UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

STUDY MATERIALS

M.A. ENGLISH

PAPER IX

(OPTIONAL - IV)

EUROPEAN FICTION

(Final 1997 Admission)

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CONTENTS

Section A

Cervantes : Don Quixote

Flaubert : Madame Bovary

Emile Zola : Nana

Leo Tolstoy : Anna Karenina

Dostoevsky : Brothers Karamazov

Section B

Franz Kafka : The Trial

Herman Hesse : Siddhartha

Thomas Mann : The Magic Mountain

Knut Hamson : Growth of the Soil

Section C

Albert Camus : The Stranger
(The Outsider)

Boris Pasternak : Doctor Zhivago

UNIT I

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES AN INTRODUCTION

1.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

(i) form a general idea of Spanish fictional literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and

(ii) understand about the life and personality of Miguel de Cervantes (1574 – 1616)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about his age, since however conventional or individualistic he may be, he nevertheless belongs to his age and is a product of his society. So, let us begin this Unit with a brief note on the Spanish fictional literature of the 16th century, the age of Cervantes (1547-1616).

1.2 SPANISH FICTIONAL LITERATURE OF THE 16TH CENTURY

Spanish literature cannot be neatly arranged in period or styles. Certain characteristics obstinately overflow the arbitrary boundaries of centuries and genres. The continuity of the heroic and lyric motifs is far greater than in English of French literature. The strange effects of the living together of Christians, Moors and Jews for many centuries are only now beginning to be appreciated. In Spain, the renaissance did not mean the end of the medieval, which in a way has continued to influence all Spanish writers who write about Spaniards.

Up to the end of the 15th century the predominant European influence on Spanish literature was French. French epics influenced the form of "Castillian chansons de geste" and French themes were adapted by composers of Spanish ballads. After 1500, however French influence almost vanishes for something over a hundred years.

Reminiscences of Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch gradually increase in Spanish poetry as the 15th century progresses. Contact between Spain and Italy had become close in the 15th century and became closer in the 16th. "Ariosto was translated into Spanish ; and imitated by Lope de Vega. Tasso's theories and practice were also influential.' The Italian novelists were translated and imitated, and they provided plots for dramatists. Much classical learning entered Spain by way of the Spanish domination in Italy.

The history of Spanish humanism is yet to be written. The Reformation passed Spain by. The number of Spanish Protestants was small and they left few important works behind. The influence of Erasmus was, however, profound. Other more orthodox writers continued to stress inner piety and the relative unimportance of religious externals. Reflections of this teaching are to be found in St. John of the Cross and Cervantes.

Several factors co-operated to make Spain the predominant European power during the 16th century. Castilian became the Spanish language. The general emphasis on disillusion by the Spanish mystics can hardly be dissociated from the prevalent economic and social conditions. The counter-Reformation provided an answer to the confusion of the world: trust in God, performance of good deeds and cultivation of virtue.

The change in outlook was reflected in works of entertainment. The early 16th century has seen the proliferation of the fantastic novels of chivalry which began to lose their hold towards the end of it. The best pastoral novels were written between 1550 and 1600. These genres could only

criticise life in so far as they escaped from it. But there were two other works of fiction which had more relation to ordinary living: "The Celestina" (1499) and "Lazarillo de Tormes" (1554). The latter is an imaginary biography of an under-dog which could expose certain vices to ridicule. Lope de Vega's "Dorothea" (1632) is a re-creation of his own youth. Aleman took the picaresque model of the "Lazarillo" and made his "Guzman" into the autobiography of a converted sinner. Quevedo in his "Buscon" used an different technique to make his hero a hardened criminal. Aleman's sermons and Quevedo's sarcasms both derive from an ascetic way of life. Cervantes too has some relation to this outlook. Don Quixote is a long discursive novel which embraces all kinds of material; the story of how the deluded hero is gradually disillusioned in a world which often encourages his madness forms the climax of the story.

Spain's most notable literary achievement is her 17th century drama. However, the novel also flourished. The greatest novelists of the 17th century were Cervantes, Gongora and Quevedo. After Cervantes died, the novel began to decay. The lesser writers of fiction of that time make depressing reading. Poetry virtually expired with Quevedo. Only the drama remained vigorous until after 1681, when Calderon died. From the purely literary aspect, the late 17th century is dreary, but the learned life of Spain survived.

It is hard to epitomize the magnificence and variety of the great works of the Spanish golden age or to account for its relatively sudden decline: in part their merit is due to the combination of baroque forms and style with medieval ways of feeling which persisted more strongly in Spain than in Italy or France. Popular literature enriched the cultivated fancy of lope, Cervantes and some lesser writers. And the great disillusions of the Counter Reformation were splendidly expressed by Aleman, Quevedo and Calderon. These great writers ended an old epoch. They did not begin a new one.

In general, it may be said that the greatest works of Spanish literature belong to the years 1540-1680 (in which period Cervantes lived and wrote): Later writers have created many interesting works which deserve to be more widely known; but they can hardly rival those of Cervantes, Calderon, Quevedo,Gongora or Lope de Vega. Cervantes and the picaresque writers gave Europe the modern novel. The cultivated writing influence each other. In the golden age writers we can see how Christian ideas and attitudes permeated and gave value to works of entertainment.

Let us now proceed to study something about the life and personality of Cervantes.

1.3 LIFE AND PERSONALITY OF CERVANTES.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616) was the outstanding genius and supreme innovator of Spanish literature. He was born the second son and fourth of seven children of Rodrigo de Cervantes and Leonar de Cortinas at Alcala de Henares some 20 miles east of Madrid which, since 1510, has been the seat of Spain's second great university. His birthdate is not recorded but the choice of name-Michaelmas, September 29; he was baptized on October 9, 1547. Rodrigo's father had made a career in the law serving as magistrate in various parts of Spain; but Rodrigo led the more precarious existence of an itinerant apothecary-surgeon. Known to have been in Valladolid in 1552-53, where he was imprisoned for debt, he moved his family to Madrid when Philip II established that still small town as his capital in 1561. Miguel thus lost his chance of a university education'; in its place he had early contracted a passion for reading, so that, he tells, that he would pick up scraps pf paper in the street to read. The self –educated man, later to became one of the best read and most intellectually curious Spaniards of his day was already in the making; and in Madrid he had his chance of further schooling.

Cervantes's literary interests started budding while he was quite young. He also seems to have been interested in the theatre both at the beginning and again at the end of his literary career.

Cervantes led an eventful life. On September 15, 1569 a warrant was issued for the arrest of one Miguel de Cervantes missing from the capital. Perhaps it was the novelist, we are not certain. Much later, he speaks of

having served in the household in Rome of Cardinal. Of his life in Rome nothing more is known except that it was brief. But to have come at an impressionable age from the still parochial Madrid to the hub (central part) of the Christian universe and a city whose surpassing beauty was treasured in memory for life proved a great enrichment of mind and all the senses. It proved a stimulus, too, to action. Cervantes enlisted in a Spanish contingent in Rome that was ordered to Naples to await the arrival there of the main fighting force from Spain. It was a long wait. On October 1571, the enemy was discovered, drawn up in battle formation in the Gulf of Lepanto, and there ensued(followed) in Cervantes's profound words,'the greatest occasion that past or present ages have witnessed or that the future can hope to witness.' His ship 'Marquesa' was in the thick of the battle and no one outshone him in bravery. III with fever, he refused to go below, and seeking out the most exposed position was twice wounded in the chest, a third shot permanently maiming (crippling) his left hand, to the greater glory, 'as he says, of the right'. Of his part in the battle, Cervantes remained prouder throughout his life than anything else.

Cervantes lay convalescing in a hospital in Messina for some time. He had a few more military assignments, some successful, some unsuccessful. Much as he had already seen and experienced, his adventures were only beginning. He had to face captivity, torture and even lashes before he was set free. Literature has rarely had a narrower escape. He sailed for Spain on October 24, 1580 and proceeded to Madrid.

The brief campaign that in 1580 incorporated Portugal into the Spanish Crown-uniting the penisula once more for the next 60 years was just over. Returning to Madrid after a few minor missions, disillusioned in his hopes of official employment, Cervantes consorted with writers and turned his hand to the writing of plays. Many of his plays were acted. "La confusa" is the play which he esteemed and prided himself on most.

On December 12, 1584 Cervantes married Catalina de Salazar, a girl 18 years his junior and of good family. She brought him a handsome dowry. However, her parents did not highly esteem the match. It was probably a year or two earlier that he had a daughter Isabel by one Ana Franca de Fiojas. By his wife he had no children but Isabel figured disturbingly in his life in later years. His father's death in 1585 doubtless increased his responsibilities as the man of a household of many women, including his sisters and a niece and gave a new urgency to the search for a livelihood that was not to be had from writing.

In 1587, he went to Seville, presumably along to seek employment in the provisioning of the Spanish Armada, the fleet that was to convoy an army to attack England. This mundane employment marked the beginning of a 15 year hiatus in his literary career. He had to undergo excommunication and imprisonment on charges of illegal requisitioning (demanding) of grain.

The years 1600-03 are a blank. The possibility that he may have rejoined his wife in the tranquil obscurity of her home is reinforced by the only thing to be inferred with certainty of this period; that he was busily-engaged in the writing of "Don Quixote." (we shall discuss the novel in detail in the succeeding units). Unluckily, he did not make much money out of this novel. To add to his woes, a stabbing affray (public fight) outside his first floor lodging in Alladolid in June 1605 which landed him and his women folk in jail for a week on suspicion, showed him to be still living in difficult circumstances.

For three years thereafter, he was again lost to view, to reappear in 1608 in Madrid, now once more the capital. There he was much harassed by an interminable series of legal squabbles over financial matters involving his daughter and her second husband; and when in mid-1610 the Count of Lemos known for his benevolent interest in men of letters was appointed Viceroy of Naples, Cervantes sought escape by aspiring to an appointment in his entourage or cabinet. The hope did not materialise; but in dedicating to the count Cervantes paid rich tribute to the generous support received in his last years from him. Earlier in 1609, he

had been received in to the newly founded fraternity of slaves of the most Blessed Sacrament; about the same time his wife took the habit of (joined) the Third Order of St. Francis. In 1612, he joined the Academia Selvaje, a new literary club to which the dramatist Lope de Vega, the other literary giant of Spain's golden age and no friend to Cervantes belonged.

A third and culminating period of intense creative activity now began: He wrote many more short stories, a burlesque poem etc. In 1614 he had promised a speedy appearance of a sequel to "Don Quixote". He was at work on the 59th chapter of the sequel when he came to know of the publication of a spurious second part. What stung him most was an insolent preface taunting Cervantes with physical defects and moral infirmitites. However, he hurried on with his own work in spite of much unpleasantness and published it by the end of 1615. It too was speedily reprinted in Brussels and Valencia (both 1616) and in Lisbon (1617) with a first translation into French, in 1618. From the Barcelona edition of 1617 onward, both parts appeared together.

With energy and inventiveness unabated (continuing) his mind shaping ever new projects, Cervantes grew conscious that time was running out. He did not live to see last work in print; it was publised in 1617. It ran through eight editions in two years with two French and one English translations. It was entitles "Lost trabajos de persiles Sigismunda". He died on 23 April 1616 (Remember: Shakespeare too died on the same day) in his house in the Calle de Leon. The next day he was buried in the Trinitarian convent; no stone marked his grave, and no will is known. His wife who in testament made in 1610 had borne witness to "the much love and good companionship we have had together," survived until 1626 and his daughter until 1652, when his life became extinct.

Read the study material carfully and become familiar with the age of Cervantes, Spanish literature during the golden age, as well as the eventful life of the author of "Don Quixote", and his interesting personality: We shall study about Cervantes's classic "Don Quixote", in the following Units.

UNIT - 2

DON QUIXOTE

PART 1: A SUMMARY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to.

(i) have general idea of the plot of the first of cervantes's "Don Quixote" and

(ii) form your initial inpressions of the Don and his squire.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation, something of the original's flavour and flair is bound to the lost. A chapter-wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about the characters, atmosphere and so on. But if you can lay your hands on a good translation, do read it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Cervantes's masterpices.

Anyway, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first part of the novel.

2.3.1 Summary of Chapter-1

The quality and Manner of life of the Renowned Hero.

Once upon a time there lived in a village of La Maricha a gentleman who kept a lance upon a rack, and old buckler, a lean horse and a coursing greyhound. He was about fifty years old. His family consisted of a housekeeper, a young niece and a servant boy. He indulged in reading that caused his brains to dry up, and his intellect to become

deranged. He was seized with one of the strangest facies that ever entered the head of any madman. It was to become a knight – errant , travel all over the world and perform deeds both for self glory and for the services if his country. He equipped himself with armour and steed. Now he needed only a lady to be in love with. He chose a good looking peasant girl-called Aldonza Lorenzo to nominate mistress of his heart. He decided to call her Dulcinea delToboso.

2.3.2 Summary of Chapter 2

The first sally Don Quixote made from his native village

Without telling anyone he set out one day on horseback. On the way he was suddenly smitten by the thought that he was not yet dubbed a knight. He decided to be made one. He traveled all day. At night he and his horse Rozinante reached an inn. On hearing a swineherd blowing his horn to collect his hogs Quixote thought with satisfaction that it was a dwarf who had given the signal of his arrival. The ladies in the inn were startled at his fantastic appearance and manner. He addressed the innkeeper as Senor Castellan and imagined the girls to be persons of quality and ladies of the castle. It was a laughable spectacle to see him eat, for his hands were engaged in holding his helmet on and raising the visor, he could not feed himself, therefore, one of the ladies performed this office for him: mean while, a sow doctor came there who blew his pipe of reeds four or five times convincing Quixote that he was now in some famous castle. So he was satisfied with his enterprise and first sally, though it troubled him to reflect that he was not yet a knight.

2.3.3 Summary of Chapter 3

How Don Quixote was dubbed a knight

Agitated by the idea, he abruptly finished his scanty supper,called the innkeeper, fell on his knees before him and begged him to confer upon him the honour of Knighthood. The innkeeper was totally confounded: Being shrewd he became convined that his guest was mad. To make sport for the night he determined to follow his humour . He informed all who were in the inn of the frenzy of his guest, and of the intended knighting. They were surprised at so singular a kind of madness, and went out to observe him at a distance. As he was pacing to and fro one of the carriers removed Quixote's armour from the cistern as he wanted to give his mules some water. Our hero challenged him thinking him to be another Knight and struck him down. He repeated it with a second carrier too. The comrades of the wounded then stoned him, standing a little away. Quixote raved thinking he was a knight. The host quickly conferred upon him the luckless order of chivalry. Quixote then requested the girls to allow themselves to be called Donna, Tolosa and Donna Molinera. He then left, much to the host's relief.

2.3.4 Summary of Chapter-4

What befell our Knight on leaving the inn

Overjoyed and delighted at being knighted Don Quixote set out from the inn. At break of day. In order to provide himself with a squire he reached his village, intending to take into his service a certain poor [illegible] fellow of the neighbourhood. He chastised a lusty country fellow who was beating his servant boy and was elated at so fortunate and glories a beginning to his knight errantry. He went toward the village entirely satisfied with his valorous self. On the way he saw a group of silk merchants and imagined it to be some adventure. He challenged them arrogantly to acknowledge that there was not in the whole world a damsel more beautiful than the empress of La Mancha, the peerless Dulcinea del Toboso. The merchants perceived his madness at once, but they felt like staying on: They assured him that they would acknowledge her beauty even if she had a squint. Quixote ran at them with his lance full of rage. Fortunately for all, he fell down. One of the merchants beat him with one of the brocken lance. At length, the fellow was tired and the merchants departed. Quixote was bruised all over and could not get up; but he was consoled in considering this a misfortune peculiar to knights-errant.

2.3.5 Summary of Chapter-5

The Knight's Misfortune (continued)

Perceiving that he was unable to stir, Don Quixote has recourse to his usual remedy which was to recollect some incidents in hism books. At that time a peasant carrying a load of wheat to the mill happened to pass

that way. Don Quixote firmly believing him to be the Marquios of Mantua, his uncle, proceeded, with an extravagant discourse on his romance, his misfortune, and of the amours of the emperor's son with his spouse. The stunned peasant took off the battered vizor and wiped the dust from the fallen knight's face. He was all the more surprised when he recognised Quixote, who continued to answer out of his romance whatever question he was asked. The good man, with great trouble, raised him from the ground and placed him on his ass: He put all his broken arms, lance etc. on the horse. The taking him by the bridle and his ass by the halter, he went on towards the village, full of concern at the wild language of Don Quixote.

They reached the village about sunset. The peasant waited till night so that the poor battered gentleman might not be see so scurvily mounted. They arrived at Quixote's house which have found in all confusion. The priest and the barber who were Quixote's particular friends were there. The housekeeper was giving vent to her worries.

She was sure that it was the accursed books of knighterrantry that had turned his brain. The niece flamed herself for not burning all those cused books. The priest agreed.

All this was overheard by Quixote and the peasent. The later was convinced of the formers infirmity. Quixote was too weak to talk. The peasant recounted all the details of his encounter . The priest and others were determined to carry into execution what he had determined to do the following day.

2.3.6 Summary of Chapter VI

Burning of Quixote's books of Knight-Errantry and his second sally

Quixote slept soundly for a long time. The niece and the housekeeper brought to the priest more than a hundred big and small volumes on knight-errantry, those authors of mischief. The two women wanted to make a pile of them in the courtyard and set fire to it; so eagerly did they both thirst for the death of those innocents. The priest wanted to verify whether some at least did not deserve to be chastised by fire. However, the housekeeper burnt all the books that night, thus proving the saying that the just sometimes suffer for the unjust'. They walled up the chamber that contained the books.

On getting up, Quixote first enquired about his books. The two men told him a prepared story on an enchanter who alighted from a dragon and left the house full of smoke. The foolish man easily believed the story and said that the enchanter was great enemy of his. He remained fifteen days at home, very tranquil. Using several arguments and promises he made a poor labourer by name Sancho Panza leave his wife and children and become his squire. He then raised money by selling and pawning things.

Then one night Don Quixote and Sancho sallied out of the village without telling anyone.

2.3.7 Summary of Chapter-7

Adventure of the windmills

The two men came in sight of thirty or forty windmills on a plain. Quixote imagined them to be monstrous giants and told Sancho that he intended to encounter and slay them and then they would enrich themselves with their spoils. Sancho told him that they were actually windmills.

Quixote would not heed him and started attacking the windmills. He beseeched his lady Dulcinea to comfort him in the present danger. Sancho felt helpless in such a mad situation. Quixote was convinced that the enchanter sage Freston had metamorphosed his stolen books into windmills.

Quixote did not need food, but allowed his squire to eat when he pleased. They went towards the pass of Lapice. He adviced Sancho to assist him in peril, enemies were vulgar and low people, and not knights. There appeared two Benedictine monks on the road. They were wearing travelling masks. Quixote imagined them to be enchanters and despite Sancho's advice encountered them. The first monk slid down on the ground and the second one fled on his mule. Two lacqueys who came there attacked Sancho when he tired to strip their master, the fallen monk, to take the spoils of battle.

There was another encounter between Quixote and a Biscayan squire who would have hurt him too much, had it not been for the entreaties of the ladies in the squire's coach.

2.3.8 Summary of Chapter-8

Pleasant Discourse between Quixote and Sancho

When the conflict came to an end, Sancho begged him to allow him to govern that island which he had won in that dreadful battle. The knight promised him greater adventured and higher honours in future . They sat and ate. Quixote was most kindly received by the goat herds. He asked his squire to be seated by his side. The goatherds did not understand the jargon of squires and knight errants, and so they only ate and stared at their guests. A youth appeared and sang excellently. Sancho felt very sleepy. One of the goatherds dressed Quixote's wound in the ear by chewing Rosemary leaves, mixing them with a little salt and laying them on the sore.

2.3.9 Summary of Chapter 9

Adventure with the unmerciful Yanguesans

After leaving the goatherds, Don Quixote and his squire journeyed inward and reached a meadow. In the same valley a number of Galiciasn mares belonging to certain Yanguesan carriers were grazing. Rozinante who strayed into their group was so belaboured that they soon lay on the ground in a wretched plight. The knight and the squire who had been resting came there. Quixote was determined to take ample revenge for the outrage. Taking his sword he flew at the Yanguesan's and Sancho did the same. TheYanguesans gave them back nicely and pursued their journey after weaving the two adventures in evil plight. It was with great difficulty that Quixote, Sancho and their animals reached an inn.

2.3.10 Summary of chapter 10.

What happened to Quixote in the inn which he imagined to be a castle

Looking at Don Quixote laid across the ass, the innkeeper asked Sancho what ailed him. Sancho lied that he had fallen and broken his ribs. The innkeeper's wife was a very charitable woman. So she and her daughter treated the knight well. Sancho told the ladies that their guest was a knight, who if he recovered, would become an emperor. The women could not understand when Quixote spoke the jargon of a knight. Sancho went to sleep. Quixote stayed awake and in the profound silence of the inn and his obsession he imagined the servent girl Maritornes to be a lady a tried to hold her. The carrier who had a fondness for the damsel entered and struck Quixote. Sancho's sleep was disturbed in the confusion that followed. An officer belonging to the Holy Brotherhood of Toledo who had been staying there hearing the scuffle came there and battered Quixote. As the innkeeper had put out the lamp, the officer was obliged to have recourse to the chimney.

2.3.11 Summary of Chapter 11

The Innumerable Disasters that befell Quixote and Sancho Panzo in the inn which the knight mistook for a castle.

The next morning Quixote and Sancho woke up full of pain and woe. They thought that the offucer was the enchanted Moor,when he lifted up his lamp and dashed it with all its contents on the head of Don Quixote. The officer took Sancho for a maniac when he asked him materials for making a healing balm for Quixote's bruises. The knight felt perfectly recovered after drinking the precious balsam. Sancho's condition, on the other hand, was worsened by the same balm. Quixote came out with the explanation that all the mischief had befallen him because he had not been dubbed a knight.

The two of them departed from the inn. It was only when the innkeeper asked for a payment for their board that the knight realized that it was not a castle as he had imagined. He refused to pay and went off mounted on Rozinante. Poor Sancho's ill luck made some needle makers carry him, place him in the middle of a blanket and toss aloft. Hearing the cries of his blanketed squire, Quixote falloped back to the inn-door and reproached Sancho's tormentors. They laughed and stopped only when they were tired. At last he departed.

2.3.12 Summary of Chapter 12

The Adventures of the Flocks of Sheep

Quixote told Sancho who came up top him, that, castle or inn, the place was enchanted. Sancho replied that if he could, he would have revenged himself, knight or no knight. He suggested returning to the village but Quixote told him to be patient and wait to see how honourable a thing it was to follow the knight's profession. As they were talking, The knight perceived on the road a great And thick cloud of dust coming towards them. He thought that it was raised by a prodigious army of divers and innumerable nations. He started reeling off the names of several provinces.

Quixote rushed into the midst of the 'army' which turned out to be a squadron of sheep and began to attack them. Not being able to desist, the shepherds began to salute his ears with a shower of stones. A big stone hit his side violently, that the poor knight fell down from the horse. Fearing they had killed him, the shepherds collected their flock, took up their dead, which were about seven, and marched off without further inquiry.

When Sancho told him that he should not have attacked the flock of sheep, his master warned him that it was actually his enemy who being an enchanter, had transformed the hostile squadrons into flocks of sheep. Sancho cursed his fate and resolved to leave his master, although he should lose his wages for the time past, and his hopes of the promised island. However, he stuck on.

2.3.13 Summary of Chapter 13

The adventure of the Dead Body

The knight and the squire were still on the high road without having found any place of reception even at night. They were famished too. Suddenly they perceived that some lights were approaching them. It was a group of mourners carrying a dead body. Sancho's courage was totally annihilated by the dreadful spectacle. Quixote went and challenged them. They pleaded haste; then the knight assailed the timorous and unarmed fellows, forcing them to quit the field. He challenged one of the fallen men who explained in a frightened manner that he as well as the eleven other men who had run away were all priests and they were taking the bones of the dead men, a gentleman to his tomb. Quixote relented and let him go asking him to beg their pardon in his name. The man departed. Sancho cleverly prevented his master from wanting to examine the dead saying "to the grave with the dead, and the living to the bread".

2.3.14 Summary of Chapter 14

The Adventure of the Fulling Mills

The knight and the squire marched on till they heard the pleasant sound of a mighty cascade. They also heard the dreadful din of irons or rattling chains. Sancho was scared to tears and tried to dissuade his master from encountering the fearful adventure. He then tied the horse's forefeet together so that he would not move. Quixote, therefore, had to wait till next morning . When it was dawn, Sancho unbound Rozinante and they set out. They came to a little green meadow bounded by some steep rocks. They understood that the dreadful noise was caused by six fulling-hammers. Both the men were dumb founded. Quixote burst out laughing. He was enraged when Sancho made a jest of him in this matter.

2.3.15 Summary of Chapter-15

The Grand Adventure and Rich Prize of Mambrino's Helmet

As it began to rain Sancho proposed entering the fulling mill, but Quixote refused. Soon the knight discovered a man on horse-back who had some glittering thing on his head. He imagined that it was Mambrino's helmet., concerning which the great Marquis of Mantua had sworn an oath of Vengeance. He would not heed Sancho's advice not to encounter the 'knight' who actually was a barber who had clapped his basin on ths head to save his new hat. On being challenged, the barber fled leaving his basin behind. Hearing the basin being called a helmet Sancho could not help laughing. The knight, however, decided to wear it on his head at least as a protection against stones. He left the barber's horse there itself since it was not usual for a chivalrous knight to plunder the vanquished. After refreshing themselves, they set out again.

2.3.16 Summery of chapter 16

The Adventure of Galley slaves

On the way out two travelers saw a dozen men on foot strung like beads by the necks in a great iron chain and all handcuffed accompanied by two men on horseback, and two on foot. Sancho said that it was a chain of galleys, Quixote decided to defeat force and violence. On asking, the first slave said that his crime was being in love with a basket of fine linen. ,the second one's crime was confessing on the rack that he was a stealer of cattle, and so on. Quixote requested the commissary to let the prisoners go which the other man refused. There upon the knight attacked him. Then utter confusion followed. The squiore cleared the field of all the guards who fled to escape from the shower of stones which was poured upon them by the slaves.

Quixote told the salves whom he had freed to present themselves before the lady Dulcinea del Tobosa saying that he had sent them to present his services to her. The last slave Pasamonte resented a remark made by Quixote. He gave a signal to his comrades upon which they rained a terrible shower of stones on the knight, and he fell down. They stripped the knight and his squire. Quixote was indeed disappointed at being so maltreated by those on whom he had conferred so great a benefit.

2.3.17 Summary of Chapter-17

The adventure in Sierra Morena

Quixote observed to Sancho that to do good to the vulgar is to throw water into the sea. For once he heeded the Squire's words and rode on till they entered the Sierra Morena, a chain of mountains. They took up lodging there. They slept. Missing his ass Dapple, Sancho was grief stricken. Quixote comforted him. They trudged for some time. Then the knight stopped and tried to lift something. It was a saddle cushion and a portmanteau fastened to it. The squire helped him to lift it. Through the gaps he could see shirts, linen etc. It also contained a rough copy of verses which Quixote read aloud. He wondered who the owner could be.

He suddenly saw a man, almost naked, springing from rock to rock with extraordinary agility.The Knight immediately imagined him to be the owner of the portmanteau.

A little away they saw a dead mule lying in a brook. They saw an old goatherd and said that all that he knew was that a well-mannered and comely youth had come to a shepherd's hut on the same mule and with the same goods. After some time he had suddenly left them. They guessed from his behaviour that he had fits of madness, just then the youth appeared there. The two knights saluted each other.

2.3.18 Summary of Chapter 18

The story of Cardenio

They gave the tattered knight something to eat. Then he said his name was Cardenio. He hailed from a wealthy family . He was about to ask his father permission to marry the girl he loved, namely, Lucinda when he had to go with duke Ricardo on service. Before leaving he asked Lucinda and her father too was for him. There the duke's son Don Fernando confided to him about his love for a certain country girl and his resolve to marry her. Cardenio decided to reveal this dishonourable piece of news to his master, the Duke. Fernando had actually married her. Later on seeing Lucinda, he became deeply enamoured of her. He stopped the story ab ruptly. The knight had a vehement desire to learn the end of the story.

2.3.19 Summary of Chapter 19

The strange things that befell the knight of La Mancha in Sierra Morena and how he imitated the penance of Beltenebros:

Quixote, along with Sancho, proceeded. They talked of various things. He wrote a letter to Dulcinea del Tobosos, professing his love and requiring her to reciprocate. He also wrote a letter to his niece asking her to give three out of five ass colts which he has left at home in her custody, to Sancho Panza. He asked his squire to mark the spot and return to the same place after delivering the letters. Sancho took leave of Quixote and mounted on Rozinante. Seeing the knight stripping off his clothes in all haste and cutting capers in the air, and tumbling heels over head, Sancho was fully convinced that his master was stark mad.

2.3.20 Summary of Chapter 20

Quixote's penance, as a lover in the sierra Morena

W hen left alone, Quixote mounted on the top of a high rock and deliberated on the matter of love. He composed many verses of a plaintive kind, in praise of his Dulcinea. Sancho came to the inn where he had been tossed in a blanket. He told the inmates of the inn about Quixote's condition, his adventures, his penance, the letter to Dulcinea etc. When he searched in his pocket he could not find the letter . Quixote had forgotten to give it to him. Sancho was visibly perturbed. He repeated the letter from memory and the barber offered to write it down for him. Each time he repeated, he added various other extravagancies. The barber and the priest devised a plan to relieve Quixote of his unprofitable penance. The curate, dressed up as a damsel-errant, and the barber as her squire, would approach the knight and ask for a boon, namely, to accompany her to redress an injury done to her by a discourteous knight. He would certainly consent and thus they might be able to take him away and try to find a remedy for his cure.

2.3.21 Summary of Chapter 21

The Plot of the Priest and the Barber

Accordingly, the priest and the barber disguised themselves. They had just got out of the inn when the priest suddenly felt that it was not right for a priest to be so dressed. They backed out.Then the barber consented to an exchange of the disguises. The next day they arrived at the place where Sancho had left his master. They waited while he went to find out about his master. The met Cardenio, who began his melancholy story but this time he completed it. Fernando and her covetous father forced her to marry Fernando. Though she had vowed to die she coolly accepted Fernando as her husband and Cardenio was confounded. Then he came out and started wandering listlessly.

2.3.22 Summary of Chapter 22

The new adventure of the priest and the barber at Sierra Morena

They were suddenly disturbed by a voice uttering mournful complaints about a secret grave for some wretched body. They saw a youth dressed like a peasant. It was actually a most beautiful woman in disquise. She began to tell them her story. It become clear that she was the peasant girl whom Fernando had fallen in love with and wanted to marry. She consented. Months passed and she began to doubt his fidelity. She then came to know that he had married Lucinda. The emerged girl, Dorothea, lisquised herself and left her house and went to Lucinda's place. There she came to know that Lucinda had affirmed in a letter that she could not be wife to Fernando as she had fallen low in public opinion.

2.3.23 Summary of Chapter 23

He arrival of the Princess Micomiconia

Both Dorothea and Cardenio had chosen to terminate their wretched existences, for their plight in love had been sad. Cardenio vowed he would help her to assert her claims. She was very grateful. As they were talking, Sancho called out loudly to them to meet him He had found the knight naked to his shirt, weak and hungry and sighing for his lady Dulcinea. Dorothea offered to do the role of the distressed damsel. She became princess Micomiconoa. Sancho was highly impressed. They reached Quixote. The Princess requested the knight to follow her, promise not to engage in any other adventure until he had avenged her on the giant Pandafilando who had usurped her kingdom. Quixote suddenly became enthusiastic. They got up on horse back. Sancho alone was on foot.

2.3.24 Summery of Chapter 24

The Princess's Story and Sancho Recovers Dapple

Dorothea disguised as princess Micomiconia invented the story that her father had left the order that if the knight mentioned in his prophecy, after cutting off the giant's head should desire to marry her she should immediately submit to be his lawful wife and give him half the kingdom. Quixote declared that though he would endure any hardship to kill the giant he could not even think of marrying her because he had his own lady Dulcinea. He became furious when Sancho suggested that

Dulcinea was inferiour to the princess. Dorothea calmed them down. Just then they saw a man approaching them, mounted on an ass. It was Pasamonte and the ass was Dapple. Sancho shouted so loudly that the man fled and the ass was restored.

2.3.25 Summary of Chapter 25

Sancho's Report of His interview with Dulcinea

Sancho confessed that he carried no letter and had written down by a parish clerk to whom he dictated from memory. The lady Dulcinea was winnowing wheat in the backhouse and asked him to leave the letter on the sack., she did not enquire about the knight; nor did she read the letter as she was illiterate. She tore it to pieces. Instead of a jewel, she presented the squire with bread and cheese made of sheep's milk. Sancho adviced him against returning to Dulcinea but to kill the giant and secure the dowry, namely, kingdom. Sancho was tired of telling so many lies that he wished to make an end of the business.

2.3.26 Summary of Chapter 26

More Adventures at the Enchanted Inn

The reached the inn where Sancho had been tossed in a blanket. The host and family welcomed them. The hostess demanded the return of her tail which he had been using as a beard,.and the barber would not give it. At last he gave it up. The conversation centred on the extra ordinary derangement of Quixote on the mountains. The innkeeper did not agree that it could have been caused by reading books of chivalry. He brought a trunk containing several such books. The priest proceeded to read a novel for the general amusement of the company.

2.3.27 Summary of Chapter 27

The Battle with the Giant Pandafilando, with other incidents

The novel was nearly finished when Sancho came and reported that his master has cut off the head of the giant Pandafilando. The whole company rushed out: They saw Quixote standing with a drawn sword calling out as if in actual combat. He had dreamed and imagined that the wine skin was the giant and had struck it, and red wine was freely flowing out through the ripped skin. The innkeeper was furious. All the others laughed at the absurdities of both master and man. Quixote was put to bed and he slept soundly.

Tranquility was resorted when a company of guests appeared. There was a lady too in that group and all wore masks. Soon it turned out that the lady was Lucinda, and that Don Fernando also was in the group. Intense outpouring of pent up love and grief at parting followed and at the end, Dorothea and Fernando, as well as Lucinda and Cardenio were restored to each other.

2.3.28 Summary of Chapter 28

The Arrival of the Captive with the Moorish Lady

Sancho's hopes of preferment vanished upon the transformation of princess Micomiconia into the peasant girl and the giant into Don Fernando: He was very sad. But all the others were happy. Sancho explained the sad transformation to his master who immediately dressed up in order to make enquires. When Dorothea claimed that she was not changed, Quixote accused Sancho of lying. Fernando put an end to the subject by expressing a desire to witness the knight's valorous deeds.

Just then two men appeared. One looked like a Christian who had lately, come from the Moors. He had a female companion, who was evidently a moor. Everyone was attracted by the novelty of her appearance. The man explained that he had just escaped from Algiers where he had been in captivity, and where he had been saved by his female companion who had given up wealth and high station in her own country in order to marry him. Her name was Maria Zoraida.

At supper ,Quixote, instead of eating, harangued the company on knight-errantry. News came that accommodation had to be provided for his worship, the judge of the High Courts, of Mexico, and for a young lady who was accompanying him. Quixote gave a grand welcome speech. The judge was impressed and happy with the accommodation too. It turned out that the judge was one of the brothers of the captive whom he had left behind when he went to the wars. It was agreed that the captain and

Zoraida should go with their brother of Seville to their father who would arrange for their marriage after baptizing her.

2.3.29 Summary of Chapter 29

The adventure of the Young Muletter

Just before day break they were attracted by the melodious singing og a muleteer. The judge's daughter, Donna Clara de Viedma, was seized with a fit of trembling and said she wanted neither to see nor hear his music. He was Don Luis, a young gentleman of large possessions whom she desired to marry, but was too young. All were asleep except the innkeeper's daughter and her maid who decided to amuse themselves by playing some tricks on Quixote's weak points while he was keeping guard outside. When it was scarcely daylighjt, four men on horseback stopped at the inn. They were confounded to hear Quixote address them as though he were the sentinel of a castle.

2.3.30 Summary of Chapter 30

Extra ordinary Adventures at the-Enchanted Inn

It was full daylight. Quixote, finding that the four travelers regarded neither him nor his challenge was furious. They roused Cardenio, the youth Don Luis whom they had been searching, from his sleep beside the muleteer, who was his companion. He had refused to go back to his father. He told the judge very tearfully and sincerely of his ardent desire to many his daughter Donna-Clara. Just then the very barber came there who had been de-provided of Mambrino's helmet by Quixote and he accused Sancho of being a thief. Sancho maintained that it was the basin helmet which had protected his master from showers of stones in battle.

2.3.31 Summary of Chapter 31

Dispute concerning Mambrino's Helmet

The barber was astounded that so many gentleman should maintain that his basin was not a basin but a helmet. Quixote took objection to the opinion made by one of the troopers and aimed a serve blow at him with his lance. Utter confusion followed. At length he subsided: thwe basin was to remain a helmet at least in Quixote's imagination. In the scene that followed the priest said so much, and Don Quixote acted so extravagantly that the officers of the Holy Brotherhood judged it best to make peace between the barber and Sancho. The priest secretly gave some money to the barber for Mambrino's helmet.

2:31.32 Summary of Chapter 32

The Enchantment of the knight

Peace was entirely restored in the inn. Quixote decided to pursue his journey and replace the princess on the throne of her ancestors. He shouted furiously at Sancho who tried to suggest that there were more tricks in the town than were dreamt of by him. He told him that all things in that castle were conducted by enchantment. The illustrious company wondered how the barber and the curate might convey the knight to his home without troubling Dorothea and Don Fernando to accompany them. They made a big cage to contain Quixote at his ease. They disguised themselves so as not to be recognised by the knight. In his disordered imagination Quixote thought they were goblins of the enchanted castle. Thus he was conveyed out of the house.

2.3.33 Summary of Chapter 33

Sancho was Suspicious about the enchantment.

Quixote imagined that he was an enchanted knight being transported by goblins. The curate engaged pay the troopers of the Holy Brotherhood to accompany Quixote home to his village. Cardenio made signs to Sancho to mount his ass and lead Rozinante by the bridle. Pretended, tearful leave takings followed. The procession of the wagon, the troppers, Sancho, Rozinante, the Curate, the barber and especially Don Quixote, caged up and imprisoned, started. On the way a canon saw this orderly procession: he was attracted and ordered some of his attendants to go to the nearest in and bring provisions for the whole party.

2.3.34 Summary of Chapter 34

The Adventure of the Goat herd

Upon Sancho giving word for his not running away, Quixote was released. The party sat under the shade and enjoyed themselves. They suddenly heard a goat herd shouting at his animals. The canon invited

the goatherd to join them who then related his story, which was to the effect that the grief seen on his face proceeded from the fact that his sweetheart had been placed in a nunnery for indulging in an indiscreet flirtation with a rival.

2.3.35 Summary of Chapter 35

The Rare Adventure of the Disciplinants

All of them, especially Don Quixote, offered their services to the goatherd. The barber introduced Quixote as the righter of wrongs, the protector of maidens etc., but the goatherd was unimpressed. A verbal battle between the knight and the goatherd led to blows, much to the amusement of the churchmen. A procession of disciplinants came that side. Seeing their strange attire Quixote imagined it to be some that side. Seeing the blessed image of the Holy Virgin he mistook it for a maiden and challenged them for her release. Quixote was badly wounded in the encounter. He heeded Sancho's advice to return home. On seeing him entering the gate, the housekeeper and his niece renewed their curses against books of chivalry. Sancho's wife wanted to know firstly whether the ass had come homwe well. The women put Quixote to bed but they feared that he might escape again and that was what happened.

2.3.36 Summary of Chapter 36

Conversation concerning Quixote's Indisposition

The two women took continual care of the knight and said that they occasionally observed in him symptoms of returning wisdom. The barber and the curate, quite happy to hear this, went to visit Quixote, agreeing not to touch upon matters of knight-errantry. As they were talking they heard a noise. The two women were defending door against Sancho who had come to pay his master a visit. They accused him of having led Quixote astray. Fearing that Sancho might blunder out something unreasonably, the knight ordered the women to be quiet and let Sancho in. When asked about the village's opinion, Sancho replied that the common people took Quixote observed that wherever virtue existed in any eminent degree, it was always presecuted. Sancho also told him that the knight's history was already printed in books under the title Don Quixote de la Mancha. Sancho then went to seek the bachelor who had told him of the above book.

2.3.37 Summary of Chapter 37.

Conversation amongst Quixote, Sancho and the Bachelor

Don Quixote waited impatiently for the return iof Sancho and the bachelor Carrasco to hear about the printed accounts of himself. Sancho came with the bachelor Samson. He told him that Quixote's history was written by a Moor and a sage. Various exploits like the advcentures of the windmills, fulling mills etc. had been highlighted. Sancho then narrated how his ass Dapple had been stolen. Samson said that the author was considering having a second part, but some others were of the opinion that there was enough of Don Quixote already. The knight asked the bachelor to compose some verses on his lady Dulcinea and requested him to keep secret his intention of setting out again, lest the others should try to obstruct his honourable purposes.

2.3.38 Summary of Chapter 38

Conversation between Sancho and his wife Teresa

Sancho went home in a very happy mood. He told his wife he was merry because he was about to return to the services of his master Don Quixote. She was not pleased. He told her he went with the knight for he hoped to see himself governor of an island. The knicde and the housekeeper had strong suspicions that Quixote would break loose but in vain. After consulting his wife Sancho told Quixote that the ought to be given in. The two of themj determined to set out.

2.3.39 Summary of Chapter 39

Quixote's visit to his Lady Dulcinea

Quixote told Sancho that he wanted to go to Toboso to meet his lady Dulcinea before he undertook any other adventure. It was late at night when they left their retreat and entered Toboso. All the town was hushed in silence. Imagining her inn to be a castle he asked Sancho to lead the way. Sancho had to tell lies to get his master out of town. When they had traveled about two miles, the knight

CUP/5026/1000/SDE—2

retired into the a shady grove, while the squire returned in quest of the lady Dulcinea.

2.3.40 Summary of Chapter 40

Sancho's cunning in enchanting Lady Dulcinea

Sancho promised to return with lady Dulcinea's favourable reply. On the way he talked to himself. As it would be difficult to look for a lady whom neither he nor his master had seen, it would not be very difficult to make him believe that a country wench was the lady Dulcinea. He stayed where he was till towards evening. Luckily, just as he was about to mount Dapple, he saw three country wenches coming from Toboso each mounted on a young ass. He rushed back to Quixote to say that Lady Dulcinea with a couple of her damsels was coming to pay a visit. The two men started and saw the three wenches very near. Sancho grandly addressed them and introduced himself and the squire. The wenches were surprised and impatient. Quixote was confounded at the peasant girl. The wench did not understand Quixote's idle gibberish. At last the three got on to their asses and fled. Sancho had much difficulty in controlling his laughter.

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the story so far. Also note down your impressions of the main characters, the various exploits etc. So that you will be able to write essays on your own.

We shall study the latter part of Don Quixote in the next Unit.

UNIT 3

DON QUIXOTE

PART II: A SUMMARY

3.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a complete idea of the exploits of Don Quixote: and

(ii) Understand the meaning of an episodic plot

3.1. INTRODUCTION

If you observe carefully, you will notice that the forty chapters of Don Quixote that we have summarized in the previous Unit are not organically bound to one another. Even if you delete a few incidents or chapters, the novel can still stand as whole. How-ever, the various episodes do have a linker or a connecting cord in the person of the hero. Such a plot is called a loose or episodic plot.

Let us continue with the forty-first chapter and complete the exploits of Don Quixote.

3.2.1 Summary of Chapter 41

Adventure of the Cart or Wain of Death

On the way Quixote and Sancho saw a cart across the road full of the strangest looking people, especially Death with a human visage, which caught the knight's attention, even startled him. Soon he became thrilled with the thought of new adventure. He asked the group who they were. The devil replied calmly that they were travelling players. One of the group came capering, started Rozinante and making Quixote lose command over his beast and fall. Dapple fled. Don Quixote decided to punish the group and rode off in pursuit of the cart: seeing the group ready to pelt him with stones. He retired prudently, following Sancho's sage advice.

3.2.3 Summary of Chapter 42

Meeting of Quixote with the knight of the Mirrors

While Quixote and his squire rested, the knight was disturbed by a noise near him; he awakened Sancho telling him that they had an adventure ready for them. He had seen two men on horse-back dismount there. One of them who appeared to Quixote to be a knight started singing a love lyric. They talked amiably.

3.2.3 Summary of Chapter 43

Jousting between Quixote and the knight of mirrors

During their conversation, the knight told Quixote that he was in love with the peerless Casildea de Vandalis who repaid his virtuous and honourable passion by allowing himself to be employed by his stepmother, in many and various perils. What he valued most about himself was having vanquished, in single combat, the renowned knight, Don Quixote de la Mercha, and having made him confess that this Casildea was more beautiful than his Dulcinea. Quixote, who was amazed at the knight's assertions challenged him by saying that the latter was beholding the true Don Quixote before him. The knight then suggested that they should wait for daylight. Their squires went in search of their animals. In the daylight the first thing that Sancho saw was the horribly huge nose of the other squire and trembled. Quixote was helping Sancho up into the cork-tree so that he could view the battle better. In the duel that followed, Quixote assailed the knight of the mirrors and soon brought him to the ground. When he observed closely, he realized that the knight resembled the bachelor Samson Sarrasco. Sancho got the shock of this life when the knight's squire's nose disappeared and he showed his neighbour Tom Cecial in the unnosed squire. By this time the two knights, badly bruised, recovered their senses. Quixote made him take back his assertions about Dulcinea's inferiority or of having vanquished Quixote. He then continued his journey with Sancho to Saragossa.

Actually the bachelor Samson Carrasco along with the barber and priest had planned the above encounter as a means of persuading Quixote to stay at home. But their dealings with the mad man proved to be unpredictable.

3.2.4 Summary of Chapter 44

Quixote and a worthy gentleman of La Mancha

Quixote pursued his journey happily imagining himself to be the most valiant knight the world could boast of. Presently he and Sancho were overtaken by a gentleman riding a mare. He was courteous. He was struck by Quixote's appearance. While listening to the knight's words, the gentleman began to suspect his intellect. The man said he had a son who passed whole days in insignificant literary investigations. Quixote lectured to him on the duty of parents to train children from their infancy. It made his companion waver in the opinion he had formed of his insanity.

3.2.5 Summary of Chapter 45

The adventure of the Cage of Lions

On being summoned, Sancho, who had been buying curds, poured them into the helmet and went to his master, who asked for his helmet and wore it so that the curds being squeezed and pressed, began to run down the face and beard of the knight. He wondered whether his skull was softening or his brains were melting. On the way they saw a man taking two lions in a cart as a gift to the king. Quixote decided to challenge the lions. He ordered the men to open the cage, otherwise he would let the lions loose. When the first cage was opened the lion did everything except to come out. The knight then asked the keeper to close the door. He then gave an elaborate story about the valour of Quixote and Sancho was impressed. He gave him some coins upon which the keeper promised to relate the story to the king. That afternoon they reached the mansion of Don Deigo.

3.2.6 Summary of Chapter 46

Quixote in the Castle of the Knight of the Green Riding Coat

Don Deigo's son with his mother came out to receive them. They young man, Don Lorenzo, had much pleasant discourse on poetry and knight-errantry with Quixote. He later on told his father, Don Diego, that the knight's madness was beyond the reach of all the doctors in the world yet it was full of lucid intervals. Quixote earnestly requested Don Lorenzo to repeat the verses which he intented for the prize. Diego's house for four days they departed-a-day of joy for Quixote and sorrow for Sancho who was too sensible to the comforts of the house as well as the hunger of the forest.

3.3.7 Summary of Chapter 47

The adventure of the Enamoured Shepherd

On the way they overtook two scholarly persons accompanied by two country fellows, all of then were mounted on horses. The knight offered to bear them company, after introducing himself as Quixote, the knight of the lions. The scholars needed little time to discover the soft part of the knight's skill. They invited him to attend one of the greatest and richest weddings-of a farmer and a country maid. Basilo and Quiteria were lovers from infancy but Quiteria's father decided to marry her off to the rich Camacho and from that moment onwards Basilio became too sad and pensive. Quixote refused to enter the town and turned a little out of the road.

