consumerist culture.
- 4) What role does the common mass have to play, according to Rushdie, in the gradual increase of the culture of commodification?
- 5) Elaborate upon Rushdie's take on

Short Answer Type Questions

Comment on the following:

- 1) The motor car as phallic symbol
- 2) How newness enters the world
- 3) Camera as a tool of power
- 4) Manipulation of reality through photography
- 5) Sea of stories