3.3.8 Summary of Chapter 48

Marriage of Camacho and the Adventure of Basilio

The next morning the knight and his squire mounted his horse and set out. The first thing that Sancho saw was animals being cooked for a grand wedding feast, and he was full of delight and wonder.

The occasion was the wedding of the rich Camacho and Quiteria. On seeing the bride, the knight thought that excepting the mistress of his soul he had never seen a more beautiful woman. Just then the poor but gallant Basilio appeared there and accused the bride of being false and ungreatful. He stabbed himself and lay in a pool of blood. Quixote who took the dying man in his hands found that he was still alive. Basilio wanted Quiteria to give him her hand in marriage as that would be a solace to his mind, and enable him to confess his sins. The bride remained harder than marble. But she went to Basilio and offered to be his wife. At once Basilio sat up and nimbly drew out the rapier from his body. Camacho and his friends attacked Basilio out of Vengeance. Quixote led the van in horseback. Finally Camacho gave up, blaming rather the fickleness of Quiteria than the cunning of Basilio. They departed. Quixote joined them.

3.3.9 Summary of Chapter 49

The Adventure of the cave of Montesinos

The newly married couple made much of Quixote thinking he had been responsible for defending their cause with his valour and eloquence. Basilio confessed the strategam of the feigned wound. After three days Quixote and Sancho left for cave of Montesinos. On reaching the mouth of the cave the next afternoon, Quixote tried to enter it by cutting and hewing the brambles and bushes that choked the entrance. Sancho let his master down into the fearful cavern, with the rope it appeared to have no weight attached to it. They concluded that Quixote was still in the cave. At first Sancho wept. But they pulled harder, and up came Quixote tried and with eyes shut as if asleep. He related what he has seen in the cave, about how he had met Montesinos himself, who had taken out the heart of his great friend Durandarte and conveyed it to the lady Belerma agreeable to his dying request. Quixote thought he had spent three days in the cavern though he had stayed there only for half an hour. The scholar found it difficult to believe it.

3.3.10 Summary of Chapter 50

The Braying Adventure the Puppet-Player and his Fortune Telling Ape

While they were talking, they saw a man coming towards them. But he was in a hurry. On reaching the inn they were told that the man was in the stable attending to his mule. The man spoke about a certain alderman who has lost his ass through he artful contrivance of a wench, and how they had tried to retrieve it by braying but in van. At this juncture a certain Master Peter came to the inn bringing his ape and the puppets. Quixote was not entirely satisfied with the ape's divinations. Master Peter was getting ready for the show and the people of the inn were now fixed, some standing and Quixote, Sancho and the scholar were seated in the best places.

3.3.11 Summary of Chapter 51

Don Quixote succours the fair Melisendra

The young interpreter announced that they were goint to present the true story of how Don Gaiferos delievered his spouse Melisendra who was imprisoned by the Moors in the city of Saragossa. On watching

the puppet show he had to comfort the flying pair and started his role of a true knight, and began to demolish the puppets with backs and slashes. After arbitration Sancho had to pay for the destruction done. Then the knight and the squire left the place the next morning.

3.3.12 Summary of Chapter 52

The Adventure with the Brayer's

On the third day, Quixote heard a distant sound of drums, trumpets and musketry. He advanced near the troop. He exhibited his gift of braying. Sancho brayed so strenuously that the adjacent valleys resounded again. A man thinking that he was mocking them raised his pole and struck him that it brought the unlucky squire to the ground. Thereupon Quixote attacked the striker with his lance. Feeling a shower of stones and seeing a number of vross bows, he galloped off. He was angry with Sancho for having brayed. Sancho was badly bruised.

3.3.13 Summary of Chapter 53

The Adventure of the Enchanted Bark

After travelling leisurely for two days Quixote and his squire reached the banks of the river Ebro. They saw a small boat with out fastened by a rope to the shore. The two men tied their animals to the trunk of a tree. Quixote then leaped into the boat followed by Sancho, he cut the cord and the boat floated away gently to shore. By then the mill labourers came out and bawled aloud that they were endangering their lives. Their faces being covered with meal dust had a ghostly appearance so the knight imagined them to be devils. Sancho wept and prayed. Quixote drew his sword and began to smite with an air as though to strike the millers. Confusion followed. The millers and fisherman could hardly understand Quixote's language; but conceiving their intellects to be disordered, they left them, where upon the knight and the squire like a pair of senseless animals returned to their animals.

3.3.14 Summary of Chapter 54

Quixote's Adventure with a fair huntress

Low spirited, wet and out of humour the knight and the squire reached their cattle. The next day they saw some people among whom there was a gay lady. Quixote assumed that she must be a lady of high standing. He wanted to pay his respects to her. The lady, a duchess, invited the knight to her house. The knight and his squire arrived at her place and accidentally fell down due to Sancho's foot getting caught in one of the rope stirrups. They were well received by the Duck and the ducjess. Quixote, however, was angry and ashamed at Sanchos witticisms. They talked on various matters relating to arms and knight errantry. They were disturbed by a great noise of many voices and presently Sancho rushed in. He had refused to be washed according to their custom, using fifty hands and towels. Though the duchess laughed Quixote could not bear to see Sancho thus treated and he voiced his displeasure. The duchess then joined him and sent them out. Sancho was relieved.

3.3.15 Summary of Chapter 55

Conversation between the duchess, her damsels and panza

When Quixote went to take rest, Sancho went to the duchess who was delighted to hear him talk. Her damsels too were there. She asked him to clarify certain doubts regarding the printed history of the great Don Quixote. Panza asserted that this master was a downright madman. The duchess was highly amused with Sancho's proverbs and philosophy. The duke and the duchess derived great pleasure in the conversation of Don Quixote and his squire. A boar hunt was proposed and the knight was presented with a hunting suit. The affair was as usual comic but the fierce animal was soon laid at length by numerous spears. Later while they went to the wood, they saw a post boy dressed like a devil who said that he was going in quest of Don Quixote de la Mancha. They also met several other strange characters in wagons: They heard some music.

3.3.16 Summary of Chapter 56

Disenchantment of Dulcinea

When the music approached, they saw a beautiful nymph on an elevated throne. Close by her sat a figure having the ghastly countenance of death looking so terrific that Quixote started. Sancho was struck with

terror and even the duke and the duchess seemed to betray symptoms of fear. The living death standing erect recited a few passages in a dull tone with a sleepy articulation. He spoke of Dulcinea's being in Hade's chamber under the spell of his buried ghost. Sancho declared that his master who was part of her, and ever calling her, ought to lash himself for her and do all that was needful for her delivery. Suddenly the spangled nymph addressed Sancho and prayed that the anguish of that miserable knight, her master, would stir him to compassion. Under compulsion Sancho consented to the penance of three thousand three hundred lashes upon certain conditions. The party then returned home highly delighted with the evening's amusement.

3.3.17 Summary of Chapter 57

Adventure of the affected Duenna and Panza's Letter

The whole contrivance of the last adventure was the work of the duke's steward; a man of a humorous turn of mind. Assisted by the duke and the duchess he prepared a still more entertaining to be scene. Sancho wrote a letter to his wife about the lashes he was giving himself for the disenchantment of the unhappy lady. All that he was doing was motivated by a love of a money for her sake etc. After dinner, a figure approached the party. He introduced himself as the squire of the countess, Trifaldi, otherwise called the afflicted Duenna. The countess wanted to come and relate her unhappy tale to Quixote. The request was granted. She was the eldest and chief of the Duennas in the household of the royal mother of infanta Antonomasia who had been attracted to a private gentleman and a treacherous cavalier Don Clavigo. Her cousin-German the giant Malambruno, a necromancer who wanted to chastise the presumptuous Don Clavigo and the foolish Antanomasia transformed them instantly by his cursed art-her into a monkey of brass and him into a crocodile of some strange metal. He further punished Trifaldi by covering her soft face with rugged bristles. So saying she fainted.

3.3.18 Summary of Chapter 58

Adventure of Countess Trifaldi(continued)

Both the knight and the squire were deeply affected by the sad tale. Quixote was ready to serve her. Trifaldi said that the horse of the giant Malambruno was called Clavileno. Sancho was not desirous of joining his master in this adventure. But he was persuaded by the duchess to do his duty. He was also moved by the tears of the Duenna.

3.3.19 Summary of Chapter 59

Adventure of Trifaldi(concluded)

Four savages entered the garden carrying a large wooden horse. The afflicted lady requested the knight and the squire to mount the horse and meet the challenge of Malambruno. Quixote was willing, but not Sancho. But he was soon persuaded to go though unwillingly. They mounted the horse, after being blindfolded. When they were in the midst of their adventure the duke and the duchess applied some lighted flax to Clavileno's tail, upon which his body being full of combustibles, he instantly blew up and threw the riders to the ground. Trifaldi and her group vanished. Quixote was greatful to heaven for having performed so great an exploit with so much care.

3.3.20 Summary of Chapter 60

Quixote's instructions to Panza before going to his government

The duke and the duchess being so well pleased with the afflicted Duenna, were encouraged to proceed with other projects seeing that there was nothing too extravagant for the credulity of the knight and the squire. The day after the flight of Calvileno, the duke bid Sancho to prepare himself to assume office as the governor of the promised island. Quixote drew him aside and gave him advice respecting his conduct in office. The rules of life he laid down for his squire were in the highest degree excellent, both morally and socially! He told Sancho that he deserved to be governor of a thousand islands.

3.3.21 Summary of Chapter 61

How Sancho Panza was conducted to his government and Quixote's adventure in the castle

The copy of Quixote's admonitions to Sancho fell into the hands of the duke and the duchess and they were surprised at his good sense and madness. Sancho was sent with a large retinue to assume office. After he had gone, Quixote started feeling lonely. He was extremely afflicted and full of melancholy thoughts. Presently he heard pleasant music and was delighted. Commending himself with fervent devotion to his mistress Dulcinea he determined to listen to the music. He then threw himself upon his bed as though some graver misfortune had befallen him.

3.3.22 Summary of Chapter 62

Sancho Panza on the Island

Sancho arrived at the Island of Barataria where after some ridiculous ceremonies he was constituted perpetual governor. Several cases were brought before him. To settle one, Sancho even resorted to beating the defendant with his own stick. In another case the way he dealt with the case left all the court in admiration at the acuteness and wisdom of their new governor.

3.3.23 Summary of Chapter 63

Quixote's dreadful adventure of the cats

Quixote was harassed with reflections on the conduct of the love-stricken Altisidora. He met her as he passed through the gallery. He asked for a lute so as to comfort the poor damsel. He started signing a song he has composed on Dulcinea which was heard by all in the castle. Suddenly a sackful of cats fastened with tinkling bells was let down to the window of his room. They soon extinguished all the lights in the chamber. Quixote was amazed and confopunded. He attacked the cats while they tried to escape. One sprand to his face and scratched it. The knight would not allow anyone to disengage it. However, at last the duke did disengage the furious animal. Quixote's face was badly scratched and had to stay in bed for five days. His boble friends were concerned at the event of their jest.

3.3.24 Summary of Chapter 64

Sanho's behaviour in his government

Sancho was conducted from the court of justice to a sumptuous palace where in a great hall he found a magnificent entertainment prepared. He sat down to dinner and a physician stood at one side of his hand. Yet before he could eat, all the food vanished, on a signal of the wand. Sancho was puzzled at this proceeding. The doctor prevented him from eating several things giving one explanation or the other and Sancho became angry. His secretary read a letter from the duke informing about the fear of attack on the island by some enemies. Sancho was astonished. However, he preferred not to die of starvation. He then attended to several cases.

3.3.25 Summary of Chapter 65

Adventure of Quixote with Donna Rodriguez

As he lay on his bed in a melancholy mood Quixote saw an apparition of a most reverend duenna gliding in. He was alarmed to see her and she was dismayed to see him disfigured with bandages. She told him that she was not a phantom or an apparition but Donna Rodriguez, duenna to the duchess. As they were talking, someone came and assaulted the matron and after her, Don Quixote, and the knight really did not understand who the malicious enchanter was.

3.3.26 Summary of Chapter 66

Sancho's tour of the Island

The governor was in a very bad mood because of the provocation he had received from the knave of a peasant who was one of the steward's instruments for executing the ducke's projects upon Sancho. At length the soul of Doctor Pedro Recio relented and he promised Sancho he should sup that night. He then attended to several disputes. A young maiden in disguise turned up claiming to be the daughter of Diego de la Llana. Out of a desire to see the town she had disguised in her brother's habit and set out. While returning she stumbled and fell and just then a man seized her and brought her there. Sancho promised to see the two youngsters safe to their father's house and they were gateful. Sancho even thought of matching

the young man with his daughter Sanchica. When Teresa Panza and Sanchica heard of Sancho's promotion as governor of an island, they were impressed.

3.3.27 Summary of chapter 67

Progress of Sancho's government

At the island Sancho was induced to struggle with hunger, and he inwardly cursed the government, and even him that gave it. At last the magistrate issued orders that they might dine that day much to his satisfaction, which he did. A courier then brought a letter from Quixote to which he made his secretary write a reply giving his news. He informed his master that veiled bribery was common on the Island. Sancho spent that afternoon in making different regulations for the benefit of his people.

3.3.28 Summary of Chapter 68

Adventure of the second Afflicted Matron

Being now properly healed of his wound, Quixote determined to ask permission to depart to Saragossa. Just then two women clad in deep mourning came to the hall. One fell at his feet. It was Donna Rodriguez. She requested him to challenge a wicked peasant who had basely and treacherously used his poor dear child. Quixote accepted the challenge. The page boy brought a letter from Teresa to the Duchess. It gave her great pleasure to read it. Next they read her letter to her husband Sancho. It caused much merriment, applause and admiration. On the courier's arrival with Sancho's letter, that too was read.

3.3.29 Summary of Chapter 69

Toilsome End and Conclusion of Sancho Panza'a Government

The governor was in bed on the seventh night of his administration, sated with sitting in judgement, deciding caused and making statutes and proclamations. Despite hunger he was about to sleep when he heard such a noise of bells sinking. He saw some twenty persons armed with torches. They told him that enemies had entered the island. Sancho felt quite helpless. Such matters were best left to his master Quixote. The people urged him to hasten and exert himself. He fell down violently and the men trampled his body without compassion. Sancho was truly fed up. Heaven at last favoured him, for when least expecting it, he was cheered with shouts of triumph. But the governor was in a most pathetic condition and had to bne raised up. He embraced Dapple and spoke to the ass with tears in his eyes. All his troubled and tribulations came one after the other only when he forsook his friend and the partner of his fatigues and miseries, and mounted the towers of ambition and pride. He told the islanders that he had rather had his bellyful of his own poor porridge than to be mocked with dainties by an officious doctor who would kill him with hunger. They tried to persuade him to stay on but when he was determined, they all embraced him and he left them in admiration both of his good sense and unalterable firmness.

On the way Sancho saw six pilgrims. They talked and drank in company. While the others slept, Sancho and Ricote, one of the pilgrims, actually Sancho's neighbour in the village, kept awake. After exchanging all the news, they embraced each other and parted.

3.3.30 Summary of Chapter 70

Sancho's Misfortune

It was so late that Sancho could not reach the duke's castle that day. Unfortunately, in seeking shelter for the night he and Dapple fell together into a cavity among the ruins of an old building. Dapple groaned most piteously. He tried to crawl out of crevice. One morning Ouixote and his horse happened to come that way and narrowly escaped falling into the chasm. On hearing Sancho's desperate voice the knight thought that it was his dead squire's soul doing penance. He understand it was his friend Sancho only through the familiar braying of Dapple. Quixote left him to tell the duke and the duchees. Ropes and pulleys were brought and with much labour Sancho and Dapple were rescued and comforted.

3.3.31 Summary of Chapter 71

Battle between Quixote and Tosilos

The appointed day of combat arrived. Quixote and Tosilos were to take part. It was agreed that if Quixote was conquered by Tosilos, the latter would have to marry Donna Roderiguez's daughter; and if he should be overcome, Tosilos would be

released from his engagement with the lady. Finally the cheat Tosilos was imprisoned, Donna Rodriguez's daughter agrees to marry the duke's lacquey and Tosilos was consoled with the expectation of matrimony.

3.3.32 Summary of Chapter 72

Quixote's Adventures after leaving the duke

Quixote and Sancho finally bid farewell to the duke and the duchess and set out on further adventures. The knight extolled liberty. They entered a wood where Quixote found himself entangled among some nets of green thread which were extended from tree to tree. The knight remarked that those nets surely promised some new and extraordinary adventure. Suddenly they saw two shepherdesses. Sancho was dazzled, and Don Quixote amazed at so unexpected a vision. They said that it was they who had spread the nets to divert themselves by catching birds. At that time a brother of one of the fair damsels came there. He saluted the knight and insisted on honouring him. Quixote said that in order to show his gratitude he would engage to maintain, for two whole days, in the middle of the king's highway leading to Saragossa and that those shepherdesses in disguise were the most beautiful and the most courteous damsels in the world, exepting only the peerless Dulcinea. The company tried to dissuade him from the challenge. But the knight was resolute. He challenged a group of horseman who being in haste asked him to get out of the way. He would not budge. Just then a herd of fierce bulls and bullocks chased them, vertourned and trampled the knight, the squire and their animals. At last fatigue obliged Quixote to desist from the pursuit.

3.3.33 Summary of Chapter 73

Quixote's extraordinary incident

In spite of eating and washing, Quixote did not feel refreshed. He was melancholy. After sleeping for some time they rode and reached an inn. During supper, they could hear some one in the next chamber suggest that they should have another chapter of Don Quixote de la Mancha. They were discussing the book. One person opined that whoever had read the first part could not be pleased with the second. Another person Don Juan observed that what displeased him the most in the second part was that the author described Quixpte as no longer enamoured of Dulcinea del Toboso. On hearing this, Quixote full of wrath and indignation raised his voice and challenged that opinion. The two men rushed into Quixote's room. The knight took the book turned over some leaves and pointed but some aspects for which the author deserved reprehension. One of the gentleman told Sancho that the author had described him as a dull fool, and glutton without pleasant following that thayat passed the greater part of the night in friendly conversation. Later the knight and the squire left the two strangers surprised at the medley of sense and madness they had witnessed.

3.3.34 Summary of Chapter 74

Quixote's Adventure on the way to Barcelona

In the morning they left the inn and took the direct road to Barcelona, for the Don was determined to prove the falsehood of the new history which he understood has so grossly misrepresented him. At the end of six days as they were resting under some shady trees, they were disturbed at suddenly being surrounded by more than forty comrades of the dead robbers and bandits, who commanded them to stand, and not to move till their captain came up. The captain Roque Guinart arrived. He at once perceived Quixote infirmity and that it had in it more of madness than a valour. The knight's harangue persuading the men to quit that kind of life, so prejudicial both to soul and body, made no impression on them since they were a wild and ungovernable race, The captain insisted upon all the property which had been taken from Dapple being immediately restored. He then made a just and impartial division of their plundered loot. Roque sent a party which soon returned with their captives. The captain treated them with courtesy and moderation and left them a part of their money. He then wrote a letter to a friend in Barcelona about his meeting with don Qukixote adding that he had found him wonderfully sagacious and entertaining.

3.3.35 summary of Chapter 75

Adventure of the Enchanted Head at Barcelona

After sojourning with the great Roque for three days and nights, Quixote and Sancho parted from him. When they saw the sea, the two men wondered at the novelty. They were warmly welcomed by the intimate and devoted friends of Roque Guinart. The host Don Antonio Moreno was learned, rich and sensible; he began to consider how he might extract amusement from his whimsical infirmity, yet without offence of this guest. At dinner time, both the knight and the square felt delighted and flattered by the respect and appreciation they received from Don Antonio, his friends and servants. After dinner, Antonio made Quixote examine a brazen head. He said that the head had been fabricated by a great enchanter, and it had the virtue and property of answering every question that was put to it. Quixote was quite astonished. The next day they derived much entertainment asking questions to the enchanted head. To the knight's questions the head replied that what had seen in the cave of Montesinos partook both of truth and falsehood, and that in due course the disenchantment of Dulcinea would be accomplished.

The examination of the enchanted head left the whole company in amazement. It was imperative to divulge the secret of that mysterious head so that the world might not ascribe its extraordinary powers to witchcraft or necromancy . He declared that Don Antonio had caused it to be made in imitation of one he had seen at Madrid intending it for his own amusement, and to surprise the ignorant. A shrewd sensible youth, nephew to Don Antonio was on this occasion the respondent having been previously instructed by his uncle in what concerned the several persons with whom he was to communicate.

3.3.36 Summary of Chapter 76

Sancho's Misfortune and Adventure of the Beautiful Moor

In the afternoon Don Antonio, Quixote, Sancho and others sailed forth intending to go on board the galleys. Quixote was warmly greeted the moment he entered the boat, and he was elated. Presently, he signal was given for the rows to strip, when instantly a vast range of naked bodies were exposed to view that filled Sancho with terror. One after the other they seized upon the squire and lifting him up, tossed him to the next man so on passing from man to man through the wide range of slaves so that at the end they left the poor man burised, breathless, and in a cold sweat, searcely knowing what had befallen him. Quixote vowed that if anyone presumed to lay hold of him in that manner, he would how their souls out. Suddenly a noise alarmed both the knight and the squire. The vessel gradually moved from the shore. Another ship was spotted in the distance. The captain was a young man of about twenty years, a youth of singular grace and beauty. Later it turned out that the youth was actually a Christian woman. She had been hurried into Barbary by her parents who, being moors, though Christianised, had been expelled from Spain. She had been followed by Don Gergario disguised as a woman and they would have nmarried, if only he had not been retained by the kinght as one of his female attendants. Everyone was moved by her tale and tears. Just then the girl's father, Ricote, came and addressed her as Ans Felix. Sancho recognised the same Ricote, he had met with upon the day he had quitted his government. All present consulted on the means of Don. Gregario's delivernance. The viceroy then returned to the shore entrusting Don Antonio with the care of Ricote and his daughter.

3.3.37 Summary of Chapter 77

Quixote's deftat and Don Gregario's deliverance

The wife of Don Antonio and Ana Felix liked each other. One morning Quixote observed a knight advancing towards him armed also like himself. He told Quixote that he was the knight of the While Moon and had come to engage in combat with him to make him confess that his mistress, whoever she may be, was beyond comparison more beautiful than his Ducinea del Tobso. Surprised at the arrogance of the stranger knight, Quixote accepted his challenge. Don Antonio said to the vicerory that he knew

neither who the stranger knight was, nor whether the challenge was in jest or earnest. Quixote declared that Dulcinea was the most beautiful woman in the world and he the moist unfortunate knight on earth. The knight of the White Moon demanded that Quixote should submit to one year's domestic repose and respite from the exercise of arms. Sancho was quite sorrowful at his master's discomfiture. He was afraid that the knight and the horse were crippled.

The stranger knight said that he was the bachelor Samson Carrasco. Feeling concerned about the knight's madness and folly and believing his recovery to depend upon his remaining quietly at home, he had acted thus. The bachelor then politely took his leave. Quixote kept his bed, melancholy, thoughtful and out of humour still dwelling on his unfortunate overthrow. Sancho strove hard to comfort him. The knight regretted that he could not go to Barbary to gain liberty for Don Gregario, since he had been forbidden to do so. Sancho gave him the news that Don Gregario had come. He had been saved by the renegade. Two days later Quixote and Sancho trudged towards home.

3.3.38 Summary of Chapter 78

The vanquished Knight's Homeward Journey

On the journey homeward, Quixote was dispirited on account of his evil destiny. Sancho tried to comfort him with moral admonitions. That night they took lodging in the middle of a field. They saw a man coming towards them. He said he was Tosilos the duke's lacquey, the same who would not fight with Quixote about Donna Rodriguez's daughter. The girl turned nun. Tosilos was now going to Barcelona as a foot post. They took leave of him.

3.3.39 Summary of Chapter 79

Adventure of the Hogs and the Revival of Altisidora

Quixote did not sleep well, but Sancho slept soundly, much to his master's irritation. Suddenly they became aware of a dull kind of noise with harsh sounds issuing from every part of the valleys. The noise had been produced by some hog-dealers eager to reach the market. The fifty herd, grunting and squeaking,threw down both master and squire and their animals. Quixote admonished Sancho not to hurt the unmannerly swine since he thought that heaven had inflicted that disgrace upon his guilty head.

The next day they continued their journey. Towards evening they saw a score of men on horse back making directly towards them. Both man and servant were frightened at their war like formation. They seized the two men and their animals. They made them move on in silence occasionally abusing them. They were placed in the middle of a court where there was a tomb. On the tomb was visible the corpse of a damsel so beautiful as to make death itself appear lovely. Two great personages and the knight recognised them as the duke and the duchess who had so nobly entertained them. At the end of the scene Altisidora who had been lying like a corpse got up muich to the delight of all present. The bachelor Samson Carrasco had called at the castle before and after his encounter with Don Quixote and the duke had arranged the disenchantment of Altisidora, as being in all probability the last time he would see the knight and his diverting squire.

3.3.40 Summary of Chapter 80

The Disenchantment of Dulcinea

Quixote took leave of the duke and the duchess the next day. The vanquished knight was depressed by the recollection of his overthrow but joyful at the probability of his lady's restoration. Sancho offered to undergo the penance of three thousand three hundred and odd lashes for the restoration of lady Dulcinea. He then began to lash his whip away after stripping himself naked from the waist upwards as Quixote began to count the strokes. But the sly slave instead if laying them on his back laid them on the trees. Later the knight and the squire continued their journey and reached an inn. Another gentleman Don Alvaro Tarfe also came there. He told them that he was the same persom mentioned in the second part of the history of Don Quixote lately printed and published and that the knight was an

intimate acquaintacnce of his. He further told the knight that he was farthest in resemblance to the Don Quixote he spoke of who had a squire supposed to be witty and comical;, but personality the gentleman thought him a very dull blockhead. When the knight and the squire were made knownm, the gentleman confessed that it perplexed him to see two Don Quixotes abnd two Sancho Panzas totally different. They dined together. They left the inn in the evening and on the way Quixote told Don Alavaro of this unfortunate defeat, the enchantment of Dulcinea and the remedy prescribed by merlin. They then parted. Sancho cunningly finished his penance of undergoing lashes taking special care to see that the beech trees should be the sufferers. Don Quixote anxiously waited in the hope of meeting his disenchanted lady. Thus hoping and expecting, they ascended a little eminence from where they discovered their village. They descended the hill and went straight to the village.

3.3.41 Summary of Chapter 81

Quixote arrives home- His death

In a field, adjoining the village Quixote and Sancho met the curate and the bachelor. They embraced Quixote cordinally. They reached Quixote's house where at the door they found the niece and the housekeeper. Quixo told the priest and the bachelor of his being vanquished and the obligation he had consequently been laid under to abstain from the exercise of arms for a year, and that, being a true knight-errant he intended to observe. He also told themof his resolution to turn shepherd to and pass the interin in rural occupation. The new madness of Quixote astonished his friends but hopping that a cure may soon be found for his malady they approved of his new project.

At home the housekeeper and the niece criticized his new resolution. However upon his request they carried him to bed, took food to him and looked after him very well. Man being mortal, the period of Quixote's dissolution came and when he least thought of it. He was seized with a fever which soon terminated his mortal course: All his friends constantly visited him and his trusty squire never quitted his bedside.

Quixote slept full six hours at a stretch. On waking up he told his niece that his judgement was now clear and freed from the dark clouds of ignorance with which the continual reading of those detestable books of chivalry has obscured it. He told his friends the priest, the barber and the bachelor that he was no longer Don Quixote de la Mancha and that now the senseless and profane histories of knight-errantry were to him disgusting and oidious . When they heard him speak they imagined that some new frenzy had seized him. The knight continued that death was advancing fast upon him.He asked for a notary to be brought to draw up his will. He also asked to bring him a confessor. His friends were dubious whether he was rational or mad. However, they complied with his request.

Quixote made his will, and then being seized with a fainting fit, he stretched himself out at length on the bed. He survived three days, often fainting in the same manner. At last after receiving the sacrament and expressing his abhorrence, in strong and pathetic terms, of the wicked books that had led him astray, Quixote's last moment arrived. And he passed away amidst the tears of all present.

Read the above study material carefully a number of times. Since the novel is packed with several adventures and encounters, you may find it difficult to remember them all in the first reading. Note the gentle humour and mild sarcasm employed by Cervantes in his picaresque novel.

UNIT-4

DON QUIXOTE

A CRITICAL STUDY

3.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

(i) Understand various aspects of Cervantes's "Donm Quixote:" and

(ii) make an overall estimate of the novel and its author.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Before you begin to read this unit, it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous Units. If you do so, you will be able to form your own impression of the novel, its characters, its mode of narration, the atmosphere and so on. Then when you read this Unit you will be able to appreciate the several aspects of "Don Quixote"

Let us study those aspects one by one.

3.2 PLOT OUTLINE

There are many inviting roads on which readers young and old may travel for pleasure and sheer entertainment. The way chosen by "Don Quixote" is like no other. It is delightfully quixotical (very imaginatively) his own. Many who have read this book consider it the most rewarding fictional journey of all. Don Quixote was an old fashioned gentleman who kept a lance in the rack, an ancient target, a lean horse and a greyhound for coursing' and his squire Sancho Panza, a good honest country labourer.' When the idealistic Don sets forth, fired with reading the romances of chivalry, he intends to perform deeds of valour and knight-errantry, but the loyal Sancho, who believes his master mad and who most of the time sees the world for what it is, is nevertheless persuaded to accompany the Don for the reward of the first island and empire- which the Don's lance should happen to conquer. The author's purpose always runs deeper than the reader's roars of laughter suggest. We see Quixote so full of chivalric zeal that he can tilt at windmills thinking them giants with their long arms extended in defiance. But some of the Don's ideals' have been absorbed by Sancho. 'How this comes about is described with a rare understanding which makes the reading-of "Don Quixote" many times such a delectable experience. The novel ends with the return of the old battered knight to his village after more than fifty chivalrous encounters and adventures; his health declines and he had natural death, but not before renouncing his obsession for knight errantry.

"Don Quixote" is often described as a picaresque novel, let us find out what that means

3.3 DON QUIXOTE:A PICARESQUE NOVEL

The picaresque novel may be defined "as the autobiography of a picaro, a rogue, and in that from a staire upon the conditions and persons of the time that gives it birth." (Fonger de Haan) Very simply put, it is a narrative genre; as distinct from these anatomies' of rogues, 'tricksters and beggars, has both a plot and single narrator. The subject matter is shaped into an artistic form and narrated from the viewpoint of the picaro. Critics like Walter Allen have extended the term to include any novel in which the hero takes a journey whose courses plunges him into all sorts, conditions, and classes of men...' Criticially speaking, the Spanish picaresque was a particular kind of narrative which first appeared in mid-sixteenth century Spain whose full flowering as a literary genre however took place almost fifty years later.

"Don Quixotre de la Mancha" is a picaresque novel where Cervantes has his knight-errant encounter a group of unfortunate ones who, much against their will , were being taken where they did not wish to go." Sancho Panza identifies them as "galley slaves". Among them was one Gines de Pasamonte; a convicted criminal who had written his autobiography during a previous sentence in the galleys. Quixote's interview with Gines contains one of the earlist reactions to the then new narrative

genre. Within the exchange between the two Cervantes focuses on three fundamental elements of a picaresque novel (i) it is the autobiographjy of a convicted criminal (ii) it is written in the pattern of Lazarillo de Tormes and (iii) it possesses an open ended 'unfinished' nature (that is, since the plot is episodic, or is made up of a number of distinct, separate episodes, there is no real beginning, middle or end to a picaresque novel). The picaresque novel as a genr meerges, as Cervantes clearly perceived, out of the confluence of the Lazarillo and of the autobiography of a criminal.

The picaresque novel was firmly established as a literary genre in Spain in the golden age, that is, the sixteenth century. This period also ends the first phase of the history of the genre in Spain. Cerventes's reaction to a fictional autobiography which pretended to be true was one of the first negative criticisms. His concern with the interaction between fiction and reality is well known. And his obsession with both the influence fiction had on life and vice versa is a commonplace of literary history. "Don Quixote is certainly his longest, most ironic and yet in some ways his most serious statement ion the subject" (Harry Sieber). He was convinced that reading 'good' fiction was a valid way of spending leisure time. Hence the author of fictions had a serious responsibility in dealing with his reader's responses to the powerfully illusory nature of literature. From the view point of Cervantes's literary aesthetic, the subject of the picaresquen novel- a criminal, hypocritical life told by the picaro himself- was never allowed to exist by itself without a larger context. It had to be contained within a fictional framework and its fictional nature had to be constantly pointed to its readers. For cervantes there were 'born' picaros as well as picaresque masks that could be put on by anyone at will. His considerations of the serious implications of the picaresque from the both literature and experience seem to be unique. Further publications of new picaresque narratives, were eclipsed by the popularity of "Don Quixote".

Carlos Blanco Aguinga observes:" It is quite common nowadays, especially in the Hispanic world, to consider that the modern novel derives its origin from, on the one hand the picaresque and on the other, "Don Quixote" together with one or two of the Exemplary Novels". These novels spell the destruction of the heroic or bucolic world of the 'idealistic' novel; in other words, they resemble each other in function in that they are not idealistic novels. So what we have in Don Quixote is a string of adventures, encounters and mishaps which befall the eccentric don on his journey as an imaginary knight. These adventures are not necessarily or originically bound; rather they constitute a loose, episodic plot. The novel is open ended in the sense, even if a few of these separate incidents are deleted, or if some more are added, the structure of the novel will not be affected. During the course if his journey, Quixote meets different classes and types of men: dukes, duchesses, barber, monks, slaves and so on. He himself is represented as a poor desperate man. The various episodes help to give a cross section of the Spanish people of Cervantes' time. An added charm of the novel is that there are two kinds if realism in it to quote Anguinga again: We would destroy the complexity of Cerventes if we did not see as a whole this superimposition of continual interchange as in "Don Quixote"-between apparent reality and real reality,real reality and critical reality, history and novel, in which everything is continually flowing into its apparent opposite and combining with it, to the point that it is no longer possible to distinguish the opposites and set them at odds to accept or reject either dogmatically.'

Actions and words reveal a person. Thus "Don Quixote " gives us a substancial picture of the knight and his squire. So let us try to understand something about their character or personality.

4.4. CHARACTER OF DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO PANZA

Lowry Nelson, Jr:observes: "As depictors of the human condition, both Shakespeare and Cervantes belong to the select company of those I would call universal ironists distinct from tendentious(or consciously deliberate) ironists. Universal ironists contemplate the world with a kind of gentle resignation and

compassion in full knowledge of both of grandeurs and miseries of human life... It is precisely this ability in Shakesphere and Cervantes to create particularized essence that leads us, their readers to draw the general conclusion to see the individual as representative. Hence the seeming plenitude of humanity we find in such odd and peculiar figures as on Quixote and Sancho Panza, not to mention Sanson Carrasco, the curate, Marcela, Gines de Pasamonte, and others.'

Don Quixote is of course a simpleton' that is clear from his mania of knight-errantry. But his obsolete whimsy is also the source of such true nobility, such purity of life, such as aristocratic bearing, such winning and respect-compelling' traits, physical and mental that our laughter over his grotesque and doleful countenance is always mingled with amazed respect. No one can know him and not feel drawn to the high minded and pathetic man, mad in one single point but in all others a blameless knight. It is pure spirit, disquished as fantasy, that sustains and ennobles him, that carries his moral dignity unscathed out of each and every humiliation.'(Thomas Mann)

Quixote is a bit cracked but not in the least stupid. In fact it is his master's elegance of thought and diction that is often the source of Sancho's boundless admiration-and he is not the only one to be fascinated by it. In the view of W.H.Auden heroes are conventionally divided into three classes: the epic hero the tragic hero, and the comic hero. Don Quixote fits none of them. The knight-errant whom Quixote wishes to become and actually parodies, was an attempt to christianize the pagan epic hero.

Quixote is the antithesis of an actor, being completely incapable of seeing himself in a role. Defining his situation in terms of his own character, he is completely unreflective. He never sees things that are not there; but he sees them differently. Similarly he never expects things to look after him, on the contrary he is always making himself responsible for things and people who have no need of him and regard him as an impertinent old meddler. He is constantly defeated, yet persists.

Sancho is an apt companion for Quixote. The potbellied squire with his proverb, his mother wit, his shrewd peasant judgement of human nature; he has no use for his master's ideas of chivalry and knight-errantry that results in beatings, but goes for the skin of liquor. He loves his good but ridiculous master despite all the hardship that loyalty to him incurs he does not leave him or stir from his side, but serves him with honest and admiring fealty (fidelity) even though sometimes he may lie to him at need all that makes Sancho Panza worthy of Four affection ; it rounds out his figure with humanity and lifts it out of the sphere of the merely comic into that of genuine humour:

Remarking about the squire. Thomas Mann observes: Certainly Sancho Panza is national in that he represents the attitude of the Spanish people towards the noble madness of chivalry. This is good or ill, his function. Here is a nation presented with a travesty of tragedy of its national qualities which it turns into its most prized classic masterpiece gravely, calmly proudly, it looks as into a mirror at uts own idealism, its lofty impracticality, its unmarketable high-mindedness, "Don Quixote" Wishes to change anything except Sancho Panza 's character. So the two are eternally related. Don Quixote needs Sanchon Panz as the one creature about whom he has no illusions but loves as he is; Sancho Panza needs Don Quixote as the one constant loyalty in his life which is independent of feeling". (W.H.Auden)

Thus we see that Don Quixote and Sancho Panza have to be 'considered as a unit for a corpus'. Each is a foil or a complement of the other. Together they represent the Spanish attitude to chivalry and knight errantry. They have been created out of Cervante's eventful and adventurous life.

Let us now turn to critical summary of the novel.

4.5. CRITICAL SUMMARY OF DON QUIXOTE

Critic Macaulay said that "Don Quixote" is the best novel in world, beyond comparison. This belief was, is, and certainly will be shared by lovers of literary excellence everywhere. Cervantes's avowed purpose

was to ridicule the books of chivalry which enjoyed popularity even in his day. But he soared beyond this satirical purpose in his wealth of fancy and in his irrepressible high spirit as he pokes fun at social and literary conventions of his day. The novel provides a crossection of Spanish life, thought and feeling at the end of the chivalric age.

THE STORY

A retired and impoverished gentleman named Alonzo Quixano lived in the Spanish provinance of La Mancha. He had read so many romanances of chivalry that his mind became stuffed with fantastic accounts of tournaments, knightly quests, damsels in distress, and strange enchantment, and he decided one day to imitate the heroes of the books he read and to revive the ancient custom of knight-errantry. Changing his name to Don Quixot's de la Mancha he had himself dubbed a knight by a rascally publican whose miserable inn he mistook for a turreted castle.

For armour he donned an old suit of mail which had belonged to his great grand father. Then upon a bony old nag he called Rosinante, he set out upon his first adventure. Not far from his village he fell into the company of some travelling merchants who thought the old man mad and beat him severely when he challenged them to a passage of arms.

Back home, recovering from his cuts and bruises, he was closely watched by his good neighbour, Pedro Prez the village priest and master Nicholas, the barber. Hoping to cure him to his fancies the curate and the barber burned his library of chivalric romances. Don Quixote, however, believed that his books had been carried off by a wizard. Undaunted by his misfortunes, he determined to set out on the road again with an uncouth rustic named Sancho Panza as his squire. As the mistress to whom he would dedicate his deeds of valour he chose a buxom peasant wench famous for her skill in salting pork. He called her Dulcinea de Toboso.

The knight and the squire had to sneak out of the village under cover of darkness, but in their own minds, they presented a brave "appearance: the lean old man on his bony horse and his squat, blackbrowed servant on a small ass Dapple. The don carried his sword and lance, Sancho Panza a canvas wallet and a leather bottle. Sancho went with the don because in his shallow-brained way he hoped to become governor of anisle.

Quixote's first encounter was with score of windmills on the plains of Montiel. Mistaking them for monstrous giants, he couched his lance, set spurs to Rozinante's thin flanks and charged full tilt against them. One of the whirling vances lifted him from his saddle and threw him into the air. When Sancho Panza ran to pick him up, he explained that sorcerers had changed the giants into windmills.

Shortly afterward, he encountered two monks riding in company with a lady in a xcoach escorted by men on horseback. Don Quixote imagined that the lady was a captive princess. Haughtily demanding her release he unhorsed one of the friars in an attempted rescue. Sancho was beaten by the lady's lackeys. Quixote bested(defeated) her Biscayan squire in a sword flight sparing the man's life on condition that he go to Toboso and yield himself to the peerless Dulcinea. Sancho, having little taste for violence wanted to get on to his isle as quickly as possible.

At an inn Quixote became involved in an assignation between a carrier and a servant girl. He was trounced by the carrier. The don, insulted by the inn keeper's demand for payment, rode away without paying. Sancho, to his terror, was tossed in a blanket as payment for his master's debt.

The pair came upon dust clouds stirred up by two large flocks of sheep. Soon Quixote was sure that they were two medieval armies closing in combat and intervened only to be pummeled with rocks by the indignant shepherds whose sheep he has scattered.

At night the don thought a funeral procession was a parade of monsters. He attacked and routed the mourners and was called the Knight of the Sorry Aspect by Sancho. The two came upon a roaring noise in the night. Quixote believing It to be made

by giants, wanted to attack immediately, but Sancho judiciously hobbled Rozinante so he could not move: The next day they discovered the noise came from the pounding of a mill:

Quixote attacked an itinerant barber and seized the poor barber's bowl, which he declarded to be the famous golden helmet of Mambrino and his packsaddle which he believed to be a richily jeweled caparison. Next the pair came upon a chain gang being taken to the galleys. The don interviewed various prisoners and decided to succour the afflicted. He freed them, only to be insulted by their remarks concerning his lady, the fair Dulcinea. Sancho, fearing what would ensue from them, on releasing of the galley slaves, led Don Quixote into the mountains for safety. There they came upon a hermit, a nobleman who told them a long story of unrequited love. Quixote and the hermit fought over the virtues of their inamoratas(sweethearts). Deciding to do penance and to fast for the love of Dulcines. Quixote gave a letter to Sancho to deliver to the maiden. When Sancho returned to the village Quixote's friends learned from the squire of the old man's where abouts. They returned with Sancho to the mountains, in Lopes that they could trick Don Quixote into returning with them. The priest devised a scheme whereby a young peasant woman should pose as a distressed princess. Quixote all but dead from hunger and exposure was easily deceived and the party started homeward.

They came to the inn where Sancho had been tossed in the blanket. The priest explained the don's vagaries to the alarmed innkeeper who admitted that he too was addicted to the reading of romances of chivalry. At the inn Don Quixote fought in his sleep with ogres and ran his sword through two of the inkeeper's precious wine skins. The itinerant barber stopped by and demanded the return of his basin and packsaddle. After the party had sport at the expense of the befuddled (confused) barber, restitution was made. An officer appeared with a warrant for the arrest of the don and Sancho for releasing the galley slaves. The priest explained his friends mental condition and the officer departed.

Seeing no other means of getting Don Quixote quietly home, his friends disguised themselves and placed the don in a cage mounted on an oxcart. He was later released under oath not to attempt to escape. A canon joining the party sought to bring Quixote to his senses by logical argument against books of knight-errantry. The don refused the canon with a charming and brilliant argument and went on to narrate a typical romance of daring do and courage. Before the group reached home, they came upon a goat herd who told them a story and by whom Quixote was beaten through a misunderstanding.

Sometime later the priest and the barber visited the convalescing Quixote and gave him news of Spain and of the world. When they told him there was danger of an attack on Spain by the Turks, the don suggested that the king should assemble all of Spains knight-errant to repulse the enemy. At this time Sancho entered despite efforts to bar him. He brought word that book telling of their adventures had appeared. The sight of Sancho inspired the don to sally forth again. His excuse was a great tournament to be held at Saragossa. Failing to dissuade Quixote from going forth again his friends were reassured when a village student promised he would waylay the flighty old gentleman.

Quixote's first destination was the home of Dulcinea in nearby El Toboso. While the don awaited in a forest Sancho saw three peasant girls riding out of the village. He rode to his master and told him that Dulcinea with two handmaidens approached. Frightened by the don's fantastic speech the girls fled. Quixote swore that Dulcinea had been enchanted.

Behihted in a forest the knight and his squire were awakened by the arrival of another knight and squire. The other knight boasted that he had defeated in combat all Spanish knights. They don, believing the knight to be mistaken, challenged him. They fought by daylight and miraculously Quixote unhorsed the knight of the wood who was Carrasco the village student in disguise. His squire was an old acquaintance of Sancho's. The don declared the resemblances were the work of magicians and continued on his way.

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Upset by his failure Carrasco swore vengnance on Don Quixote.

Sancho filled Quixote's helmet with curds which he had procured from shepherds. When the don suddently clapped on his helmet at the approach of another adventure, he thought his brains were melting. This 'new adventure' took the form of a wagon bearing two caged lions. Quixote, ever intrepid, commanded the keeper to open one cage- he would engage a lion in combat. Unhappily the keeper obeyed. Quixote, stood ready but the lion yawned and refused to come out.

The don and Sancho joined a wedding party and subsequently attended a wedding festival at which the rejected lover tricked the bride into marrying him instead of the rich man she had chosen. Next the pair were taken to the caves of Montesinos where Quixote was lowered underground. He was brought up an hour later asleep and upon awakening he told a story of having spent three days in a land of places and magic forests where he had seen his enchanted Dulcinea.

At an inn Quixote met a puppeteer who had a divining ape: By trickery the rascal identified the don and Sancho with the help of the ape. He presented a melodramatic puppet show which, Quixote, carried away by the make- believe story, demolished with his sword. The don paid for the damage done, and struck out for the nearby River Ebro. He and Sancho took a boat and were carried by the current toward some churning mill wheels which the don thought were beleagured city, waiting deliverance. They were rescued by millers after the boat had been wrecked and the pair thoroughly soaked.

Later in a forest the pair met a huntress who claimed knowledge of the famous knight and his squire. They went with the lady to her castle and were welcomed by a duke and his duchess who had read of their previous adventures and who were ready to have great fun at the pair's expense. The hosts arranged an elaborate night ceremony to disenchant Dulcinea who was represented by a disguised page. Sancho was told to his great discomfort that he would receive thousands of lashes as his part of the disenchantment. Part of the jest was a ride through space on a magic wooden horse. Blind folded, the pair mounted their steed and servants blew air in their faces from bellows and thrust torches near their faces.

Sancho departed to govern his isle, a village in the domains of the duke and the duchjess where the female part of the household turned to the project of compromising Quixote in his worship of Dulcinea. Sancho governed for a week. He made good laws and delivered wise judgements, but at the end of a week he yearned for the freedom of the road. Together he and his master proceeded towards Saragossa. Quixote changed their destination to Barcelona, however, when he heard that a citizen of that city had written a spurious account of his adventures.

In Barcelona they marveled at the city, the ships and the sea. Quixote and Sancho were the guests of Moreno who took them to inspect the royal galleys. The galley which they visited suddenly put out to sea in pursuit of pirates and a flight followed. Sancho was terrified.

There came to Barcelona a knight of the White Moon who challenged Don Quixote to combat. After the old man had been over come the strange knight, in reality the student Carrasco, sentenced him to return home. Quixote went back determined next to follow a pastoral life. At home the tired old man quickly declined. Before he died he renounced as nonsense all to do with knight-errantry-not realizing that in his high minded noble hearted nature he himself had been a great chivalric gentleman.

Let us now attempt an overall estimate of Cervantes and his masterpiece.

4.6 AN OVERALL ESTIMATE OF CERVANTES & DON QUIXOTE

Miguel Cervantes is easily the most popular of Spanish writers of the Golden Age. He is remembered as the creator of the inimitable masterpiece "Don Quixote" a picaresque novel which offers fun and entertainment to young and old alike. The characters of the don and his squire have

been admirably sketched by the author. The dialogue in English translation itself is lively. One can very well imagine how wonderful it would be in the original Spanish language.

Don Quixote is a mild satire on knight errantry which was way of life in the Middle Ages. The encounters of the knight are all exaggerated, his blunders covered up and his glory hailed. Simultaneously the don's madness is broadly hinted at. As it is a picaresque novel, there are numerous episodes strung together. A certain critical view is that the novel is too long; it goes on and on encounters following one another, so that perusal becomes tedious after a few chapters. Moreover, the episodes are characterized by monotony and lack of variety. However, the novel offers a feast for leisurely readers.

The novel abounds in sagacious statements and sayings. Both Quixote and Sancho are lovable characters, and readers derive plenty of fun travelling with them through the pages. The irony and sarcasm employed by Cervantes is mild and therefore enjoyable. The novel has exerted tremendous influence on future generations of writers too.

Please read the study material given in the four units a numnber of times and make sure that you have understood the novel and its various aspects. Note down any idea, impression or opinion that suggests itself to you.

You may next try to prepare your own essays. Please remember: the study aterial can be utilized properly to write essays but do not mistake them for prepared essays.

4.7 Questions based on Cervantes's Don Quixote.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. The character of Don Quixote.

(Hints: lovable gentleman-eccentric knight-his obsession-his adventures-true to his words at last)

2. The character of Sancho Panza

(Hints: a poor peasant-loyal squire of Don Quixote – full of practical wisdom- foil to his knight- loyal to the end.)

3. 'Don Quixote' as a picaresque novel

(Hints: Definition- Characteristics-illustrations)

Read the study material and prepare the above essays. Prepare essays on related topics.

Let us now turn to objective type questions.

4.9 Objective/viva voce Question

1. Who is Dapple? (Sancho Panza's ass)
2. To whom did Don Quixote dedicate his deeds as a knight? (Dulcinea del Toboso)
3. What did his friends and relatives do to cure his obsession with books on knight-errantry?(Burnt them)
4. What is the name of Quixote's horse? (Rozinante)
5. What did the don imagine the windmills to be? (Monstrous giants)

You may prepare several such questions on your own.

Let us wind up this module with a select bibliography. Try to secure these books (and many more)and try to increase your knowledge of all the three novel's discussed herin.

4.10 Select Bibliography

1. Gustave Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" (English translation by mildred Marmour)
2. Emile Zola's "Nana" (English translation)
3. Cervantes's "Don Quixote"
4. "A Short History of French Literature" by Geoffrey Brereton
5. "Seeds of Decadence in the 19th Century novel" by Suzanne Nalbantain
6. "The Picaresque" by Harry Sieber.
7. XX Century Views: Cervantes (ed) by Lowry Nelson, Jr.
8. Naturalism: by Lilian R. Furst and Peter N. Skrine.
9. A Glossary of Literary Terms: M.H.Abrams.

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UNIT II

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT: AN INTRODUCTION

1.0. OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

(i) Form a general idea of the French novel in the nineteenth century: and

(ii) Understand about the life and personality of Gustave Flaubert.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about his age; for, however unconventional or individualistic a writer may be, he nevertheless belongs to his age and is a product of his society. So let us begin this unit with a brief note on the French novel in the nineteenth century, the age of Flaubert (1821-80) and Emile Zola(1840-1902)

1.2. FRENCH NOVEL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

With the nineteenth centuary a new period opened in French literature, but the break with the past was not so complete as it had been at the Renaissance. Some of the chief trends of the eighteenth century continued to live on. These included (a) the emotionalism typified, by Rousseau and especially his conception of the individual as the central figure in the scheme of things; (b) a rekindled interest in spiritual values; (c) mysticism, and so on.

Yet if the nineteenth century prolonged the eighteenth century in certain important respects it differed profoundly in others. The Frenchmen believed the experience of the Athenians and the Romans to be still relevant to the human situation as they found it two thousand years later. This general habit of thought, shaken but not displaced in the eighteenth century by the spread of scientific thinking, was transferred in the succeeding centuries to an elite group consisting of the classical scholar and the professional philosopher.

This change was reflected in French literature; which quickly became open to modern European influences- German, English as well as American and Russian. Far-reaching social changes also came into play. The middle class which had been increasing in power throughout the eighteenth century, so consolidated itself after the Revolution that no return of the aristocracy could seriously shake its position. The social structure has altered fundamentally and had given literature new patrons with new tasters.

Besides this, the industrial Revolution particularly after 1830, created an urban proletariat whose influence on literature was two fold: (a) As readers they called into existence a mass of popular and lively fiction including the adventure and the crime novel. (b) As subjects, they offered writers a whole new field for observation and comment. The mere description of their lives and environment was rich material for the realistic writer, while the problem of social reform which they raised preoccupied other kinds of novelists throughout the century.

The novel became the most representative genre(literary type) of the nineteenth century and has continued to be so until today. It was the form best suited to the new reading public, with whom it occupied a place comparable to that held in the Middle Ages by the "Chansons de gestes" and the verse romances. Enlarged in scope and raised in status, the nineteenth century novel not only mirrored society than before the general philosophy of the times. To a great extent the novelist took over the parts formerly played by the moralist and the essayist. He also came to look on his profession as an art

and his interpretation of the age as something approaching a mission. There was now a theory of the novel, whereas earlier there had only been theories of poetry and drama. As the medium of expression of Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Zola and a score of somewhat lesser men, the French novel amply justified its new place in the literary hierarchy.

It was not, however, until 1830 that the greater novelists began to appear. Before that the chief innovation had been the short biographical or "confessional" novel which could take as many tones as there were individual writers. Stendhal and Balzac are two of the outstanding writers of French fiction. The peculiar combination of the revelation of character from the inside with a profound and unillusioned view of society is what contributes to Stendhal's greatness. He aimed at complete precision in the definition of feeling and motive and hence in style. With a ponderous comprehensiveness, his contemporary Balzac leads us round the society and the thought of his period; spanning fifty years from the Revolution to about 1840 and covering almost all walks of life. Victor Hugo, Merimee etc. also belonged to this period.

After 1850, the French novel underwent a change. For the time being, the autobiographical novel was dead. The historical and adventure novel, typical of another fact of Romanticism was also neglected. New conceptions of realism and later of naturalism began to rule literature, pinning the writer to often sordid contemporary themes and stamping his works with a new pessimism.(Geoffrey Brereton)

The turning point can be found in Gustave Flaubert (1821-80) and more precisely in his first published novel "Madame Bovary". (which you will be studying in the next units). This novel may be said to have established the realistic novel which was dominant in France for the next thirty years. The Goncourt brothers Edmond (1822-96) and Vles (1830-70) wrote novels of contemporary life. However it was a writer of much coarser fibre than the Goncourts who became the leader of the naturalistic school which emerged in the late eitghteen seventies as an extreme development of Flaubertain realism. As defined by Emile Zola (1840-1902) the new novel was to be based on the laws of scientific determinism, which according to the thought of the time, governed human nature. (We shall take up this idea in greater elaboration at a later stage) No other serious writer carried natuaralism as far as Zola. But a loosely knit group formed round him which included Daudent, Huyamans and Guy de Maupassant (1850-93) A fine short story writer as well , Manupassant is at his best when writing of the middle class and of the peasants of his native Normandy. With Anatole France the list of novalists who were formed in the nineteenth century comes almost to an end... Needless to mention there were several minor or lesser novelists as well.

Now let us concentrate on the study of Gustave Flaubert. We shall begin with his life.

1.3. LIFE AND WORKS OF GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

Flaubert was born in Rouen in France on 12 December, 1821. His father Achille Gleophas Flaubert, who was from Champagne, was chief surgeon and clinical professor at the Hotel- Dioeu hospital in Frouen. His mother, a doctor's daughter belonged to a family of distinguished magistrates typical of the great provincial bourgeosie.

Flaubert began his literary career at school when his first published work appeared in a little review in 1837. Very early in life he cultivated a close friendship with the young philosopher Alfred Le Poittevin, whose pessimistic outlook had a strong influence on him. Equally strong was the impression made by the company of great surgeons, and the environment of hospitals, operating theatres and anatomy classes, with which his father's profession brought him into contact.

The young man's intelligence, moreover, was sharpened in a general sense. He conceived a strong dislike of accepted ideas of which he was to compile a dictionary for his amusement. He came to detest the bourgeois by which he meant anyone who has a low way of thinking.

In November 1841, Flaubertr was enrolled as a student a the Faculty of Law in Paris. At the age of twenty two, however, he was recognised to be suffering from a nervous disease that was taken to be epilepsy, although the essential symptoms were absent. This made him give up the study law, with the result that henceforth he could, devote all his time to literature. His father died in January 1846 and his beloved sister Oaroline died in the following March after giving birth to a daughter. Flaubert then retired with his mother and infant niece to his estate at Croisset, near Rouen, on the Seine. He was to spend nearly all the rest of his life there.

On a visit to Paris in July 1846, At the sculptor James Paradier's studio, Flaubert met the poet Louis Colegt. She became his mistress, but their relationship did not run smoothy. His self protecting independence and her jealousy made separation inevitable, and they parted in 1855.

In 1847, Flaubert went on a walking tour along the Loire and the coast of Brittany with the writer Maxime di Camp whose acquaintance he had made as a law student. The pages written by Flaubert in their journal of this tour contain some of his finest writing.

Mature career: Some of the works of Flaubert's maturity dealt with subjects on which he has tried to write earlier. Two examples are Memories dun fou and La Tentation de Saint Antoine. These works illustrate the tenacity in the pursuit of perfection which made Flaubert go back constantly to work on subjects without ever being satisfied with the results.

In 1839, he was writing *Smarth* the first product of his bold ambition to give French liteature its Faust. He resumed the task in 1846-49, in 1856, and in 1870 and finally published the book as La Tentation. The four versions show how the author's ideas changed in the course of time. From Novemebr 1849 to April 1851, Flaubert travelled in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece and Itally with Maxime du camp.

"Madame Bovary " may be considered Flaubert's master-piece. It cost him five years of hard work. Du Camp who had founded the periodical Revue de Paris urged him to make haste, but he would not. The novel with the subtitle Provincial Customes eventually appeared in instalments in the Revue from October to December 15, 1856. The French Government then brought the author to trial on the ground of his novel's alleged immorality, and he narrowly escaped conviction (January-February 1857)

The same tribunal found the poet Charles Baudelaire guity in the same charge six months later. Think over this point: should authors or book be banned because they run contrary to accepted morals? We shall discuss the issue in a later unit.

To refresh himself after his long application to the dull world of the bourgeoisie in "Madame Bovary", Flaubert immediately began work on Salammbo a noval about ancient Catrthage. A play he wrote in 1863 namely "Le Chateau ds Coeurs" was not printed till 1880.

Later Years: Though he wrote a few plays they were not highly appreciated and Flaubert was naturally disappointed. The last years of his life, moreover, were saddened by financial troubles. In 1875 his niece Caroline's husband Earnest Commanville, a timber importer, found himself heavily in debt. Flaubert sacrificed his own fortune to save him from bankruptcy. He sought consolation in his work and in the friendship of George Sand., Ivan Turgenev and younger novelists-Emile Zola, Daudet and especially Maupassant, who was the son of his friend Alfred Le Poittevin's sister Laure and who regarded himself as Falubert's disciple.

Flaubert temporarily abandoned work on a long novel Bouvard et Pecuchet in order to write Trois Contes, a set of three stories. The profound meaning of his novel which was published posthumously was seriously misunderstood by several critics who regarded it as a denial of the value of science.

Flubert died suddenly of an apoplectic stroke on May 8, 1880. He left on his table an unfinished page and notes for the second volume of his novel. The materials were gathered and published later.

Read the study material carefully and become familiar with the age of Gustave Flaubert, as well as his life and personality. We shall study about his classic "Madame Bovary" in the following units.

UNIT 2

MADAME BOVARY: A SUMMARY OF' PARTS I AND II

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to :

(i) have a general idea of the plot of Flaubert's "Madame Bovary", part I: and

(i) form your own initial impressions of Emma Bovary the person.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation something of the original flavour and flair is bound to be lost. A chapter-wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about the characters, atmosphere and so on. But if you lay your hands on a good translation, do read it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Flaubert's masterpiece.

However, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first two parts of the novel.

2.3. SUMMARY OF PART I

Part I of "Madame Bovary" consists of nine chapters. Let us summarise the chapters one by one.

2.3.1 Summary of Chapter I

The novel opens with a school room scene. A class was going on. Suddenly the headmaster entered bringing a new boy not in school uniform. He was a country boy about fifteen years old who felt self conscious and out of place. While all the other boys were in the habit of throwing their caps on the floor, the new boy kept his on his knee. Each time he he stood up, it fell, and the boys laughed. The poor boy put up with all the humiliation in the manner of a stoic. When the teacher asked thim what his name was he replied Charbovary.

It took some time for the teacher to understand that the meant Charles Bovary.

We are next told of the story of Charles's parents. Charles father Monsieur Charles Denis- Bartholome Bovary ex-aide to a surgeon major had been forced to leave the service as a result iof some scandal. He then exploited his personal appearance to marry the daughter of a hosier who offered him a handsome dowry. After the marriage he lived happily on his wife's fortune for two or three years. His father-in-law died leaving very little and he was furious.

At first his wife loved him madly, and served him in all servility; she suffered in silence when he spent evenings running after all the village trollops, only to be brought back to her late at night, dead drunk, from various places of ill repute. Then her pride asserted itself. But she still said nothing , stifling her rage with a mute stoicism that she was to maintain until her death.

She gave birth to a son(that is the boy Charles we saw in the classroom) and the boy was spoiled like a prince. Contrary to her material instincts, the father tried to impose the notions of a manly childhood, of living austerely in Spartan fashion, in order to develop a strong constitution. His mother was always dragging young Charles around with her. In the loneliness of her life she lavished all her thwarted ambitions on this childish head. She dreamed about great success and important positions fior him. Though she wanted to educate him, her husband would not hear of it and the child wandered about in the village. Thus he grew like on oak. His hands developed strength.

But when Charles was twelve, his mother arranged for him to begin his studies. His father had to give in. He was sent off to study medicime, where he managed to stay in the middle of his class by working very hard. His mother arranged a room for him and left after giving him a thousand lectures about the need t o behave well and so on.

Charles understood nothing, even though he tried his level best. Gradually out of

indifference he managed to forget all his drive(enthusiasm) and resolution. Having neglected his studies, he completely failed the test for health officer and he was expected home that very evening to celebrate his success. When he told his mother the whole story, she made excuses for him, blamed his, failure on the unfairness of the examiners, and took it on herself to arrange matters. Only five years later did Monsieur Bowvery learn the truth; by then he accepted it as ancient history.

So Charles went back to work and prepared unceasingly for his examination. He memorized all the questions before hand and passed with a decent grade. It was a happy day for his mother. She decided that her son would practice in Tostes, since the only doctor there had conveniently passed away.

Charles needed a wife. So his mother found him one: a forty five year old widow, very ugly but with an income of twelve hundred pounds. Charles had hoped for better days following his marriage. He assumed that he would be freer to choose his own actions and spend his money as he pleased. But his wife was the ruler. She was highly interfering and demanding, She complained incessantly about her health and moods.

Critical Comments

The hero of the novel Charles Bovary is dramatically introduced. His childhood days, his mother's over protective, indulgent attitude towards him, his first marriage-all reveal how he is a mere puppet, without a will of his own.

2.3.2 Summary of Chapter II

One night at about eleven o'clock Charles received a letter which begged him to come immediately to Les Bertaux (about 14 miles away) to set a broken leg. A stable boy was sent ahead and Charles himself set out at four A.M. He was feeling very cold and drowsy. At last he reached Les Bertaux. It was an impressive farm. A young woman came out to receive him and invited him into the kitchen.

Charles went up to the second floor to see the patient: a short, heavy man of about fifty lying in bed and pouring himself drinks to keep his spirits up. It was an extremely simple fracture. However, remembering the bedside manners of his teachers, he comforted the patient with all kinds of nice words. The patient was Monsieur Rouault.

The young lady was Mademoiselle Emma, the patient's daughter. Charles was attracted towards her. Her real beauty was in her eyes: instead of returning to Les Bertaux three days later, as he had promised, he appeared the very next day, then regularly twice a week, in addition to in scheduled visits. Everything was going well. At the end of forty six days when old man Rouault was seen trying to walk by himself in his room, people began to consider Monsieur Bovary a very talented man.

As for Charles his visits to the farm came as a delightful change to the dull occupations of his life. He loved the company of Emma. Charles's wife was inquisitive and attributed his radiant looks to that woman, Emma. And she hated her instinctively. Starting with casual comments, she ended in making point blank insults at him, to which he did not know how to reply. He stopped going there as Heloise (his wife) had made him swear, his hand on his prayer book, that he would not do so. But inwardly he loved and desired Emma.

Charles's mother came to see them, and soon both she and Charles's wife like two scissors started cutting into him with their comments and their observations. At the beginning of spring, the notary of the window Dubuc's money ran off taking with him all the funds in his custody. Out of all the fortune about which so much noise had been made, very little turned up in the Bovary household. So the good lady had lied, Charles's father was very angry and accused his wife of having caused their son's unhappiness by harnessing him to such an old workhouse. There were explanations, scenes. Heloise in tears begged him to defend her against his parents. Charles tried to speak on her behalf. They became angry and left.

But the damage was done. Eight days later she began to spit blood. She was dead the next day. When the services at the cemetary

were over, Charles remained lost in a sad reverie, until evening. She had loved him, after all.

Critical Comments

The significance of this chapter us that it marks a turning point in the early part of Charles's life: the meeting with Emma followed by the death of his first wife. The totally submissive,repressed nature of his puppet- personality is also illustrated.

2.3.3 Summary of Chapter III

One morning old Rouault came to pay Charles for setting his leg: fees plus a turkey. He consoled him in his recent bereavement and told him that Emma thought about him often; he should visit them. Accordingly Charles visited Les Bertaux. The old farmer was extra nice and sympathetic towards him. His wife's death had not served Charles badly in his profession, since people were sympathetic. His reputation has spread, his clientele increased.

Gradually Charles and Emma spent a lot of time together, she talked to him about the convent, showed him her music books etc. He wished to marry her. He decided to propose when the occasion presented itself. Old Roualt would not have been sorry to be rid of his daughter who was of little use to him in the house. He felt that she was too intelligent for farming. The farmer was heavily in debt and Charles did not look the sort who might ask for a big dowry. So in his mind he said that if Charles asked him for Emma, he would consent.

At Michaelmas, Charles tried to open his mind in the matter but the old man anticipated him, Emma expressed her willingness by blushing. They decided to have the wedding around spring time. Emma wanted to get married by torchlight at the unusual hour of midnight, but Roualt could not understand this notion at all. And so a wedding took place, to which forty three people came and sat at the table for sixteen hours. It began the next day and continued to a lesser extent the next day.

Critical Comment.

Note that Emma's intelligence and fantastic tastes are emphasized. They, you will soon sede, are at once her uniqueness and weakness too.

2.3.4 Summary of Chapter IV

The guests arrived early in their vehicles, mostly carts. They were dressed in a showy manner and seemed incomfortable. As for Monsieur Bovary Senior, he felt contempt for all these people. The table was set in the cart shed. The people ate till evening. The children has fallen asleep on the benches. The bride begged her father to be spared the customary wedding-high jokes. Madame Bovary senior had cleaned her teeth all day long. She had not been consulted about anything, so she went to bed early. Her husband smoked till daybreak. Charles was humourless.

The next day, however, he seemed a new man. It was he who could have been taken for the virgin of the night before, rather than the bride, whose self control gave no opportunity for conjecture. Even the most daring jokesters were silenced, and they looked at her with bewilderment when she passed near them. But Charles did not hide his love or appreciation for his wife.

Two days after the wedding, the couple left; Charles could not stay any longer because of the patients. Old Rouault feld sad like an abandoned house. Charles and Emma arrived at Tostes at about six o' clock. The neighbours stationed themselves at the windows to see their doctor's new wife. The old servant introduced herself, greeted Emma, apologised that dinner was not yet ready and invited Madame to become acquainted with her home while waiting.

Critical Comments

The marriage of Charles and Emma marks a significant development in the novel. Henceforth Emma will play the role of Madame Bovary signified in the title.

2.3.5 Summary of Chapter V

Emma inspected the house: Charles's consulting room, the long and narrow garden, the bedrooms. She spotted the marriage bouquet of Charles's first wife. Charles noticed her glance, picked it up and took it to the attic. Emma drowsily wondered what would happen to her own wedding bouquet if by chance she died.

She kept herself busy the first days thinking about changes in the house. She had wallpaper hung, the staircase painted, and benches built in the garden. Finally her husband, knowing that she liked to go out for drives found her a second-hand carriage. So they were happy and without a care in the world. Charles had never imagined so much heappiness. Wheat good things had happened to him until now? His school days when he remained in the midst of students richer or smarter than he, who made fun of him; his medical study period when he scarcely had money to have a mistress; his first marriage to a widow whose feet were as cold as ice, on which lasted for fourteen months. Certainly unpleasant experiences. But now he possessed for life this lovely woman whom he adored. For him the universe was bounded by the circumference of the silk petticoat. He could not keep himself from constantly touching her; seeing her, kissing her.

Before she had married, Emma thought she was in love. But the happiness that should have resulted from this love had not come; she must have deceived herself- she thought. She sought to learn what was really meant in life by the words "happiness ", "passion" and intoxication"- words that had seemed so beautiful to her in books.

Critical Comments

This chapter marks the beginning of Emma's conflict: reality versus expectation. Reality often falling short of imagination begins to hurl her into disappointment and dissatisfaction with life.

2.3.6 Summary of chapter VI

Emma's mind was full of unfulfilled dreams: Sweet friendship of dear brother etc. When she was thirteen, her father took her to the city to enter in the convent. At first she was happy in the company of the kind sisters. She played very little in the recess periods and understood the catechism well. Slowly she succumbed peacefully to the religious and mystic languor of the chapel. But she knew the countryside too well. Accustomed to the calm life she turned away from it toward excitement. She needed to derive immediate gratification from things and rejected as useless everything that did not supply this satisfaction. Her temperament was more sentimental than artistic. She sought emotions and not landscapes.

At the age of fifteen Emma read a lot of romantic stuff. Later with Walter Scott she grew enamoured of historic events, wished that she lived in some old manor etc. She read plenty of books by unknown authors most furtively in the convent.

She cried a great deal the first days after her mother's death. She wanted to be buried in her mother's tomb when she died. Her father was shocked but Emma was inwardly pleased to feel that she has achieved at her first attempt this rare ideal of pallid existences that mediocre hears never achieve.

The good sisters who has been so sure about her vocation realized with great astonishment that Mademoiselle Rouault seemed to be eluding their influence. Her temperament positive in the midst of its enthusiasms which had loved the church for its flowers, the music for its romantic lyrics, and literature for its passion- inspiring stimulation rebelled before the mysteries of faith, in proportion to her growing irritation against the discipline which was antipathetic to her nature. The mother superior found that towards the end Emma had become quite-irreverent towards the community.

Back home, Emma begin disliking the country and missed the convent ! When she met Charles she thought she finally felt that marvelous passion that until now had been like a huge pink winged bird soaring through the splendour of poetic skies. She could not believe that the calm in which she was now living was the happiness of which she had dreamed.

Critical Comments

The chapter give us an insight into Emma's deep character. Basically she is a creature of emotions; she has a profoundly poetic temperament. It lends colour to her personality, but it spells her doom too.

2.3.7 Summary of Chapter VII

Yet sometimes she thought that these were the most beautiful days of her life- the

honeymoon, as it was called. To savour its sweetness, it would have doubtless been necessary to go off to one of those sonorous sounding countries where the first days of married life are languorously spent. She would have loved to express her intangible uneasiness to someone. But words failed her as well as the opportunity and the courage. In contrast, Charles conversation was flat, arousing neither emotion, nor laughter, not dreams. He was not curious. He thought she was happy, and she was angry at him for this placid stolidity, for his leaden serenity, for the very happiness she gave him. She could draw, play the piano, run the house and all this reflected favourably on Bovary. Charles ended up by thinking all the more highly of himself for processing such a wife. Emma looked after him well and he was perfectly contented.

Charles's mother came to visit him. She seemed rather prejudiced against her daughter-in-law: She found her a bit too haughtly or their station in life. 'Mother' and 'daughter' offered gentle pharses to each other ; their voices trembling with anger. Charles's love fore Emma seemed to the old woman desertion, an encroachment on that which belonged to her, and she observed her son's happiness with a sad silence. She would recall her exertions and sacrifices, compare them with Emma's neglectful habits and conclude that it was not reasonable for him to adore her in such an exclusive way. Charles did not know what to say. He respected his mother, and he loved his wife boundlessly.

Emma soon realized that Charles's passion no longer offered anything extravagant. His effusions had become routine. His embraces had the habitual monotony of eating dessert after dinner. Sometimes she asked herself why she got married. She would ask herself if there might not be a way, by other combinations of fate, to meet some other man, and she tried to imagine. What these un realized events, this different life, this husband she did not know would be like.

But towards the end of September she was invited to Vaubyessard, to the home of the Marquis d' Andervilliers. During the hot weather Charles has miraculously cured an abscess in the marquis's mouth. The clerk he sent to pay for the operation reported that he had seen some superb cherry trees in the doctor's garden. The marquis then came in persons, was attracted by Emma's pretty figure and invited the doctor and his wife to his chateau; the young couple arrived at nightfall.

Critical Comments.

This chapter prepares Emma to fulfuil some of her cherished romantic dreams. We are yet to see what course her life is to take from now onwards.

2.3.8 Summary of Chapter VIII

The chateau, of modern construction was in Italian style. As she entered, Emma felt herself enveloped in a warm atmosphere. Dinner was served at seven. After dinner, like the other ladies, Emma went up to get ready for the ball. She dressed with the meticulous care of an actress making her debut. She dissuaded Charles from dancing saying people would laugh. To stay out was more suitable for a doctor. When he tried to kiss her she prevented him saying that he would wrinkle her dress.

One of the dancers familiarly addressed as a viscount came a second time to invite Madame Bovary to dance and Waltz. She enjoyed herself. Chares, who had been feeling sleepy, all the while, was received when it got over. After breakfast the next day, the Bovarys took leave of the marquis and headed back to Tostes. On the way Emma thought she recognised the viscount among a group of horsemen, but actually she saw nothing but some heads. Charles found a cigar case edged with green silk and emblazoned with a coat of arms in the centre and picked it up.

On reaching home, Emma was furious that dinner was not ready, and she dismissed Nastasie. Charles was rather fond of the poor girl for she had often kept him company on many an empty evening and was his oldest acuaintnce in the district. When Charles tried to smoke after diner, Emma disdalnfuly seized his cigar case and threw it hastily into the bottom of the cupboard:

The memory of the ball became a preoccupation for Emma. Some of the details

faded away, but the regret remained. The wealth of the upper classes had rubbed off on her heart something that would never be erased.

Critical Comments

This chapter takes the story of Emma's future life style a definite step ahead. It is only beginning but a powerful and explosive one, as subsequent events will reveal.

2.3.9 Summary of Chapter Nine

Often when Charles had gone out, Emma would take the green silk cigar case out of the cupboard and wonder whether it belonged to the viscount; perhaps it was a gift from his mistress. He was in Paris. What a marvelous name! She became obsessed with the French capital; which glistened in her eyes in a silver-gold atmosphere. She subscribed to women's magazines and became acquainted with opening nights, races, latest fashions etc. She read Balzac and George Sand, searching in their writings for vicarious satisfaction of her own desires. The thought of the viscount came back to her continually as she read.

The closer things were, the more she turned her thoughts from them. The mediocrity of existence seemed to her an exception in the world, an unusual accident in which she found herself trapped, while beyond it the immense world of happiness and passion extended the sensualities of luxury with the joys of the heart, the elegance of convention with delicacy of sentiment.

To replace Nastasie(who had finally left Tostes in tears) Emma took into her employ a fourteen year old orphan. Charles was in good health and looked well. His reputation was quite established. The country folks adored him because he was not conceited. Seeing Charles contented and totally without ambition, Emma longed to have married at least one of those silent impassioned men who worked at their books all night and became famous towards the end of their life. She would have liked the Bovary name, which was hers, to be famous, to see it displayed in the bookstores repeated in newspapers, known by all in France. She repeated to herself bitterly that Charles was a sad creature. If at all she corrected his dressing, it was not, as he assumed, for her; it was for herself, for her own ego, out of nervous irritation.

Deep down within her she was waiting for something to happen. When nothing happened, she grew continually sadder and would look forward to the next day. She gradually lost interest in her music, reading, drawing and other interests. She was listless all the time. Meal time was the worst of all in that tiny room on the ground floor; all the bitterness of her existence seemed to be served up on her plate. She was neglecting everything in the household now, and her mother-in-law was amazed at the change.

Emma was becoming difficult and capricious. Her father who came to spend a few days with her left with a feeling of relief that surprised her. Moreover, she was no longer hiding her disaste for everything and everyone; and she began to express very odd opinions sometimes, condemning things that were generally approved and approving perverse and immoral things. This often caused her husband to stare at her.

Would this misery last forever? Would she never be out of it ? She certainly deserved as much all those women who were living happily. She cursed God's injustice. She envied tumultuous lives, masked balls and insolent pleasure with all the mad distractions they probably offered and that she had never known.

She became pale and suffered heart palpitations. Since she was constantly complaining about Tostes Charles decided to set up his practice elsewhere, though it meant a lot to him to abandon that place after four years' residence and at the moment 'when he was beginning to take root'. He look her to Rouen to his old professor. It was a nervous disorder. Finally they left Tostes to set up Charles's practice at Yonville-I' Abbaye. At that time Madame Bovary was pregnant.

Critical Comments

This chapter marks the end of part I of Flaubert's classic'Madame Bovary' as it puts an end to her life in Tostes. Leaving Tostes is a significant development with its implication

for newer opportunities for going astray on Emma's part, as we shall see presently.

Let us now move on to part II

Part II is made up of fifteen chapters. Let us study them one by one.

2.4.1 Summary of Chapter I'

Yonville-I' Abbaye was a 'small town near Rouen, without much deveopment. It was Monsieur Homais's pharmacy facing the Golden lion inn that most attracted the eye: There was nothing else to see, in Younville. Charles and Emma were coming in a carriage. On the way Madame Bovary's greyhound had run off across the fields. After whistling for it for a good fifteen minutes, they finally moved on. Emma burst into tears and lost her temper. She accused Charles of causing the tragedy. Monseiur Lheureux the dry goods merchant who happened to be with her in the carriage tried to console her with several stories about lost dogs recognizing their masters after many years.

Critical Comments

The Bovarys land in Yonville. The subsequent chapters will reveal the crucial role Lheureux the merchant is to play in Emma's tragedy.

2.4.2 Summary of Chapter II

Emma got down first followed by Felicite her maid, Lheureux and a nurse. They had to awaken Charles. Homais welcomed them heartily. As Emma warmed her cold feet a fair haired young man looked at her in silence. He was clerk. His name was Leon. Homais told Charles that a doctor's job was quite easy in those parts, and well –to-do farmers paid well.

Leon happened to lodge in the pharmacist Homais's house. He and Emma talked on various matters like music, the sea, reading books, dreaming, thinking and so on. After dinner the Bovarys left for their house which was only fifty feet from the inn. It was the forth time Emma was sleeping in an unknown place. The first had been the day she entered the convent, the second here at Yonville; and each of them had turned out to mark a new phase in her life. She did not believe that things could turn out the same in different places, and since her life so far had been bad, maybe that which was to come would be better.

Critical Comments

Has Emma's life been bad so far? What makes her feel so? Is she justified,? Ponder over these questions. This chapter introduces another character Leon who, you will see shortly, is to play a crucial role in Emma's life.

2.4.3 Summary of Chapter III

Leon was clearly interested in Madame Bovary. The dinner of the previous evening had been a considerable event for him; never before had he spoken for two consecutive hours with a lady and on that occasion. The apothecary Homais turned out to be the best of neighbours. Charles was despondent. There were no patients. Emma hoped for a son. The thought of having a male child was a anticipatory revenge for all her earlier helplessness. A man, at least, is free. He can explore passions and countries, surmount obstacles, taste the most exotic pleasures. But a woman is continually held back. However, she gave birth one Sunday at about six A.M. as the sun rose. When Charles told her that it was a girl, she turned her head away and fainted.

Emma named her daughter Berthe. Monseiur Bovary senior remained in Yonville for some time and Emma was not at all displeased with his company for he regaled her with information of the places he had visited, his mistresses, the dinners he has attended etc. Moreover he was attentive and would clasp her by the waist occasionally. Then Madame Bovary senior began to worry about her son's happiness, and fearing that her husband would have an immoral influence on the young woman's notions she made haste to leave.

Emmas daughter had been put to nurse with the carpenter's wife.'One day she was suddenly filled with the desire to see the little one. On the way she met Leon and asked him to accompany her. By evening this was known in Yonville and commented upon by the major's wife in her maid's hearing: Madame Bovary was compromising herself. 'The wet nurse tried to extract as much as

possible so as to annoy Emma. During their leisurely conservation, she and Leon talked about a Spanish dance company soon expected in the Rouen theatre. Their eyes were full of more serious statements. They each felt the same languor. It was like a murmur of the soul, profound and continuous.

On going back Leon said to himself that he was so bored. It was sad that he should live in that remote village. But Emma's face detached itself from the monotonous background of human faces, isolated yet even further removed; for he sensed undefinable charms between himself and her. At first he had called on her several times in the pharmacist's company. Charles had not appeared to be very interested in receiving him; and Leon, between the fear of being indiscreet and the desire for an intimacy that he magined almost impossible, did not know how to proceed.

Critical Comments

To some extent Leon's predicament is the same as Emma's. Both are bored with the monotony of existence; they are not contented. They are attracted towards each other. Leon is the more expressive. Will they seek fulfillment? Let us read on.

2.4.4 Summary of chapter IV

Emma sat by the window and watched Leon glide behind the curtain without turning his head. Monsieur Homais and his family were a friendly sort and spent some time each day with the Bovarys talking, discussing the paper, playing cards etc. Leon too would be present. He would read and she would listen while Charles and Homais would fall asleep. Thus a sort relationship was established

Between them was a continual exchange on books and ballads. Monsieur Bovary, not a jealous type, did not wonder about it.

Leon tortured himself to discover how he could declare his feelings to her; and always hesitating between the fear of displeasing her and the fear of seeming weak-willed, he wept tears of discouragement and desire. As for Emma, she did'nt think she was in love with him. Love, she believed, should arrive all at once with thunder and lightning- a whirlwind from the skies that affects life.

Critical Comment

A continuation of the previous chapter thematically, this chapter presents a one-sided relationship between Leon and Emma. Will Emma respond? Only future events will tell.

2.4.5 Summary of Chapter V

On a snowy Sunday afternoon in February the Bovary's, Homais and Leon had gone off to see a flax mill. Emma felt the flatness of her husband's personality written all over his coat. She regarded him, savouring in her impatience a sort of depraved voluptuousness. In contrast, Leon's big blue eyes lifted towards the clouds seemed to Emma more limpid and more beautiful than those mountain lakes in which the sky is reflected. That evening, when she was alone in her bedroom the comparison began. She could not get Leon out of her mind. She was convinced that he was in love with her. Then the eternal lamentation began: 'if only fate had willed it! Why can't it be? Who prevented it?"

The next day, at nightfall, she received a visit from Lheureux, the dry goods merchant. He was an extremely clever and shrewd businessman, capable of the most complicated calculations Polite and friendly in a showy manner, he told Emma that if wanted, he could give her money. Leon came in. Emma appeared to be very busy with her household work, very anxious about her husband. The conversation languished. This was her rigid fashion during the following days. She took her little daughter Berthe from the wet nurse. Charles's eyes became moist with happiness at his wife's solicitous behaviour towards him. She appeared so virtuous amd inaccessible to Leon that even the smallest hope abandoned him. She continually rose in his heart. It was one of those pure sentiments untroubled by the realities of life. One cultivates them because they are rare-and their loss would hurt more than the pleasure of possessing them. Emma was so sad and so calm, at the same time so sweet and so reserved that one felt a glacial charm when near her: everyone felt the

power of her personality. The women admired her thrift, the patients her politeness, the poor her charity.

But within, she was full of envy, rage and hatred. She was in love with Leon and she longed for solitude in order to dream about him undisturbed. Even the sight of him troubled the voluptuousness of her meditation, but the emotion subsided in his presence, and only an immense wonder remained, which faded into sadness. She would not express her true feelings but wanted him to suspect it. The more she grew aware of her love, the more she repressed it, in order to hide and lessen it. And then the fleshly appetites, desire for money, and the melancholy grip a passion combined into the agony. What exasperated her was that Charles did not seem to suspect her suffering. Was he not the obstacle to all happiness? She hated him intensely. His very kindness to her made her rebel. Domestic mediocrity was pushing her to luxurious fantasies, matrimonial tenderness to adulterous desires. She felt strongly tempted to run away Leon somewhere faraway to try a new destiny, but her fear of not being loved by him in turn prevented her from doing so.

Critical Comments

You are slowly forming your own impressions of Emma Bovary. What do you think of the conflict in her mind? Does it appeal to you as realistic? Flaubert has powerfully presented Emma's mental struggle. She is torn between passion and fear because it is her first extra marital desire.

2.4.6 Summary of Chapter VI

One evening on hearing the repeated chiming of the bell, Emma went to the church prepared for any act of devotion as long as she could give her soul up there and make her entire existence disappear. Her efforts to confess to the priest and get his advice were in vain. The old man failed to understand her. On reaching she felt irritated when her little baby tried to totter and get close to her. Seeing her own child sleep after it had fallen against the chest of drawers and hurt itself, Emma thought that her daughter was ugly.

People noticed that Leon was sad. He was tired of being in love without results. He began feeling the despondency brought on by the unvarying repetition of the same life, when there is no motivating interest and no sustaining hope. He decided to go to Paris and finish his law studies there. His mother gave him consent. The Homaises and Justin, the servant were sad. Emma appeared stiff and inexpressive when Leon bid farewell. Charles and Homais expressed their concern for Leon who had to take care of himself in a strange place. Emma was sure he would manage beautifully. Homais told them that the Seine Inferieure Agricultural Show was to be held in Yonville that year.

Critical Comments

The conflict in Emma's mind over Leon continues.

2.4.7 Summary of chapter VII

The next day was a day of mourning for Emma. It was the mood of sadness and the same lifeless melancholy, the same numb despair which she had suffered after returning from La Vaubyessard. The cause then had been the viscount and now it was Leon. Why had she not held him back? She cursed herself for not having loved him. She thirsted for his lips. Little by little absence caused love to die away and habit smothered regret. She was more unhappy now because along with the experience if unhappiness, she now had the knowledge that it would never end.

Emma started indulging in all sorts of whims and luxuries: nail polishing, buying costly dresses and shawls, changing her hair styles, buying books etc. She had moods in which she almost went wild. Despite her "flighty' airs (as the Yonvillites called them) she was not happy. Charles was anxious when she spat blood but refused to submit to any treatment. His mother asserted that what Emma needed was manual labour. If she was forced to work like so many other women, she would not have those spells that came from the ideas derived from evil books with which she filled her head. A person without religion would always end up bad.

One day as Emma was sitting at the window as she often did a certain Monsieur Rodolphe Boulanger of La Huchette estate came to see Charles. Rodolphe lived a

bachelor life and was reputed to be very rich. He had brought a servant for a small treatment. Charles called Emma for some help and this gave Rodolphe a chance to see her and he was immediately attracted towards her. The thirty four year old man was hardhearted and extremely intelligent, had spent a lot of time in female company and was very knowledgeable about women. He determined to have Emma. He decided that he would utilize the coming agricultural show to meet her. The best way was to start off boldly.

Critical Comments

The Chapter is a crucial one. The introduction of Rodolphe adds to the complication of the plot of the novel. We are to watch in the succeeding chapters how he fills the vacancy created by Leon's departure in the life of Emma Bovary.

2.4.8 Summary of chapter VIII.

The day of the famous Agricultural show finally arrived. The inhabitants of Yonville were happy and excited. Emma also went to see it. Rodolphe had come there in anticipation. With great tact and cunning he separated her from Homais and Lheureun. Emma seemed to enjoy company from the start. He tried to win her affections by affecting to be friendless, to have a dreadful reputation to be a dreamer constantly in need of the purest of passions, the most passionate of pleasure etc. He told her that their duty was to discern the great and cherish the beautiful and not to accept all those conventions of society with the ignominies it imposed on them. Emma argued that they had to go along with society to some extend and respect its morality.

Little by little Rodolphe managed to brainwash Emma with his words and his personality. He asked her whether the conspiracy of society did not revolt her. Society condemned the most noble instincts; the purest emotions were persecuted and slandered, and if two poor souls finally met everything was organized so that they could not unite. As he sat with his arms closed on his lap gazing steadily into her eyes a sudden weakness overcame her. Rodolphe succeeded in winning over her in his first attempt itself.

Critical Comments

This Chapter is an inevitable sequel to the previous one: given Emma's nature and Rodolphe's resolution and keen experience of women his winning over her is very natural. Note how Emma is aware of the need to respect morality to a certain extent. Yet she compromises this time, though she did not in the earlier case of Leon. The temptation of a second experience, the more powerful personality of Rodolphe and her carving for carnal pleasures, passion etc. are all causes. The repercussions are likely to be explosive.

2.4.9 Summary of Chapter IX

Rodolphe returned to Emma's place one evening after six weeks. If she really loved him, her impatience to see him again would be increasing her love; thus he reasoned rightly. Emma was pale and rigid at first, but his words of love made her surrender. It was the first time that she had heard such words uttered to her.

Roolphde flattered Charles by addressing him' Doctor'. He offered to bring his horse for Emma; for horseback riding was good for health. Charles readily accepted his kindness! Emma was charmed by his appearance when he appeared the next afternoon with two horses. She was ready and waiting for him. They rode very far. Though she was scared of his advances initially, eventually she gave herself to him.

That night she shut herself in her room after Charles left. At first she was in a state of confusion. On seeing her reflection in the mirror, she noticed that she was transfigured by some subtle change permeating her entire being. She relished the idea that she had a lover now. So she was finally going to possess those joys of love, that fever of happiness, of which she had so long despaired.

The next day Emma and Rodolphe made promises to each other. From that day on they wrote each other regularly every evening and exchanged them at the back of the garden. One day when Charles had gone out before dawn, Emma managed to go to her lover's estate. Her desire to see him straight away was that intense; the first risk having succeeded, each time from then on

that Charles left early, Emma would repeat these visits. She never wanted to leave her lover at all. Something stronger than herself was pushing her towards him so that one day seeing her appear unexpectedly he frowned as if he were annoyed and declared very gravely that her visits were becoming imprudent and that she was compromising herself.

Critical Comments

Emma performs adultery at last. She demeans herself so much that even her cunning lover tells her openly that she is compromising herself. And the simpleton charles is blissfully unaware of his wife's infidelity.

2.4.10 Summary of Chapter X

Gradually Rodolphe's fears began to affect Emma. She was terrified of being seen. Once she aroused the suspicions of the tax collector Binet who saw her returning home early in the morning. The next day Emma and Rodolphe decided, because of the incident, to arrange their meetings better. All through the winter, three or four times a week he came to the garden of her house in the dead of the night and announced his presence by throwing a handful of gravel against the shutters. Then she would sneak out half undressed, after charles fell asleep. When it rained they took shelter in the consulting room. Rodolphe could not help making various jokes at Charles's expense. She was amazed at his courage; although she sensed in it an indelicacy and blatent vulgarity that she thought shocking.

Emma was becoming quite sentimental. She wanted a ring, an actual marriage band as a sign of eternal union. As for Rodolphe, he was not a man devoured with jealously she was pretty and her love without guile was something new to him. Gradually when he was sure of being loved, he stopped trying to please her. So the great love affair in which she had plunged seemed to lose its intensity. She did not want to believe it. She did not know if she regretted having given into him. The humiliation of feeling how weak she was where he was concerned turned into a resentment tempered only by sensual pleasure. It was not an attachment but a permanent reduction. Rodolphe thus succeeded in conducting the affair to suit his whims for half a year.

A loving letter from her father set her thinking and she wondered what was making her so unhappy. She sought the extraordinary calamity that had over whlemed her. Her relationship with Rodolphe was losing its initial intensity. Emma repented; yet she loathed Charles for there was very little he could offer for the return of her affection.

Critical Comments

This Chapter describes how Emma is deep in adultery. Her passion demeans her to such a level that Rodolphe is quite disdainful. She has no time or thought either for her husband who simply dotes on her, or her little daughter who badly needs her. Nemesis is slowly approaching the fallen woman.

2.4.11 Summary of Chapter XI

Homais had recently read an article praising a new method for curing clubfoot. He wanted Bovary to try it. Emma too was enthusiastic because she wanted desperately something that would increase his reputation; urged on by the two, Charles let himself be convinced. Homas was urging the stable boy Hippolyte to let himself be operated. The operation was successful and the paper report prepared by Homais was flattering.

But five days later the boy's mother came running in fright screaming that Hippolyte was dying. A gangrene had developed and was moving higher and higher. The boy's mother and the priest were harming his convalescene. Monsieur, canivet M.D. was called to amputate the boy's leg. Charles was full of remorse and humiliation. Emma's private scheme was that she had imagined that such a man could be worth something. How could she, who was so intelligent, have fooled herself to ruin her life for this creature who understood nothing, felt nothing? She had tried to love him and even repented in tears her affair with another man. Looking very troubled, Charles was numbly listening to the last cries iof the amputee and his sharp screams. Everything about him irritated Emma. Whatever virtue still remained

CUP/5026/1000/SDE—4

collapsed beneath the fury of her pride. She revelled in all the evil ironies of adultery triumphant. Charles seemed detached from her life, forever gone as impossible and annihilated as if he were dying and passing away before her eyes. Poor Charles could not understand her. She readily met and embraced her lover at the garden that night.

Critical Comments

Emma encouraged her husband to try the new mode of operation for the wrong reason- for fame and reputation. So when things went wrong and he felt terribly discouraged she hated him and resolved to stick to her course of adultery.

2.4.12 Summary of Chapter XII

Emma and Rodolphe fell in love all over again. This love increased each day in proportion to the revulsion she felt for her husband. She gave special care to dress up herself like a courtesan awaiting a prince. She spent money recklessly on her wardrobe: Charles had to spend three hundered francs for a wooden leg to be gifted to Hippolyte, who soon resumed his work.

Lheureux tempted Emma to buy various feminine trifles from his shop and lost his patience when the debts kept pilling up. She gave several gifts to Rodolphe who found her high-handed and demanding. The novelty of their relationship was giving way to monotony but he treated her without consideration, making her into something compliant and corrupt. Madame Bovary's manner changed as a result of constant indulgencde in love. Her gaze became bolder, her talk freer. The women in the town as well as her mother-in-law were scandalized. The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law had a fight on his matter. She begged Rodolphe to take her away along with her daughter which made the man think: "What a woman!"

In the day that followed Emma exhibited an amazing change. She was too good, respectful and loving to Charles and his mother to be true. Never had she been so beautiful as now. She was so happy thinking that Rodolphe will take her a way to a life absolute bliss. She ordered a trunk, a bag etc. needed for her travel from Lheureux and gave her watch towards payment. Her plan was to go off with Rodolphe the next month. But Rodolphe kept on postponing it on some pretext or the other. Finally it was fixed for September 4.

The Saturday preceding the fatal day arrived. He mildly tried to dissuade her but she was hopeful and determined. It was clear that he had no intention to oblige her.

Critical Comments

Emma's depravity is coupled with recklessness and unrealistic exspectations.

2.4.13 Summary of Chapter XIII

On going home Rodolphe took at random handful of letters he has received from various mistresses and exclaimed, 'What a collection of nonsense!' This summed up his attitude towards Emma also. He then wrote a long letter breaking his relationship with her as gently as possible, let a big drop of water fall on the letter on order top appear like his tears, and asked his plowboy to hand over the letter to her. Emma was unspeakably upset. On reading it, she became delirious. Brain fever had broken out. Charles did not leave her side for forty three days. Moreover the young man was worried about money.

Critical Comments

It is all to easy to rave about pure passion, and noble sentiments of love and all that. But when they descent to the level of reality, see how tragic and heart rending they can be! Is Emma's plight a unique one? Will she learn a lesson from her bitter experience? Charles certainly shines by contrast, doesn't he?

2.4.14 Summary of Chapter XIV

Emma's medical expenses, their household expenses and other bills were becoming frighteningly high. Charles did not know how to pay them back. One day at the height of her illness Emma believed herself dying and asked for communion. She had buried the memory of Rodolphe in the very bottom of her heart. Then she became extreamely charitable. Her moods kept fluctuating all the time. One day Charles took Emma to the theature to see a play.

Critical Comments

This chapter tells us of the effect of Emma's illness on the household, and her recovery.

2.4.15 Summary of Chapter XV

Emma was excited and felt transported to the readings of her childhood as she watched the opera. Poor Charles just could not understand or enjoy the performance. They met Leon. Charles invited him for dinner. The clerk accepted the invitation especially since he had to go to Yonville on some office business.

Critical Comments

This chapter presents before us a lack-lusture Emma and her solicitous husband. Once again Leon appears in the scene. We are yet to see whether the whole drama will begin afresh.

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the story so far. Also note down your impressions of the main characters, plot development etc. So that you will be able to write essays on your own.

We shall study the latter part of "Madame Bovary" in the next Unit.

UNIT 3

MADAME BOVARY
A SUMMARY OF PART III& "TRIAL"

3.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a complete picture of the tragedy of Madame Bovary

(ii) Understand the arguments for and against Flaubert's master-piece;and

(iii) Ask yourself whether it is proper to ban books.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Please read Unit 2 a few times and understand the first two parts of the novel thoroughly. Only then can you appreciate the novel as a whole. In this unit we shall summarise part III consisting of ten chapters as well as 'The Trial" of Madame Bovary.

3.2.1 Summary of part III Chapter I

While studying law, Leon was a fairly frequent visitor to the cabaret. He often thought about Emma. Now after three years his passion for her revived. He decided to possess her. The next day he went to the Red cross Hotel where the Bovarys were staying. Charles was not there. During their conversation Emma commented about the futility of earthly affections and the eternal isolation in which every heart remains. They talked of their sorrows and became freer with their confidences. Finally Leon told her that he had loved her so much to which she answered that she had always thought so. Talking to him she was surprised at feeling very old. He insisted on meeting her the next day at the cathedral at eleven. That evening she wrote a letter in which she cancelled the meeting. But she did not know Leon's address.

The next day when they met, she gave him the letter to read and went into the church to pray, hoping that some sudden strength would descent from heaven. She irritated him by this whim of piety as well as her sudden interest to see the curiosities of the church: Losing patience, he dragged her abruptly out of the church, hailed a carriage pushed her into it and sat in. When she remarked that it was improper, he replied that it was done in Paris. He ordered the cabman to keep on going much to the anger of Emma. Then about six o' clock, the carriage stopped in a side street. Emma stepped down walking away with her veil pulled down and without looking back.

Critical Comments

The mad drama, it appears, is about to begin again. Emma is a little wary and hesitant after the bitter experience with Rodolphe. But Leon is too eager. We are yet to see how things will shape out.

3.2.2 Summary of Chapter II,

Emma already felt in her heart that cowardly submissiveness, for many women, both the punishment and the atonement of their adultery. She got into a cab can asked the driver to hurry. On the way her maid Felicite met her and told her to go straight to Monsieur Homais's place. It was very important.

When she reached the pharmacist's place she found him highly agitated and shouting at the errand boy Justin, When Homais had asked another pan, Justin had got it from the capharnaum. The room contained acids and caustic alkalis as well Arsenic, a highly poisonous powder kept in a blue bottle sealed with yellow wax. Homais was frightened, and very angry imagining the risk of poisoning his patients and being put on the prisoner's deck etc.

It took Emma quite some time to find out why she had been called, for at last Homais told her that her father-in-law was dead. Actually the old man had died a couple of days back but Charles had asked Homais to break the sad news to Emma very gently. She was not at all affected; but at dinner, out of politeness she pretended that she had lost her appetite. As she looked at Charles, the monotony of the sight banished little by little all the pity in her heart. She felt he was weak and puny, a contemptible man in every respect. The next day Madame Bovary senior arrived. She and her son wept copiously Emma left them to themselves. While they mourned, she wanted to be alone to enjoy the memory of her love, which was dwindling away under the impact of external impressions.

Monsieur Lheureux came there. Charles was afraid if the story of the note might become known. The merchant congratulated Emma quite openly on the inheritance. Emma was afraid that Charles might suspect her. Charles and Lheureux had a dispute over the travelling goods she had ordered. Now the merchant had come to renew the promissory note signed by Bovary. The cunning man suggested that the man could save himself a lot of bother if he gave the power of attorney to his wife: She did not seem to understand. The merchant kept coming off and on and trained Emma in business transaction to suit his selfish motives. He even made her possess a power of attorney document without the knowledge or consent of Charles. When Charles naively asked her where it came from, she offered to go to Paris and ask Leon. She remained three days with him.

Critical Comments

This is a significant chapter for several reasons. Firstly Emma is made aware, though by chance, of the deadly poison Arsenic. Secondly, her father-in-law's death leaves them with an inheritance and the cunning merchant Lheureux is quick to exploit the situation. Thirdly, She is all set to start another act of adultery-with-Leon-in all seriousness. The out come of such a combination of factors is likely to be disastrous one.

3.2.3 Summary of Chapter III

The three days Emma spent with Leon at Paris were three exquisitely full days, glorious days, a real honeymoon. When they had to part, the farewells were sad. He was to send his letters in care of Madame Rollet, the wet nurse. Leon greately admirwed her shrewdness in love matters . As he walked back alone through the streets, he wondered why she had been so insistent about the power of attorney.

3.2.4 Summary of Chapter IV

Leon soon assumed an air of superiorly over his friends, kept aloof from their company and completely neglected his work. Instead of diminishing, with absence, the desire to see Emma grew so strong that finally one Saturday morning he went to Yonville. He went to the house the Bovary's. Emma was in her room but only emerged a quarter of an hour later. The doctor appeared delighted to see him but did not leave the house that whole evening or all the next day. He saw Emma alone at night in the lane behind the garden, where she used to meet Rodolphe. She decided to find a permanent way to see him freely at least once a week.

Emma was in high spirits. She was going to have some money. She started spending money lavishly, even recklessly, buying new

curtains, ordering rugs and so on. She was suddenly smitten by a passion for music and won everyone's sympathy through a combination of talent and inability to afford lessons. And that was how she managed to obtain her husband's permission to go to the city once a week to see her lover on the pretext to taking music lessons.

Critical Comments

This is Emma's second affair and naturally she appears bolder and more experienced in the manipulations and strategies coupled with adultery; passion for money and things is also consuming her up.

3.2.5 Summary of Chapter V

Emma's day was Thursday and she would set off very early. For fear of being seen she usually did not take the shortest road. Leon would keep walking on the sidewalk. She would follow him to his hotel. He wou.ld go up, open the door and go in; and then what passionate embraces and kisses and outpourings! For the first time in life, Leon was tasting the inexpressible sublety of feminine grace: She was a woman of the world, a real mistress. She awoke a thousand desires in him.

Charles would be waiting for her at home. He would notice that she was pale and moody. The next few days would be unbearable because of her impatience to meet her lover. Hers was a burning desire, inflamed by her memories. She savoured this love in a discreet and intense way. She incited his jealousy by casually referring to her previous affair. She was more charming than ever to Charles He considered himself tha most fortunate of mortals, and Emma lived in tranquility until one day Charles told her that the music teacher from whom she was supposed to be taking lessons said that she did not know Emma. She cunningly managed the situation by producing a false receipt for the fees!

From that moment on, her existence was a continuous string of lies. Lying became a need, a mania and a pleasure, and Charles least suspected her. One day Lheureux met her leaving the hotel on Leon's arm. Three days later he met her privately in her room and asked for money. When she said she had none he told her to sell her property using her power of attorney, to which she agreed. This property was part of a little farm sold by old Bovary. The merchant arranged the transactions. He then made her sign four promissory notes, each for one thousand francs and told her to keep the proceeds of the sale of the property namely eighteen humdred francs after deducting a commission of two hundred francs. She would receive the balance in six months time. Emma was a bit confused by a calculations.

Charles happened to see the fourth pronote and Emma told him most lovingly about innumerable items she had bought on credit. Charles at his wits end had recourse to the indispensable Lheureux who promised to straighten matters out if Monsieur would sign two notes for him, payable in three months. In order to be able to meet it, he wrote a pathetic letter to his mother. She came at once. She insisted in seeing the bills.

Madame Bovary senior quickly found that Emma had spent too much, and wastefully too.

She forced Charles to cancel the power of attorney which in turn made Emma suffer from an attack of nerves. The old lady however claimed that it was all play-acting. But-Charles rebelling for the first time in his life took his wife's part and so well that his mother decided to leave. Emma succeeded in making him issue a second power of attorney.

Leon did not know what there was within Emma that drove her recklessly toward the pleasures of life. She was becoming irritable, greedy and voluptuous. She would walk with him in the streets, her head held high, without fear of being compromised. One evening she did not go back to Yonville, causing terrible anxiety to Charles and making little Berthe sob as if her heart were breaking. Finally at eleven Charles set out in his cart in search of her. She coolly turned up the next day saying she had not felt well. She also told him not to worry in future.

Soon she started misusing this liberty too. She would call for Leon at his office whenever she desired. At first it made him very happy, but soon he told her that his employer was

deispleased with these intrusions. Soon he accepted all her tastes becoming her mistress, rather than she being his. She offered tender words and kisses that drove him mad. Where had she learned this corruption, so deep and yet so disguised that it appeared almost disembodied?

Critical Comments

This chapter exhibits Emma in a very bad light. Adultery, greed for money, mania for lying, through disregard for her own husband and little child, it is a vicious circle in which she exists.; Due to her greater experience, she is dragging Leon too in the mire

3.2.6 Summary of Chapter VI

When he traveled to Yonville to see Emma, Leon often dined at the pharmacist's home, and he felt obliged, out of politeness to reciprocate invitation. And so she was surprised one Thursday to see Homais in the Golden Lion kitchen (Leon's place). Homais stayed so long that Leon regretted his invitation. Emma was furious. When at last he managed to get rid of the pharmacist and rushed to the hotel, Emma was not there, she had left in exasperation. She detested him.

This disappointment soon gave way to a renewed hope and Emma would return to Leon more impassioned and avid. She would undress savagely. There was something wild, strange and tragic about her which he did not dare to question. What had once charmed him now frightened him a little. He resented Emma for this permanent victory over him, even tried not to want her. Yet he could not resist her.

Nonetheless she was not happy, had never been happy. She constantly felt the instantaneous decay of the things she relied on. Nothing was looking good; everything was lie. Each smile, his yawn of boredom, each joy a curse, each pleasure its aftermath of disgust etc. She lived, only for her passions, no more concerned about money than an archduchess.

One day a man came to Emma saying he had been sent by a certain Monsieur Vincart of Rouen. He had brought a note for seven hundred francs signed by her which, despite all her protests, Lheureux had endorsed over to Vincart. She did not have any money. The next afternoon she received a summons. The stamped paper so frightened her that she quickly ran to the dry goods merchant. Lheureux told her that there will be a court judgement and then a seizure.

Indeed Emma's debts amounted to very high sums. On being pressed Madame Bovary Senior replied that she had nothing more to give them. Then Emma sent off bills to two or three patients and soon had frequent recourse to this method which worked well for her. To make money she began selling household things. Poor Charles made no comments because the least was enough to set her flying into a rage.

Her festive days were those when she met Leon. She wanted them to be splendid, and freely paid the difference making Leon pawn even her wedding gifts if necessary. Leon found the whole thing strange and displeasing. As a matter of fact someone had sent his mother a long anonymous letter warning her that he "was ruining himself with a married woman". The good lady wrote to Leon's employer who dealt with the matter splendidly.

Leon finally swore not to see Emma again. Emma was as sated with him as he was tired of her. She was finding in adultery all the banalities of marriage. Though she felt humiliated by the base quality of such happiness, she clung it out of habit or depravity. She was now living in a state of chronic and complete wretchedness. She wished she were dead, or continually asleep.

The day of Mid-Lent she did not return to Yonville, but went to a masked ball in the evening. She danced all night to the wild sound of the trombones. Her company consisted of a clerk, two medical students, a shop assistant and women from the dregs of society. She was frightened and fainted.

On reaching home, Emma got the shocking news that her furniture and effects were to be seized in twenty four hours. She found no comfort at Lheureux'x hands. He was callously unhelpful.

Critical Comments

Nemesis has started functioning in Emma's life. Her lover is bored with her. Her

furniture etc. is to be seized. She is being punished both for her adultery and undue passion for money. Sadly and inevitably, poor Charles and little Berthe too are made victims.

3.2.7 summary of Chapter VIII

Emma appeared stoical the next day when the bailiff came with two witnesses to draw up the inventory for the seizure. All the while she had sent her maid Felicite to be on the lookout for Bovary to keep him away. She tried in vain to get money from someone. At two 6'clock she ran to Leon. She asked him for eight thousand francs and suggested he would find it in his office. A criminal boldness was in her flaming eyes and her eyelids narrowed with voluptuous suggestiveness; so much that the young man agreed to oblige. He wondered if she suspected his lie.

Emma felt herself lost she arrived home numbed, disconsolate, almost asleep. The next morning she was awakened by a noise of voices in the square. The maid brought a yellow piece of paper she had just torn from the door. Emma read at a glance that all her household furnishings were to be sold. Following the maid's advice she went to see the notary, Matire Guillaumin. He knew of her predicament even before she started to relate it. Because he was secretly in league with the dry-goods merchant, he decided to exploit her distress by trying to misbehave with her. And she went out remaking that she was not for sale.

She had tried everything. She decided to confess to Charles. Yet she did not want him to know. She approached Binet and two ladies watching them made all sorts of conjectures. She counted on Leon to come with the money. She sent Madame Rollet who came back to report that there was no one in her house and that her husband Charles was crying. In her mad despair, she thought of approaching Rodolphe flashed in her mind. And so she went off towards La Huchette without realizing that she was running to offer herself-the very thing that had outraged her a little while ago at the notary's and quite unaware that she was prostituting herself.

Critical Comments

This chapter shows how people will do any shameful or degrading act when they become desperate. That exactly is Emma's condition. Note how no one is willing to help her. Can you blame them?

3.2.8 Summary of chapter VIII

Emma went to Rodolphe. She tried to use her feminine charms to win him over. He readily responded, even enjoyed her company; but when she spoke about her troubles and asked for a loan of three thousand francs, he calmly refused. Emma worked herself up pouring out all her bitterness and disappointment. Rodolphe kept his cool.

She left crushed, madness seized her. Her troubles loomed before her like an abyss. Then in a transport of heroism that made her almost joyful she came to the pharmacists shop. First she asked Justin for the key for upstairs. When the boy hesitated she told him not to bother. She walked into the hall that led to the door of the laboratory. Hanging on the wall was a key marked "Caphanaum" she went up and he followed her. The key turned in the lock, she went straight to the third shelf, seized the blue jar, pulled out the stopper, plunged her hand in, and pulled it out filled with a white power that she began to stuff into her mouth. Poor Justin hurled himself at her and wanted to call for help. She told him not to say a word, his master would be blamed. Then she went back home, suddenly relieved and almost as serene as if she had done her duty.

When Charles, shocked by the news of the dispossession, came home, Emma had just left. He wept, shouted and fainted. He went off in search of her. By that time she had returned. She sat down at her desk and wrote a letter and sealed it slowly. Then she told Charles solemnly that he would read it the next day and asked to be left alone. She stretched herself on the bed. She was not suffering yet and thought that it was really quite simple to die.

But gradually her troubles began. She was seized by a sudden attack of nausea and felt a glacial chill creep up from her feet to the heart. She began to maon. Convulsions seized her which made her shout out. 'Oh my god, it's horrible". Poor Charles asked her

what she had eaten. She showed him the sealed letter, He opened it and read it aloud. "No one is guilty-' He could only repeat the word 'Poisoned".

Homais was called for. When she told Charles who was crying that she was forced to do it, he asked her if she had not been happy, whether it had been his fault etc. When Emma tried to kiss her child's hand little Bertha struggled, the child was afraid of her mother's big eyes. Charles's collegue Canivet and Doctor Larviere came. Both felt that the case was hopeless. Homais took them out to lunch.

When they entered the bedroom, they found it filled with mournful, solemnity. The priest had come and was giving her Holy Communion. Emma's suffering continued for some more time. At last she was no more.

Critical Comments

This is indeed a powerful scene of suicide. Emma had no other go. Considering her temperament and helplessness, her end was very natural. Do you feel sorry for her? Could she have been saved? Or do you think Charles deserves more sympathy? However this chapter puts an end to the explosive, passionate drama of Madame Emma Bovary in a most tragic manner.

3.2.9 Summary of Chapter IX

There is always a kind of numbness after a person's death, so difficult is it to understand this new state of non existence and to accept the fact that it has occurred. Poor Charles found it hard to control his grief. Homais had to think up a lie to conceal the poisoning for the Rouen Beacon obituary, as well as for the people waiting to hear the news from him. He gave the story of Emma's mistaking arsenic for sugar while making a vanilla cream, and all the people of Yonville hear it.

Charles was inconsolable. The priest had to persuade him to make the arrangement s or the funeral. He insisted on having his wife buried in her wedding dress and be covered with large piece of velvet. Charles's mother arrived at dawn the next day. He became furious when she tried to say something about the funeral. Charles wanted a lock of Emma's hair. Emma was brought in her oak conffins made of mahogany and lead. Old Rouault arrived and fainted away in the square at the sight of the black cloth.

Critical Cmments

This chapter describes a typical funeral scene. Yet it assumes deeper poignancy and pathos when we consider how Emma had all along cheated her husband who in all his doting love and total ignorance of her crimes is beside himself with grief and insists on according her a rich funeral.

3.32.10 Summary of Chapter X

It was Homais who had informed Emma's father of the tragedy, without giving clear details. Rouault fell into Bovary's arm crying, and Charles could only sob, Charles found the funeral services totally unbearable. There was a large crowd of mourners. Homais went from group to group giving vent to his observations. They were all deploring Emma's death.

After the funeral Charles, his mother and Rousalt were at home. The old man wanted to go off to Le Bertaux, as he would not be able to sleep in that house. He even refused to see his grand daughter, and he left. Despite their weariness, Charles and his mother stayed up very late to talk. It was decided that she would come to live in Yonville and take care of the house. She secretly rejoiced at having regained the affection that had eluded her so many years. Charles lay wide awake thinking of his dead wife. Rodolphe and Leon slept peacefully in their homes. There was someone else who was not asleep at this hour. It was Justin. The kneeling boy was crying at her grave. His chest was shaking with sobs beneath the burden of great sorrow that was more tender than the moon and more unfathomable than the night.

The next day Charles sent for his daughter. She asked for Mamma and was told she had gone on a trip and would bring her back some toys. Gradually the child forgot her. Bovary felt sick at heart at the child's cheerfulness.

Money troubles soon started again. Charles signed notes for some exorbitant sums since he was determined not to sell Emma's furniture. His mother was furious

and left the house for good. Then everyone began taking advantage of him. He sent out bills for outstanding accounts. He was shown letters his wife had sent, and so he had to apologise.

Leon's mother sent him a card for her son's marriage. In the congratulatory letter he sent her, "Charles wrote. " How happy my poor wife would have been"!.

One day as he aimlessly climbed upto the attic Charles came across a letter written by Rodolphe. The respectful tone of the letter fooled him. Anyhow he was not the sort of man who went right to the heart of things. He shut his eyes to the evidence and his vague jealousy was lost in the immensity of his sorrow. To please her, as if she were still alive, he adopted her preferences and ideas. Emma was corrupting Charles from beyond the grave.

He was obliged to sell the silverware and much of the furniture. The poor man suffered to see his daughter so badly dressed, her shoes without laces, her smocks torn to the hips for the house keeper paid no attention to her. But little Berthe was a sweet and gentle child. No one came to see them now for Justin had run off to Rouen where he became grocer's assistant and Monsieur Homais did not care to prolong the intimacy considering their different social station.

Homais was growing in ego-consciousness. For the sake of his own reputation he used his wits to imprison enemies like the blind man who dared to speak about the pharmacist's vain attempt to cure him. His action revealed the depth of his cunning, the viciousness of his vanity and his hatred to priests. He was "under mining foundations", he was becoming dangerous. He helped Charles to have a fine tomb erected for Emma and also put a nice inscriptions on it.

It was strange how Bovary was forgetting Emma while thinking continually of her. Despite the frugal way he lived, he was unable to pay off his old debts. Dispossession was imminent. He sought help from his mother. When his mother suggested that she take in the child, he would not part. This time it was a permanent and completed break. Charles was worried about his daughter's poor health.

Across the square, cheerful and flourishing the pharmacist,s family grew. However, a secret ambition was gnawing at Homais: he wanted the cross of the Legion of Honour. He did not lack the proper qualification. Then he cultivated the powers that be.

One day Charles opened the secret compartment of a rosewood desk. All of Leon's letters were there. A more thorough search revealed Rodolphe's portrait in the midst of a jumble of love letters. Charles sobbed violently, screamed, crazed with rage. His depression astounded people. He never went out anymore, even refused to see patients.

Another day when Charles had gone to sell his horse, his last asset, he met Rodolphe. They paled seeing each other. Rodolphe after stammering some excuses had the nerve to invite Charles to drink in a tavern. Watching the face of the man Emma had loved Charles felt he would have liked to be that man. There was an instant when Charles filled with somber fury fixed his eyes on Rodolphe who stopped talking out of fear. Then he told him in a resigned tone of infinite sadness that he did not blame him any more. Fate was to blame, Rodolphe who had manipulated that fate found Charles too easy-going for a man in his situation – rather comic and even a bit contemptible.

The next day Charles sat down on the bench in the arbour. He was choking up like an adolescent in love in the vague flood of emotion that swelled an unhappy heart. His head was thrown back against the wall. His eyes were closed, mouth open and in his hand he held a long strand of black hair. Berthe who had not seen him all afternoon came to fetch him for dinner at seven. Thinking he wanted to play, she pushed him gently. He fell to the ground he was dead.

Thirty six hours later in response to the apothecary's request, Monsieur Canivet performed an autopsy but found nothing. When everything was sold, there was just enough to pay for Mademoiselle Bovary's fare to her grandmother's. The old lady died

that same year. Since old Rouault was now paralysed, an aunt took her in. She is poor and has sent her to working a cotton mill to earn a living.

Since Bovary's death three doctors have succeeded one another in Yonville without being able to establish themselves, so effectively does Monsieur Homais rout them. He has an enormous clientele. The authorities cultivate him and public opinion protects him. He has just received the Legion of Honour.

Critical Comments

This chapter marks the resolution of the novel. Charles's shock at the discovery of his wife's infidelity is so intense that his death which follows comes as no wonder. One feels sorry for little Berthe who is made a victim of her mother's sins.

Read the summary carefully and understand the tragedy of Madame Bovary well. I have already mentioned that Falubert's novel came in for much criticism and there was even a trial. Let us first of all, summarise the main arguments for and against the book and the final verdict.

3.3.1 Summary of "Speech for the Prosecution"

The difficulty is not caused by charge, that is, offences against public morals and religion, but rather by the length of the work, as it is an entire novel. The only course before the prosecutor is to first tell the story of the entire novel, then read out incriminating passages and finally meet the objection that maybe raised against the general principles of this prosecution.

Neither the title 'Madame Bovary' not the substitute provincial morals, reveal the author's intentions. The book begins and ends with the husband, but the most important portrait of the work is certainly that of Madame Bovary. Regarding the story, we find the husband at school extremely dull-witted and shy, so that he works without making progress. He is a model, if not of incompetence at least of ridiculousness to the school. After finishing school he goes to study medicine at Rouen. He manages little by little to achieve the degree only of health officer. Monsieur Bovary's first wife is a forty five year old window, rituous and ugly having an income. She dies beartbroken on knowing that the notary who held the capital of the income had gone off to America.

Monsieur Bovary, a widower, remarries Emma Rouault an only child of farmer Rouault and educated by the Ursuline nuns in Rouen. Bovary is at his wife's feet; he is the happiest of men' the blindest of husband; his only concerns is to anticipate his wife's desires. Here Monsieur Bovary's role becomes dim. Madame Bovary become the principal subject of the book. Madame Bovary did not love her husband or try to love him. At the very beginning there took place what one may call the initiation scene. The invitation to attend the great fete at the chateau de la Vaubyessard had been like an initiation into all the voluptuoyus excitements of the senses. From that moment, her husband, everything that surrounded her, had become intolerable to her.

In an effort to get her out of the boredom that consumed her. Bovary sacrificed his practice and went to settle in Yonville. It is here that the scene of her first downfall takes place. The first person on whom she fixes her attention is not the local notary but the notary's only clerk Leon Dupuis. Anyone but Monsieur Bovary would have become perturbed by the visits of the young clerk, but Monsieur Bovary was so naïve that he believed in his wife's virtue. Leon inexperienced, shared the conviction. He departed. The chance was lost by a second opportunity appeared in the form of Rodolphe.

Rodolphe and Madame Bovary had innumerable trysts. The lovers attained the extreme limits of sensual pleasure. When Rodolphe refused to let her elope with him, she become prostrated, developed brain fever. The illness killed her love but she survived. This was the second scene.

After a short lived religious life she accepted when Leon proposed that they got into a closed cab. Her downfall took place in the cab. Their assignations multiplied as with Rodolphe but eventually she also tired of this second love and it was then that the

scenes of desolation began that formed the last of the novel.

Madame Bovary had lavished presents on Rodolphe and Leon, had lived a life of luxury and in order to meet such expenses had signed many promissory note. She had obtained a power of attorney from her husband enabling her to manage their joint resources. She had found a money-lender who had been sign the notes and these not being paid when they fell due, were renewed in the name of an accomplice. Then had come official notices judgements, bankruptcy, seizure, and finally notice of sale of the furniture belonging to Monsieur Bovary who was unaware of all of it. Reduced to the most cruel extremity, Madame Bovary begged for money from the whole world and obtained it from no one. If she apologized to her husband he would have generously pardoned her and that was a humiliation she could not accept. She poisoned herself. He ordered her to be shrouded in her wedding dress and to be enclosed in a triple coffin.

On opening her desk the husband discovers the letters written by her lovers. Instead of his love dying it is stimulated by these moments. He neglects his practices, lets the last remnants of his patrimony and one day he is found dead. The novel may be called by another title with justice: History of the adulteries of provincial wife:

The prosecutor next quoted passages to support his accusations on two counts-offence against public morals and against religious morals. The former was in the lascivious pictures and the latter was in the mingling of voluptuous images with sacred things.

The author's general colour was a lascivious colour, before, during and after these transgressions. He cites a number of instances like twelve year old Emma confessing her sings etc. Then he quotes from four principal passages: the love affair with Rodolphe, the religious conversion, the affair with Leon and her death. The prosecutor does not much like to find sacred matters treated in a novel, but if they are mentioned, they must at the very least not have been travestied by the language. Is there anything in this adulterous woman who goes communion of the faith of the repentant Magdalen? After being told of the defilements of marriage, we are shown adultery in all of its poetry, its ineffable charm.

The prosecutor objects to Emma receiving the Last Sacrament, when there is not a tear, not a sigh of repentant Magdalen for her sin of disbelief, for her suicide, for her adulteries. He also insists that the sacred words of the holy sacrament ought not to be accompanied by sensual images from the past.

Flaubert cultivates the descriptive style of the realistic school of painting, which he uses to paint all the scenes alluded to in the above mentioned paragraphs:

The three defendants are Flaubert the author of the book, Pichat who accepted it and Pillet who printed it. All the three who have collaborated in the publicity should be equallty penalized. Yet Flaubert being the principle culprit should be most severely treated.

As a general objection the defence may claim that the novel is fundamentally moral since the adulterous woman is punished. The prospecutor's reply is that a moral ending could not pardon the lascivious details that could be found in it. Therefore the book fundamentally was not moral. Lascivious paintings generally had more influence than dispassionate arguments. Such books would therefore corrupt the minds of young girls or even unmarried women by seducing their imagination.

Next the story of Madame Bovary considered from a philosophical view point was not at all moral. Madame Bovary died at an hour of her choosing, in all the glamour of her youth and beauty not because she was an adultress but because she wanted to die. There is none in the book who can condemn that woman so that book is immoral. The book might not be condemned in the name of conjugal honour or public opinion or religious feeling or even in the name of the author's conscience. The only character who rules is Madame Bovary.

In the name of Christian morality that is the foundation of modern civilization, adultery is stigmatized and condemned, not

because it is an impudence that exposes one to disillusionment and to regret, but because it is a crime against the family. We stigmatise and condemn suicide because it is the contempt for one's duty in the life that is ending and the cry of disbelief in the life which is beginning.

Thus Christian morality that is the foundation of modern civilization, adultery is stigmatized and condemned, not because it is an imprudence that exposes one to disillusionment and to regret, but because it is a crime against the family. We stigmatise and condemn suicide because it is the contempt for one's duty in the life that is ending and the cry of disbelief in the life which is beginning.

This Christian morality stigmatizes realistic literature because it paints passions like hatred, vengeance, love etc. without restraint, without bounds. Art without rules is no longer art; it is like a woman who throws off all garments. To impose upon art the single rule in public decency is not to enslave but to honour it.

Comments: You have heard one side of the argument. Obviously, the public prosecutor is a champion of "Art for Morality" sake and condemns "Madame Bovary" on religious and moral grounds. Let us now listen to the speech for the defence that is short.

3. Summary of Speech for the defence

(Made by Monsieur Marie –Antoine Jules Senard)

Monsieur Flaubert was accused of writing an indecent book, and of having committed flagrant offences in his book against public morality and religion. The author swore that he had written an honourable book having a moral and religious intention. The author's father, an old friend of the attorney was a respectable surgeon. A worthy son of a worthy father is not capable of moral outrage.

Monsieur Flaubert was a serious and grave man, of wide knowledge including law. He was a widely traveled person. He belonged to the realist school in the sense that he was interested in the real nature of things. He belonged to the psychological school in the sense that he is prompted not by materialistic side of things but by human feelongs and the unfolding of the passions within their given sphere. What Falubert has desired above all has been to take a theme from real life, to create and embody true middle class prototypes, and to arrive at a useful result. He thus presents to the reader's eye a true picture of what most often happens in the world. The author has tried to give us the story of an education of the dangers to which adultery can lead, the story of degradation, villainy of a suicide seen as the consequences of an early transgression.

The author has painted the education given a woman that is above the station to which she was born and the resulting mixture of incongruous elements it produced in the woman's understanding. He further showed a woman turning to vice from an unsuitable marriage, and from vice to the last stages of degradation and misery. We are shown how in the first case the woman is saved thanks to the ignorance and lack of experience of hers as well as that of the young man while in the second case she becomes involved with a man of world who seduces her. That is the essential, that is the book itself.

With Flaubbert the great failings of society figure on every page; with him adultery moves replete with disgust and shame. From the ordinary relationships of life he drew the most striking lesson that could be given to many young women who in the banality of their household were sometimes tormented by what went on around them. They would surely be made to reflect by a book like this one. With the author adultery was but a succession of torments, regrets, remorse and finally it reached a final expiation that was appalling. The conclusion in favour of morality was to be found in every line of the book. Mothers of families were filled with astonishment after having been so highly impressed that they felt obliged to thank the author.

He then cited some passages from the novel to counter the charges made by the imperial attorney. He showed that the author had done well to warn families of the dangers of emotionalism to young girls attracted by petty practices instead of becoming attached

to a strong and severe religion that would support them in their day of weakness.

Monsieur Flaubert was not only a great artist but also a man of feeling because he did not transform the husband but left him to the end just as he was a good man, common and mediocre, performing his professional duties, faithfully loving his wife. He was a subline man whose death was admirable, who kept up his simplicity and his goodness of heart up to the end.

Flaubert constantly emphasised the superiority of the husband over the wife implying by that fulfillment of duty, while Emma strayed from it. The attorney quoted several passages to defend the book against religious outrage.

In summarizing his argument the defence attorney repeated his question: " Does the reading of such a book give a love of vice or does it inspire a horror of vice?" According to him the book was excellent as whole and irreproachable in its parts. It was not right to condemn a book on a few lines. One had to judge a book by its intention and execution. Flaubert was already too cruelly punished. It was up to the court to pronounce judgement.

Let us now seee what the verdict on the novel was

Summary of Verdict:

Pichat, Flaubert and Pillet were charged with having committed the offences of outrage against public and religious morality: The work deserved strict censure, for the mission of literature must be to enrich and to refresh the spirit by improving the understanding by perfecting the character, far more than to instill a loathing for vice by offering a picture of disorder that may exist in society. The author vigorously denied the charges against him stating that his novel was eminently moral in intent and that he had been concerned principally to expose the dangers deriving from an education inappropriate to one's station in life and that he had shown the woman, The principal character in his novel aspiring to a world and society to which she was not born; unhappy in the modest condition that was her proper sphere, forgetting first her duties as a mother, then neglecting her duties as a wife- successively bring adultery and ruin upon her house and ending wretchedly in suicide after descending to the most complete degradation even to the point of stealing. This fundamental idea, undoubtedly moral in principle, ought to have been complemented by a certain austerity of expression and by a cautions restrain flabertan co-defendently appeared tohave insufficiently appeared tohave insufficiently understood that there were limits that even the most frivolous literature ought not to overstep: Flaubert's work appeared to have been laboured over long and seriously from the view point both of writing and character study. The passages challenged in the indictment were very few in comparison with the extent of the work. It did not appear that the book unlike certain other works, had been written with the sole aim of gratifying the sensual passions or the spirit of licentiousness and debauchery or to ridicule the things that should be surrounded by the respect of all. Flaubert had committed only the fault of some times losing sight of the rules that no self respecting writer ought to break and of forgetting that literature, like art, if it is to achieve the good work that is its mission to produce, must be chaste and pure in its form as in its expression.

In the circumstances, in as much as it had not been sufficiently established that Pichat, Flaubart and Pillet had been found guilty of the offences with which they had been charged, the court acquitted them of the accusation brought against them and dismissed the charges without costs against the defendants.

Read the above study material carefully a number of times. Ask yourself if it is right to ban books. Discuss this matter with your friends. You very well know how several writers are even threatened with imprisonment and killing if they write " immoral" books. Salman Rushdie is a case in point. Do the writers deserve such harsh punishment?

UNIT 4

MADAME BOVARY " A CRITICAL STUDY"

4.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to

(i) Understand various aspects of Gustave Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" and

(ii) Make an overall estimate of the novel and its author.

4.1. Introduction

Before you begin to read this unit it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous unit. If you do so you will be able to form your own impression of the novel, its plot, the characters, the atmosphere and so on. Then, when you read this unit, you will be able to appreciate the several aspects of "Madame Bovary".

Let us study them one by one.

4.2 Plot Outline of "Madame Bovary"

Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" is the story of provincial doctor's wife who attempts to escape from the monotony of her environment by illicit love-affairs which she invests with a false glamour. Emma Blovary's ill-starred pursuit of tawdry romantic dreams shapes Flaubert's great novel. Set amid the stifling atmosphere of nineteenth century bourgeois France, "Madame Bovary" is at once an unsparing depicting of woman's gradual corruption and savagely ironic study of human's gradual corruption and savagely ironic study of human shallowness and stupidity. The drab stupidity of life in the little Normandy town cannot be overcome by such moral or material resources as Emma possesses and she resorts to every expedient until she commits suicide in circumstances which are described in repulsive detail.

Let us turn to characterization now

4.3.1 Emma Bovary

Emma Bovary is the titular heroine of Flaubert's classic " Madame Bovery". " She is a very ordinary, middle class woman with banal expectations of life and an urge to dominate her surroundings," observes Mary MacCarthy. She is the sort of person who never finds fulfillment in life, is never contented and eternally indulges in voluptuous dreams and unrealizable desires. As a child she is happy neither in the home of her farmer-father not in the convent. Both are happy when she leaves; the nuns when she gives up her religious aspirations and her father when she marries Charles Bovary. While any other woman would have been very happy to be the much adored wife of a provincial doctor Emma is totally frustrated. Being educated above her station she tends to look down upon her husband, a totally unambitious simpleton and curses her fate.

As a mother Emma is equally uncaring and indifferent. She even feels that her little child is ugly. She has no time for her. In fact the girl, is forced to bear the cross for the mother's actions at the end of the novel; the girl has to work for her living. As Mary McCarthy remarks: " Her character is remarkable only for an unusual deficiency of natural feeling". Indeed, she is the sort who does not know which side of her bread is buttered.

Emma's constant quest is for a love that will live up to her solitary dream. She is disappointed in both her lovers and in "love" itself. Radolphe is wedded to a stock idea of himself as sensual brute that prevents him from noticing that he actually cares for Emma. He has readymade disillusionment. Since he knows that "eternal love" is a cliché he is prepared to break with Emma as a matter of course. But Emma's dejection and depression following his rejection reach gigantic heights. As for her other lover, Leon, he is very cowardly that he deceives himself in the opposite way from Radolphe: Radolphe feels something and convinces himself that it is nothing, whereas Leon feels nothing and dare not know it. Even his sensuality is timid and short lived. Unfortunately, Emma does not see the difference. Her principal emotions are jealousy and possessiveness, which represent the strong, almost angry movement of her will.

In spite of her education, reading religious training and so on, Emma is trile, what happens to her is trite. Her end is inevitable, but not a classic doom which is perceived as inexorable only when it is complete. In her case the end is unavoidable because it is ordinary. Anyone could have prophesied what would become of Emma. It did not need a Trieasias.

Emma and Homais

Both Emma and Monsieur Homais, the chemist, regard themselves as confined to a sphere too small for their endowments hers in sensibility, his in sense. Emma takes flight from the country where the chateau is, into the town; Monsieur Homais's solution is to inflate the village he lives in by his own self importance and by judicious publicity. Emma feels that she has nothing in common with the grotesque pockmarked druggist in his velvet cap; he was the antithesis of refinement. But Monsieur Homaris is attracted to her and senses a kindred spirit. Emma's boredom and her recklessness distinguish her from Homais who is a coward and who create boredom around him without suffering it himself. Yet Emma is tiresome too, at least to her lovers, and she is never more conventional and tedious than when she is decrying convention.

Charles Bovary

He is represented as stupid and dull witted, a peasant as she calls him, almost a devoted animal, clumsy, a dupe. He has no imagination, Emma thinks, no "Soul". For instance when they find the green silk cigar case that must belong to the viscount on the way from the ball at Vaubyessard Charles's only reaction is to note that it contains two smokable cigars! Yet this provincial, this philistine is the only real romantic in the novel. He and the boy Justin, despised and rejected, are capable of "eternal love". Justin lets Emma have her death (arsenic) because he cannot refuse her, just as Charles lets her have her every desire: Charles is a provider, and he has a true man's solicitude for the weaker creature. He sheds tears when he sees Emma eat her first bread and jam after her brain fever. This heavy maladroit man is a person of the utmost delicacy of feeling. If he is easy to deceive, it is because his mind is pure. It never enters his end that Emma can be anything but good.

For Charles, marriage with Emma is a sacrament. The simpleton considers himself as the happiest luckiest person on earth to possess such a fine wife. For him, she is a mystery from start to finish. Thus he is not only Emma's Dupe, but also the dupe of commerce. He responds to her beauty with worship, which is what beauty – a mystery – deserves. "This explains why Charles though not deceived by Emma's character is not a fool; he has recognized something in her about which he cannot be deceived" (Mary McCarthy)

Like his father-in-law Father Rouault, Charles is dumbly rooted in the organic world where things speak in simple sing language. He is simple and uses languages in plainest terms. Typically he is docile: it does not occur to him to rebel. His mother, his teacher, his school mates and then the widow make a citizen of him. They equip him with profession for which he is not fitted. The only thing in life he chooses is Emma. She is his first and last piece of self expression.

"Without Charles Emma would be the moral void that her fatuous conversation and actions disclose. Charles, in a novelist's sense, is her redeemer. To her husband she is sacred, and this profound and simple emotion is contagious" (Mary MacCarthy) Indeed, it is the books' final profound irony that only Charles, Emma's oxlike eternally deceived husband, emerges with a measure of human grace through his stubborn and selfless love.

Besides excellent characterization, Madame Bovary is a novel which deals with the diffusion of ideas through mass culture or books. Let us discuss those aspects.

4.4 "Madame Bovary" and Mass Culture

"Madame Bovary" is often called the first modern novel, and this is true not because of any technical innovation Flaubert made but because it is the first novel to deal with what is now called mass culture". (Mary McCarthy). The diffusion of ideas in the innocent country side is the plot of "Madame Bovary". Emma did not have television and her maid did not read comic books in the

kitchen but the phenomenon was rampant in every Yonville L'Abbaye, and Flaubert was the first to note it.

Mass culture in this novel means the circulating library and the Rouen Beacon (a paper). In Emma's times, mass-produced culture had not yet reached the masses, it was still a bourgeois affair and mixed up, ironically, with a notion of taste and discrimination – a notion that persists in advertising. Words, ideas and sentiments like wall paper, have become a kind of money too, which allows them to be exchanged. It is their use as coins that has made ideas trite. The banalities exchanged between Leon and Emma at their first meeting, for instance, are simply coins . The same with Rodolphe and Emma or for that matter with nearly the whole cast of characters. A meeting between strangers in "Madame Bovary" inevitably produces a golden shower of platitudes which is as mechanical as the droning action a lathe. It appears to be beyond control: no one is responsible and no one can stop it.

The lending library is a central metaphor of "Madame Bovary" because it is the inexhaustible source of borrowed ideas and stock sentiments that circulate tritely among the population. For Flaubert, all ideas become trite as soon as somebody expresses them. This applies indifferently to good ideas and bad. For him the lending library is an image of civilization itself. Ideas and feelings will get more and more soiled and grubby like library books as they pass from hand to hand. The pursuit of originality is as pathetic as Emma's decorating efforts. Similarly, with the quality of sincerity. From his own point of view, this renders the author's efforts in his study as unavailing as Emma's quest for a love that will live up to her solitary dreams. Words, like lovers, have the power of lying, and they also like lovers, have a habit of repeating themselves since language is finite. Involuntary repetition is a bahality. Yet "Madame Bovary" is not a nihilistic satire or howl of despair emanating from the novelist's study.

Just as Cervantes expresses the dangers of obsession with ideas of chivalry and knight errantry in his classic "Don Quixte" through the person of the titulor hero, Flabert celebrates the pernicious influence of mass culture on average minds and the dangers of an education above one's station in life. That is the tragedy of Emma's life.

Let us now attempt a critical summary of the novel.

4.5 Critical Summary of "Madame Bovary"

Critique: Flaubert's genius lay in his infinite capacity for taking pains, and "Madame Bovary" so true in its characterisations, so vivid in its setting, so convincing in its plot, is ample testimony to the realism of his work. The novel was one of the first of its type to come out of France and its truth shocked contemporary readers. Condemned on the one hand for picturing the life of a romantic adulteress, he was acclaimed on the other for the honesty and skill with which he handled his subject. Flaubert does not permit Emma Bovary to escape the tragedy which she brings upon herself. Emma finds diversion from the monotony of her life, but she finds it at the loss of her own self respect. The truth of Emma's struggle is universal and challenging.

The Story

The Charles Bovary was a student of medicine who married for his own advancement a woman much older than himself. She made his life miserable with her nagging and groundless suspicions. One day Charles was called to the beside of M.Rouault, who had a broken leg, and there he met the farmer's daughter, Emma, a beautiful but restless girl, who early education in a French convent had given her an overwhelming thirst for broader experience. Charles found his patient an excellent excuse to see Emma whose charm and grace had captivated the young doctor. But his whining wife, Heloise soon began to suspect the true reason for his visits to the Rouault farm. She heard rumors that in spite of Emma's peasant background, the girl conducted herself like a lady. Angry and tearful, Heloise made Charles swear that he would not visit the Rauault home again. Then Heloise's fortune was found to be nonexistent. There was a violent quarrel over her deception and stormy scene between her and the parents of Charles brought on an

attack of an old illness. Heloise died quickly and quietly.

Charles felt quilty because he had so few regrets at his wife's death. At old Rouault's invitation, he went once more to the farm and again fell under the influence of Emma's charms. As old Rouault watched Charles fall more deeply in love with his daughter, he decided that the young, doctor was dependable and perfectly respectable, and so he forced the young man's hand, told Charles he could have Emma in marriage, and gave the couple his blessing.

During the first weeks of marriage Emma occupied herself with changing their new home and busied herself with every household task she could think of. Emma realized that even though she thought she was in love with Charles, the rapture that should have come with marriage had not arrived. All the romantic books she had read during her early years had led her to expect more from marriage than she received, and the dead calm of her feeling was bitter disappointment. The intimacy of marriage disgusted her. Instead of a perfumed, handsome lover in velvet and lace, she found herself tied to a dull-witted husband who reeked of drugs and medicines.

As she was about to give up all hopes of finding joy in her new life, a noble patient whom Charles had treated, invited them to a ball at his chateau. At the ball Emma danced with a dozen partners, tasted champagne, and received compliments on her beauty. The contrast between the life of the Bovarys and that of the noble man was painfully evident. Emma became more and more discontented with Charles. His futile and clumsy efforts to please her only made her despair at his lack of understanding. She sat by her window, dreamed of Paris, moped and became ill.

Hoping a change would improve her condition, Charles took Emma to Yonville where he set up a new practice and Emma prepared for the birth of a child. When her daughter was born, Emma's chief interest in the child was sent for a wet nurse, where Emma visited her, and where accidentally she met Leon Dupuis a law clerk bored with the town and seeking diversion. Charmed with the youthful mother, he walked home with her in the twilight and Emma found him sympathetic to her romantic ideas about life. Later Leon visited the Bovarys in company with Homais, the town chemist, Homais held little soirees at the local inn, to which he invited the townfolk. There Emma's acquaintance with Leon ripened. The townspeople gossiped about the couple but Charles Bovary was not acute enough to sense the interest Emma took in Leon.

Bored with Yonville and tired of loving in vain, Leon went to Paris to complete his studies: Broken-hearted Emma deplored her weakness in not giving herself to Leon, fretted in her boredom, and once more made herself ill. She had not time to become as melancholy as she was before, however, for a stranger, Rodolphe Boulager came to town. One day he brought his farm tenant to Charles for blood letting. Rodolphe, an accomplished lover saw in Emma, realized that if she gave herself to him her surrender would be immoral. But she rationalized her doubts by convincing herself that nothing as romantic and beautiful as love could be sinful.

Deceiving Charles, Emma met Rodolphe, rode over the country side with him, listened to his urgent avowals of love, and finally succumbed to his persuasive appeals. At first she felt guilty, but later she identified herself with adulterous heroines of fiction and believed that, like them, she had known true romance. Sure of Emma's love, Rodolphe no longer found it necessary to continue his gentle lover's tricks. He no longer bothered to maintain punctuality in his meetings with Emma, and though he continued to see her, she began to suspect that his passion was dwindling.

Meanwhile, Charles became involved in Homais's attempt to cure a boy of a clubfoort with a machine Charles had designed. Both Homais and Charles were convinced that the success of their operation would raise their future standing in the community. But after weeks of torment, the boy contracted gangrene, and his leg had to be amputated. Homais's reputation was undamaged, for he was by profession a chemist, but Bovary, a doctor, was looked upon with suspicion. His practice began to fall away.

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Disgusted with Charles' failure. Emma in an attempt to hold Rodolphe, scorned her past virtue, spent money recklessly on jewellery and clothes, and involved her husband deeply in debt but on the very eve of what was to be her escape she received from him a letter so hypocritically repentant of their sin that she read it with sneers. Then, in horror over the realization that she had lost him, she almost threw herself from the window. She was saved when Charles called to her. But she became gravely ill with brain fever, and lay near death for several months.

Her convalescence was slow, but she was finally well enough to go to Rouen to the theatre. The tender love scenes behind the footlights made Emma breathless with envy. Once more she dreamed of romance in Rouen: she met Leon Dupuis again. This time Leon was determined to possess Emma. He listened to her complaints with sympathy, soothed her; and took her driving. Emma, whose thirst for romance still consumed her, yielded herself to Leon with regret that she had not done so before.

Charles Bovary grew concerned over his increasing debts. In addition to this own financial worries his father died leaving his mother in ignorance about the family estate. Emma used the excuse of procuring a lawyer for her mother-in-law to visit Leon in Rouen where he had set up a practice. At his suggestion she secured a power of attorney, from Charles; a document which left her free to spend his money without his knowledge of her purchases.

Finally in despair over his debts, the extent of which Emma only partly revealed. Charles took his mother into his confidence and promised to destroy Emma's power of attorney. Deprived of her hold over Charles's finance and unable to repay her debts Emma threw herself upon Leon's mercy with all disregard of caution. Her corruption was so complete that she had to seek release and pleasure or go out of her mind.

In her growing degradation, Emma began to realize that she had brought her lover down with her. She no longer respected him, and she scorned his faithfulness when he was unable to give her money she needed to pay her bills. When her name was posted publicly for a debt of several thousand francs, the bailiff prepared to sell Charles's property to settle her creditor's claims. Charles was out of town when the debt was posted; Emma in one final act of self abasement appealed to Rodolphe for help. He too, refused to lend her money.

Knowing that the frame work of lies with which she had deceived Charles was about to collapse, Emma Bovary resolved to die, a heroine's death, and swallowed arsenic procured from Homais's shop. Her husband, arriving too late from his trip was unable to save her from a slow, painful death.

Charles, pitiful in his grief could barely endure the sounds of the hammer as her coffin was nailed shut. Later feeling that his pain over Emma's death had grown less, he opened her desk to find there the carefully collected lover letters of Leon and Rodolphe. Broken with the knowledge of his wife's infidelity-scourged debt, and helpless in his disillusionment Charles died soon after his wife, leaving a legacy of only twelve francs for the support of his orphaned daughter. The Bovary tragedy was complete.

Let us now attempt an overall estimate of Flaubert and his classic.

4.6 An Overall Estimate of Flaubert and "Madame Bovary"

Gustave Flaubert was a fastidious conscious artist. His aim in art to create beauty and this consideration often overrode moral and social issues in his depiction of truth. He worked slowly and carefully, and as he worked the idea of his art became gradually more exact. His ambition was to achieve a style "as rhythmical as verse and precise and the language of science". In his view "the faster the work sticks to the thought, the more beautiful is the effect". He often repeated that there was no such thing as synonym, and that a writer had to tract down "the unique right word". All this explains the uniqueness and excellence of Flaubert's style. Another author with whom we may compare Flaubert on this score is Somerset Maugham. Their prose style is chaste, refined and characterized by exactitude and accuracy in the choice of words.

Flaubert was a keen observer of human nature as well as the workings of the psyche. This borne out by his fine portrayal of Emma Bovary. There are several critics who see a strong resemblance between Emma and the author. Theoretically Flaubert sought objectivity in all his writings above all else. "The author in his work must be like God in the Universe, present everywhere, and visible no where". It is paradoxical therefore that his personality should be so clearly discernible in all his work. He was similar to T.S.Eliot, who too believed in the impersonal theory of art and literature. In all probability he had projected his dreams, aspirations, sentiments of art and love etc. through the character of Emma, but Emma is a character who can stand on her own as well.

Flaubert is a bold writer who embraced an outspoken manner of expression. The trial of his novel is an evidence for this aspect. While the strict moralists and dogmatic readers would criticize him for polluting sensitive readers with immoral and irreligious ideas and emotions, the defender of Art for Arts sake would in all admiration approve of his masterpiece. Flaubert has only presented what he observed in life, and that too in an effective style. Being an advocate of Naturalism, he is concerned only with the depiction of truth with substantial accuracy. Even a harshest critic cannot deny him credit for that. And therein lies the true merit of "Madame Bovary".

Please read the study material given in the four Units a number of times and make sure that you have understood the novel and its various aspects. Note down any idea, impression or opinion that suggests itself to you.

You may next try to prepare you own essays. Please remember: The study material can be utilized properly to write essays; but do not mistake them for prepared essays.

4.7 Questions Based on Flaubert's "Madame Bovary"

1. The Character of Emma Bovary.

[Hints: her background-education above her station – her failure as wife and mother – reasons – her eternal, futile quest for true love – her disappointments – resons – her moral code unconventional and decrying everything traditional and conventional – her death and Nemesis – your impressions]

2. The character of Charles Bovary

[Hints: his background – influence of his mother – his marriages – devotion to Emma- totally unambitious and uncomplaining – fully contended – unsuspecting and easily duped- examples – his purity of mind – only graceful character – pathetic simpleton]

3. "Madame Bovary" and mass culture

[Hints; Education abover her station, cause for Emma's frustration – new ideas of modernism and urban culture spread by circulating library – attraction and dangers – the characters swayed by mass culture: (i) Leon: goes to Paris, what happens to him; (ii) Homais, new ideas of medicine, operations etc. How he attains Legion of Honor (iii) Emma, the worst victim of mass culture – her affairs, adultery, extravagance and suicide – Charles Bovary, only character unaffected by mass culture.]

4. Should Madame Bovary be banned?

[Hints: Refer trial – charges leveled against the novel –defence-verdict-novel strongly condemned by dogmatic moralists – approved by champions of Art for art's same the novel, a true product of the school of Naturalism – truth depicted accurately and objectively as a work of art blameless-mirror of society of 19th century France-need not be banned.

Read the study material and prepare the above essays. You may prepare essays on related topics too.

You may also prepare "objective type questions" and "viva voce type' questions. A few samples are given below.

4.8 Objective/Viva Voce type questions

1. What is a subtitle? (A secondary title)
2. What is the subtitle of Flaubert's Madame Bovary suggested by the public prosecutor? (A History of the Adulteries of a Provincial Wife)
3. Title attained by Monsieur Homais: (Legion of Honour)
4. The boy whose clubfoot Charles Bovary tried to cure (Hippolytle)
5. The poison that caused Emma Bovery's death: (Arsenic)

you may prepare several such question on you own)

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UNIT III

EMILE ZOLA : AN INTRODUCTION

1.0 Objectives:

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

(i) understand about the life and personality of Emile Zola: and

(ii) become familiar with "Naturalism" and "Realism".

1.1. Introduction

Please read up Unit one: Gustave Flaubert " An introduction" and refresh your knowledge of the French novel in the nineteenth century. Emile Zola, like Flaubert, was a French novelist of that age. You can understand and appreciate Zola's life and personality and place him in the right perspective only if you connect him with his times.

Let us begin this Unit with a brief biographical sketch of Zola, the founder of the Naturalist movement.

1.2 Life and works of Emile Zola

Emile Zola occupies a special place in the history of the novel as the founder of the Naturalist movement. Until the mid-19th century. French novelists had paid little attention to the actual physical details of man and his environment, concentrating instead on the creation of emotionalized, romanticized fictional worlds, Sweeping social changes in the 19th century, particularly those associated with the industrial Revolution, led to a different approach novelists set out to give an accurate picture of life in all its details, an approach that came to be known as Realism. Zola carried the development to its conclusion. Underlying his objective documentary descriptions was a scientific philosophy intended to offer a new and complete explanation of life and human behaviour in purely material terms. The result was called naturalism.

Early Life

Emile-Edouard-Charles-antoine Zola was born in Paris on April 2, 1840. Naturalised as a Frecnch citizen in 1862, he was the only child of an Italian father and French mother, Francesco Zola and Emile Augbert. His father was of a Venetial family of churchmen and solders served in the Italian artillery and hoped to become an officer in the engineers, but after the fall of Napoleon I, he soon found the oppressiveness of the Austian regime intolerable. He let his native country and settled in France where he went into practice as a civil engineer. The family moved there in 1842. Five years later he died suddenly.

Francesco Zola left his dependents in straitened (in poverty) circumstances. His wife Emile returned to Paris in 1857 in order to supervise her interests in the canal which he had been entrusted to build. Her son joined her the following year. He finished his education at the Lycee Saint-Louis where like some other distinguished writers he failed d his examination in 1859.

Zola spent the next two years in a vain search for employment. The stories of the future novelist remaining all day in bed wrapped in an eiderdown or a blanket because he had pawned his trousers, or living on sparrows caught outside his attic window have no doubt been exaggerated, but these two years had been a period of real hardship. They also provided him with first hand knowledge of how the poor lived, which was to be of great value to him as a novelist. He eventually secured a clerical post in a shipping firm and he loathed it. (You must have heard how George Benard Shaw suffered from a similar predicament) His fortunes took a turn for the better in March 1862 when he moved to the sales department of the publishing house of Hachette.

Zola, like many other novelists, began by trying his hand at poetry. He wrote two epics on the evolution of man and of love, that clearly foreshadowed the form taken by the novels. He showed the second epic to Hachette, who refused to publish it, told him that there was a better market for short stories than for poetry, and doubled his wages. Zola took his advice. His first book published in 1864 was a collection of short stories called "Contes a Ninon", It was followed in 1865 by a grimly sordid autobiographical novel "La Confession de Claude" which attracted the attention of the police. There were no proceedings but Hachette is said to have offered Zola the choice of giving up literature or resigning, Zola had already begun to supplement his wages by freelance journalism, so in January 1866 he left the firm.

On May 31, 1870 Zola married Garbrielle Eleonore Alexandrine Meley. As he had two women, wife and mother, dependent on him, he was exempt from military service in the Franco-Prussian War and spent the war years outside Paris. He had already started writing novels. In 1870 he virtually completed the first two novels of an ambitious project; Rougan Macquart cycle consisted of 20 novels.

These novels sold well without being sensational; but the appearance of "Drunkar" (Eng.trans) a study of alcoholism put the novelist in best seller class. He became the best known writer in France. From this time onward his success was assured. (We shall study about Zola as a novelist more elaborately in a later Unit)

Controversial Figure: Throughout his career zola had been a controversial figure. He had been an ardent admirer and supporter of the young impressionistic painters, who were treated with hostility by the general public. In 1867, he published a biographical and critical study of the artist Edouard Manet in which he tried to reconcile the public by claiming that the life of the contemporary artist was that of a "Peaceful bourgeois who paints pictures in his studio as other people sell pepper behind their counters". His relations with another painter Paul Cezanne, a boyhood friend, were less happy. The friendship came to a sudden end in 1886 because the painter was convinced, not altogether rightly, that Claude Lanter the tragic hero of L'Oeuvre (Eng: trans: The Masterpiece) was a caricature of himself.

Zola did his best to keep his literary controversies going, partly because he realized, with his flair for publicity, that it was an excellent way of promoting the sales of his books. As a young man he had used literary journalism as a means of propagating his theory of naturalism. His work was constantly denounced by the conservative public as pornography. There was a more serious attack in 1887. The publication of "La Terre" (Eng.trans.Earth) one of his most grim and outspoken novels was the occasion of that onslaught (attack) by five writers of the younger generation in a journal.

The year 1888 was marked by an upheaval of a different kind when Zola formed his liaison with Janne Rozerot, who was thirty years his junior. One of his great sorrows had been his wife's childlessness. His mistress bore him a daughter in 1889 and a son in 1891. Zola's wife was at first stricken, but in time accepted the position and after her husband's death, recognized the children legally. Although the liaison brought lasting happiness to the man, it was the end of the novelist whose work began to show a pronounced loss of drive

The Dreyfus Affair: Zola's intervention in the Dreyfus affair that a Jewish French army officer whose trial for treason began a 12 year controversy, that deeply marked the political and social history of the period is the most celebrated episode of his career. At an early stage in the proceedings he had decided rightly that Dreyfus was innocent. On January 13 1898, he published a fierce denunciation of the French general staff in the newspaper L'Aurore. He was prosecuted for libel and found guilty. He appealed and his conviction was quashed by the court, on April 2. There was a retrial at Versailles on July 18, but Zola did not wait for the verdict. On the advice of counsel and friends, he fled to England. He spent 11 months there writing novels and being looked after by Henry Vizetally, who in 1889 had been imprisoned for translating Zola's novels into

English. He returned to France the following June when he heard that the Dreyfus case was to be reopened with a possible reversal of the original verdict.

Death: On September 28, 1902 the Zolas returned to Paris from their villa at Medan on the Seine where they always spent the summer months. That night a fire was lighted in their bedroom where they slept with the windows closed. Owing to a defective flue or failure to sweep the chimney, they were overcome during the night by carbon monoxide fumes. (The suggestions has been made that the "accident" might have been engineered by some of the novelist's political enemies, but the case must be regarded as unproved) Zola was dead by the time help arrived, but his widow recovered after a few days. He was given a public funeral. And his remains are preserved in the Pantheon, the vast lay mausoleum reserved for France's great men. His reputation as a pornographic writer prevented him from becoming a member of the Academie Francaise, for which he stood unsuccessfully on no fewer than 19 occasions.

Read the study material carefully and become familiar with the life and character of Emile Zola. We shall study about his classic "Nana" in the following units.

Unit 2

NANA

A SUMMARY OF PART I

1.0 Objectives:

At the end of this Unit you should be able to

(i) have a general idea of the plot of Zola's *Nana* Part 1 and

(ii) form your own initial impressions of Nana the person as well as the product of the French society of the nineteenth century.

2.1 Introduction

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation, something of the original flavour and flair is bound to be lost. A chapter wise summary of this sort is twice removed the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about characters, atmosphere and so on. But if you can lay hands on a good translation, do read it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Zola's masterpiece.

However, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first part of the novel.

2.2 Summary of Chapter One

It was nine O'clock at night and the Variety Theatre was still almost empty. The first night performance of a new piece called The Blonde Venus was to be put up that night. One by one the important characters of the play started turning up. M.Fauchery, a tall fellow with slight black moustache and his cousin, M Hector de la Flaoise a young man who had completed his education in Paris, were the earliest to arrive. The manager of the theatre Bodenave, the exhibitor of women preferred to call the place 'My Brothel' openly. The main attraction of that night's performance was that Nana was going to make her maiden appearance. To La Faloise's difficult enquiries, the manager bluntly said that Nana could neither sing or act.

A little later Mignon, a tall stout fellow and the banker Steiner, a short man came together Mignon's wife Rose appeared. Lucy Stwart, a little ugly women who was about forty joined the group. Mignon pointed out to Daguenet, a journalist whom he referred to as 'Nana's sweet heart'. By now the name Nana started falling familiarly from the lips of everyone. A fever of curiosity took possession of one and all there; La Faloise was strangely affected by Gaga a beauty of yester years. He further identified Count Muffatde Beuville, the count's wife and her father Marquis de Chouard.

At last the curtain rose for the first act of the 'The Blonde Venus'. A slight tremor took

possession of the audience on the appearance of Rose Mignonas Diana. The part of Vulcan, the god of cuckolds was played by Fontan, a comic actor gifted with real talent. But it was evident that the entire audience was waiting impatiently and excitedly for Nana to appear.

And Nana did appear. Nana very tall and very plump for her eighteen years. In the white tunic of a goddess and with her beautiful golden hair floating over her shoulders, walked towards the footlights with calm self possession, smiling at the crowd before her. It became clear at once that she coı !d neither sing nor act. But a voice was suddenly heard.

'She is stunning'.

The whole house looked to see who had uttered these words. It was the Cherub, the youngster fresh from college, his childish face all aglow with admiration of Nana. Soon the crowd agreed with his view. Nana smiled disarmingly, wriggled her body about, jerked her hips in a most provocative mann : etc. So that she soon had the whole house applauding her in a most deafening manner.

The reactions and response were mixed. One phrase was constantly heard: " It is simply idiotic". Nana was the chief topic of conversation. Donguenet observed that he had perhaps seen her at old Tricons. Steiner said he knew her: Mignon was morally offended that the public should welcome such a filthy wench.

Soon the second act of the play was put up. In no time Nana managed to make the audience fairly intoxicated with her full employment of the power of woman. In the course of that night, Facuchery familiarised his cousin with Satin, a wretched street walker. The youngster fresh from college (who had earlier remarked that Nana was stunning) asked Dauguenet if he knew Nana's address. The journalist felt like slapping his face: Clearly the lad was overwhelmed with an intoxicating fascination for Nana.

Little by little, Nana had gained possession of the audience and now every man succumbed to her. The lust she inspired, similar to an animal in heat, had grown more an more till it filled the house. Now her slightest movements fanned the desire. In spite of the suffocating heat she remained victorious with her marble flesh; her sex alone strong enough to conquer those fifteen hundred persons and remain scatheless.

The play ended and the curtain fell. The cry 'Nana! Nana!' reechoed again and again. The manager was obviously intoxicated with success. La Faloise remarked that his piece would run for two hundred nights as least. All Paris would visit his theatre. But the manager, boiling with rage at the thick crowd of men still inflamed with their passionate longing for Nana, violently exclaimed.

"Say my brothel, can't you? You pig-headed animal!".

2.2 Critical Comments on Chapter One

The first chapter of the novel 'Nana' is traditionally in the form of an introduction corresponding to Exposition in drama. We are introduced to some of the key figures who are to appear several times in the story. The debut (first appearance) of Nana is dramatically executed. Her ability to use the power of woman to hold men in tyrannical sway is broadly and glaringly shown. Zola prepares us to watch the way Nana is to use her seductive charm over weak, erring mortals in the subsequent chapters.

Let us move on to the second chapter.

2.3. Summary of Chapter Two

The next morning at ten 'clock, Nana was still sleeping. She occupied the second story of a large new house. A rich merchant from Moscow, who had come to spend a winter in Paris and installed her there. The rooms had never been completely furnished; but had a gaudy luxury about them. Everything betokened (indicated) the damsel abandoned too quickly by her first genuine protector and fallen back into the clutches of unscrupulous lovers. A most difficult debut (first appearances) at Variety Theatre marred and trammelled with a loss of credit and threat of eviction.

From the conversation that ensued (followed) between Nana and her maid Zoe, it became clear that Nana had a couple of paying gentleman, who the two called "old

miser" and "blackmoor". Each as given a certain day and care was taken to see that the visitors did not meet. Nana was discussing her worries and problems with Zoe. There were financial worries and fears of being thrown out. But Nana's greatest worry was her little Louis, a child she had given birth to when she was only sixteen years old, and whom she had placed out to nurse in a village. The nurse demanded three hundred francs owing to her before she would give up Louis. Nana's maternal love had been aroused ever since her last visit to the child. Her ardent wish was to pay off the nurse, and place the child with her aunt Madame Lerat, so that she could see him whenever she wished. The problem was how to realize the money for that.

As though like an answer to her problem a certain Madame Tricon appeared there. The lady was known for her ignoble dealings with girls and women down in their luck. Usually Nana preferred to ignore her. But today she accepted an offers of selling herself at three o'clock. She needed money desperately.

Around noon, Madame Lerat arrived. From the conversation and behaviour of the lady, it was clear that secretly she approved of Nana's business, though she pretended to be moral and proper: She found out from Nana that the father of her child Louis was a gentleman. She promised Nana to take some nice rooms for her, besides which she would allow her one hundred Francs a month. The aunt was extremely delighted and impressed upon her niece that she should squeeze the men while she had the chance.

By then, lunch was ready; the two went to the dining room. They found an elderly lady already seated there. She was Madame Maloir a mysterious woman who acted as Nana's old lady friend. The two old ladies settled down to play cards. While Nana most reluctantly went out to keep her appointment. A large number of visitors poured in one after another and Zoe had a tough time accommodating them in various rooms so that they might not see each other. It was rather late, when Nana returned; She was in a nasty mood. She gave her aunt three hundred francs to get back little Louis and another fifty francs for her expenses. She kept the remaining fifty francs.

Upon Zoe's persuasion she decided to see two of her visitors. They were Marquis de Chouard and Count Muffat. They had come for some donation: Fuming inwardly but smiling outwardly Nana parted with her fifty francs. Zoe managed to send most of the visitors away. Regarding the banker Steiner Nana remarked; "If I want to hook him, the best thing is chuck him out".

One visitor, however, could not be chucked out. That was the seventeen year old college lad who had remarked that Nana was stunning the previous night at the Variety Theatre. His name was George Hugon. Nana became quite easy, familiar even maternal with him. She at last sent him away, giving him permission to come again.

The hair dresser Francis had come and was doing her hair do for the night's performance. Nana asked him for a small loan which he gave her: By then more men had filed into her house. Nana was beginning to feel rather uneasy. Just then Labordette, a gentleman came in. He told her of an account he had settled for her at the office of the justice of the peace.

Nana's relief and joy knew no bounds. She suggested that they go out, dine together and then would see her at the Variety Theatre Leaving the crowd to wait in her house, she seized hold of his arm and hurried away happily. She told him that he should bring her home again. She intended to sleep a whole night – "a whole night all to myself". Just a whim (wish) of hers.

2.3.1 Critical comments on Chapter Two

In this chapter we get a picture of the coarse and loose life Nana generally leads. A positive dimension to her character is suggested by her strong maternal love for little Louis. Far from abandoning her illegitimate child she really shows care for him. Note how she is able to tempt and lure even youngsters like George. The two elderly ladies Madame Lerat and Madame Maloir impress us as cunning, hypocritical and exploitative. As you read on you will see for yourself how Nana's life becomes coarser and coarser.

Let us pass on the third chapter.

2.4 Summary of Chapter Three

The scene shifts to the large building occupied by the Muffat family. Countess Sabine, as Madame Muffat de Beuville was called to distinguish her from the count's mother, who had died the year before, received visitors every Tuesday at her house. On this particular Tuesday evening towards ten o'clock, there were scarcely a dozen persons assembled in the drawing room. Those present were talking of the great personages who were coming to Paris on account of the Exhibition. The countess's daughter Estelle, a young girl of sixteen, skinny and insignificant-looking was seated on a stool. On entering the room one found oneself in an atmosphere of cold dignity, of ancient customs and of past age, exhaling odour of godliness.

At the height of the discussion on various matters ranging from politics and war to gossip, the door opened and Faloise appeared, along with Fauchery the journalist. For a moment Fauchery stood like a fish out of water. He was happy to recognize Steiner and Vandeuvres. The latter and Fauchery hinted at going "at midnight at her place" leaving Faloise at a loss as to what they meant.

Fauchery was struck by countess Sabine. She had often been talked about in his presence. He knew that, married when she was only seventeen, she would then be thirty four though she looked much younger and that ever since her marriage she had led a sort of cloistered existence between her husband and her mother-in-law. In society some said she was as cold as a devotee. One of Fauchery's friends, a captain who had been recently killed in Mexico had imparted a brutal secret about her. Fauchery could not make sure. He noted, however, that the lady's lips alone, slightly thick, had a sort of imperious sensuality.

Faloise was indignant when the journalist suddenly asked him whether the countess had any lover. However, he related in a very low voice all that he knew regarding the Muffats. Mamma Muffat had always mixed up with priests, given her son a "beautiful" education-confession everyday, no youth, no sprees of any kind. As a result, the count was most religious. He had frequent fits of faith of great violence, similar attacks of brain fever. To finish his portrait with a last detail he whispered something in his cousin's ear. "He had it still when he was married" Fauchery laughed as he glanced at the Count and murmured. "A fine present he made to his wife. Ah, poor little thing! how he must have bored her; I bet she doesn't know anything at all!".

Fauchery continued his reflections on the countess. He felt convinced that she had no lover. Her father the Marquis de Chouard was a terrible man and strange stories were beginning to circulate about him despite his great show of piety! A mark the journalist noticed on the countess's left cheek near her mouth surprised him greatly. Nana had the same exactly. He could not resist whispering to Vandeuvres about it: They discovered a vague resemblance about the chin and the mouth and the little black hairs or the mark on the cheek. But the eyes were not at all alike. There Nana looked thoroughly kind hearted and good natured, while the countess was altogether doubtful. The two men continued to discuss her. Fauchery declared that she was a fine woman but the other man seemed to unrobe her with a glance. However, Vandeuvres expressed his opionion that she was a most virtuous woman.

The session at the countess's house was largely full of gossip, character assassination and pretended morality. Another notable character to turn up was Madame Hugon with her son George who had uttered the famous 'Isn't she stunning!' which was still talked about. Madame Hugon was a notary's widow and lived on her family estate. Her other son, Philippe was a lieutenant in the army. She impressed Fauchery as a worthy, respectable and good person. It was very late when the guests left one by one. Steiner, Vandeuvres, and Fauchery agreed to meet at Nana's at midnight. It took Faloise much time and difficulty to elicit this piece of information.

2.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Three

In this chapter you get to know about the Muffats, particularly Countess Sabine. The

19th Century French aristocracy and genteel folks with their outward show of morality, their hypocrisy and snobbery are pictured here. Is Madame Muffat virtuous or not? We are yet to find out. A striking resemblance between Nana and the countess is drawn. What is the implication? Zola leaves it at that.

Let us move on to Chapter Four.

2.5 Summary of Chapter Four

Nana wished to celebrate her great success as an actress by a midnight supper that would be the talk of everyone: She decided to hold it in her apartment. So she ordered a staff of waiters and other assistants from Brebant's restaurant to set the table in the drawing room – a table on which places for twenty five had been laid rather close together. Nana herself returned home from the theatre at midnight. Her maid, Zoe, was altogether out of sorts what with all the restaurant staff making quite a noise in the kitchen and her having to send away Nana's two ex-gentlemen.

Nana then called Daguenet and George to her dressing room, where Zoe got her dressed. One by one guests started arriving. Among them were Clarisse, whom La Faloise had brought, Steiner, the Mignons, Gaga, Fauchery, Count de' Vandeuvres, Lucy Stewart and others. Nana was offended that Count Muffat had declined to come. No one had expected Bordenave to come since his foot had caught in a trapdoor and he had sprained his ankle most abominably. They were surprised when he arrived, enormous in size and very red, his legs stretched out straight, learning on Simone's shoulder. He needed two chairs. Everyone fussed a lot over him.

To add to the confusion several more guests, uninvited by Nana turned up and soon there were thirty eight. All the men and women squeezed closer than ever. The supper began on a rather low key with hardly any conversation. The men, not knowing one another merely started, and the women kept very quiet. George was most astonished. He had expected that there would have been a great deal of kissing.

The supper ran through several courses. There was much meaningless talk and gossips as in the Tuesday session at the house of Countless Sabine (Refer Chapter III). All the ladies became very tenderhearted when they started talking about the children. Nana was brimming with happiness when she spoke of her little Louis. George was very surprised and asked Daguenet if all the ladies had children, and the latter amused by the questions gave him a few particulars. The youngster was feeling quite dazed by the coarse particulars about the ladies.

As the supper proceeded the guests became more and more intoxicated: broad jokes were uttered aloud. The room became increasingly hot and uncomfortable. Much food was wasted on the plates. The old gentleman Fourcarmont became insulting, Migrior, Steiner were all very far gone. Nana was not in high spirits. Ever since the commencement of the supper she had not seemed to be at home. She felt quite lost among all those people, who almost strained her with their loud talk. She too began to forget her duties as mistress of the house, occupying herself solely with stout old Steiner. Towards the end of the supper she became quite tipsy. That vexed her very much. An idea seized her that the other women were playing a dirty trick on her, by behaving badly in her rooms. She murmured to Steiner. "It serves me right, it will teach me not to invite such a low set another time". She said rather roughly that those who wanted coffee could have it in the dining room. Everyone rushed to the room and had to take their coffee standing. Nana had disappeared; but no one was troubled about her absence. In fact they got on very well without her forming groups and indulging in gossip. The conversation became more coarse.

It became clear from their dealings and dialogues that Mignor used his wife's talents both as an actor and as a woman to make money; he managed quite well too. That is how he had been using Steiner. He was not really happy when his wife wanted to invite Fauchery to dinner, but he had to consent to her 'folly' and 'waste' all the same. Lucy Stewart was visibly angry that Fauchery was ditching her in favour of Rose.

Suddenly Vandeuvres asked where Nana had gone to. Everyone became aware only then that she was not present. Vandeuvres found her in the bedroom with Daguenet and George standing and watching her in fear. She told Vandeuvres that she didn't intend to be made a fool in her own place. Then she let her tongue go loose. The ladies were a parcel of strumpets who were not fit to clean her boots. She didn't know what it was that kept her from kicking the whole dirty lot out of the place. And rage chocking her, she sobbed aloud.

In spite of the repeated requests of Daguenet and George, Nana refused to return to the dining room. She was furious that Rose had prevented the respectable lady Madame Roberts from coming, and that the "regular serpent" Fauchery had dissuaded Count Muffat from coming. Vandeuvres laughingly told her that the Count would never come, because he was mixed up with the priests. He further advised her, "Don't let the other one escape". (perhaps indicating Steiner)

Nana suddenly became very tender towards Daguenet and George and wished that the two would always get on well together. The three went to the drawing room attracted by a snoring sound. Bordenave was asleep on two chairs. Nana started laughing at the comic sight. She dragged the ladies to come and see the funny sight and they all seemed obliged to laugh even before they knew why. By then it was nearly four o'clock. Some of the men started playing cards in the dining room. Others were trying to dance in the drawing room. Daguenet was kindly assisting at the piano.

All on a sudden there was a frightful uproar. Eleven young men barged into the house laughing very loudly. They claimed that Nana had invited them. Nana merely laughed. By five o'clock the dancing had ceased. The ladies continued to gossip and talk shop. The day was about to break. Everyone was bored to death. No one knew how to infuse some gaiety into the proceedings to finish the night in a sufficiently wild manner. Then a little fair-haired fellow trying to do something funny took up a bottle of champagne and emptied the contents into the piano. The others laughed and followed suit. Nana did not see what they were after.

The day had dawned. The breaking up began a leave-taking full of uneasiness and ill-nature. Nana who had evidently made up her mind to exploit Steiner suggested that he should take her to the Bois de Boulogne and they would have some milk. She clapped her hands with a childish joy. She had to wake up Zoe who had fallen asleep on a chair in the dressing room. She told her in a most familiar manner. "You were right, it may as well be the banker as another".

Daguenet looked very sad, while George had fallen asleep. Nana spoke tenderly to the former. She then invited Blanche too to join her and Steiner. This time the banker's bloated face turned pale with annoyance at the idea of being accompanied by that fat girl. But the two women were already leading him off and repeating.

"You know, we must see the cows milked".

2.5.1. Critical Comments on Chapter Four

In this chapter we watch a supper hosted by Nana. We get to know the characters, their parentage, their petty rivalries and secret activities. Are they ashamed? Do they take all such aberrations (shortcomings) in their stride? How do you find Nana? She is most capricious (unsteady) and unpredictable in her rapid change of moods. What do you gather about French society of these times? Ponder over such points.

2.6 Summary of Chapter Five

'The Blonde Venus' was being performed for the thirty fourth time at the Variety Theatre. There was great excitement as the Prince was expected to come. Simone, Clarisse and Prulliere were discussing the Prince and his interest in Nana. Fontan, who knew what had taken place the first time between the prince and Nana, related the story to the two women causing them to laugh. And Simone related how Nana, having come across Satin, an old School fellow of hers had taken a great fancy to her and was bothering to bring her out.

Fauchery and Mignon entered. From his behaviour it was clear that Mignon was

furious by his wife's infatuation, disgusted at seeing that Fauchery never contributed anything significant towards their expenses avenged himself by hitting and slapping the young man as though he were being friendly. Fauchery's reward was kissing Rose familiarly: Count Muffat was spotted sitting beside the prince in the stage – box. The count's father-in-law, the Marquis de Chouard too bad come.

Mignon came to know that the banker Steiner was going to purchase a country house for Nana. He became very grave. Steiner had once promised Rose a mansion but it was a lost opportunity which he must now regain. The prince wanted to compliment Nana between the acts. So Bordenave ushered him along with Muffat and Marquis de Chourd to her room. Nana who was naked to the waist pretended to be bashful and embarrassed, but her words and actions soon betrayed her cunning ways to entrap the gentlemen.

The prince was quite comfortable and relaxed in the company of Nana, but not so was the case of Count Muffat. He became red in the face, and beads of perspiration rested on his forehead. The same dizzy feeling he had experienced on the occasion of his visit to Nana at her apartment (refer Unit 2) again seized hold of him. Nana was enjoying herself trapping the rich gentlemen. She even made them drinks to Fontan as it was his saints day!

Count Muffat was immersed in thoughts of his youth. The room he had when a child had been very cold. He never experienced any warmth in his mother's kiss or the icy coldness of her embrace. Later he had encountered in his wife a strict observance of conjugal duties; he himself experienced a sort of devout repugnance (hatred). He grew up, he grew old ignorant of the ways of the flesh, bent to rigid religious practices having regulated his life according to precepts and laws.

Finding himself in company of the almost naked girl Nana, his whole being revolted, the slow possession that Nana had taken of him for some little time past terrified him. In his confused state of mind, he felt that Nana was the devil in person. He felt angry and embrassed when his father-in-law the Marquis de Chouard teased him by observing. "The count is virtue itself".

It was time for Nana to appear on the stage. The gentleman left the dressing room. Suddenly an occurrence quite scared the actors and actresses waiting for their cues. Mignon and Fauchery were hitting and punching each other, full of hate and anger. It was Mignon who had instigated the journalist first. With great difficulty Bordenave managed to separate them.

Iricon, an old woman who transacted shady business with the ladies, appeared there much to the disgust of the theatre manager. She and Simone transacted some such deal. At last the show for that night ended, and the gentlemen crowded in Nana's dressing room. The marquis went off with Simone. Nana and the prince walked slowly along the passage. When the prince went off for a short time to meet Bordenave, Count Muffat gave way to an impulse of rage and desire and kissed Nana roughly on the back of the neck. Nana was furious but she tactfully hid her anger. At length she told him that she was a landowner. She had purchased a smalls estate near Orleans. She knew from 'baby' (meaning George Hugon) that Count Muffat sometimes went that side. She asked him to come and see her there. The timid count, frightened and ashamed, accepted her invitation. As he passed the green-room he heard Satin screaming at the marquis for pitching upon her.

Finally the prince and Nana walked off. Bordenave opined that the prince was a bit of a muff. Count Muffat decided to go home on foot: All the conflict within him had ceased. A new era of life had drowned all his ideas and his beliefs of forty years standing. He was willing to give up anything and everything just for one short hour that very night. It was his youth that was at last awakening within him in the midst of his Jesuitical coldness and his dignity of middle age.

2.6.1. Critical Comments on Chapter Five

This chapter dwells on the potential of Nana to lure rich and royal personages with immense and immediate success, It also throws light on the mean character of Mignon. The conflict in the mind of Count

Muffat between sensuality and religious training has been well presented. In a way this chapter contains the crisis of turning point in the drama of Muffat's Life. Henceforth it is clear that he will steadily head towards shame and disaster.

Let us now move on to chapter six.

Summary of Chapter six

Count Muffat, accompanied by his wife and daughter had arrived the previous evening at Le Fondettes where Madame Hugon who was alone with her son George had invited them to come and spend a week. Madame Hugon, with her kind maternal smile, was a fine hostess and Countess Sabine was very merry recalling the events of her childhood. In the course of the conversation Madame Hugon said she was expecting Fauchery and Daguenet and perhaps Vandeuvres too. Her other son Filippe had asked for leave.

The conversation turned to Paris, when Steiner was mentioned. The old lady remarked that the stout gentleman had bought an actress (meaning, Nana, of course) a small estate a little away from there. Everyone in the neighbourhood was scandalized. Muffat feigned (pretended) ignorance. George, who had buried his nose in his cup, looked Muffat full in the face and wondered why he had lied. Madame Hugon was initially angry about Nana whom she described as a most abandoned woman but soon her good nature triumphed and she remarked philosophically that everyone had to live, so the best thing was to merely ignore her.

During the afternoon, the old became very uneasy. Soon after lunch George complained of a severe headache. He shut himself up in his room under the pretext of sleeping till next morning. Instead of going bed, he noiselessly dressed himself again. Ten minutes after the dinner bell had rung, he escaped from the house and headed for Nana's estate.

It was indeed that evening that Nana was expected at La Mignotte. Ever since the month of May when Steiner had bought her country residence she wished strongly to go and live there, but Bordenave refused her the smallest holiday. At last, losing patience, she declared that she would go to her country house and invited a number of people in Bordenave's presence. She artfully resisted Muffat's advances but included him too in the list of invitees.

Suddenly Nana had a whim to leave Bordenave in the lurch and arrive at La Mignotte two days ahead of the others without anyone knowing about it. She had sent a note to Steiner informing him about her departure. She had written a second letter to her aunt begging her to bring little Louis to her at once. She badly missed her son. She was impatient to reach her destination. Her maid, Zoe, was annoyed at having had to leave Paris in such a hurry.

Nana was excited beyond words when she reached her house. It was a large building in the Italian style erected by a rich gentleman. The house was simply magnificent.: Nana raved and exclaimed about each and every room to Zoe who stood indifferent and sulky. She walked about in the kitchen garden while it was raining heavily. As she was plucking strawberries, George appeared on the scene. He was wet and dripping. She kissed him on his forehead and fussed about to make him feel comfortable. She gave him her night gown etc. to wear and when he changed into them she remarked that he looked like a girl! When he said he was famished (very hungry) she was angry at first thinking how stupid he was to run away from his mother with an empty stomach, just to go and throw himself into a pool of water! However she shared some food with him. George had no intention to leave. Even though she tried half heartedly to dissuade the youngster, she finally gave into his advances and they spent the night together.

The next morning, around lunch, Fauchery, Daguenet and Count des Vandeuvres arrived at Madame Hugon's residence. The last to arrive was George who pretended that he was much better. The old lady was pleasantly surprised on seeing the Marquis de Chouard arrive. At the dining table Fauchery found himself seated beside Countess Sabine, who surprised him with her liveliness. Daguenet felt rather uncomfortable sitting close to Estelle, the

silent, lanky girl whose sharp elbow's were his horror.

The old lady remarked that she had a new neighbour whom they probably knew. All the men feigned ignorance, however they failed to hide their genuine astonishment when they heard that Nana had arrived. George alone did not raise his eyes. His anxious mother asked him about his neck which was all red. He was confused, and then remarked that some insect had stung him! The marquis cast a sidelong glance at the red mark while Muffat also looked at George.

On leaving the table, Daguenet remained behind with Fauchery to make some rather coarse remarks about Estelle. "A pretty broom stick to shove into a fellow's arms". However he became serious when the journalist mentioned the amount of her dowry. Four hundred thousand francs!

No one was going out that day as it was still very showery. George had hastily disappeared and locked himself in his room. The gentleman avoided coming to an explanation among themselves, though each of them knew very well what reasons had brought them together. Obviously the scent of Nana was too strong to resist. Muffat was the most ardent and excited. He had a distinct promise. Nana was expecting him. He determined to go to La Mignotte that very night after the dinner.

That evening as the count left the grounds, George followed him. When he understood that he too was making for Nana's his eyes filled with tears of rage. Nana, astonished at this display of jealousy and uneasy at the turn things were taking tried her best to kiss and console him. He knew Steiner was upstairs, he did not mind him. She asked George to run up to her room and hide himself there and wait for her. The young boy obeyed in the hope of repeating last night's pleasures.

When Count Muffat appeared, Nana felt a slight awkwardness, having scarcely regained her composure, after the scene with George. She had promised the count, but tonight she was in no mood to entertain him she would rather chuck up everything than be unfaithful to Georges As for the count, he was determined to end his suffering, and gratify his passion thorough force. It cost her a lot of tact and trouble 'to free herself from his embrace and look normal when Steiner descended downwards and entered the room. The two men were introduced. After fifteen minutes the Court left. Steiner almost immediately went off to bed; grumbling against the ailments that were always affecting the female sex! Thus getting rid of the two men Nana rejoined George.

The following days were adorable ones for Nana and George. Beneath the child's caresses, the flower of love bloomed again, in spite of her knowledge of man and the loathing it caused her. She had never felt thus before. She indulged in the fancies of a sentimental girl. Once she even sobbed on the youngster's neck, murmuring she was afraid she was going to die. In short, she behaved very foolishly.

But what caused the young woman's heart completely to melt was the arrival of little Louis. Her attack of maternal love bordered on madness. She, Goerge and Louis spent most of the time together. Nana indeed built a thousand castles in the air. This fine life lasted for nearly a week. Count Muffat came every evening only to return angry and fustrated. Each Day Nana revolted more and more at the idea of being unfaithful to George. Zoe was full of contempt for this adventure and thought that her mistress was becoming cracked (mad).

All on a sudden, on the sixth day, a band of visitors broke in upon this idyllic existence. Nana had invited a number of people, thinking that no one would come. Naturally she was angry and shocked on seeing an omnibus full of men and women drawing up in font of the iron gates of La Mignotte. The crowd included Mignon, his two sons, Labordette, Lucy Stewart, La Faloise, Gaga, her daughter, and some others – eleven in all. But soon Nana was delighted to have her old friends in her country abode. They lavishly complimented her on her most enchanting abode. When she came to know that Bordenave had filled her place with the understudy Simone and that the little girl had scored a great deal in the 'Blonde Venus' Nana grew serious. However she enjoyed, her

friends company and even arranged an excursion while they were there.

That evening Count Muffat approached Nana's house; he understood the situation from the bright lights, loud laughter, and familiar sounds and went away enraged by this new obstacle. Driven to extremities, determined to use violence, George entered Nana's bedroom secretly and waited for her until past midnight. She came at last very tipsy and more loving and maternal than ever. She coaxed Georges to join her on the excursion but he feared to be seen with her in a carriage as that would cause a frightful scandal.

Nana's proximity upset Madame Hugon's whole household. The old lady, usually so tolerant, felt indignant about the sway the gay woman had on respectable people. She accused her guests of wandering about La Mignotte. She spared only Count Muffat and George. The former who pretended to be officially busy could not be running after girls, and poor George was beginning to cause her the greatest anxiety with his violent attacks every evening, which forced him to go bed before it was really dark.

Fauchery had elected himself Sabine's attendant whilst the count disappeared regularly every afternoon. Soon a sudden intimacy was established between them.

On Friday M. Theophile Venot also arrived. He put on his most agreeable look and affected an indifferent air of an insignificant person without appearing to notice the uneasy deference with which he was treated. On leaving the table he took the count's arm and led him into the grounds. It was known that he exercised a great influence over the count. After some time the count returned looking very pale and with his eyes red as though he had been weeping.

Sunday afternoon being a fine clear day, all the guests at Madame Hugon's place went for a walk. "Poor George" the old lady thought had started before seven to see the doctor. When they reached the foot of the bridge, they stood hesitating, as though some obstacle caused them uneasiness. Soon it became very clear that Nana along with her guests was coming in a set of five carriages from the opposite direction. In the last carriage, accompanied by Steiner, was Nana who had on the little seat in front of her, that poor love of a Zizi, that is, George with his knees touching hers.

Countess Sabine affected (pretended) not to recognize Nana. The two women exchanged a searching look- one of those scrutinising glances lasting but a second yet complete and definite. As for the men they behaved admirably. Fauchery and Daguenet, perfectly impassive, recognised no one. Count Muffat, greatly agitated, followed with his eyes, the vision of Nana flying away from him. His wife had turned slowly around and was examining him. The count's agony made him cry aloud. It broke his heart to think that Nana should have preferred the child George to himself!

Madame Hugon, however, had not recognized George at First. But suddenly she recognized him in Nana's company and exclaimed in shock. She was so sad that no one dared to console her. On her part Nana observed the other group and made a few observations. She did not think much of Countess Sabine. She stated that Fauchery was her lover. She felt sorry for Zizi's mother who looked a kind woman. She offered to write to her but the boy said he would arrange all by himself. After that George continued to be very dejected and tried to invent some lies for the evening:

Nana's party talked gaily about various things. They discussed a certain Madame Irma d'Anglars who had led an awfully fast life (as a prostitute), but later became very religious and would be about ninety years old. All the ladies became serious on hearing this. Nana declared that she certainly did not want to make old bones (grow old). In the midst of their talking, Lucy pressed Nana to join them back to Paris where the Exhibition was about to close. But Nana was obstinate. She detested Paris and would not want to go there for a long time.

The carriages finally stopped in a deserted looking place at the foot of a hill. One of the drivers showed them the wonderful chateau of Irma's and they were filled with admiration at its magnificence. What a wonder she was, that Irma, they mused. They

walked towards the church. Gaga stated suddenly that it was Irma in person who was standing in front of the church. The congregation was streaming out, all the folks bowed low as she passed them. She was a mighty queen loaded with years and honours. She ascended the steps of her chateau and disappeared. For some time she became the topic of conversation:

Compelled by Nana, George returned home in time for dinner. Luckily for him his brother, Philippe had arrived – a big soldier and a very lively fellow. Madame Hugon contended herself with looking at him with her eyes full of tears. While Philippe, informed of what had occurred, threatened to bring him back by the ears if he ever returned to that woman, George however planned secretly to meet Nana.

During dinner, Count Muffat created quite an embrassing situation. He kept glancing at George. After dinner he went and shut himself in his room complaining of a slight fever. M.Venot had hastened after him. In spite of the latter's exhortations, the count confessed that he could no longer resist the temptations of the flesh and so he was going to Nana's. The two walked together to La Mignotte, Venot warned him that God's will be done. Adding, 'your sin will become one of his weapons'.

At La Mignotte, a good deal of quarrelling took place, Nana was in a foul mood, caused by a letter she received from Bordenave in which he had advised her to take plenty of rest, meaning that he did not care for her. She shouted at her aunt for having used a rather objectionable word. Then influenced by an idiotic attack of responsibility, she bored everyone with her goody goody sentiments on good behaviour and so on. All the while she was conjuring up a vision of Nana very rich and very much bowed to.

When Muffat arrived, they were all just going up to bed. Understanding his object, Labordette secretly led him to Nana's room. Nana showed no surprise, but merely felt bord by Muffat's persistence. However one must have an eye for business during life!: It was stupid to love, it led to nothing. Besides she had scruples on account of Zizi's youth: she had really behaved disgracefully well! She would return to the right path and go for the old fellow. Impulsively she asked Zoe to pack up the trunks. They were going back to Paris. And she allowed Muffat to remain, though it caused her no pleasure.

2.7.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Six

This chapter particularly highlights the steady decline of the young George Hugon and the old count Muffat, both of whom cannot resist the seductive charm of Nana. A blooming illicit relationship between Fauchery and Countess Mignon is broadly hinted. Daguenet's interest in the Count's daughter, Estelle, is purely prompted by her rich dowry. We also get to see Nana's ever changing mood. Her fear of old age and death are indicated. Let us next pass on to the seventh chapter.

2.8 Summary of Chapter Seven

Three months later, one cold evening Count Muffat was walking along a busy street thinking of Nana all the time. He kept wondering why she had lied to him that her son was ill and gone to Variety Theatre, though she had no role. He realised that she had altered. In the early days she had given him the impression that he was the only little man whom she adored. He no longer fearead George; he sort of accepted Steiner's occasional presence at Nana's considering the amount he had spent upon her. Thus for the last three months the count had lived in the midst of a sort of whirlpool, outside of which he understood nothing very clearly except the necessity of possessing Nana. This late awakening of his flesh was like the gluttony of a child, which leaves no room for either vanity or jealousy.

The time was close upon nine o'clock. Nana would soon be coming out of the theatre. The count decided that he would insist on knowing the truth. He watched at the stage door himself, thought he was afraid of being recognized. Ten o'clock struck. He suddenly felt that he could see easily whether Nana was in her dressing room. As he waited, the fear that Nana might go off behind his back made the count lose all self-respect.

Muffat went and stood right opposite the stage door. Just then Nana came down the three steps. She turned deadly pale as she caught sight of him. She took his arm and lied to him that she had come to the theatre for a short time as they wanted her opinion on a new piece. Her child was much better and so on. Even though he knew that she lied, the count did not contradict in his inordinate desire to possess her. She boiled with rage and wondered whether she could get rid of the count by midnight. Only then everything would go as she wished.

As they walked past the shops, nana slackened her footsteps. Ever since her girlhood she had a passion for the glitter of Paris imitation jewellery. But that night she was really upset not to have her evening to herself, and in her secret revolt she felt a longing to do something foolish. She had just run through or extracted out of the prince and Steiner indulging all her childish caprices without in the least knowing where the money the men gave her was not enough. She would have sent the whole of them to the right about. Yet the lure of a fine mansion and riches made her pull on.

Nana wanted to eat some oysters and so Muffat tool her to a café. As yet he had not ventured much about with her in public, so he asked much for a private room. Suddenly Daguenet rushed out from the adjoining room and greeted her. Though the count vanished inside the room, Daguenet had been quick enough to see him. Nana still had a soft spot for him even though he had pretended not to recognize her in the company of ladies. He told her that he was seriously thinking of getting married. Nana was not impressed.

Daguenet told Nana that Count Muffats's wife had succumbed to Fauchery. Nana did not seem surprised at all. She also remarked that she always felt the greatest disgust for a cuckold, implying Muffat, of course. When he entered the room she was torn between feelings of pity and contempt. However, feeling sorry for him she took him home. It was eleven o' clock. 'She had to find some means of sending him away by midnight.

When they were together in the bedroom Nana indulged in a delightful pastime of hers; standing full length before the mirror, removing her clothes item by item admiring her satin- like skin and the suppleness of her form. She asked Muffat if he had read the article about her in the "Figaro". And slipping off her chemise she remained naked waiting until the count had finished reading Fauchery's article entitled 'Golden Fly' was the story of a girl born from four or five generations of drunkards; she avenged the rogues and vagabonds from whom she sprang. With her, the putrefaction (or rotting) that was left to ferment among the people, rose and polluted the aristocracy. She became, without herself wishing it, one of nature's instruments, a ferment of destruction corrupting and disorganizing Paris and so on.

As Muffat read and re-read he article, Nana was absorbed in her admiration of herself. Then when he watched her she frightened him. In that moment of clear understanding, he despised himself. It was true that in three months she had corrupted his life. For an instant he was conscious of the results of sin; himself poisoned, his family destroyed a corner of society cracking and tumbling into ruins. He thought of his old horror of woman, the monster of Scripture, lecherous and bestial.

Nana prolonged self-enjoyment exasperated Muffat. All his efforts to satisfy his passion that night were in vain. Nana was thinking of some means of getting rid of the count. She wanted to do it pleasantly, for she was a good natured girl, and was sorry to pain others, particularly cuckolds like him. She provoked him by talking about his wife and made him confess that he had been a perfect innocent when he had married his wife nineteen years ago. She teased him on that score. With her great experience on such matters she explained to him on that women do not like simpletons and that when they have not had what they expect, they seek for it elsewhere. The talk continued in that vein for some time till it was half past twelve. Feeling instigated, Muffat asked her not to talk badly about respectable women: Nana flared up and referred to them disrespectfully. She had been resisting a strong desire to tell him of his cuckoldom to

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his face. He exasperated her so much that she openly told him that his wife was having an affair with Fauchery.

Muffat's reacted violently. In a terrible passion he threw her full length on the floor and was about to crush her. The sight of his internal struggle made her feel a mortal regret. She then went on to abuse women in general, so as to make the blow less hard to bear. Not waiting to listen he hurried out and disappeared. Nana regretted the encounter and tried not to blame herself.

Outside Muffat hurried on. He was totally upset and thought that Nana had lied about his wife. He was seized with fear and burst into sobs. He became more uncontrollable. He contempleated taking them by surprise and straining them. It was four o'clock in the morning. He was hovering around the Rue Taitbout where Sabine was reported to be with Fauchery. He thought he would merely wait for the woman to come out.

At last it was daybreak. The count who had been wandering on the street all night felt sad and miserable. Then his thoughts turned to God, with feeble steps he sought a church. He failed to derive any consolation there. And he mechanically returned to Nana's. He was too tired and weak. Zoe was amazed and a little uneasy when she saw Muffat. She said that her mistress had been seized by a violent headache. Just then Nana appeared. Though angry, she felt sorry and tried her best to persuade him to go back. But he kept on insisting on sleeping with her.

To make matters worse, Steiner appeared. It was indeed a most embarrassing situation. Nana asked Steiner roughly what he wanted. Steiner stammered that he had brought her the thousand francs she had demanded of him. She had forgotton having asked him for the money. Much to his shock she seized that envelope of money and threw it in his face. She then shouted at both of them to go out. She accused them of having insulted her. She had enough of a fashionable existence. When they did not budge she suddenly threw the bedroom door wide open. The two men saw Fontan in the middle of the tumbled bed. It was Fanton whom Nana, seized by that mad infatuation of women for the hideous grimaces of ugly comic actors, had been fetching nightly for a week past from the Variety Theatre.

Muffat called Nana 'Strumpet'. Nana implied that his wife was one. She then loudly banged the bedroom door after her and bolted it. Zoe talked very sensibly to the two men. She obviously thought that madame had behaved very foolishly. However, her mania for the wretched stroller(Fontan) would not last for long. The two men went out silently moved by a sort of fraternal feeling they silently shook hands and then walked off in opposite directions.

When Muffat at length returned to his house, his wife had just returned there. Raising their eyes they saw each other. The count's face had the frightful pallour of a man returning from a surfeit of vice. The countess, blear-eyed with her hair all dislevelled and thoroughly exhausted by a night passed in the train seemed scarcely able to keep awake.

2.8.1 Critical Comments on Chapter VII

This scene marks a further step in the deterioration of Count Muffat's character. He realizes that his association with Nana is ruining and corrupting him but he cannot help it. His feelings that he is a cuckold makes him a pathetic figure. After all his wife is reported to be doing only what he himself is doing. Observe his double standards. Naan's violent, willful nature takes the readers by shock. The succeeding chapters will reveal more of this facet(aspect) of her complicated nature.

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the story so far. Also note down your impressions of the main characters, plot developments, etc. So that you will be able to write essays on your own.

We shall study the latter part of Nana in the next Unit.

UNIT 3

NANA

A SUMMARY OF PART II

3.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

(i) have general idea of the plot of Zola's "Nana" Part II.

(ii) Analyse the important characters, particularly Nana and

(iii) Form a picture of French life and Society in the 19th centuary.

INTRODUCTION

Please read Unit 2 few times and understand the plot of the novel so far. Only then can you appreciate the whole novel. In this Unit we shall summarise the second part of the novel, starting with the eighth chapter.

3.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER EIGHT

Nana and Fontan had invited a few friends to partake of their Twelfth Night cake.

They had only got settled three days back and intended having a house warming in their little apartment. On the morning of the grand brawl (fight) when she had dismissed Muffat and Steiner (Refer Chapter Seven) she realized that her financial position was in quite a mess. In her infatuation for Fontan her dream of her girlhood returned to her. Fontan possessed about seven thousand francs, and agreed to put them with Nana's ten thousand francs although he had a reputation of being miserly.

At the beginning this kind of life was simply delicious.

That night, Madame Lerat was the first to arrive with little Louis. She rejected the advice of Zoe and her aunt to become sensible and return to her old apartment. The aunt remarked that Nana would only obey the dictates of her heart. Nana, however was very annoyed to hear that La Mignotte (which Steiner had bought of her) had been Laberdette , had purchased it for a most ridiculous sum for Caroline Hequet. Madame Maloir entered by then. It was a happy meeting. Soon Fontan came in with Bose and Prulliere. Everyone put on a show of kindness and friendliness.

Nana made an excessive outpouring of her love for Fontan to the distaste of the others. But everything went off well. They naturally talked of the Variety Theatre. Nana and Fontan both out of any of Bordenave's pieces (plays) exaggerated the fruits of liberty and the others pretended to envy their happiness. It was one o'clock when the party broke up.

For three weeks the life of the two lovers was sweet indeed. She went out but little, affecting solitude and simplicity. One morning early she went to buy fish at the market when she suddenly met Francis the hairdresser dressed with his habitual correctness making her feel ashamed of being seen by him in the street in a dirty morning gown. She questioned him about her old friends, and what they said about her little escapade. She learnt that it had caused quite a commotion. Steiner was in financial straits (difficulties), Daguenet was setting down. Muffat suffering made him look like the ghost of some unburied corpse. Mignon had taken him home. Though she laughed and looked calm outwardly, she was in reality very angry since Rose Mignon had accepted the man she had turned out. The hairdresser said that according to Mignon's version it was the count who had turned Nana out and that too with a kick behind. On hearing this Nana became very pale and shouted angrily. When she cooled down, Francis venured to give her some advice. She was foolish to sacrifice everything simply for an infatuation. Infatuations spoilt life.

During the day the story of the kick behind obsessed Nana. She affected the style of a strong minded woman who would not brook (tolerate) any insult. That day she and Fontan started talking about a certain woman and gradually started quarrelling. Fontan's temper rose so high that he slapped her. She

was totally stunned, she was frightened and began to sob. She respected him.

But from that night on their life changed entirely. For everything he hit her and she submitted. She was totally miserable and lonely. Therefore she was delighted when she met Satin by chance at the market. Satin showed her where she lived. Nana related the story of her love for Fontan to her.

After that day whenever Nana felt dull she went to Satin, who never went out before six in the evening. She nearly always found her in bed. She talked about the abominable ways of men. Satin invariably sympathized with her. Gradually they became in separable. Yet Satin never went to Nana's since Fontan had declared that he would not have any strumpets in his place. Nana would talk about Fontan all the time, how he hit her or slapped her and Satin would listen with interest.

One day Satin took her to call on a woman who turned out to be Madame Robert whom Nana often thought about with a certain respect. The lady was not at home. Satin thought highly of her virtue, but Nana had doubts. Nana saw the lady's portrait and felt she had certainly seen that face some where not respectable.

The next day Nana and Satin went to Laure's (a restaurant) for lunch. While they waited they saw a number of women arriving and kissing the owner-fifty year old Laure- on the mouth. There was quite a crowd of females, big and flabby, for a minute Nana was interested in a young man who soon turned out to be a woman! Nana was disgusted.

Just then a woman entered the room who caused her a great surprise. It was Madame Roberts! She and Laure kissed each other for a long time. Nana watched everything. Having caught sight of Satin, Madame Robert hastened to her and was most amicable. The two of them talked in low tones about meeting each other. Nana was annoyed and wished to have the respectable women came in. Nana could recognize Lucy Stewart and Maria Blond but preferred to ignore them. She was shocked to find that Satin had disappeared. She tried to hide her annoyance: What exasperated her was having to pay for Satin's dinner. She thought her a vile creature. Her evening was thoroughly spoilt. She felt disgusted at Madame Robert who pretended to be a virtuous woman.

That evening when she reached home Nana found that Fontan had already reached home. He was in a rather foul mood. A letter from George who was still kept at Les Fondettes had come. Though addressed to Nana he had opened it. He said he would write as reply; while he wrote she went to make tea. He wrote five pages of sentimental stuff and felt delighted. But all on a sudden he flew into a rage over the tea she had made and the quarrel started from that. Fontan worked himself up, flung all sorts of accusations at her and raved about the money. All his miserly instincts were awakened. The row became a regular storm when he realized that they had spent ten thousand francs. When Nana ventured to question him he slapped, kicked and hit her hard.

In spite of all this brutal behaviour Nana threw herself on his chest and sobbed aloud. Their battles always ended thus. She trembled at the thought of losing him. But from that evening their life together became worse than ever. From one end of the week to the other the sound of slaps could be heard, just like the tick tock of a pendulum which seemed to regulate their existences. Nana being beaten so frequently became more supple and beautiful! Prulliere and Bose frequented their house for dinner. Madame Lerat abused Fontan whenever her niece showed her a fresh bruise. The aunt or the maid Zoe could not understand how Nana could put up with Fontan unmannerly, uncouth ways. The fact that it was Fontan who was the cause why she, the child Louis and its mother Nana were not rolling in wealth enraged Madame Lerat to such a pitch that she denied the existence of love.

The want of pounds soon became Nana's great care. The seven thousand francs Fontan had taken had quite disappeared. He would give very little money towards the house keeping expenses and fly into a rage if the meal was not grand. Nana had resigned

herself for the sake of peace and quietness in her home. She said "yes" to old Tricon and thus earned some money which helped the house going. Slowly he reverted again to the depravity of her early days. She walked the streets as she did when a young girl in quest of a five franc piece.

Nana made up with Satin. Her curiosity being awakened, she questioned her in regard top some details of vice, amazed at learning something fresh at her age, after all she knew. She felt a slight repugnance (hatred) for at heart she was rather conservative in her habits. She was greatly in want of money. So she wandered with Satin all over Paris amidst that degrading vice which powls along the muddy bystreets. She frequented low dancing places, balls, cafes of a locality, crawling upstairs wet with saliva and spilt beer, and so on. Sometimes men avoided them, times bargains were made and Nana learnt a lot about vice from Satin. She wondered whether there was no virtue. From the highest to the lowest all seemed to grovel in vice. She was completing her education.

One night on calling for Satin, Nana recognised the Marquis de houard coming down the stairs, leaning heavily on the rails and his face ghastly pale. Satin admitted that she knew the marquits: he was an awful nuisance and pestered her immensely. What most troubled Nana was the sincerity of these low debaucheries (immoral activities). She recalled how she had seen the girls about her losing their health day by day. Then Satin frightened her terribly with the police, their sudden raids, being informed against, betrayed etc.

One night as the two of them were walking along the Boulevard, Satin started running asking Nana to hurry up. It was the police. Nana was on the point of being caught when a man took her arm and led her off. It was Prulliere. She refused to go with him, for she could not deceive Fontan whom she loved dearly.

The next morning, as she was on her way to her aunts, Nana suddenly found herself face to face with Labordette. He told her how everyone was amazed at Nana's total eclipse; and how all her old friends were pining away. He then gave her the same advice as Francis': She was making a fool of herself through her infatuation. He offered to patch her up with Muffat. He also told her that Bordenave was going to bring out a new piece by Fauchery in which there was a capital role that would suit her splendidly. She refused his offers.

That night when she questioned Fontan why he had not told her of the new role in Fauchery's piece, he only insulted her and laughed at her lack of acting abilities. She nevertheless loved him despite all the loathing and fatigue her present existence caused her. Fontan became her vice, for which she paid heavily.

One night when Nana returned home about eleven o'clock, the door was bolted from inside. She was shocked and frightened to find that Fontan had brought a little woman from the theatre. He brutally asked Nana to clear out. She went to Satin who also had been chucked out of her house by her landlord. They took a small back room in a lodging house, undressed and got in to bed and were soon laughing gently and uttering words of love.

But suddenly a loud noise made Satin who was half naked, jump up. It was the police. At the word police Nana lost her wits and was about to jump out of the window. She disappeared in the darkness. Satin threw her friend's clothes into the bottom of the cupboard. She resigned herself to her fate and dressed herself when a policeman knocked and she opened the door.

No one had betrayed Nana and she was saved. She entered the room and fell asleep after some time. When about eight o'clock on the morning she went to her aunt's place the old lady understoodf it all a once. Zoe too was relieved that madame was restored to them. Nana kissed her little son who was sleeping in a last outburst of sobs.

3.2.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eight

This chapter describes another facet in the deterioration of Nana. Her infatuation for Fontan makes her throw her fortunes derived from count Muffat and the banker Steiner to the winds. In order to win and keep him to her, she descends as low as she can indulge

in disgusting relationships. One is tempted to ask after Francis the hair dresser and Labordette whether she is not a big fool to suffer all this at the hands of Fontan. Doesn't she bring to your mind the plight of the typical Indian female without financial independence, who meekly submits to all the whims and whips of her husband.?

Let us move on to Chapter Nine.

3.3 Summery of Chapter Nine

The rehearsal of the "Little Duchess" was going on at the Variety Theatre. Nana had gone there and was half hidden in the company of Labordette who was exerting himself with Bordenave for her. She had wished to see the piece, for she hesitated before in agreeing to act the part of a gay woman. She longed to appear on the stage as a lady. Prulliere was listening to Rose Mignon who had received a splendid offer from another theatre. It was rumored that in that event Mignon would chuck up Bordenave without notice.

Labordette had arranged for Nana to meet count Muffat in the dressing room. And Bordenave had hastened to lend his theatre and offer a part to Nana wishing to get on good terms with the count with the view of borrowing money from him. All the while the rehearsal was becoming worse and tempers were flying high. Bordenave struck Simone on her back and she decided to leave him more especially since Steiner had promised to provide for her.

Suddenly the actors noticed Nana sitting in the theatre. Her return scandalized Prulliere. Clarisse was very uneasy about the part she was longing for. As for Fontan he pretended supreme indifference. Rose was agitated at Nana's presence for she knew its implication. She would lose Count Muffat. Mignon asked her to shut up. He had got pretty well all he could out of Muffat. He felt that on a sign from Nana, the count was ready of lie down and be her footstool. It was impossible to fight with such a passion as his.

The rehearsal recommenced just as Labordette went off with the count. The latter trembled at the thought of seeing Nana again. After their rupture he had felt himself alone in the world. In his heart there remained a sting caused by her words of dismissal the pangs of which almost suffocated him. He was so desperate for Nana's love that he jumped at the chance of a interview with her, though ashamed afterwards of having given way in a manner so ridiculous for a man of his rank.

Nana called him in and shut the windows. It was agreed that they would not refer to the subject of their old fight again. Desperate to possess her the count declared he would give his fortune. He offered to make her the most admired, the richest etc. on the sole condition that she would be only his. Nana refused his offer. She wondered how rich people supposed they could have everything for their money. She said she danced on money, she spat upon it.

Nana then tried a new tactic. She insisted that she would be given the role of grand Duchess Helene(now being played by Rose). She explained to Muffat how to get it. Bordenave was in want of money. Muffat could get the role for her by lending him the money as he had such a lot to throw out of the window. When she taunted him about Rose, he said that he would cast her off at once. He offered her everything she wished but not the role. Instead of wasting any more time in arguing she stimulated him with a shower of kisses till his reason was gone.

Muffat staggered down not knowing what to say or how. The actors were quarrelling. He told Bordenave rather abruptly that Nana wanted to play the part of the duchess, Bordenave consulted Fauchery who at once scoffed and laughed at the very idea of Nana doing a lady's role: Poor Muffat !

In his desire to convince the other two men of Nana's eligibility of the role, he even tried to imitate the way Nana had walked posing like a lady. Fauchery understood the situation. The count could sense derision and pity combined in Fauchery's glance. Fauchery continued to refuse. At last he suddenly gave away when Muffat begged him. He thought it unfair.

When Bordenave told Mignon about the alteration in their agreement, the latter flew into a passion. It was disgraceful; they

wanted to ruin his wife's prospects. They argued for a long time. At last Mignon said that if they gave his wife ten thousand francs she would cancel her agreement and go to another theatre. The count sounded relieved but not Bordenave. At last, however, the compromise was made.

Rose came there. When Mignon told her of the new arrangement, she became agitated. She was ordinarily quietly submitted to him in the making of agreements with her managers and her lovers. She merely remarked that he was too much of a coward. The words struck him full in the face like the lash of a whip. When Mignon realized that she was very furious he left her. He told Bordenave that they would sign the agreement the next day and asked him to have the money ready.

Nana, informed by Labordette of what had taken place, arrived triumphant. She affected the style for a respectable woman with most distinguished ways just to impress all those idiots that when she liked, not one of them could come up her. On the way, Rose saw her and challenged her: Nana reacted in a lady like manner saying Rose must be crazy. Frauchery was worried that his piece would be damned. But Nana tried to reassure him. In the general joy that Nana seemed naturally to bring with her, Fontan alone seemed indifferent. A little later everyone went away. The count took Nana in a cab, while Labordette went off consoling Fauchery.

A month later, the first performance of the 'Little Dunchess' was a great disaster, for, seated close to the stage Rose Mignon greeted each appearance of her rival with a shrill burust of laughter. It was a first revenge. At night when Nana found herself alone with the count who was very much cut up, she told him furiously that it was all jealousy. She did not care for them at all. She vowed to make all those who laughed lick the ground at her feet and to teach Paris what it was to be a grand lady.

3.3.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Nine

This chapter describes how Nana uses power of women to control Count Muffat and makes him dance to her tune. One cannot help admiring her despite the meanness of her behaviour. The whole episode is marked by real dramatic power.

Now we shall move on to the tenth chapter

3.4 Summary of Chapter Ten

Then Nana became a woman of fashion, a marchioness, a fine lady of the streets frequented by the upper ten, living on the stupidity and the depravity of the male sex. It was a sudden and definitive start in a new career, in the full light of the follies of wealth and of the wasteful effronteries of beauty. She reigned at once among all that were most costly. Her photographs were in all the windows, and when she passed along the Boulevards in her carriage, the crowd turned to look at her, and uttered her name with the emotion of a subject saluting its sovereign. She combined the suppleness of the adder with the nervous distinction of a throughbred cat, like an aristocracy of vice, superb and rebellious, treading Paris under foot in the manner of an all powerful mistress. She set the fashion and great ladies followed it.

Nana lived in a luxurious mansion showing herself at once at home in all the refinements of luxury like the Paris street girl who has the instinct of elegance. Zoe triumphed as the mistress of the household and feathering her own nest, yet looking after Madame's interests as honestly as possible. Labordette made himself very useful and even engaged the servants including a butler, a coachman, a cook and so on. Everything was done in princely style. The expenses were at the rate of three hundred thousand francs a year.

And Nana in the midst of all this fortune gradually settled down. She had left the theatre, after the second performance of the 'Little Theatre' leaving Bordenave to struggle as best as he could against threatened bankruptcy, in spite of the count's money. All the same she felt bitterly of her failure. Her thoughts of vengeance towards all men caused by Fontan's dirty trick did not remain for long. What did remain, however, outside her moments of anger, was an even keener appetite for sqandering money, aw natural disdain for the man who paid, a perpetual caprice for devouring and destroying, a pride in the ruin of her lovers.

Nana commenced by setting clearly the programme of her relations with Count Muffat. He gave her twelve thousand francs a month without counting presents and only asked in return an absolute fidelity. Though she swore to be faithful she insisted on complete freedom and respectful status and treatment as the mistress of the household. He himself should come only at stated hours. At the end of the first month the count respected her.

Soon Nana influenced Muffat in a good natured manner cheering him up, taking an interest in his family affairs etc. But when Muffat told her that he thought Dauguenet was going to ask for his daughter's hand Nana flew into passion and abused him lavishly. She told him coarsely that she had been Daguenet's mistress. Naturally the count became very pale.

Nana managed to extract extra pocket money- a few thousand francs every month- by retaining Count Xavier de Vandeuvres on the conditions of entire liberty and love at fixed times. Muffat suspected nothing. Then Nana's establishment was indeed complete.

One morning when Muffat was still in the bedroom, Zoe ushered George Hugon, all in tremble into the dressing room where Nana was changing her undergarments. Nana had to struggle herself free from the young man's smothering kisses. She scolded both George and Zoe. George told her that his mother had let him leave Les Fondettes thinking that he had got over his infatuation for her. As soon as he reached Paris he hastened in a cab to kiss his darling sweetheart as quickly as possible. She warned him that she was not free and so he must be good. She explained that he must never call in the morning but could come in the afternoon between four and six o' clock when she received company. The truth was she no longer felt for Geroge as she did before. How ever, he came promptly at four o' clock every afternoon looking so sad that she often yielded.

Madame Hugon surely heard of her boy's new fall into the power of that bad woman for she hurried to her elder son Lieutenant Philippe for his assistance. George, fearing the employment of force, went and blurted out about Philippe to Nana so much that she ended by thinking a little of the lieutenant. One morning as George was alone with Nana Philippe actually went there.

Nana made George hide in the bedroom and received Philippe after making him wait for fifteen minutes . Poor George was desperate and trembling and imagined the worst. Zoe who came in put some linen in a cupboard assured that Madame would settle everything all right. Poor Zizi imagined that Nana was still crying. The ruffian Philippe must have slapped her. So when he ran back to the door and again held his ear to the key hole, he was quite bewildered for the heard a sudden burst of gaiety, tender voices, whispering etc. Almost at once Nana and Philippe appeared looking cordial and familiar. She assured him that all was settled. George's brother was a nice fellow and that he behaved like a man of the world. George turned pale when she told him that he was coming again, for she had invited him.

George was at first shocked when he saw his brother at Nana's. However, as Philippe called every day he began to get used to his presence. He did feel an uneasy shame on seeing him free with Nana who was radiant with joy.

One afternoon when the two Hugons were there, Count Muffat called outside his regular hours. But he went away on hearing from Zoe that Madame was with friends. Later that night, he had great difficulty in obtaining forgiveness. She told him that she did not wish to be talked about. Gradually, she made him accept the presence of George, Philippe etc. The Hugons, Vendeuvres and Muffat then openly belonged to the establishment where they met together as intimate friends. Nana even told Muffat that if any of those men forgot themselves, she would have them turned out of the house at once.

Yet in the midst of ther luxury with men and money surrounding her everywhere and all the time,Nana was bored to death. She felt a void somewhere; a vacancy that made her yawn. Her life was characterized by the monotony of surfeit and certainty. Her great diversion was to go to a her aunt's to see her

little Louis. Once in a fortnight she would be smitten by a rage to see him and would go loaded with lots of presents and full of the tenderness of a good mother. Her aunt too was overjoyed to bask in the niece's luxury and generosity. Generally she reserved Sunday for her family. Poor little Louis was always ill. He was nearly three years old but he had an attack of eczema at the back of his neck. When she saw him looking so pale, she was greatly surprised. What could be matter with him to be sick like that? She, his mother, was always so well.

Solitude made Nana sad at once, for she found herself again with the empty feeling and the tedium of her own society. She would constantly sum up her life in this cry between two yawns:'Oh! How men bore me". Then one afternoon she saw Satin on her way back from a concert and picked her up in spite of what the world would say. From that time Satin became her vice. And afternoons full of tenderness commenced between the two women-caressing words were heard, and kisses broken with suppressed laughter. Then one night it became serious. Nana who was so disgusted at Laure's now began to understand. She was quite upset and greatly enraged, the more so because Satin disappeared on the morning of the fourth day, seized with a longing for the open air and her favourite pavements.

Nana flew into a real rage, went to Laure's and managed to carry off Satin after making the other woman tipsy. Inside the carriage she bit Satin andthreatened to kill her if she ran away again. And then the same thing kept continually occurring. Madame Robert wrote some abominable anonymousw letters to her rival's (Nana's) lovers.

One morning in a very agitated state Count Muffat showed Nana an anonymous letter which accused her of being unfaithful to the count with Vandeuvres and the two Hugons. She energetically swore that it was false. The letter also recounted her connection with Satin in the most ignoble terms. She offered to settle the marriage for him on the condition that on the wedding day he must bring the hand sel of his innocence (inaugural gift) to Nana. Daguenet readily agreed.

Once there was a dinner party at Nana's. The count came early. He needed eighty thousands francs to rid the young woman of two or three debts and to present her with a set of sapphires. The matter was arranged. During dinner Nana was annoyed to think that all the amount was to be paid away to trades people. She became sentimental and began to praise the joys of poverty. She and Satin started remembering their young days, much to embarrassment of the men. She openly said that her mother was a washer woman and her father used to get drunk and he died from it. Nana shouted at the servants and created a big row. She scolded the men for teasing Satin. She spent some time talking to the men. She said she liked noble and tender books which elevated her soul. All the while George was feeling frightfully jealous of Philippe in the matter of Nana.

Nana had to console Zoe who was crying because earlier she had called her a fool. Nana readily kissed her and gave her address. She also sent the other servants a louis as a pledge of reconciliation. Satin threatened to go away. After some time the men left. As the count sat beside Nana she enquired about Estelle. She insisted that the must marry her off to Daguenet. The count agreed. Then when he spoke of going to bed she protested she was not well. Just before leaving the count presented her with the sapphires which he had intended to hide at the bottom of the bed and thus become a surprise gift. He merely received a half-hearted thanks for it.

Having sent everyone, the two females enjoyed themselves. Satin spoke of a raving beauty who after years of successful prostitution had finally become a wreck. Never before had Nana felt so strongly the power of her sex as on that night she remarked that one was right in availing oneself of every opportunity when one was young.

3.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Ten

This chapter describes Nana's life as a rich lady of fashion. Note the way she manipulates all the men including her benefactor Muffat to dance to her tune and not to oppose her. Her sense of emptiness, her uncontrollable urge for Satin are well brought out. Her fear of life ending badly for a prostitute like her also is hinted.

Now we shall proceed to Chapter Eleven

3.5 Summary of Chapter Eleven

The race for the Grand Prize of Paris was to be run in the Bois De Boulogne, one Sunday in June. Nana, very excited, arrived there very grandly, like a queen wearing the colours of the Vendeuvres stable. She had amused herself by bringing the dog Bijoy and little Louis. She was talking loudly to Philippe and George Hugon. She was telling them of her quarrel with Muffat. He was too religious for her taste.

The mignons arrived. Nana told the Hugon brothers about M.Venot. He had requested her to unite Muffat with his family, Nana said that she should be delighted to see the whole lot of them happy. Besides, it would give her rest, for there were days when Muffat was really too tiresome. Her weariness of the last few months escaped her in that cry from her heart. Moreover, he was in dire financial straits. They saw Contess Sabine seated with her daughter Estelle. Daguenet was going towards them. They discussed the approaching marriage of Daguenet and Estelle.

The space around was rapidly filling up. Labordette, Gaga, Clarisse, and Blanche arrived. Nana sent for Labordette, and talked to him about betting. Labordette, without explaining why, advised her to trust his instinct. He was nicknamed the king of the sporting prophets, for he was well informed in the matters of stables and horse racing.

Carriages s[illegible] continued to arrive. Nana was astounded to see Simone arrive in a trap with Steiner, and the girl was resplendent with diamonds. She exchanged a bow with them from a distance. She saw old Tricon who stood, commanding a full view of he crowd; she was an inveterate gambler and was mad about horses. La Faloise, who had inherited his uncle's fortune and had become an extraordinarily fashionable young man hastened to Nana ignoring Gaga and Clarisse and abruptly declared that she was his Juliet now. Wanting to bet she discussed the merits of the different horses with him. The passion for gambling possessed all.

The Hugon brothers and La Faloise betted on the horse Nana. The Empress followed by Count Muffat, and Charles the Prince of Scotland arrived. Nana spoke disdainfully about them. She had only to whistle to Charles and he would throw everything up for her. Without the external gloss, they contained only fifth and company. The animation around increased. Everyone ate and drank. Nana offered champagne to all the men who came to shake hands with her. She made her little son take an few drops and he coughed frightfully. The Mignons were not included in order to avoid a row, she invited Bordenave and he was heartily delighted. The circle increased much to the jealousy and anger of the other women. Finally to settle it all she filled her glass and raised it on high in her old posture of Venus Victorious.

Suddenly Mignon surprised her by touching her on the back. He told her not to provoke Rose too much. She had a letter written to Fauchery by Countess Sabine and she intended to send it to the Count to be avenged on him and Nana . Mignon wanted to avoid a big scandal, if he could; Nana was not perturbed.

The race for the Grand Prize was about to begin . Vendeuvres led Nana off on his arm to show her round. She noticed that he was nervous and his clear eyes seemed lighted up with little flames of fire, the same as on the night when he frightened her by talking of burning himself in his stable with his horses. He was very troubled and ill tempered unlike his usual polite self. If his horses did not win that day it would mean a regular collapse. And Nana, as everyone also knew, was the man-detroyer , who had finished him. Eight days before she had made him promise her a chateau and he made it a point of honour to keep his word.

On entering the enclosure, the forbidden spot, Nana walked with studied poise staring

at the ladies especially countess Sabine. She remarked loudly that Muffat standing up near the Empress looked stupid. She wished to see everything. She recognised the Marquise de Chouard. On meeting the book matters Vandeuvres exchanges some words which Nana hardly understood. He seemed more nervous than ever and placed her abruptly under Labordette's care and went inside. On returning she told her friends that the enclosure was all humbug. Gaga had come to her carriage for the sake of being near La Faloise. She talked about her troubles.

The sounds of a quarrel caused them to stand up. People were getting excited about the race and arguing about the relative merits of different horses. Nana was all excited over the horse which bore her name. When that horse won and people applauded. "Nana! Long live Nana", she felt they were applauding her. Labordette told her that she had won two thousand louis. But the money affected her less than that unexpected victory, the splendour of which had made her queen of Paris, the other women had all lost. And Nana's court grew larger and larger. Mignon, Steiner, old Tricon, Brodenave, all applauded her. Rose continued to give her black looks. But Nana was so intoxicated with the joy that she applauded herself.

The races were drawing to a close. Vandeuvres' name was frequently uttered in the midst of squabbles. Rumours were that he was done for. A little later Labordette confirmed the rumour. That night at Mabille Nana met with a colossal success. When she arrived towards ten o' clock she was surrounded by all the gallant youth of the capital, an aristocratic company of women with bare shoulders etc. who all walked round and yelled, stimulated by drinking on a gigantic scale. Nana was seized inspite of her struggles, and three gentleman carried her in triumph into the garden. It was not until Tuesday that Nana felt quite recovered from the emotions of her victory. Her aunt told her that her son had been unwell since his outing.

Veneuvres, warned off all the race courses, his name withdrawn, had on the next morning set fire to his stable, and had been burned with his horses. Nana simply remarked that the young fellow was a regular mad man. She could not regret much. Labordette, who had been collecting her winnings for her entered. She was angry that he had not brought the entire amount. He said that those ancient families always came to grief in a ridiculous manner. Nana replied that Vandeuvres ended grandly. It was not fair to accuse her of being the cause of his death as Blanche put it. She did not ask him to steal. If he had told her that he had nothing more she would have simply told him that they could part. However, the closing scene was indeed grand.

Labordette gave a low whistle of incredulity. He had not believed in Vandeuvere's death. One person swore that he had seen him get out through a window. A man who behaved so stupidly with women, so empty headed, was not capable of dying on such a grand style. Nana's illusions were dispelled as she listened to him.

3.5.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eleven

This chapter describes Nana's unexpected triumph at the race course and the tragic but inevitable collapse of Count Vandeuvres. The incident highlights her squandering nature, her weakness for cheap popularity and her utter callousness at the news of the Count burning himself. We also get a premonition about her little son's untimely, impending death.

Let us pass on to chapter twelve.

3.6 Summary of chapter Twelve

It was one o'clock in the morning and Nana and the count in the big bed hung with Venetian lace were not asleep. He had returned that evening, after sulking for three days. Ever since that morning she had complained of an uneasiness and all her stupid ideas of death and hell had been secretly tormenting her. She fell upon the count's chest sobbing that she was afraid to die. The count himself was afraid of catching her mad fears and tried to reason with her. Today the sight of her nudity in the mirror only increased her fears of death. She was obsessed with death and its ugliness.

Two days later when Muffat came his eyes were red with weeping. Zoe told him to hurry, a madame had nearly died the previous night. Nana was three months pregnant and suddenly the previous night she had miscarriage. It was George who told this news, full of astonishment and emotions of La Faloise, Steiner, Philippe and several others who called: All the men had conversed in undertones and each one wondered if he were the father!At first they seemed apologetic. Then they assumed their airs again. It was her fault entirely. She was a scorcher, that Nana.

Muffat went up to see Nana. Satin who had been reclining on the sofa displayed a cold rage exclaiming that it served Nana right; it would be a lesson for her. Nana spoke tenderly of the child as though he had been the father and the count was surprised at the paternity. She asked him what was troubling him. He started sobbing. She understood that Rose had ended by sending the letter.

Nana spoke tenderly and affectionately to comfort him. He said he intended to thrash the man and sue his wife for a separation. She made him see the folly of both actions. She explained to him that what really bothered him was that he himself deceived his wife. With what would he reproach her? She would say that he himself set the example. She told him that he must make it up with his wife; otherwise it would give her a bad reputation. She continued thus giving him the best advice. She, however, did not talk of breaking off.

Count Muffat was in severe financial difficulties. Besides Nana's innumerable claims, there was most wasteful expenditure going on in his own house, for on their return from Les Fondettes, the countess had suddenly developed an appetite for worldly enjoyment which was rapidly devouring their fortune. In order to pay off the hundred thousand francs for Nana's bill, the only way out seemed to sell a magnificent estate which the countess had inherited from an uncle. He had determined to ask for her consent the previous night when the blow fell in the form of the letter.

Countess Sabine had wished her daughter's marriage contract to be signed in a grand party to which five hundred invitations had been sent. The old friends of the count's mother wondered at the total change in the set up of the Muffat household. Sabine was too richly dressed up exhibiting her gold and diamonds. The count appeared to obey her and so on. Estelle was as cold and impassive as ever. Steiner and La Faloise also came. Vandeuvres's name was taken with the greatest disdain.

Nana's arrival and her role in arranging the marriage were talked about. The marquis de Chouard appeared there looking quite haughty. Scandalised by count Muffat's conduct , he had publicly broken all connections with him and pretended to attend the function because of the request of Estelle. The old women discussed how Nana had bewitched Muffat, how he was in debt, how Sabine too was to blame, etc. Overhearing their conversation M.Venot assured them not to despair. Providence would have its hour.

Madame Hugon said with her tolerating air that they ought to forgive a great deal in others, when they wished themselves worthy of pardon. She added that certain faults deserved no pardon. It was by such compliances that society tottered on its foundations.

La Faloise tried to discomfit his cousin Fauchery by asking whether her things were good. Fauchery managed to laugh it away, but he was really upset because in addition that morning Rose had told him during a quarrel that she had sent the letter.

The orchestra was playing the waltz of the "Blonde Venus". Fauchery first bowed to the countess, who smiled, serenely delighted. Count Muffat that night maintained his haughly gravity. For some seconds the two men looked at each other; it was Fauchery who first held out his hand, Muffat clasped it. Their hands were locked one in the other. They were thus reconciled.

It was on the night of the wedding at the church that count Muffat appeared in his wife's bedroom which he had not entered for two years past. He was very embarrassed.

Preserving her smile of intoxication, she gave him a little lecture. Neither ventured on a complete explanation. She at once consented to selling the estate Les Bordes. Both needed money badly. They would share the proceeds. That completed the reconciliation. Muffat experienced a real relief in spite of his remorse.

That day as Nana was dozing towards two o' clock, Daguenet forced his way in and announced in a jocular way that the had come to give her commisiion for his marriage the handsel of his innocence! Nana had totally forgotten the matter. She asked him to kiss her a lot, as it would perhaps be for the last time. They made merry, though pressed for time. Daguenet was to leave with his wife directly after the wedding breakfast.

3.6.1 Critical Comments on Chapter twelve.

This chapter highlights the powerful role played by Nana not only in wrecking families but reuniting estranged relations. Is it her manipulative skill or dies it indicate an iota of goodness in her nature? Or it is thoughtless perversity?

Let us move to the next chapter.

3.7 Summary of Chapter Thirteen

One evening when Count Muffat came to Nana's bedroom he was shocked to find her reclining in George's arms. All denial on their part was impossible. She was exasperated at being caught like that. She apologized and tried to console Muffat. He merely insisted on George being sent away. But all illusion was gone; he could not longer believe in Nana's sworn fidelity and he lived in the torment of possessing her though he was frightened at the idea of living without her.

This was the epoch of her existence when Nana brightened Paris with an increase of splendour. She became more imposing still on the horizon of vice; she domineered over the city with the insolent display of her luxury, with her contempt for money, which caused her to publicly melt away fortunes. Never before had a mania for expense been seen. The servants thrived happily. She broke and destroyed everything. She still nursed a last caprice, namely, to redecorate her bedrooms, Costing several thousands francs which Muffat was to present her with as a New Year gift.

In spite of his ever flowing river of gold, Nana was constantly without money had to borrow constantly from Zoe, Philippe and so on. She had been emptying his pockets for three months so that he did not call whenever there was a crisis. She started asking him for loans and Philippe who had been made a captain and pay master of his regiment would oblige. On her saints day he brought her a delicate old Saxon China comfit box mounted with gold which she carelessly let fall and it broke. She then began to laugh and Philippe was upset. It had cost him quite a bit to buy it. However yielding to her intoxicating kisses he cheered up. She coaxed him to bring her more money the next day. Philippe wanted Nana to marry him. The idea seemed ludicrous to her. George had heard all this through the key- hole and he was filled with a murderous hate for his brother.

Towards midday Madam Hugon received the shocking news that Philippe had been in prison since the previous evening accused of having stolen twelve thousand francs from the regimental chest. The old lady cursched by her child's crime uttered at first a cry of rage against Nana. Not seeing George in his room she feared a second misfortune.

Ever since the morning Nana had nothing "except financial" worries. She had a number of bills to pay but was left with no money. Towards two o' clock Labordette brought designs for the bedstead and it was a pleasant diversion. She told him that her "little Muff"(Muffat) would pay for the bedroom decoration, what ever be the cost. When she asked for a petty loan, Labordette did not oblige. Having no other go she hastily dressed to go to old Trison'. After all, her body could fetch her money as an when she needed.

Just then George appeared and expressed his jealously towards his brother. He was upset when Nana confessed that she was Philippe's mistress. Then she left him. When alone he took from the dressing room a pair of sharply pointed scissors and waited patiently for an hour. On her return he asked

her if she would marry him. She simply slammed the door in his face. With one hand he opened it; then the thrust the scissors into his chest. Nana was reized with fear. The youngster had struck himself a second blow. Nana was too frightened. By then Madame Hugon came there. Nana stammered that the boy had killed himself as she refused to marry him. The old lady stooped down and touched him. She felt his heart beat. The grief stricken mother told Nana that she had done them much harm. She insisted on talking her son away from that house though it killed him.

A little later Count Muffat came there. Nana seemed especially anxious to prove her innocence. She neither told Philippe to steal nor drive George to kill himself. Muffat was greatly affected, his thoughts full of that mother weeping for her two children. He knew her great heart. Nana insisted that he should run and bring her news about George. Muffat did so and returned with the news that the little fellow was not dead and that they even hoped to save his life. Then she changed at once to a great joy: However much she cleaned, Zoe could not get the blood stain (of George)' from the carpet. Nana remarked that the footsteps would wear it away.

Count Muffat has sworn never to return to Nana. He looked on Philippe's and George's calamity as foreboding his own ruin. But it was only a temporary emotion. He felt that she lied. One morning when he observed Foucerment leaving her house at a rather peculiar hour, he sought an explanation which sent her into a fit of a passion. She made it clear that when a man pleased her she would have him there. She opened the door but he did not go. Thus she wielded absolute power over the count.

His reconciliation with his wife has made Muffat's home unbearable. The countess cast off by Fauchery sought forgetfulness in other amours. Since her marriage Estelle had not seen her father. She had suddenly developed into a woman with an iron will so absolute that Daugenet trembled before her; now he accompanied her to church, converted, and furious with his father in law who was running them with an abandoned female. M.Venot alone remained affectionate towards the count.

Count Muffat put up with Nana's worst taunts and insults. They had continual quarrels over money as she openly abused him. They did not even want him any longer in the court. The Empress had said, "He is too disgusting" Nana flung the same remark to his face. She started doing as she pleased without the least constraint. Though he knew of these goings on, the count pretended to be ignorant and suffered in silence.

Nana's mansion was fast becoming a regular hell, a madhouse. She had arrived at the point of battling with her servants. One after the other, they left her. Nana's moods were terrible. All sorts of people were hanging around the place at all times, Nana deceived Satin the way she deceived the count, having a rage for the most monstrous crazes, picking up girls from the street corners. Singular its of revolt, however, still took possession of the count but Labordette reasoned with his not to fight against any one for Nana. All Paris would laugh at him.

In a few months Nana devoured her long procession of gentleman, one after the other. Foucarment did not did not last a fortnight. She hastened Steiner's downfall by the most lavish expenditure. She returned him to the pavement sucked to the bone. He went crazy. Her next victim was La Faloise. She scoffed at the idea when he wanted her to marry him.

When Nana found Muffat extremely humble, her triumph became tyrannical. She instinctively had a rage for debasting everything. She polluted everything. She destroyed everything. She would feast herself with the sight of the idiotic count's infamy. Little by little she seemed overwhelmed by a sort of madness. She treated him like an animal, goaded him and persuaded him with kicks. And the muff delighted in his naseness and realized the enjoyment of being a brute.

One night as Muffat came to Nana's house, Zoe remarked that madame was going mad. He was shocked to see near Nana a shameful and decrepit object, the Marquis de Chouard in his night shirt. This last sight

of licentiousness has smitten him with imbecility. Nana chucked Muffat out and shut the door: This was really too much for him. He was desperate. He found comfort in M.Venot. However, the priest told him the shocking news that countess Sabine had crowned her follies by eloping with a young man employed at a large linen draper's a frightful scandal of which all Paris was already gossiping.

Muffat was totally ruined, totally abandoned by his wife and daughter. He once more returned to the strict duties of religion. Sabine, corrupted by Nana's promise couseness, incited to extremes, became the very canker of home. When she returned home, the count took her back in the resignation of Chirstian pardon.

Mignon approached Zoe to find out if she would be his wife's maid. Zoe said that she was leaving madame to set up her own business. She was going to acquire old Tricon's business. He was totally stunned by Nana's gorgeous bedroom. She had shaken Paris and built up that fortune beneath which dead bodies were slumbering- all with a little of her delicate nudity. He was simply enraptured.

Little by little Nana had become very sorrowful. The meeting of the marquis and the count, Satin's illness and impending death, Zoe's notice to quit were all causes. Labordette came and told her that George was dead. She burst into sobs. She was full of self- reproach. She had ruined them all. She was an abominable woman. Her suffering was stifling her. Then she became indignant. She gave all, she had never wanted to be unpleasant to any of them. It was they who were always hanging about her skirts.

Nana continued her justification and onslaught. She never led them on. She never married any of them though she could, have. Daguenet refused to acknowledge her. Society was badly constructed. The women were refused, when it was the men who were entirely to blame. She wanted to know if there was any fault of hers in all that.

Nana met Mignon who complimented her on her abode. She then went off to see Satin in the hospital. " No one ever loved me as she did" , remarked, and the two then smiled. Her works of ruin and death was accomplished, the fly had taken its flight from the fifth of the slums carrying with it the ferment of social decay had poisoned those men merely by touching them. It was good, it was just, she had avenged her people the rogues and the vagabonds from whom she sprang. Neither her beauty not her mansion seemed to matter. She only wanted too commence again. She dreamed too, of something, better: to kiss Stain a last time.

3.6.1 Critical Comments an Chapter Twelve

This Chapter highlights the extreme potential of Nana to destroy and demolish. We witness her innumerable lovers being smashed and crushed one after the other. She tries to justify herself and prove her innocence. What do you feel about her stand? Is the guilty ? Or is her justification acceptable?

Now we come to the last chapter of the novel.

3.7. Summary of Chapter Fourteen

Nana abruptly disappeared- another plunge, a wild prank, a flight into strange lands. Before her departure she auctioned everything including the mansion, the furniture, jewellery, dresses and the linen, and made more than six hundred thousand francs. For a last time Paris had seen her in a fairy piece "Melusine" at the Gaiety Theatre. It was a dumb part; all show but a real hit. Then in the midst of this great success the simply left for Cairo, for she desired to see the Turks.

Months passed by. Nana was forgotten. The strangest stories of her caprices and debauchery were circulated about her. A legend gradually developed. In the unknown far off lands, she assumed the mysterious radiance of an idol covered with precious stones.

Then one July evening eight o' clock Lucy Stewart told Caroline Hequet that Nana had returned, and was probably dead while they were talking at the Grand Hotel, of small pox. Nana had returned from Russia. At her aunt's place she found her baby ill with small pox; he died the next day of it, for he had

never been wellfed or looked after. She met Mignon who promised to look after her affairs. By that time Nana herself became sick. Surprisingly Rose's heart melted and she had Nana removed to the Grand Hotel, so that she might die in a grand place. Rose had already spent three nights with her and might very likely die of it later.

They reached the Grand Hotel. During the day, the corps Legislatif had voted for a declaration of War. Mignon was standing in the portico looking nervous. The idea that Rose might lose her beauty by risking herself to small pox infection exasperated him. Fauchery joined them. Then the two men invited each other to go up. Fontan who first contemplated shaking hands with the poor woman hearing she was sick, withdrew at once on hearing the word small pox. Indeed, it was no joke catching small pox. It could be fatal; it could leave ugly scars.

The night was advancing, the crowd was becoming thicker. Voluntary soldiers were being enlisted for defending the father-land. They saw count Muffat sitting in front of the hotel hiding his face in his handkerchief. He had been sitting there since morning. As he was about to go upstairs and enquire about Nana just as he had been doing every half hour, the door keeper told him abruptly that Nana died just a minute ago.

The news of Nana's death was a blow for all of them. They gave went to their shock and grief. Mignon was relieved that Rose would at last come down. Lucy followed by Caroline and Blanch at last reached Room No.401 on the fourth floor. Gaga, Simone Clarisse and Rose were already there. Rose had been weeping. She remarked that Nana was altered. The females discussed Nana's immense wealth; who would inherit them? Perhaps the aunt? Nana had obstinately refused to have her inherit, bearing her some ill-will for the death of her young son. Then they all pitied the poor child full of disease, one of those brats who never wanted to be born.

Gloomy ideas possessed them in the severity of that chamber of death:Maria Blonde as wekll as Bordenave, Daguenet, Labordette, Prulliere and others came on hearing of Nana's death. The men lapsed into politics and strategy. The women also discussed whether to leave France or join the army. It was Gaga who spotted Fauchery at a distance. He had been in cited by Mignon to call back Rose. The men were standing on the pavement. Rose was perhaps the most affected. She said that Nana's death had been a great shock to her. "We were not very nice to each other", she lamented.

The dead body was beginning to fill the room with a feartful stench. There was quite a panic after such a long period of unconcern: A bright light suddenly illuminated the face of the deceased. It was horrible. They shuddered and hastened away. Nana was left alone; a mass of matter and blood, a shovelful of putrid flesh, thrown there on the cushion. The pustules has invaded the whole face and the features were no longer recognizable. One of the eyes had completely disappeared, while the other looked like a black and tainted hole. On this horrible and grotesque mass of nothiness , the beautiful hair, retaining its sun-like fire fell in a stream of gold. Venus was decomposing. It seemed as if the virus gathered by her from the gutters that ferment with which she has poisoned a people has ascended to her face and rotted it.

3.7.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Fourteen.

This chapter brings the dramatic story of Nana to a terrible close. How does the end appeal to you? Did Nana deserve this nemesis? Observe the reactions of her "friends" to her death. The description of Nana's corpse speaks very well for Zola's powerful, piercing style.

Read the above study material carefully a number of times. Make yourself familiar with Nana's character and activities. Aren't you stunned at the way she demolishes family reputation and wealth and sends her victims, one after another, into the jaws of death and destruction? But is Nana solely to blame? The theme of prostitution has always been a fertile one in all literature. As long as man lacks self-control and indulges in immoral pleasures, there will be several Nanas to lure them. In other words, Zola has presented in this classic a universal theme, a perennial theme, and that too with great mastery of handling.

UNIT 4

NANA: A CRITICAL STUDY

4.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1) Understand various aspects of Zola's Nana and
2) Make and overall estimate of the novel and its author

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Before you begin to read this unit it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous Units. If you do so you will be able to form you own impressions of the novel, its plot, the characters, the atmosphere and so on. Then, when you read this unit, you will be able to appreciate the several aspects of NANA.

Let us study those aspects one by one.

4.2 Plot Outline

A coarse picture of the life and death of a courtesan forms the subject matter of this classic novel. This is a realistic story of a woman who tempted rich men to leave their fortunes, their titles and their honours. They were ever at her beck and call. She had seductive beauty and a devouring passion in the flame of which many erring mortals got grievously burnt, and ultimately she herself was consumed by the flame of her own passion. Nan, the voluptuous young woman with a violent and extravagant temperament, existed in a world of her own. Fortunes she squandered, reputations she ruined, and her prosperity she displayed ostentatiously. And the inevitable happened. From the Zenith of her power , she fell into the final degradation and degeneration.

Read the units 2 and 3 in the light of the above sketch outline. You can easily fill it out to get the whole plot.

How is the plot presented? Let us see.

4.3 Method of Narration.

There are several methods of narrating the plot in a novel. They are the direct, the autobiographical, the epistolary (in the form of letters) the stream-of-consciousness method and so on. You may refer to the glossary of literary terms to know more about each.

The method of narration employed in the novel "Nana" is the direct or epic method in which the novelist plays the role of the historian narrating the story from outside. Nana is a well made novel with a proper beginning, a middle and an end. The story of Nana's rise and fall is narrated in a directly chronological manner. Each chapter deals with a distinct episode, event or development, which logically leads to the next. It is an organic novel and hance has coherence, continuity and unity. Direct narration is blended with effective dialogue so that the plot moves smoothly forward.

4.4 Decadence.

The seeds of Decadence were sown in the transitional period in Western literature from 1870 to 1900. Decadence was an aesthetic of transition expressing a crisis in values and language in the Western world.The movement emphasized sexual experimentation, deliberate inversion of conventional moral, social and artistic norms, bizarre subject matter and attitudes and so on. The meaning of the term as here perceived seems most gravely ingrained in the chief writings of such prominent novelists as Dostoevsky, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Conrad and of course Emile Zola (please refer to the glossary for more details).

Let us see how Zola defined Decadence in his writings, particularly in "Nana".

4.5 The Hyperbole of Consumption in "Nana"

In his panoramic view of French society in the wake of the Franco-Prussian war Emile Zola created a clear definition of decadence by associating it with indulgence and the loss of control. As Suzanne Nalbantion observes: "His depiction of material excess was to be stylistic not thematic, the tone moral not moralistic, as he evinced the mechanism of that decadence". In tune with his times he

CUP/5026/1000/SDE—7

used as a physiological metaphor in his novels like *Geminal* and *Nana*, the germ of consumption to illustrate the enlargement process of his artistic expression to which social reality was subject in his fiction. Through that hyperbole or exaggerated metaphor, he actually isolated and catalysed the elements of his conception of Western decadence which highlighted the contagious quality of an excess whose overall persuasiveness cut through class structures and social distinctions; a germ or a fly so to speak which assaulted and affected all the levels of society. The consumption- ailment which debilitates the whole- can be identified as the major symptom of Decadence. "In society as in the human body, there exists a solidarity which unites the different parts, tying together the different organs such that if one organ decays all the others are affected and a very complex sickness is announced" (Mitteransd). In concentrating on physical analogies such as the body in "Nana" Zola featured agents of hyperbolic consumption. Suzzanne Natbantain writes:

"In the case of "Nana" often regarded as an ornamental period piece of the second Empire's blatant "Corruption", it can be seen how the heroine's white body specifically becomes the target of the hyperbole. Nana enacts the "nervous exaggeration of the sexual instinct". Her personality is indeed subservient to her physically as she becomes the personification of sensual excess. The individual character surpasses its individual significance as it assumes a mythical dimension, conceptualizing whoredom. Character has lost its concreteness here not because it has become a pale paradigm of failure but because it has become a powerful conglomerate of sensual forces and has attained a mythic role. Zola obtains an overt and uncontrolled sensuality debilitating an entire social corpus, the literal and spectacular way in which Nana is shown infecting and destroying an entire society is the effect of stylistic exaggeration. She becomes a living emblem of appetite and waste as she "feeds" irresponsibly upon the men in her life and is never satiated. The consumption analogy with sexuality here receives prime treatment.

"What remained in the hours when she was not indignant, was an ever open appetite of expenditure along with a natural contempt for the man who was paying, and a constant caprice of consumption and waste which took pride in the ruin of her lovers". (Text)

Zola brings a series of victims to Nana's caprices from various segments of society including journalists, bankers counts etc. and hyperbolizes her magnetic power of attraction. Her most symbolic conquest is that of Count Muffat. She becomes there a catalyst for the decay of the aristocracy. In the metaphor of the golden fly, she is reported to be the agent of corruption as she spreads the squalor form the people to the aristocracy: "corrupting and dis organising Paris between her white thighs"(Text) it is as if Zola is demonstrating as literally as possible his dictum:" if one organ decays all the others are affected and a very complex sickness is announced". From the sordid presentation of Nana's dealings with all her customers the contagious disease of her corrupting nature becomes evident.

You might have heard the name of Zola being associated with "Naturalism" and the "Experimental Novel". Let us study some thing about those aspects now.

4.6 Naturalism and Zola's experimental novel

In 1880 Zola had firmly proclaimed a manifesto of Naturalism in his treatise on the "experimental novel" adapting the findings of Claude Bernard and the Positivists to his conception of the novel. There he has stated in principle that the rigours of scientific truth were to be brought in the novel form. Supporters of Naturalism believe that a person inherits compulsive instincts- especially hunger, the accumulative drive and sexuality-and is then subject to the social and economic forces in the family, the class, and the milieu into which that person is born. The experimental novel developed by Zola is a novel organized in the mode of a scientific experiment on the behaviour of the characters it depicts. He tried to present his subjects with scientific objectivity and with elaborate documentation sometimes including an almost medical frankness about

activities and bodily functions usually unmentioned in earlier literature. He chooses characters like Nana who exhibit strong animal drives such as greed and sexual desire and who are victims of both glandular secretions within and sociological pressures without. The end of the naturalistic novel is usually "tragic" but not as in classical and Elizabethan tragedy because of a heroic but losing struggle of the individual mind and will against gods, enemies amid circumstances. Instead the protagonist of the naturalist plot, a pawn to multiple compulsions, usually distintegrates, or is wiped out.

"Nana" is a typical instance of an experimental novel. The entire novel is pivoted on the character and actions of this Parisian prostitute who seeks to destroy and gets demolished in the process. Her unending onslaughts on the men who hang on to her petticoat are evidently motivated by her voluptuousness as well as avarice. The more she gets, the more she consumes. Zola paints and portrays everything with such clinical accuracy that even if it may seem objectionable or indelicate to puritanical readers, he cannot be found fault with on the score of truth. From the sordid grounds of Naturalism a leap to symbolization occurs in the presentation of this alluring and supernatural character that vividly engulfs a whole society. Her destructive force reflects the failings of that society.

So how can you sum up the character of Nana? Let us make an attempt.

4.7 Character of Nana

Nana is the titular heroine of Zola's classic novel. The word heroine can be interpreted only to mean the main female protagonist. She is portrayed as an abandoned woman, careless, callous out to destroy, men's reputation as well as wealth. Her victims range from journalists to bankers, poor actors to aristocrats, very young boys to old men, old enough to be at least her father. But as she puts it frequently it is not she who goads or tempts them; initially it is the men who wish to hang on to her. They put up with all her tantrums and moods and wait like willing slaves for an occasional condescension on her part to satisfy their sexual appetite. The classic example is her relation with count Muffat. None other than such a muff would go back to her after the filthy way she treats him.

Nana appears as a symbol of revenge the way she destroys one victim after another: Vandeuvres, Steiner, young George Hugon his brother Philippe and of course the count. She has no prick of conscience in breaking their gifts and hearts, on squandering their wealth and reputation. She cares nothing for aristocracy. She is aware of the moral hypocracy and double standards of aristocrats and genteel folk and derives special pleasure in abusing them and destroying them.

Zola has created a living natural creature of sexual excess in the person of Nana. It is the very reality of the social decay that is the target of his stylistic expression of sensuality. Suzanne Nalbantian observes:"If Nana is mythic rather than individualized her character is stylized by exaggerated poses. Though written earlier Nana seems to amalgamate the sensual forces and drives which surface sporadically in Grtminal (written in 1885). The repeated metonymic images of her haunches, neck and bed are the realistic parts which undergo hyperbolic treatments and create a cult of sexuality. The Byzantine bed outrageously replaces the altar, the self- infatuation of the narcissistic prototype, a kind of Salome of femme fatale captured in physical terms."

The presentation of Nana in her boudoir receives an arabesque and ornamental treatment comparable to the elaborate sequences and detailed descriptions that were designated as true decadent style by the Aesthetic stylists of the term. But the Dionysian ecstasy which the character Nana achieves in her self contemplation is devoid of creative energy because of her compulsive self consciousness. Instead it leads to destruction evidenced by the facts of the narrative. One of her liaisons results in marriage: "And the final images of Nastasya in the "The Idiot" and later Kurtz in "Heart of Darkness" portends the decadence of the social structure."(S.Nalbantion)

The apocalyptic paradigm also becomes associated with this work, as Nana is likened

hyperbolically to the Biblical beast of the Revelations in the mind of the infatuated count Muffat. The language used to describe Nana's bestial allure is provocative in its sensuality and visual effect. The outrageous scene in which the count prances on all fours before Nana, is remmiscent of the image of the Harlot of Babylon and her beast in the Apocalypse, identifying in the waning of Second Empire France, a paradigm of moral corruption.

But Nana is not totally vicious character. Her love for her son, though an illegitimate child, speaks very well for her. There are numerous instances of her maternal love. In fact it is this instinct that makes her risk her looks, even life trying to nurse her child affected by small pox. Another illustration is provided by her love for Satin. Though not exactly a healthy relationship there is a certain sincerity in it. She breaks down when she knows that Satin is hospitalized and is dying Again she loves George truly, at least temporarily.

Yet it is the less desirable aspects of Nana that outweigh her few virtues. True to the concept of the experimental novel she is a victim both of glandular secretions within and sociological pressures without. Flesh and money blatantly invade her character. Her body becomes the imperial throne praised and revered as it proceeds in its increasing conquest and debilitates several sectors of the ruling' class, most notably the nobility.

But can we blame Nana for all the havoc she causes? The moralist's stance will be that Nana the abandoned woman ought to the punished. Mrs. Hugon is certainly one to the take strong objection to her wicked ways. On the contrary, we have to consider two other points. Firstly, if Nana is to blame, then all her victims are equally reprehensible. As she tells count Muffat it is because he neglects her that she finds solace in Faunchery. The double standards of the high class ladies and gentleman are ruthlessly exposed and criticized by her. Secondly, she refuses to marry any one, though many propose to her desperately. She hates the men, calls them pigs yet they stick on to her. Can such a society which uses her for its pleasure blame her?

Let us now attempt a critical appreciation of the novel by considering its various aspects.

4.8. Critical Summary of "Nana"

"Nana", one of Zola's Rougan Macquart series of novels picturing French life and society in the period from 1852 to 1870 was written to portray a successful courtesan not sentimentally or romantically but realistically. As Zola presents her, Nana is moronic, vulgar, greedy and cruel, and her story is a sermon warning men against a devotion to lust. The novel is a powerful indictment of the social decay which marked the reign of Napolean III.

THE STORY

M. Fauchery, theatrical reviewer for a Paris paper, was attending the premiere of "The Blonde Venus" at the Variety Theatre because he had heard of rumour of Nana, Venus of the new play. Smart Paris was well represented at the theatre that night, and Fauchery and his cousin Hector de la Faloise noted a few of the more interesting people. In the audience were Stenier, a crooked but very rich banker who was the current lover of Rose Mignon., an actress in "The Blonde Venus"; Mignon who served as procurer for his own wife, Dauguenet a reckless spender reputed to be Nana's lover for the moment; Count Xavier devandeures ; count Muffat de Beuville and his wife, and several of the city's well known courtesans.

The play, a vulgar travesty or the life of the Olympian gods, was becoming bore some when Nana finally appeared and with beautiful golden hair floating over her shoulders walked confidently towards the footlights for her feature song. When she began to sing, she seemed such a crude amateur that murmurs and hisses were beginning to sound. But suddenly a young student exclaimed lludly that she was stunning. Everyone laughed, including Nana. It was as though she frankly admitted that she had nothing except her voluptuous self to offer. But Nana knew that was sufficient for her audience. As she ended her song she retired to the back of the stage amid a roar of applause. In the last act Nana's body was veiled only by her golden locks and

a transparent gauze. The house grew quiet and tense. Nana smiled confidently knowing that she had conquered them with her marble like flesh.

Thus Nana, product of the streets of Paris started her career as mistress of the city. To get money for her scrofulous little son, Louis, and for her own extravagant wants, she sold herself at varying prices to many men. She captivated Steiner, the banker at an all night party after her initial success as Vwenus. He bought her a country place,n La Mignotte, a league from Les Fondettes home of Madame Hugon, whose seventeen year old son George had called Nana stunning on the opening night of "The Blonde Vensus"and who had been enraptured with her at Nana's party. Nana, making no pretense of belonging exclusively of Steiner, invited a number of friends to visit her at La Mignotte.

Madam Hugon entertained count Muffat, his wife Sabine and their daughter Estelle at her home in September. George, who had been expected several times during the summer, suddenly came home: He had invited Fauchery and Daguenet for a visit. M.De Vandeuvres, who had promised for five years to come to Les Fondettes, was likewise expected. Madame Hyugon was unaware of any connection between the coming of Nana to Mignotte and the simultaneous visits of all these men to Les Fondetts.

George excused himself from his doting mother and went in the rain to Nana who found him soaking wet as she was gathering strawberries in her garden. While his clothes were drying, he dressed in some of Nana's. Despite Nana 's feeling that it was wrong to give herself to such an innocent boy she finally submitted to George's entreaties and she was faithful to him for almost a week.

Muffat who had lived a circumspect life for forty years, became increasingly inflamed by passion as he paid nightly visits to Nana's place, only to be rebuffed each time. He talked with Steiner, who likewise was being put off by Nana with the excuse that she was not feeling well. Meanwhile Muffat's wife attracted the attention of Fauchery the journalist.

Eleven of Nana's Prussian friends arrived in a group at La Mignotte. George was seen with Nana and her friends by his mother who later made him promise not to visit the actress, a promise he had no intention of keeping. His brother Phillippe, an army officer, threatened to bring him back by ears if he had anything more to do with Nana.

Being true to George was romantically pleasing, but financially it was unwise, and Nana at last gave herself to the persistent Muffat the night before she returned to Paris to see whether she could recapture the public that had acclaimed her in "The Blonde Venus". Three months later Muffat, who had taken the place of cast off George, was involved in financial troubles. During a quarrel with Nana he learnt that his wife Sabine and Fauchery were making a cuckold of him. Nana by turns is irritated or bored by Muffat and then sorry for him, chose this means of avenging herself of Fauchery who had written a scurrilous article entitled "The Golden Fly" obviously about Nana herself.

Having broken with Muffat and Steiner, Nana gave up her place in the Boulevard Hausman and went to live with the actor Fontan. But Font an became increasingly difficult and even vicious beating her night after night taking all her money. Nana returned to her old profession of street walking to pick up a few francs. After a close brush with the police, she grew more discreet. Also she left the brutal Fontan and sought a part as grand lady in a new play at the "Variety Theatre". Given the part, she failed miserably in it, but she began to play the lady in real life in a richly decorated house which Muffat purchased for her. Despite Nana's callous treatment of him, Muffat could not stay away from her.

In her mansion in the Avenue de Villiers Nana squandered money in great sums. Finding Muffat's gifts insufficient she added Count Xavier de Vandueuvres as a lover. She planned to get eight or ten thousand francs a month from him for pocket money. George Hugon reappeared, but he was less interesting than he had once been. When Phillippe Hugon tried to extricate his young brother from Nana's net, he also was caught. Nana grew bored. From the street one day

she picked up the slut Satin, who became her vice.

In a race for the grand Prize of Paris at Longchamps, Nana won two thousand louis on a horse named after her. But de Vandeuveres, who owned the filly 'Nana' as well as the favourite Lusignan lost everything through some crooked betting. He set fire to his stable and died with his horses.

Muffat found Nana in George's arms one evening in September and from that time he ceased to believe in her sworn fidelity. Yet he became more and more her abject slave, submitting meekly when Nana forced him to play woolly bear, horse and dog with her, and then mocked his ridiculous nudity. Muffat was further degraded when he discovered Nana in bed with his father-in-law, the ancient Marquis de Chouard.

George, jealous of his brother Phillippe, stabbed himself in Nana's bedroom when she refused to marry him. He died of his self inflicted wound and Nana was briefly sorry for him. This utterly evil woman also broke Phillippe. He was imprisoned for stealing army funds to spend on her.

Nana thus thrived on those she destroyed. It was fate which caught her at last. Visiting her dying son after a long absence and many conquests in foreign lands, she caught small pox from him and died horribly in a Paris hospital. The once beautiful body which had destroyed so many men lay like a rotting ruin in a deserted room as outside there sounded the French battlecry. The Franco Prussian war of 1870 had begun.

Let us now attempt an overall estimate of Emile Zola and his classic.

4.8 An overall estimate of Zola's and "Nana"

Emile Zola is one of the outstanding French novelists of the nineteenth century: He was a keen observer of human nature. He was keenly aware of socio-political issues of his times. In all his novels he treats of some social problem or the other; usually they deal with the low, basic instincts of man. In "Nana", as we have seen, he deals with the theme of prostitution in all its excesses. The reader is stunned at the way Nana wields the power of women on one and all alike, brings them to their inevitable doom.

Strong moralities and dogmatic critics may criticize "Nana" on the score of vulgarity or obscenity. But defenders of "Arts for Arts Sake" will hail the novel as a superb creation. The point to be borne in mind is that, like Flaubert, Zola too is an advocate of Naturalism and is solely concerned with the depiction of truth in all its substantial accuracy.

The nemesis that overtakes the French courtesan is extremely dramatic and speaks well for Zola's mastery of the art of fiction. If Nana had died of sexual excess, such a catastrophe would hardly have evoked much horror or sympathy in the readers' mind. She dies of small pox, and that too, caught while nursing her sick, illegitimate child; Her death disfigures and distorts her; can any punishment be worse that such a horrible end to "Venus" who destroyed lives, reputation and wealth callously? But, she had a real dread of death, Nana's death is perhaps the most dramatic and effective part of the novel, very natural and therefore very shocking.

Zola prefers the dramatic method. He lets his characters reveal themselves through their deeds and words. He does not moralise but leaves the readers to glean his moral attitude by implication. In the last analysis what makes him one of the great figures of European fiction is his poetic vision. It is his picture of the doomed world going down to destruction in flame, smoke and ashes that gives his most memorable pages their sulfurous visionary quality.

Please read the study material given in the four Units a number of times and make sure that you have understood the novel and its various aspects. Note down any idea, impression or opinion that suggests itself to you.

You may next try to prepare your own essays. Please remember: The study material can be utilized properly to write essays, but do not mistake them for prepared essays.

4.9 Questions based on Zola's "Nana"

1. The character of Nana

(Hints: A type character – a successful prostitute –" scorcher of men"- destroy young and old alike – shatters aristocracy – squanders others' wealth – some positive qualities: love for son, Satin, but over shadowed by vice – fitting Nemesis)

2. The character of Count Muffat

[Hints: His background – religious and repressed – impact of meeting Nana – conflict – steady depravity and servility at Nana's hands – a real muff – totally despicable repugnant and loathsome punished by wife and daughter-final conversion or revulsion]

3. Compare the characters of Nana and Emma Bovary

[Hints: I. Nana, a prostitute, Emma a wife and adulteress. Whose crime is greater? 2. Love of luxury and the fine things in life: Nana willfully squanders and demolishes her family 3. Love of child: Nana far better – loves Louis – courts disease and death through nursing him; Emma totally indifferent to Berthe 4. Station in life and education: Nana, a regular germ of the gutters – no education or guidance, behaviour typical; Emma: peasant family, education above station in life – victim of mass culture.

Both products of 19th century French society – violent, disastrous ends – Nemesis – naturally portrayed.

Zola's "Nana" as a study of prostitution

[Hints: Powerful, though conventional theme – apt title – metaphor of consumption – woman's power rocks and shatters aristocracy hypocrisy of the high classes – attacked by Nana – wives of immoral men making cuckolds of their husbands – morally powerful manifesto against excessive sexual desires]

Read the study material and prepare the above essays. You may also prepare essays on related topics.

You could prepare "objective type questions" and viva voice type questions. A few samples are given below.

4.10 Objectives / Viva voce type questions.

1. With which school or movement would you associate Emile Zola? (Naturalism)
2. What is the name of Nana's son? (Louis)
3. "How did George Hugon die? (Self – inflicted wound)
4. Nana's maiden role at Variety theatre: (Venus)
5. How did Vandeuvres die? (By burning himself in a stable)

You may prepare several such questions on your own.

Lesson Prepared by:

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UNIT IV

COUNT LEO NIKOLEYEWICH TOLSTOY

ANNA KARENINA

AN INTRODUCTION

Count Leo Nikoleyewich Tolstoy, author of several books, social reformer and philosopher was born on 28 August, 1828 in his family estate Yasnaya Polyana. He ranks amongst the world's greatest novelists. The Tolstoy family was an old Russian family and belonged to the class of nobles. He grew up in a large manor house circumscribed by vast tracts of forests and fields. He lost his mother when he was just twelve years old. He was the youngest of the four sons of his parents. He had a sister too. His father invited Tatyana (aunt) to help bring up the children. Tolstoy grew very fond of Aunt Tatyana. He was devoted to her.

The family moved to Moscow and Tolstoy became a total stranger to the changed, metropolitan surroundings. He was just seventeen when he lost his father too. He felt miserable. He came to hate conventional regimental school system on account of his once being punished cruelly by one of his tutors for a very minor offence. He was not a bright student, though he got his education at the University of Kazen. He used to read folklore and the "Arabian Nights".

When at eighteen he inherited his paternal land, he gave up his studies at Kazan and took residence at his ancestral home applying his mind to the pursuit of the arts.

Soon he came under the influence of Rousseau. This was purely temporary. He returned to Moscow and there he enjoyed himself eating, drinking and merry-making, gambling and chasing women. In 1851 he joined the Russian Army.

Tolstoy's first literary efforts took shape while he was serving in the army: When he completed his first story 'Childhood', it was enthusiastically accepted as a sensitive portrayal of intimate and elusive moments in a child's early life. Tolstoy maintained a meticulous record of his activities of each day of his life in the form of a diary.

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Tolstoy was disillusioned by the Crimean War. Again, after two journeys abroad, when he was depressed with the materialism and artificiality of Western Civilization, he went back to his ancestral home where he started a school for the children of the peasant community. In 1862 the Tolstoys had an unusually large family consisting of thirteen children.

It was around 1860 that he was intellectually torn by the conflict he felt between Natural Law and the artificial laws of reason. This inner Conflict was apparent in his work at that time, as, for instance, in his novel entitled *The Cossacks'* (1863). We believe that it was his successful marriage (though at frequent' intervals the couple quarreled with each other) that helped resolve his conflicts and his true genius found expression in the first of his great novels *'War and Peace'*. *'War and Peace'*, as everyone now recognizes, is an artistic, historic and philosophic epic depicting the growth and development of the national life of Russia. Tolstoy worked on it from 1864 to 1869. Between 1873 and 1877 Tolstoy laboured at *"Anna Karenina"*. It is the story of turbulent emotions and passions. It describes the life of the Russian landed gentry and gives us a vividly realistic picture of life in St; Petersburg.

Tolstoy was involved in a profound inner conflict-this time of a religious nature which

turned him to mysticism and renunciation. In *'A Confession'* he gives us a complete account of his conversion. His new mode of thinking and living had a marked effect upon his literary output which became sort of religious in nature. His works are some of the world's greatest religious treatises.

Though a deeply troubled man, Tolstoy continued to write and published *'The Death of Ivan Iiyewich'* (1886), *'Resurrection'* (1899) and What is Art?' (1897):

Tolstoy was anti-imperialist and anti-Church and became responsible for a new faith. He emerged a prophet.

Tolstoy thought one day that his wife become guilty of the breach of trust and left his family and estate. It was the beginning of winter. Exposure to the hostile Russian winter resulted in Tolstoy falling victim to pneumonia. He died on 7 November, 1910.

TOLSTOY, THE AUTHOR OF "ANNA KARENINA"

Tolstoy, the visionary and a committed and sincere novelist, addressed the question of a wife transgressing the vows of holy matrimony, always bearing in mind the fundamental, irrefutable truth that the wife is at first a woman and then a wife. The vows of holy matrimony are part of institutionalized marriage and conventionalized religion and run contrary to natural, elemental human urges. Marriage and religion and morals are man-made and so artificial. They have always systematically and mercilessly ignored the basic human cravings. When elemental human nature raises its head and tries to assert its upper hand, what will the religion – built, customary society do? The bitter truth is that an individual is always weaker than an organization. Hence in a fight between the two the individual is doomed to defeat and destruction. But the question is kept more burning and more alive than ever before tending to result in branding a permanent scar on human conscience.

ANNA KARENINA

THE BACKGROUND AND THE CHARACTERS

The action of 'Anna Karenina' whose central theme is adultery unfolds in the Russia of the 1870s in three places – Moscow, St. Petersburg and the country estates of the landed gentry. One of the Ten Commandments is : Thou shalt not commit adultery. If committed, it is against the canonical law and will lead, undoubtedly, to tragic, disastrous consequences. The question – Why does one commit adultery? naturally leads to the equally natural answer. Because one is discontented in one's unhappy, perhaps 'arranged' marriage. There could be other reasons, too, though in religious terms, marriage is holy matrimony before the altar of God. Though contemptible and condemnable, the guilty on many occasions do demand pity and compassion, as they do have a right to happiness in life because they have only one life to live. The plot revolves round two marriages: one happy and the other unhappy. In the former the happy couple are Kitty and Levin (The long Russian names have been shortened for convenience). In the latter the partners are Anna (the heroine) and her paramour, Vronsky and her husband, Alexei. Those two parallel plots act as foils to each other, highlighting and underscoring the merits and demerits of each other.

SYNOPSIS

To try to condense a 1000 page novel with innumerable characters is one of the worst indiscretions. However, we cannot do without one. Hence this attempt.

I shall first give a list of the characters of the novel and then proceed to condense it. In the condensed novel, you may not find several of them as we have to economize on space and length.

CAUTION: DON'T TREAT THE SYNOPSIS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE NOVEL. THE TEXT IS EASILY AVAILABLE AND DOES NOT COST MUCH-READ THE ORIGINAL SEVERAL TIMES OR UNTIL YOU HAVE GRASPED ITS SPIRIT.

For this exercise I have used the text translated by Constance Garnet and published by Rupa and Co.

The spellings are found to differ from translation to translation. In other words, we need not be sticklers in this regard. We will use the shortest forms for the sake of convenience and ease of remembering.

A. The Karenin Family

Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin: A bureaucrat in the Czarist government set up; married to his job more than to his wife, Anna, formal; strict; stiff, tiresome, self-righteous, yet honourable; not attractive; unable to be in love; too conscious of his social position.

Anna Arkadievna Oblonsky: Karenin's wife; sister of Prince Stepan Oblonsky; an intelligent and rather good-looking woman; owner of a terrific sex appeal with a captivating smile; charm, poise, vivacity and grace; passersby stop to look at her; mother of Seryozha (Sergi); after getting involved with Vronsky (as his mistress) she registers, a dramatic change by becoming prey to rapid changes of mood- she is easily annoyed, is suspicious of all and wallows in self-pity. The smouldering fire slowly becomes an erupting volcano.

Seryozha (Sergi): Son of Anna and Alexei.

Anny: Daughter of Anna and Vronsky.

Kornei: Alexei's manservant

Korsunsky: Social leader, dancer, master of ceremonies:

Kristsky: A friend and associate (political) of Nikolai Dmitrievich Levin

Kuzma : Levin's servant

B. The Oblonsky Family

Prince Stepan Arkadievich Oblonsky (Stiva) : Anna's brother; a handsome, comfort-loving, sensual, easy going 36 year old man; father of half a dozen children.

Dolly Oblonsky	:	Nee Princess Daria Alexandrovna Shcherbatsky and Stepan's wife; just a year junior to Stepan; unrelenting in her resentfulness of her husband's unfaithfulness; known by terms of endearment like Dollenka, Dashenka etc.
Grisha	:	Oblonsky's son
Masha, Vasya & Tanya	:	Oblonsky's daughters
Varvara	:	Oblonsky's aunt.

C. The Levin Family

Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev	:	A famous scholar and author; bachelor; middle aged and emotionally inhibited man; half-brother to Konstantin and Nikolai.
Konstantin. Dmitrievich Levin (Levine)		Nobleman: member of a long-standing and famous Moscow family; a serious minded, pensive man strongly preoccupied with problems relating to religion and cultivation; lives on his ancestral estate and derives his satisfaction and fulfillment from farming; commonly referred to as Kostya.
Nikolai Dmitrievich Levin	:	Konstantin's brother, originally austerely religious, at present committed to revolutionary social reforms; of late leading a dissolute bohemian life.
Kitty	:	Levin's wife; nee Princess Ekaterina Alexandrovna Shchebatsky; a simple, lovable and loving woman; not at all pretentious.
Dmitri (M ya)	:	Son of the Levins (Levin and Kitty)
Natalie Lvov	:	Nee Princess Natalia Alexandrovna Shcherbatsky
Lydia Ivanovna	:	Countess friend of Alexei Karenin, an interfering woman much given to religious enthusiasms
Makhotin	:	An officer
Maria Andreyevna	:	Nikolai's mistress: commonly called Masha.
Matriona Fillimovna	:	Nurse to the children of Stiva and Dolly

Matvei : Oblonsky's valet.

Princess Miakhy : An eccentric woman given to blunt speech.

Mikhalov : a Painter originally from Russia, now settled in Italy; he paints a portrait of Anna Karenina.

Fillipp Ivanovich Nikitin : Oblonsky's friend.

Countess Nordston : a member of the Shcherbatsky's social circle; Levin hates her as much as she hates him.

D. The Shcherbatskys

Prince Alexander Dmitrievich Shcherbatsky : An old, generous, compassionate, lovable person; Kitty's father.

Princess Shcherbatsky : Kitty's mother; she will stop at nothing in order to see her daughter getting married to Vronsky.

Natalia Alexandrovna : Natalie Lvov

Daria Alexandrovna : Dolly

Ekaterina Alexandrovna : Kitty

Nikolai Shcherbatsky : Kitty's cousin

Petrov : A painter stationed in Germany who is passionately in love with Kitty and wants to marry her

Anna Pavlovna Petrov : Petrov's wife

Sitnikov : The tutor of Sergei (Seryozha Karenin)

Milkhail Sliudin : The quite capable office manager of Alexie Karenin)

Mme. Stahi : A Russian woman living at German Spas. Though reputed for exceptional piety she is in fact a self – indulgent sick woman who keeps on torturing Varenka with her incessant demands.

Vargnka : (Varvara Andreyvna Stahi) : A close friend of Kitty and the foster child of Mme. Stahi; a god – fearing, self – effacing girl.

Stremov : Karenin's political opponent.

Tushkevich : Lover of Princess Betsy Tverskoy

Princess Betsy : Anna's friend, a malicious gossip and meddlesome woman.

E. The Vronskys

Count Alexei Kirillovich Vronsky : Lover of Anna Karenina; a rich, dashing landowner and officer of the Russian Army; an attractive charming, capable man; lacks integrity; rather shallow and weak as far as character is concerned.

Alexander Vronsky : Alexei's brother

Countess Vronsky : Alexei's mother

Veslovsky : A guest of Levin who tries to flirt with Kitty Levin

Levin Nickolai Ivanovich Sviazhsky : landowner : friend of Levin;Interested in local politics.

Yashvin : Vronsky's friend; a gambler

Agafia : Levin's housekeeper

Annushka : Maid to Anna Karenina

Chirikov : Levin's friend

Golenshchev : Vronsky's friend, how living in Italy.

Mihail Grinevich : Oblonsky's friend.

Hannah : The daughter of Vronsky's horse trainer; Anna's protégée

Kapitonych : Alexei Karenin's doorman, very faithful to Anna Karenia

ANNA KARENINA : A SUMMARY OF THE PLOT

Tolstoy opens his *'Anna karenina'* with the observation: Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. There was too much trouble in the Oblonsky household. The pot of trouble was in fact boiling over. That gay young man, Prince Stepan Arikadisvich Oblonsky (commonly called Stiva), 36 years old, many years married, father of many children, had been rather too attentive to the French governess who was taking care of the Oblonsky children. The Princess Daria Alexandrovna Shcherbatsky (commonly called Dolly) had come to know of the affair between her husband and the nurse and, wasting no time at all, sent the nurse packing, then declaring that she would desert Stiva and go home to her mother. Stiva easy-going, handsome, young, healthy and highly sensuous was excessively annoyed. Dolly was 35. Perhaps Stiva was no longer content with Dolly who had to bear quite a large number of kids and consequently had perhaps lost her bloom and charm and, above all, her libido. Stiva has sorry, and he had told Dolly so. But in his heart of hearts he beamed himself for not having been able to keep the affair a secret; he had really enjoyed the clandestine relationship (Recall what Gloucester says about the begging of "Edmund, the illegitimate son in "King Lear". There was more sport in his making" For bidden things have stronger and greater appeal than permitted ones. But, women, Stiva told himself, were so unreasonable in matters such as this. Dolly had kept herself in her room, refused to admit anybody and see anybody, or to attend to domestic duties with the result that the servants did not know what to do. Under the circumstances Stiva, at a loss to remedy the damaged relationship, grew worried. Solution to the problem eluded him. At long last he made up his mind to seek the assistance of his sister, Anna, now Anna Karenina, wife of the rising statesman Alexei Karenin (Alexei): He sent for her. The broken marital bond might be set right and their marriage saved. So thought Stiva. So Anna would go from St. Petersburg to Moscow to straighten things out.

Everybody had said that Anna Oblonsky had made a brilliant match when she got married to Alexi Karenin. Well, Anna thought so herself. Alexei Karenin was a model husband, wealthy, the pink of society and proprietary, possessed power and influence and he was already well known all over Europe. He was some what cold, it is true, but perfectly just, and never allowed himself to be moved by transient emotions. Anna had the greatest respect for his. The Karenins moved in two of the three circles of St. Petersburg society, the official and diplomatic and that presided over by the Countess Lydia Lvanovna, composed of men distinguished in the arts, sciences, literature or statesmanship and middle-aged and old women of unimpeachable character and charitable tendencies, which was sometimes alluded to as 'the conscience of St. Petersburg'.

There was a third set, though; Anna's cousin, the Princess Betsy Tverskoi, was the pivot around which circled that set, the set which lived for 'society' and themselves only. Rich, powerful, influential, leisured and having nothing particular to do or be busy with, they feasted and enjoyed themselves, had 'affairs' and worshipped 'ton' (fashion); people who went dancing to the grave and left behind them the memory of a few scandals and many a good dinner. 'When I am old and ugly, 'said the Princess Betsy in speaking of the Countless Lydia's set, 'I shall apply to the asylum for aged females, but not before. "Well, naturally, the Karenins were not intimate in the Princess Betsy set.

Anna Karenina went to Moscow and straightened out the crooked and disordered affairs of the Oblonsky household; Dolly and Stepan were reconciled through her. Anna returned to her husband and her little adorable son, Sergei, as a good wife should. But Anna took back with her to St. Petersburg something that a good wife should not. A love newly born for a man other than her husband. It was all a new and strange sensation; the feeling that Anna experienced for the young Count Vronsky whom she had chanced to meet while in Moscow. He was an officer of the army; an imperial adjutant, had wealth and ambition, besides a scheming

old mother who adored her son and pushed his fortunes. He was easily the leader of the gilded youth of the capital.

Anna felt with a sort of surprised terror that there was danger in her being much in the company of the dashing and debonair Vronsky. She told herself that she should not see him any more. But at the same time she kept on wondering when she would see him again. Well, Vronsky was in exactly the same boat himself he was as much smitten with Anna as she was with him.

Princess Ekaterina Alexandrovna Shcherbatsky, an uncomplicated and affectionate girl, who had been madly in love with Vronsky was broken-hearted when she saw in a Moscow drawing room how much Anna and Vronsky were infatuated with each other. Poor Kitty! Constantine Levin had come all the way to Moscow to woo Kitty leaving his country estate for the time being. Needless to say, he was mad about Kitty, not realizing his innate worth, had given the poor young man the mitten, thinking all the while that she might be able to win Alexeis Vronsky and possess him forever.

Constantine Levin lived alone upon his vast ancestral estates where he kept himself busy trying to improve the methods of farming. He was very highly regarded by his peasants and servants and they lovingly called him 'little father'. Though he was one of the best and most eligible of bachelors, Kitty rejected him which hurt him pretty badly: However, he was quite resilient. He aroused himself with the thought that he had duties in this world to perform and resumed his old way of life, chastened and saddened, sadder and wiser, with greater energy and commitment than before: As a matter of fact, the person who was hurt most by Kitty's rejection of Levin was Dolly, Kitty's sister who knew how noble Levin was. Dolly thought that Kitty would have been very happy if she had married Levin. Infatuated with Vronsky she had become blind to the pure love that Levin was capable of. Hence her rejection of Levin's suit.

When Anna Karenina arrived at the railway station in St. Petersburg after her trip to Moscow (where she mended the broken relationship between Dolly and Stepan) Count Vronsky was there to meet her, having traveled north by the same train. Alexei Karenin, Anna's husband, was there to meet her, too, and the sight of Alexei very much irritated Vronsky. He very closely studied Anna's face with his observant eyes as the husband and the wife were exchanging greetings. "No, she does not love him at all,' said Vronsky to himself. Without much ado Anna introduced them to each other. 'Ah, I think we have met before,' replied Alexei Karenin. 'I suppose you are on leave, Count Vronsky,' he continued and without waiting for an answer, turned to his wife with some trivial question; it was a kind of dismissal. So accepting the evident hint, Vronsky took his leave, saying to Anna, "I hope to have the honour of calling'.. it was the husband who replied "We shall be most happy and most honored; we receive on Mondays".

Anna was most distressed and confused. As she entered her boudoir that night she was deeply troubled and said to herself. 'My husband is a good man and honest and loyal one'. 'Nevertheless, Anna was changed; on her face was no such smile as she had worn when she first met Vronsky. The light of gladness was sadly missing from her eyes. For the first time in her life she had experienced and was experiencing a new thrill and a strange fulfillment in the company of Vronsky compared to which her life with Alexei was dull and cold, tasteless and odorless. In short, Anna learnt for the first time in her life what she was lacking and where from she would get what she lacked.

Days passed. But the hunger in Anna for the companionship of Vronsky refused to be quenched she therefore began to frequent the set of Princes Betsy-that was the set and the circle where Vronsky moved: As the conditions were conducive for their coming together, there as a matter of course they met quite frequently. Without wasting any time at all, the young and enterprising soldier, exploiting the many occasions and situations, declared his love for Anna. Anna, on her part, made no response or advance in the initial stages, but deep in her heart was ever the same feeling she had felt and experienced when they first met each other. Her joy in

his presence was visible in her eyes, her smile, her glance. She melted in Vronsky's warmth. His magnetic charm drew her to him and she was absolutely helpless in resisting it. Do what she could; she was not able to conceal what she felt for Vronsky. The two would sit apart in crowded assemblies. People began to nod their heads and talk. In just a few days' time the Princess Betsy circle accepted the situation as just another 'affair'. The members were delighted – as was natural. Betsy asked her one-day. "Why were you not at my dinner last night? ... Don't answer it. I know; a certain person was not there, how I envy you lovers your second sight's she added."

One evening Alexei Karenin entered a crowded drawing room and saw Anna sitting apart as usual with Vronsky and oblivious of her surroundings and engaged with Vronsky in deep earnest conversation: Karenin knew that Count Vronsky was a frequent caller at his house and that he met Anna quite frequently at social functions. But jealousy to the diplomat was one of the meanest of passions. Besides, it was an insult to his wife to harbor such an evil feeling. But that night the radiant look on Anna's face as Vronsky whispered in her ear coupled with the significant and sly looks on the faces of the other guests, prompted him to take a firm resolution. There was nothing wrong, of course, but she had to avoid the appearance of evil. So he made up in his mind a nice little lecture for Anna. That night he went up to her boudoir and started delivering his carefully rehearsed and perfected lecture. But Anna interrupted him and spoiled everything. "What is it that you are talking about?" she asked, "That is just like you. Sometimes you complain because I am dull, and tonight because I enjoyed myself, you are angry. But go on. I am interested. What is it that you are driving at?". Karenin had never seen Anna like that before and he felt alarmed at her manner and her words. "Anna, I do not seek to inquire into your feelings; it would be useless, perhaps dangerous. But our lives have been joined together not by man, but by HIM, and only death or sin can break the tie, a sin which brings its own punishment. "I do not understand even a word of what you are trying to tell me, 'said she, yawning, "I know only that I am tired and sleepy". "Anna, for heaven's sake, do not talk like this. I speak as much for your own sake as mine. I am your husband and I love you. But the word "LOVE' as Alexei said it irritated, nay, infuriated Anna. However, it set her thinking. If he had never heard the word used he would have ignored it she thought, What does Alexei know about love? 'Alexei', Anna said with a held repressed smile, ' I have no confidence to make and really, it is time to think of sleep, Good night'. As Karenin left the boudoir, Anna said to herself with a sigh', Too late, too late.'

That was the night from which the martial relationship between Anna and Alexei changed entirely. Outwardly the husband and the wife lived as usual, as if nothing had come between them, but a wall had arisen between them. That Anna loved Vronsky, Alexei Karenin was certain, but he strangely believed that pride alone would prevent Anna forgetting her duties as a wife and mother. As for Vronsky, they now frankly told each other and themselves that they loved each other and that there was nothing else besides in the world that mattered. The young soldier was offered the governorship of a distant province, but had declined it in order to be near Anna. He was ordered to join his regiment and for the same reason he resigned his commission. Thus he sacrificed the imperial favor and his ambition in his chosen profession at the false shrine of his illicit love. Anna at times felt terrified, at others experienced heavenly happiness and fulfillment, an experience she had never had with her husband so far.

Stepan, her brother, came to see her and reasoned with her, but she baffled him, as she had Karenin. 'And how is Kitty?" Anna asked of her brother. Stepan informed her that his sister-in law had been made very ill grieving over her unrequited love for Vronsky, and that her parents had taken her abroad. Anna said, 'Poor Kitty!. I am sorry for her. And Levin? 'He is on his estates.' 'Poor Kostia (i.e. Levein)! Kitty should have married him: He would have made a model husband." There was a touch of irony in her tone. Anna had, in the meanwhile,

developed a very strange way wardress, stubbornness and strength of character-which made her quite incomprehensible.

Many a month passed. It was summer. Anna was living with her son, Sergei, in a villa some miles from St. Petersburg. Alexei Karenin had plunged more deeply than ever before into the affairs of the state. Sometimes he would not visit the villa for weeks together. Secretly Anna was receiving constant visits from Vronsky. One day, as she and the Count were sitting alone upon the terrace, she leaned over and, blushing, whispered in his ear. Vronsky started and turned pale. Finally he spoke, "Neither you nor I have looked upon our liaison as one of ephemeral joy and happiness. Now the time has come to put an end to all this lying and deceit. You must confess everything and leave your husband for ever". 'But he does not know', said Anna. That was not the first time that Vronsky had been struck with the impossibility of making Anna comprehend her own position. He realized far more strongly this time that in the place of the real and former Anna had grown up into a being who was capricious and incomprehensible. And, that was almost repulsive to Vronsky.

'This cannot go on like this, said Vronsky, 'our lives must be united'. "Are they not united now?' replied Anna. 'We should have to fly, to give up everything: 'Anna', said Vronsky, 'I am sincerely sorry to make you unhappy, but....' There is my happiness,' cried she, and at once ran to meet her little boy, Sergei, who came dancing in from the garden. Shortly after this intention there was a day's racing at the fashionable track near St. Petersburg: The Emperor was there in person, so, of course, Alexei Karenin, the rising minister, went along with his wife to the race course. There was a steeplechase race for gentlemen riders. Vronsky was one of the participants and rode in it on his English mare. The Count rode with more fury than judgment. At the last jump the mare took it all right, but when she landed on the other side of the fence, she slipped and sank to the earth with a broken back. Vronsky escaped unhurt, but the mare had to be shot. All that Anna from her seat in the grand stand could see was that the Count's mare had fallen and he with her. She was terribly agitated and lost all control of herself in her terror and anxiety. 'Let us go, let us go', she cried, starting up: Her husband, who had been observing his wife closely, said,' "I am offering you my arm to go if you wish it;" Anna sank back in her seat, put her fan before her face and burst into tears. Karenin placed himself in front of her to shield her, in vain, of course, as it was too late for it, from the curiosity of the crowd close to them.

After a while when Anna had calmed down, Alexei escorted her to their carriage. As they drove away, he said. "I wish to call your attention to the fact that your conduct today was highly improper. There was a time when I should have used the relations between us as an argument. It is now merely a question of outward facts. You have behaved with impropriety and it must not happen again. Perhaps I have been deceived. If so, I ask your forgiveness". "No', burst out Anna, "You have not been deceived. I am in love with him. I am his mistress. I hate you and fear you. Do with me what you like". Then Anna sank back into her seat and once again burst into tears. Karenin did not speak, did not alter the direction of his look, but the stern, grave expression on his face became fixed as in the rigidity of death. As they approached the house, he turned to his wife and said: 'Until the necessary measures have been taken to protect my name and honor, measured about which you shall be informed of, I insist that decencies and appearances be preserved'. He got down from the carriage; assisted Anna to alight, re-entered the carriage and was driven to St. Petersburg. Anna found a note from Betsy saying' I have seen him. He is unhurt.' Then he will come, thought Anna, looking at her watch. 'My God, how I love him! As for my husband well; so, much the better. It is all over now between us.'

Naturally Alexei Karenin's first idea was a challenge (a duel to stake a claim, to set things right etc.) But from his youth up he had always had a horror of that mode of avenging a wrong. Again, would he not look like an imposter in sending a challenge when he knew that his friends would not permit

him to risk a life so valuable to the country. There remained the matter of divorce, against that he had religious scruples. Also, he thought, divorce severs completely the relations between husband and wife, leaving the wife to the lover. There would be a scandal and his political enemies would make capital out of it. If his political opponents made the most of it, he would suffer and not Anna. Finally, after many a weary hour of thought, he wrote his wife a letter in which he said 'My decision is this: Whatever your conduct may have been, I cannot recognize my own right to break, to destroy, a tie consecrated by the Supreme Power. The family name must not be exposed. Outwardly our special life must remain as it had remained so far, I am convinced that you are repentant and will continue to repent. I desire that you return to town Tuesday at latest.'

"He is right," Anna thought, 'he is always right always Christian-like' and magnanimous Anna sent a note to Vronsky asking him to go to her. When Vronsky arrived, she showed the letter from her husband to him and informed him of what she had done. 'It is a thousand times bear. You did the right thing' said Vronsky, and you must leave him. Whatever he may think, things can no longer go on as they have been going on'. "Any my son, Sergei?' Anna asked. 'Take him and come to me. I must provide for our future lives". No said Anna slowly it must be as he says. Things must go on as they have been going'.

Anna won, at least for the time being. Things went on as they did before. Karenin had a serious talk with his wife when she arrived at St. Petersburg. Vronsky was forbidden in his house and Anna was given strict orders to avoid him when they met by chance in society. But secretly Anna and Vronsky continued to meet, both disobeying the commands. Karenin learnt about these clandestine meetings. He went to Anna in her room and said: I came to tell you that I shall never again enter this house. I am going to Moscow for a time. You hear from my lower about the steps shall take for a divorce. My son will be taken care of by some of my relatives. 'Alexei', 'cried Anna; leave me Sergei – to save me, leave me Sergei. But Karenin shook off the hand that was stretched to stay him and left the room without another word. Karenin drove to the office of a prominent lawyer and succinctly stated his case. "You will please let me know within eight days!" said he in conclusion, "whether you will take the case and upon what terms". Soon he applied for permission to go abroad. As he had to pass though Moscow, he determined to stop there for a few days. The gay Stepan, his brother in law, called upon him and invited him to dinner, 'I cannot come, 'said Alexei Karenin, 'Why?' asked Stepan. 'Because I am about to get a divorce from your sister:'

'Oh, don't, said', Stepan, 'Dolly and I had a deuce of a row once, you remember, and see how happy we are now. And Kitty, you know; well, she has returned as well as ever and Levin and she are about to be married. She found out after all it was Levin that she really loved. So, you, see, if only you wait; how things come out all right. 'But when Alexei had explained all to Stepan, he had to admit that' it was a very hard case. Dolly, on being informed of the state of affairs, appealed to Karenin, saying,' Think about what she will become if you abandon her.' But he could only answer,

'Alas! There is no other way'.

The following day a telegram was delivered to him. It read:' I am dying. Come to me. I shall die easier if I have your forgiveness', and it was signed 'Anna'. Is it some new trick of hers? thought Alexie. However, he took the next train to go home at St. Petersburg. All the way he could not get out of his head the thought that if Anna should die, it would solve all his present problems. 'How is your mistress?' said he to the servant who opened the door. 'Madam was safely confined last night, 'was the answer. Karenin turned pale; He realized how much he had desired her death. Who is here? He asked'. 'The doctor, the nurse and Count Vronsky.' said the servant. Anna lay in her bed moaning and raving incoherently, and nearby lay a newly born baby girl. At the head of the bed sat Vronsky, his face buried in his bands. She turned her head toward her husband and said.

'Alexei, is it not cruel that they both should be called Alexei? Alexei you are a good man, you do not know how good you are yourself. Give me the child. No, he has not seen her yet. Take her away. Alexei; come near me. The time is short. Now I understand everything. Give me your hand. Forgive me. Make Vronsky uncover his face. There, there, forgive him, please' with tears streaming down his cheeks Karenin extended his hands in silence to Vronsky. They left the room together, and Vronsky said: 'Alexei Karenin, I am incapable of speaking or of understanding. Believe me, my sufferings are great. Have pity upon me, and, if you can; forgive me.' 'You are aware; 'replied Karenin, 'that I have intended getting a divorce-1 will even go further, and say that I have wished for her death. But now I see clearly my duty. It is to remain with her. I only ask one thing – the joy of forgiving.'

Vronsky went away feeling humiliated and confused, as if he had just lost the path along which he had been walking proudly and contentedly. The betrayed husband had raised himself to a height, which compelled his respect, and appeared to him honest, high minded and generous, while he himself seemed a mean and spiritless creature. All that night Vronsky walked his room thinking, and toward dawn tried to put a bullet through his heart. But his aim was bad, and he only succeeded in wounding himself severely.

Anna, in spite of the prognostications of the physicians, began to mend. While she was recovering, the Princess Betsy came bustling in to see her. She told her about Vronsky's attempt at suicide and begged her to go see him. Anna said, 'No I can never see him again! If he were not going away'. Urged Betsy, 'I could understand your refusal. But not to see the man who has tried to kill himself for your sake and is now going to exile himself for love of you-why that is absurd. Let him say goodbye at least."

In a moment of weakness Anna consented to an interview with Count Vronsky. And, Count Vronsky did not go away. Gradually, the old relations were re established. Karenin realized that matters were drifting back to their former state and Anna's of repeated exclamation, 'Oh why did I not die?' found an echo in his heart. A month later Karenin was alone with his son. Meanwhile, Anna had gone abroad with Vronsky. They stayed in Italy in an ancient place, a palace with spacious grounds. Vronsky took up painting as a diversion. They had their daughter with them and as the baby grew, it became a source of grief to them that she could bear no name other than Karenin. Now and then ronsky brought traveling Russians to the palace, men of the world who he knew would 'understand'. Of women's society, they had none. The little paradise they had planned where love should be everything did not, somehow, seem to be a wholly satisfactory place after all.

Vronsky became bored with his painting and gave up art in disgust at his own lack of ability: He would often visit the neighboring city alone to mingle with the world once more. Anna became jealous, suspicious and would break out into fits of furious reproach against Vronsky, charging that he no longer loved her and ending her outbursts with a flood of fears and a series of caresses. Vronsky had letters from his people telling him how Kitty and Levin were living upon Levin's estates, busy, happy and contented in each other and in the work they found to their hands. Theirs was an isolated life, as was the one he and Anna were leading-but what a great gulf was between them.

Anna suddenly demanded to be taken back to St. Petersburg. The Count, knowing what she would be exposed to in that city, tried to reason with her, but she was insistent and the next winter saw them in the Russian capital. Karenin was leading a lonely life. He dined abroad and was at home only for his sleep and his early breakfast. The countess Lydia visited the house daily, taking charge of the uprising of Sergei and of the ordering of the domestics. He knew that people expected him to press for a divorce, but his religious scruples against divorce became active and he hesitated. Anna learned that Lydia had taken the place she should have filled with respect to Sergei and wrote to her letters begging to be allowed to visit and see the boy. Lydia, after consulting with Karenin, wrote back that no good could come of the

CUP/5026/1000/SDE—8

interview and that it would incite the boy to ask questions concerning matters of which it were better that he kept in ignorance.

Anna ordered a carriage and drove to the house, once her home bribed the servant at the door and forced her way into the sleeping room of her son. 'Oh!' cried Sergei "do not go away again. They told me you were dead- but I knew better." The boy's tutor entered the room. Anna drew the veil over her face and fled to her carriage. Brooding in her room at the hotel she thought, 'I am quite alone. I am a burden, on Vronsky. My son is no longer mine. Vronsky had sounded his family upon the question of receiving". Anna, but had been rebuffed. He had reconciled himself to the situation. Generally Anna was said ignored by her former friends and acquaintances, but the Princess Betsy called. 'I know they will blame me'. it Betsy 'but I would come and see you. How about the divorce? Of course I am not foolishly prejudiced. But I warn you that others are not so liberal. You leave on Thrusday, you say I am sorry I shall not see more of you.' That night at dinner Anna suddenly announced that she wanted to go to the opera. It was a subscription night, when the society of the capital would be present at the opera theatre. Vronsky was aghast, but Anna insisted, and the Prince Toushkenwitch, who was dining with the two, politely said he had an engagement for the evening. Anna said the Prince would escort her and she would take along her aunt- an elderly spinster with a sad reputation as chaperon. Warning was useless; Anna would go. Vronsky entered the theatre late and, seeing her mother in her box, went to her.' I see little of you of late,' said she, smiling,' But why are you not in attendance upon Mme. Karenina? There she is, over there: But what is taking place? "Vronsky looked and turned pale. In the next box to Anna, where the Karasofs were, Mme Karasof was standing up, talking hurriedly and angrily while her husband was adjusting a cloak for her and looking now and then at Anna, who was biting her lips and staring straight before her. All eyes were turned from the stage to the little drama. Karasof had bowed to Anna, and his wife had made a scene, uttering offensive words about Anna in a loud tone of voice. In a minute the Karasof box was empty. The Count hastened to Anna's box. "It seems to me, 'said Anna, "That you have come very late. You have missed the best piece". "I am a poor judge," replied he, looking at her seriously. When they reached the hotel, Anna burst into tears, She exploded: "It is you who were the cause of every thing. It was horrible:" She said, "she was disgraced by sitting near me. If I live to be a hundred I cannot forget it.' I begged you not to go, 'said Vronsky. 'And why should I not have gone? replied Anna. If you had any love for me... you have driven me to this,' In short, Anna was utterly unreasonable and made Vronsky feel angry and bitter toward her. Two days later they left St. Petersburg and went to live at a small place of the Count's in the country. Here for some time they were happy again, but-Anna soon began to be haunted with the fear that Vronsky had ceased to love her. While he, in spite of himself, welcomed any excuse to absent himself from home, and felt that things were getting into an impossible state. A divorce and his marriage to Anna, he thought, might make matters smoother. Anna herself now gladly welcomed the idea, and wrote to Alexei- but received no reply: Vronsky had to go to Moscow on business. Anna insisted upon going with him. Their quarrels broke out afresh. Vronsky's mother was in Moscow, and staying with her was the young and attractive Princess Sarokine, whom the Countess wished her son to marry, Anna somehow knew about it and naturally, her fears, suspicions and capriciousness increased a thousand fold. After a violent scene with Anna, Vronsky left the room; muttering to himself; I have tried everything. I will now see what a little indifference will and can do. From one of the servants Anna, now suddenly repentant, learnt that Vronsky had left, for the stables. She dispatched a note after him, begging him to come back. In the meantime Vronsky had left the stables and gone to the railway station in order to take a train for Nijini. Anna wrote another note and said to the servant, Here, take this to your master at his mother's country' home at Nijini. In the note Anna had written.' I am scared, Come back. All will be explained.' The last words she had spoken

to Vronsky were: 'You will be sorry for this.' Now the idea occurred to her that the only way to make Vronsky sorry was to kill herself. She could not get the idea out of her head, howsoever hard she tried. She hurried to the railway station and took the next train for Nijini. The man at the station told her that Vronsky was not at his mother's, but at the house of Princess Sarokine, close by.

Just then the servant whom she had dispatched with her note appeared before her and delivered a message from the Count. The message read: 'Sorry your note did not reach me in Moscow. Will return at 10 o' clock, 'Anna walked down the platform, 'My God', she thought; 'where shall I fly to? I will not permit him to torture me like this again."

A heavy train was approaching; Suddenly she thought of a man she had once seen run over. In an instant her resolve was made. Without wasting any time she threw herself beneath the wheels of the train and life was crushed out of her. Vronsky, coming to the station, saw her mangled body, her face alone was undamaged, lying in the freight shed where the officials had carried and placed it.

Two months later the terminus of Koursk Railway was crowded with troops going off to the Trukish war. The old Countess Vronsky was there, come to see off her son who had volunteered and equipped a battery at his own expense, "You have no idea what we have been through,' said the Countess to a friend." For six weeks Alexei would not speak, and it was well nigh impossible for me to 'make him eat anything: Yea, that woman died, as she had lived-shamelessly. She ruined the lives of two men, both of exceptional merit, and went to perdition herself. What did she expect to prove by her death? Oh, believe me, she was thoroughly bad.' Vronsky went up to his mother. He showed the effects of illness and despair and, above all, guilt. As the train moved off, he said to himself: 'I go to lose honorably a life which has been spent dishonorably!'

ANNA KARENINA : A CRITICAL EVALUATION

Perhaps the best way of studying 'Anna Karenina' is through the analysis of the principal characters and the conflicts that rage through their minds as well as between pairs of them. The direction that the plot would take is presented in the beginning itself: The temporary marital discord that rose between Stepan and Dolly, if it had aggravated, the consequences would have been, to put it mildly, disastrous. Stepan would go one way, Dolly another way and the children yet another way, the family disintegrating into myriad pieces. The timely capable invention and mediation by Anna saves her brother's marriage. (But, ironically, her own marriage shows the domino effect) Stepan was guilty of unfaithfulness, having an affair with their French governess, but he is not punished. For the same indiscretion Anna and Vronsky are severely, cruelly punished. Is this not discriminatory? Why are two yardsticks used to measure the same sort of offence with? The slip of moral law shows and it shows very conspicuously.

Love is the noblest of all emotions. The whole world revolves round the love of one sex for the opposite sex. There is the congenital craving in every human being for union with a member of the opposite sex. It is this craving and its recognition and acceptance that are behind the evolution and establishment of the institution of marriage. However, when conventional morally obtrudes, there is derailment. It is the natural libido that guarantees the continuity of posterity. Conventional morality and religious scruples help repress or perhaps sublimate this libido through the artificial, institutional or perhaps sublimate this libido through the artificial, institutionalized, 'holy' matrimony. Matrimony conveniently forgets the truth that man is basically an animal with repressed animal instincts.

All marriages are not always based on, or brought about by, love of one another of the couples. Economic, social, religious, cultural, educational, geographic and many other factors come to the fore before, during and after marriages. There is the worst kind of marriage: the marriage of inconvenience. Soon incapability raises its ugly head and the marriage is doomed to failure unless the partners learn fast to adapt and also accommodate each other in a spirit of 'live and let live without expecting much out of

each other or out of a marriage'. As a matter of fact, it is this sort of marriage that we find all over and we know as a 'successful marriage. Needless to say, it is a life-long, unending sacrifice of everything personal and private on the altar of marriage. But is it worth it? The answer is an emphatic and unambiguous 'NO'. Yet marriages do succeed. It is simply because the partners do not seem to realize what they are lacking/ losing/sacrificing and' what they deserve to get out of marriages. So long as this awareness does not down upon them; things move in circles, it is routine and ennui. It is just one or two out of a million who suddenly get sensitized and realize the monotony and try to break it and get out of it. Needless to say, it is these courageous few who live, whereas the remaining just exists. The few who live 'demand; the rest are, metaphorically speaking, dead inside.

This is what we have to bear in mind while studying 'Anna Karenina'. Anna has been 'successfully' and even 'gloriously' married to Alexei Karenin for almost a decade. It is only when she meets Vronsky that she wakes up and becomes aware of what is wanting in her' near ideal' marriage: Her marriage, she now realizes, is like fire without heat, food without spies, flower without colour. Anna literary wakes up' at the touch of and in the company of Vronsky. Alexei Karenin has been keeping Anna asleep all through their married life; it is this wakefulness that drives Anna crazy. She is hungry for what has been denied her all along. Let us here recall Ibsen and his 'Doll'. Anna has been the violin of Alexei: Vronsky starts fine tuning it making it come to life.

The matter is not so simple as that. Here orthodox religion interferes with its Commandment: Thou shall not commit adultery, The interests of organized religion and the notion of individual's freedom have always been and will always be, at loggerheads. We may call this another of the eternal predicaments of man. There can be no reconciliation between them. And we know that religion can destroy individuals. The destruction begins with the psyche and ends with the body. Perhaps I have put the matter too succinctly and abruptly. At least in Anna's case it is true. (Recall what happens to Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale in Hawthorne's 'The Scarlet Letter'. The Comparison helps. It will be fruitful to recall Elizebath Chandler's comment on this American novel: "The main theme... is not the sin of illicit love, but the consequent sins of hypocrisy and revenge, and their effect on the soul').

Her life with Alexei has been too right; too correct, too model like to be human life. In this the humanity of Anna is totally submerged and hidden. Vronsky brings her up and out and a whole new world in its glorious colours and brilliance is revealed to her. However, it also blinds her. She errs in moralistic, religious, social ethical terms. But her erring is also her awakening to the fulfillment of life. Regrettably, society is not grown up enough, tolerant enough, to accept it on Anna's terms. It condemns her. It is this conflict between the individual and the organization that leads to Anna's premature doom.

Tolstoy seems to say that the relation between man and woman (in marriage, obviously) is destructive when it is dominated by possessiveness and self-centeredness and is rewarding and ennobling when governed by selfless love and mutual regard.

These two forms of love are illustrated in the novel by the 'adulterous' relation between Anna and Vronsky and the marital relation between Levin and Kitty respectively. We all know that married life is not a bed of roses, nor is it a bed of thorns. Married life is always like a sea wracked by tempestuous storms with periods of perfect calm and poise in between.

We may, if need be, call it psychological realism to refer to the delineation of characters and to the description of social life in Russia in the 1870s. (The events described in the novel are supposed to have been taking place in the 1870s) Tolstoy delves deep into the psyche of the principal characters and makes them reveal themselves totally, without for a moment intruding upon their private and personal thoughts and feelings. It is this aspect that makes the novel a masterpiece.

We are presented with three man-woman relations in the novel; first, the marital relationship between Alexei and Anna Karenina: second the marital relationship between Levine and Kitty; and third, the 'adulterous relationship between Anna and Vronsky. The first is devoid of love, though full of respect for each other, the second is cemented with love and consideration, understanding and accommodation; the third is brought about by passionate love and sexual attraction. The first two are sanctified matrimony. On that pretext anything goes. The third, though grounded on mutual attraction and a specific form of 'natural' love is frowned upon because it is not permitted by holy matrimony and it is violative of the canonical law. How can the third one be permitted to flourish?

Man, who underneath the veener of artificial civilization is a beast, is naturally adulterous; when all the parameters are favorable, this nature, surfaces: But society consisting of the vast majority of 'civilized' people condemns this 'natural' craving and the strong 'need' for its situation. We have here a situation akin to the one we find in "Mansfield Park" and in 'Madame Bovary' Constantine Levin and Kitty are in their country estates ad everything is all right with them. The cities are centers of corruption; as exemplified in Moscow; St. Petersburg, Paris and London: Everything is topsy-turvy with Anna, Vronsky, Betsy and her associates and Madame Bovary. This is not to say that city corrupts all and Nature maintains prelasparian purity and innocence in everyone. All that I am trying to say here is that the attraction a man and a woman feel for each ether is just mercilessly and unnaturally suppressed and repressed on account of social taboos which go by the pet name of civilization. The individual's freedom of choice is totally curtailed in matters such as the choice of his/her mate; if he/she is a victim of institutionalized marriage. However, something I hasten to add here. When Vronsky insists on Anna getting her divorce from Alexei, she refused; it is because she will be able to retain her high social profile which her marriage confers upon her. Besides, her natural craving will be satisfied through her clandestine relations with Vronsky for which marital contact is not necessary. In other words, Anna wants to eat the cake and have it-another predicament. The result is, predictably, the predicament remains and the person trying to resolve it gets destroyed. Though Tolstoy's intentions are outlined above, he means much more than what he says. Let us see how. Here we have to go by what is given in the text.

There are three females who enter the circle of relationship. Anna, Dolly and Kitty. Anna is far lovelier, cleverer, smarter and abler than Dolly. Kitty is just ordinary and native by contrast: Anna saves Dolly's marriage, but she fails in saving her own. Anna indirectly helps Kitty find joy and happiness in her marriage of Levin rectly helps Kitty find joy and happiness in her marriage of Levin (by possessing Vronsky herself after weaning him from Kitty who was infatuated with him); but she fails to find happiness and satisfaction in her own marriage. If we can call her experience with Alexei happy, then she loses that happiness, consequent upon her meeting Vronsky. Do we find 'double standards' here, as we find them in every sphere of human life at all times? What Anna preaches to Stepan and Dolly, she fails to practice and she deceives herself. It is people like her who make up society. Let us now take Alexei Karenin. He is in every respect a model husband; yet he is unable to fill the sudden vacuum that has arisen in Anna's life (The vacuum was there, Anna had not felt and realized it until she met Vronsky) is it Alexei's failure or is it Anna's exorbitant demand? We have to consider her as more important than Alexei. Now the answer is that Anna becomes all on a sudden too demanding and she thinks/ feels that Vronsky alone can fill the sudden vacuum she has discovered in her life. That is exactly the reason why she, a Christian, flouts all her vows of holy matrimony and has her adulterous, nay, naturally human affair with Vronsky. Here the conflict assumes a religious versus natural domain. The outcome, once, again a predictable one is disastrous.

While Alexei takes Anna for granted, Vronsky sacrifices everything he values in his

life for her, for instance, his military career which promises him a, great future. Anna, of course, reciprocates by sacrificing her family, attraction and attention in blue blooded society and fashionable circles, is belittled, avoided, ridiculed, snubbed and straight away condemned as an object of contempt by her one time friends and acquaintances. She is now a castaway, ostracized and untouchable for people.

In spite of these set backs Anna stands by her paramour. Regrettably, it is not just love that makes her do it. It is relentless, unremitting, jealous possessiveness. She panics and has moments of madness, bottomless self-pity and self-accusation, which leads to an acute hatred of herself: The result is, as we see, suicide. Anna has bitten more than what she can chew. We can give Anna an anthropological dimension. Women are classified under three board heads : (a) the mother woman (b) the sage woman ; (c) the fatal woman. In ancient anthropological terms it is the responsibility of the woman to "lead" her man in the right direction in life; the successful woman is the sage (wise) woman. Woman can lead man to destruction; figures like the 'Yakshi', the 'snake woman', 'the poisonous woman' (Lamia, the Sirens, the Harpies etc. etc) destroy man by misleading man. The mother woman is like Virgin Mary. Recall the words of countess Vronsky which I have quoted at the end of our summary how Anna ruined the lives of two exceptionally meritorious men. She is somewhat like the legendary snake woman (fatal woman-femme fetal)

However, Tolstoy does not condemn Anna at all. He seems to pity her. Does not Stepan manage his infidelities through clever concealment? Does not Dolly close her eyes to the extramarital affairs of Stepan and silently suffer to keep her family infact and save her marriage? Does not Betty with her notoriously loose friends manage as much as Stepan and get away with her indiscretions? Society which censures is itself guilty of serious offences. But society is organized and an organization is always stronger than an individual. Society crucifies individuals: The so called spiritual triumph of the individual is mere blah-blah.

The stormy affair between Anna and Vronsky is no doubt far more thrilling than the somnambulant, routine, though steady, love between Kitty and Levin. Troughs and peaks are far more challenging than level land. There is greater strength in the conquest of the former; it tires, though. The latter is just commonplace and not at all remarkable. Anna let loose a veritable storm and caused unending ripples in the placid lake of Moscow and St. Petersburg society. What did Kitty do, except live her life? Anna looms large as a question mark on the backdrop of 'successful' but 'unhappy' marriages after becoming a scapegoat.'

The heinous double standards of society, religion, cults, families, friends and every other form of institution are mercilessly exposed by Tolstoy in the novel. It is when helpless individuals fall victim to these double standards that they are exposed. But it is too late the harm is done. And it is endlessly repeated.

The societies of Moscow and St. Petersburg are the micro cosmic representations of Russia at large in the 1870s. We learn a lot about how high society lived and moved in those days from the novel.

We find Levin to be an indistinct self-projection of the author himself. He explores religion, pacifism, governmental process, agricultural labour, the sympathy and the lack of sympathy the landed gentry has for the peasant class and many other things in the novel.

"Anna Karenina" is a vast fabric into which is woven every aspect of contemporary society of Russia of the 1870s. The intricate pattern looks different from different angles. It presents a vast panorama of human life, its falls and triumphs, it's joys and sorrows, its love and hate; its tenderness and cruelty – all together constituting humanity. So the novel is an in depth study of humanity.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Prepare character sketches of Anna, Alexei, Vronsky, Kitty, Stepan, Dolly, Levin and Betsy.

2. Evaluate the religious, ethical aspects of Anna's clandestine relation with Vronsky.
3. 'The treatment that was meted out to Anna by society is violative of the principle of justice and the equation between crime and punishment." Discuss.
4. Anna Karenina is a vast mosaic of contemporary Russian life.' Comment
5. Discuss the tempestuous relation between Vronsky and Anna
6. 'The maternal instincts are repressed in Anna so that her amorous adventures can have full play. Do you agree?

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There are quite a large number of critical studies of Tolstoy in the form of essays available in anthologies. Read a few.

Lessons prepared by

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Trichur.

UNIT - V
FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY
THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV

Destoevsky was born in 1821 in Moscow in a middle class family as the second son of their eight children. His father, a strict disciplinarian, was an army surgeon and was killed by his own enraged serfs. His mother belonged to the Moscow merchant class and was an unusually loving, unassertive woman. At the age of sixteen Dostoevsky lost his mother too. The following year he entered the military academy. He hated it and its regimental set up. When he was twenty-three, he resigned his army commission with the intention of writing. That was the one and only thing he liked doing,

His association in 1848 with Petrashevsky, a liberal-minded official and his group of revolutionary friends resulted in his being arrested, tried and sentenced to death in 1849 along with all the others of the group. They were actively involved in matters like the abolition of serfdom, the problem of censorship and Fourierist socialism. They were charged with seditious conspiracy. It was when they were standing blindfolded before the firing squad that a last minute reprieve arrived. Instead of death they were sent to Siberia-the death penalty was commuted-to do eight years' hard labour. The inhuman cruelty of the last minutes as they were looking at death before the squad produced a traumatic effect in many of them: a few became raving mad, a few somewhat mentally deranged and perhaps it was the root cause behind Dostoevsky's epileptic attacks later in life.

After five years of the eight year sentence, in 1855, he was released and made to enlist in the army with the restoration of his commission. In 1859, after getting full pardon, he returned to civilization in St. Petersburg.

It was while he was in Siberia that he met and married a widow, Maria (Marie) Isaeva, who suffered from tuberculosis. He loved her, but it was an incompatible and so unhappy marriage. When she died, he met and fell in love with a certain Appolinaria (Polina) Surslova who was a proud, passionate and defiant feminist college girl. She became his mistress for some time. In 1867 he got rid of Polina and married Anna Grigorievna Snit kina, his very young secretary who understood, loved and respected him and made him comfortable and happy. Meanwhile, he had become a compulsive gambler and lost heavily at the gambling tables of Europe.

Dostoevsky had a heap of troubles: his gambling, his useless step-son; poverty, epilepsy; the responsibility to look after the family of one of his brothers, greedy and unscrupulous publishers etc.

In spite of his misery and poverty he traveled all over Europe, and learned a lot. This learning is found in abundance in his writings. Dostoevsky always stood for the Russian Orthodox Church and Religion and Russian nationalism.

Dostoevsky died on 9 February, 1881, three months after he completed 'The Brothers Karamazov'. By then he had become a great national figure, almost a monument and a legend. Today he is recognized as one of the three greatest writers of Russia the other two being Tolstoy and Turgenev.

DOSTOEVSKY, THE WRITER:

The life of the author falls under four periods as given below:

1. The Pre-exile period (1821-1849)
2. The Exile : the Siberian period (1850 – 1858)

3. The post – exile period - upto his meeting Anna (1859 – 1866)
4. The Anna period (1866-1881)

His creative period began in about 1845-46 and ended in 1880. His first novel came out in 1846 which reveals the author's deep compassion for the poor, the downtrodden and the exploited, besides his abiding interest in abnormal psychology. His literary output is given below:

1. Poor Folk (1846)
2. The Insulted and the Injured (1861)
3. The House of the Dead (1862)
4. Crime and Punishment (1867)
5. The Idiot (1868-69)
6. The Possessed (The Devils) 1871
7. A Raw Youth (1876)
8. The Brothers Karamazov (1880)

Notes from the underground (Letters from the Underworld which were written in the early 1860 s)

Though Dostoevsky was from Moscow, his novels contain the life of St. Petersburg, especially that during evenings and nights. Quite unlike Tolstoy and Turgenev, his illustrious contemporaries, rich and contenders for the number one position in the world of fiction, Dostoevsky has drawn his characters from the middle class, both the upper and the lower ones, consisting of ordinary government clerks and copyists, prostitutes and pawn brokers, thieves and murderers, sensualists and immoralists, gamblers and businessmen etc. in all of whom we find a streak of abnorinality. Though all his four major novels- *Crime* and *Punishment, The Idiot, The possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov* are murder stories, murder is not his only preoccupation. Of course, we do find in him on overriding obsession and infatuation for crime and punishment, sin and expiation, guilt and retribution; but besides, we find in his writings his profound exploration of theological and ethical problems (Is there a God? What is it that we call suffering? Choice between good and bad, virtue and vice, truth and lie, and so on) His characters are strongly disturbed by problems like the above and many live turbulent lives. He is one of the greatest realists in world fiction and has profoundly influenced novelists and the craft of fiction the world over.

THE GENESIS OF "BROTHERS KARAMAZOV"

In the translator's introduction to the novel (penguin classics – two volume edition) there is an excellent treatment of how the novel took shape in Dostoevsky's mind. It was while he was in Siberia that he happened to hear the germinal idea of the novel PARRICIDE the most heinous form of murder. (The word 'parricide' means 'the murder of a parent or near relative, or the murder of anyone to whom reverence is considered to be due; one who commits such a crime. The connection of the word with 'pater' (father) is rather fanciful. However, in our novel it is the same as patricide, the murder of one's own father) Let me quote from the introduction.

"The genesis of the "Brothers Karamazov", however, shows an even closer link with Dostoevsky's past. For, it was during his imprisonment in Siberia that he met a man serving a twenty-years' sentence for parricide, who was to supply him with the central idea of the plot of his novel...The condemned parricide was, like Dmitri Karamaov, a retired lieutenant, of a line regiment, by the name of llyinsky.....

In addition to this, Dostovesky was strongly influenced by a performance of Schiller's. 'The Robbers' which he saw when he was just ten. He refers to it in his correspondence. His wife, Anna, also records that while her husband was writing 'The Brothers Karamazov', he again reread 'The Robbers' and on one occasion read it aloud to his family. Schiler's play deals with the subject of parricide and the rivalry between two brothers.

Besides the theme of parricide, Dostoevsky was also concerned with them like atheism, the existence of God, children and their maltreatment, the disintegration of family and state etc. All these find important places in the novel. Taking the novel as a whole, we may venture to say that it gives the reader a picture of Russia of the seventies and

eighties of the last century, as Dostoevsky saw it.

Dostoevsky very effectively fuses idea and character in the novel. Even minor characters are drawn with loving care and so they appear rounded. It is the psychological realism of the novel that strikes us best.

"THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV" : THE NOVEL : SYNOPSIS

The texts used are the two volume edition by Penguin Classics and the two volume edition by Raduga Publishers (Moscow) translated by Julius Katzer (second edition, 1990). The quotations are all from the latter. I find the latter better printed, cleaner and far more readable than the Penguin Classics. Hence the preference. The novel is a thousand pages long. No condensation can do any justice to the original (translation, of course).

Given below is the list of characters. The more important ones are sketched in some detail so that the synopsis can be better understood. HOWEVER, THE SYNOPSIS IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE ORIGINAL NOVEL AS THE NOVEL IS AN ALL TIME CLASSIC. Read the original as many times as you can.

FYODOR PAVLOVICH KARAMAZOV:

A landowner, 'a man who once acquired some notoriety because 'of his tragic and mysterious death', 'not only an evil and thoroughly reprobate man but also a bungler', one of the most inept cranks, fawning for small 'favours', 'twice married', father of four male children, the first by his first wife, the second and the third by his second wife and the fourth 'illegitimate', 'a bold, and pungent critic and a spiteful buffoon', 'money-grubber', greedy and unscrupulous, occasionally suffered beatings from first wife, a lecher ready to chasing after any female who would as much as beckon to him, regular at bawdy houses and pubs:....

ADELAIDA IVANOVNA MIUSOV:

First wife of Fyodor Karamazov, mother of Dmitri (Mitya), 'hot-tempered, mettle-some, reckless, endowed with remarkable physical strength', of fairly wealthy and distinguished stock, good looking and with a dowry, always ready for a fight with her husband. Fyodor and Adelaida eloped to get married!! Later left home with an impecunious teacher abandoning the three-year old Mitya to her husband's care, later dies at St. Petersburg...

SOFIA IVANOVNA:

The second wife of Fyodor; a very young orphaned girl, 'meek, gentle and inoffensive', remarkably beautiful and artless, innocent, suffered from dreadful fits of hysteria, mother of Ivan and Alexei (Alyosha), died when Alyosha was four. Called the 'Wailer' by Fyodor.

DMLTRI (MITYA)

Twenty seven, the first son of Fyodor; neglected by father and cared for by Grigori for one year when Mitya was just three; forgotten by both father's and mother's relatives; between 3 and 4 under the guardianship of Pyotr Alexandrovich, then handed over to Pyotr's aunt, again on her death to one of her married daughters thus changing home four times in just a few years: His boyhood and youth were wild', he did not finish the gymnasium (the secondary school of the highest grade), got enlisted in the army, at the military school; stationed in the Caucasus where he earned promotion. Fought duel for which he was degraded to the ranks, won promotion again, led a boisterous life, spent a good deal of money'. Had exaggerated notion of his inheritance from his mother and also from his father; exploited by father; flighty, unruly, impatient and dissolute; deceptively turned debtor by father.

IVAN AND ALEXEI

Second and third sons of Fyodor by Sofia; neglected by father and initially cared for by Grigori, later looked after by Sofia's guardian and then by the guardian's heir, a most honourable and humane man.

(a) Ivan 24 'Sullen and withdrawn', far from timid but keenly aware, even at the age of ten that they were living with a family of strangers and on charity', extraordinarily brilliant, joined the university, self reliant by teaching and writing, 'proud and cautious', gets recognition from father, respected by

father for his knowledge, 'acting as mediator and conciliator' between father and Mitya; restless intellectual.

(b) Alexei: Called Alyosha, 20, lover of and trusting man kind, neither 'mystic' nor 'fanatic' inclined to monastic life, 'not very demonstrative in his childhood and adulthood and even sparing of words, but not from mistrust, or timidity, or morose aloofness', 'chaste and pure', 'general favorite', 'inspiring deep affection', 'rarely frolicsome' and 'never high-spirited', never harboring resentment, modest and one of the best boys at school.

PAVEL FYODOROVICH SMERDYAKOV:

Commonly referred to as 'Stinky', illegitimate son of Fyodor by smelly and idiotic' saintly fool' Lizaveta (it is alleged that it was Fyodor who impregnated Lizaveta; but never proved), brought up on her death immediately after delivery by Grigori and his wife, 'offspring of a devil's son and a righteous girl', employed as cook at Fyodor Karamazov's house and Fyodor's valet, living with Grigori and Marfa, 'tight-lipped', 'supercilious by nature', morose, looking upon the world with furitive suspicion, too self-centered, 'unsociable', suffering from fits, 'extremely old-looking for his age (24), prematurely wrinkled and pasty-complexioned, even resembling a eunuch and insolent.

FATHER ZOSSIMA:

A Starts (literary : old man, elder; a venerable monk, unordained preacher given to religious life and prayer, asceticism and solitude, who offered counsel and guidance to anyone in need of spiritual comfort at moments of suffering or turmoil, sometimes attached to a monastery or wandering from village to village living on alms...) of the local monastery, famous for his spiritual counsel.

Grigori:

A loyal servant of the Karamazovs who took care of the brothers when they were children.

Marfa: Grigori's wife.

Lizaveta : A half –witted girl and mother of Smerdyakov; died at the child's birth.

Yefine: A benefactor of the Karamazov children who pays for their education. On his death, for two years Alyosha stayed on at school.

Piotr Miusov (Piotor Miusov) : One of the cousins of Adelaida; mother of Mitya...

Piotr Kalgano (Piotor) : A relative of Miusov; a young but idle fellow

Maximov : An old land owner....

Father Paissy : A monk; on the death of Zossima he becomes the spiritual mentor of Alyosha.

Father Ferapont : A crazy man, besides being both ascetic and fanatic.

Mihail Rakitin: A theological student full of malice and a thoroughbred opportunist.

Mme. Hohlakov: A middle-aged, half-crazy widow:

Lise Hohlakov: Daughter of the above, unfortunately, she is a cripple; mischievous; willful and neurotic.

Katerina Ivonovna (Katenka/Katya) : 'Not some simpering boarding school miss but a person of character, proud and genuinely high principled: above all, she had intellect and education', felt Mitya; engaged to Mitya; beautiful, theatrical and possessive. "I love you to distraction. What if you don't love-it makes no difference; only be my husband. Have no fear; I shan't hamper you in any way. I'll be like a piece of furniture; the carpet you walk on I want to love you for ever; I want to save you from yourself;"she wrote to Mitya.

Agafya Ivanovna : Katerina's sister.

Kuzma Samsonov : A clever, old, grasping merchant and trickster.

Agrafina (Grushenka) : Mistress of Samsonov; Mitya is blindly in love with her; she has no character. See what Dostoevsky says about her:

"..Grushenka, laughing in delight, walked up to the table. Alyosha felt as if some new and powerful sensation had come over him. He fixed his gaze on her, unable to look away so this was that horrible woman the "man-eater; as his brother Ivan had blurted out half an hour before. Yet before him stood, it

would seem, a most ordinary and uncomplicated human being-a good natured and attractive woman, certainly good – looking but how resemblant to all other good looking but 'ordinary' women! True, she was very, even very very good looking, with a kind of Russian beauty so loved by many even to the point of passion ! She was well above medium height, but somewhat shorter than Katerina Ivanovna (who was quite tall), full of figure with feline and even flowing movements of her body, cloyingly languorous, just like her voice. She did not enter as Katerina Ivanovna had, with firm and vigorous step, but on the contrary, noiselessly. Her feet made not the slightest sound on the floor. She sank into an arm chair with a soft swishing of her gorgeous black silk dress, and languidly arranged about her milky white neck and opulent shoulders her costly black cashmere shaw!. She was twenty-two, and looked exactly her age. She had a creamy complexion; the cheeks tinted a pale pink. Her face might have been considered too broad, the lower jaw even a little protrusive. The upper lip was thin, the somewhat prominent lower lip being twice as full, and pouting. But her masses of magnificent light brown hair, her perfect sable black eyebrows and her superb greyblue eyes with their silky lashes would have made even the most blasé of men who chanced to see her in a crowd or among strollers in the street come to sudden standstill at the sight of her face and remember it long afterwards. What struck Alyosha most in that face was its expression of child like trustfulness. Her gaze was that of a child, she expressed delight as a child would; she walked up to the table with a delighted look as though in expectation of something with the impatience and trustful curiosity of a child. Her glance gladdened the heart – Alyosha could feel that. There was also something about her which he could not and would not know how to explain to himself, but which perhaps affected him without his being aware of it, namely, the selfsame flowing voluptuousness of her movements their feline noiselessness. Yet hers was a strong and opulent body.... The body perhaps held out the promise of a Venus of Milo ...." She lisped : her manners were coarse, though. Her intonation and manner of speech were totally out of tune with her childlike simplicity. She is willful, insolent; Katerina calls her a tigress.

Fenya: Servant of Grushenka

Nilkolai Llyich Snegiryov : An officer who has been discharged from the services, burdened by an invalid family.

Arina : Wife of the above.

Llyusha : The young son of the above two : passionate defiant boy strongly attached to his father, nay, devoted to him, bullied by schoolmates.

Nina : Sister of llyusha

Varvara: "Nikolai Lvanovich Krassotkin (Koyla for short) A good natured, daredevil schoolboy: just thirteen

Anna : The doting mother of the above.

Smurov : Another school boy.

Marya : Karamazov's neighbour.

Gorstkin (Lyagazovy) a peasant trader of Volvya.

Pyotor Perhotin : a young officer

Trifon Borissovich : an innkeeper at Mokroe.

Mussyalovich : The Polish lover of Grushenka, a corruptly mercenary swindler.

Vrublevsky : companion of the above.

Mihail Mankarov : An old-fashioned police captain.

Makarov : Inspector of police.

Nikolai Nelyudov : Investigating lawyer.

Ippolit : Deputy prosecutor; an able and ambitious person; consumptive.

Fetyakovich : Dmitri's lawyer from Moscow.

Dr. Herzenstube : A conscientious but mediocre physician.

Dr. Herzenstube : A conscientious but mediocre physician.

Dr. Varvinsky : District Medical Officer

THE KARAMAZOV BROTHERS ARE

1. DMITRI (MITTYA)	27 Years
2. IVAN	24 years
3. ALEXEI (ALYOSHA)	20 Years
4. SMEDRYAKOV (STINKY)	24" (the illegitimate son)

Study the character sketches of all the principal characters before you proceed any further. Only the barest outline is given below. The synopsis can be better understood if you are thoroughly familiar with the main characters, as only they figure in the outline.

Synopsis:

Fyodor Karamazov is a landowner in a Uyezd (administrative subdivision, Province). He is hardly a gentleman. He is quite well off. He is notorious. He may be said to occupy the fringes of respectable society. His life is disorderly. He is guilty of flagrant sensuality. Whenever he gets a chance he displays idiotic buffoonery deliberately. He is twice a widower. His first wife, Adelaida left him, leaving behind her son Dmitri to the care of her husband, though he was looked after by Grigori, the servant for about a year (Now Dmitri is twenty seven). His second wife, Sofia, Ivanovna, whom Fyodor nicknamed. 'the wailer' and rod roughshod over the most ordinary decencies of conjugal life owing to her phenomenal meekness and submissiveness, died of inhuman abuse leaving behind her two sons, Ivan and Alexei, now twenty-four and twenty respectively; Fyodor never cared for his sons. So the children, brought up by his servant and later by relatives of their mothers, developed abnormal characteristics (Let us recall Dostoevsky's interest in abnormal psychology). Besides the three ligitimate sons in his two marriages, Fyodor is alleged to have a fourth son (Stinky) by "Smelly Lizaveta', the village half wit and saintly fool loved by one and all in the village. Lizavata died immediately after giving birth to Stinky who was subsequently taken care of by Grigori and his wife. Stinky is now Fyodor's (his father) valet and cook. Let me repeat that these four brothers have nothing in common; Dmritri (Mitya) is now an ex-army officer. He has inherited from his father a strong taste for debauchery. He has been squandering, as much money as he could lay his hands on in which he is just the opposite of his grasping, close-fisted father. He is constantly in debt. In exchange for paying the son's bills, the reprobate father has coerced his son to renounce all further claims on his estate. It is alleged that Mitya has exaggerated notions of his inheritance both from his late mother and the living father. Fyodor has taken full advantage of Mitys's expensive habits. Ivan, the second son, is something of an intellectual. He has been living in Moscow. He has cut loose from his roots in Orthodox Christianity (Remember Dostoevsky's passion for Orthodox Christianity) and moved away, though he has not yet succeeded in finding for himself a new anchorage, a new spiritual home. For one like Ivan it is absolutely imperative that he finds one immediately or as early as possible. Alexei (Alyosha) is deeply religious. He is gentle, loving, lovable, healthy, good-looking and an introvert. He has become a novice at the monastery where his spiritual guide, Father Zossima, is a part. Stinky is a competent valet. But he is resentful, sly and ambitious. He is insolent, not at all lovable, totally ungrateful to Grigori and his wife though they brought him up. He has a warped mind. To make matters worse, he suffers from epilepsy (Dostovsky too suffered from it).

In the monastery Alexei has been under the influence of Zossima, who is said to read and understand the mysterious workings of the human mind besides being a deeply pious, wise man. Fyodor Karamazov has heard about him, especially about his sanctity and sagacity. Since there is between Dmriti and him bitter hostility, Fyodor suggests that in order to get rid of the ill-will and to re-establish good will and familial bonding all the Karamazovs seek spiritual counsel and guidance from Zosima. Alexei is not very confident of the success of such a step. He has very serious reservations about the manners and propriety of his wayward father. He suspects and fears that there might be some ulterior motives behind his father's recommendation. He knows that his father

is a notorious buffoon and that he might make a mockery of the meeting. Well, Alexei's fears come true, As suspected by him, fyodor conducts himself despicably behaving like a buffoon, boisterously fighting with his eldest son and others too, belittling the venerable monks and religious persons present there and embarrassing one and all. Luckily for everyone, Zossima is not offended; he is only concerned about the general welfare of the guests who are trying to seek his guidance. He does give Fydor and Ivan some brief advice. Though he does not give any counsel as such to Mitya, he makes a low bow to him indicating recognition. He explains soon afterwards that Dmitri is fated to undergo terrible suffering. He orders Alexie in loving kindness and compassion that for the sake of his brothers first and the whole world next he at once should leave the monastery and return to the mundane world. His service is needed there.

Dmitri's case is not simple and uncomplicated, in fact, it is far from simple. He is involved in a mazy love tangle. As a young military officer some time ago he was drawn to one Katerina Ivanona, the lovely daughter of a colonel. Mitya has come to know that the colonel has been guilty of using regimental funds to make some profit for himself on a regular basis and at one juncture lost a large sum of money which resulted in embezzlement, having failed to make good the loss in time. Unless the money is restored forth with, he is in the potential danger of exposure and disgrace. At this time Dmitri intervenes and offers to help by giving the colonel the money through Katerina to make good the deficit if Katerina will exchange favours with him. As a matter of fact, this offer is an insult to a woman of Katerina's rank and position in society (and it is hitting below the belt or adding insult to injury). She has been steadily and carefully ignoring Dmitri in the past. So Dmitri's present offer comes as if he will like to level the scores between them. However, in her abject helplessness and out of loyalty to her father in distress she gets ready to make the sacrifice. Dmitri, who is sometimes very honourable, is moved to generosity and arranges for her the sum of 4000 roubles as an out right gift. Katerina has a penchant for dramatic situations when she can be in the limelight of suffering and sacrifice. She feels permanently indebted to Dmitri but for whom and his timely help her father would have been disgracefully from the regiment and would have had to face court-martial for embezzlement. Dmitri has paved the honour of her family and hers. Without much delay Dmitri and Katerina are engaged to be married, though they belong to different social tiers. They have nothing in common. We readers can predict that it is going to be a case of incompatibility and disaster. Besides, Mitya is notoriously riotous, lavish, unstable and sensual. He is a spendthrift who has had his share of sexual exploits in the past. Hardly has he got engaged to Katerina when he comes across Grushenka and gets infatuated with her. She is being kept by an old and unscrupulous merchant. Samsonov Katerina and her sister Agafya lose their lieutenant – colonel father very soon after the financial matters are set right. Within a few months Katerina gets a windfall fortune dowry of 8000 roubles from a relative. When she entrusts Dmitri with a sum of 3000 roubles to be sent to Agafya by post, he steals the money and goes on a spending spree for three days with Grushenka who will not be ready to marry him, not even look at him. He cannot face Katerina, for he is guilty of deception and theft. See what he says to Alexei.

"I want you to know, Alexei, that I may be a base man with low and degrading passions, but Dmitri Karamazov can never become a thief or a pickpocket, or a flicher! Yet you should now learn that I've become a thief – pickpocket and sneak thief"

Dmitri is in a fix. He cannot leave Katerina because he is bound to her by his debt and engagement. He cannot wed Grushenka because she will not even think of looking at a penniless man. To complicate it still further Fyodor Karamazov, the old lecher, is interested in Grushenka himself. He is trying pretty hard to tempt and lead her away from her keeper, Samsonov, with his show of wealth which, Dmitri thinks, is as much his too as his father's since he is one of the rightful heirs of the Karamazov estate. To make matters still worse and much more

complicated, (which is something like a blessing in disguise for Mitya, though) Ivan who was sent by Dmitri as an emissary to Katerina, had fallen for her and continues to be in secret love with her. It also appears that she at first reciprocated. Though Dmitri is pleased with this unexpected angle of development, which, if it materializes will free him from his engagement and enable him to marry Grushenka, Katerina is grimly and firmly determined to stand by her early decision and to sacrifice herself for the rehabilitation of Dmitri (who has saved her father and their family) from shame and made possible an honourable discharge from the army. Therefore, she will not entertain any thoughts of Ivan and encourage him any further.

Stinky, in the meanwhile, biding his time, has sprung into action. He goes to Ivan and makes an evil proposal, very indirectly and suggestively, of course, in such a way that if Ivan chooses, he can pretend not to have understood the motive behind it. Stinky is venomous. He alleges that Dmitri is very impatient and unpredictable, and is in a state of mind in which, he would kill Fyodor Karamazev, his (their) father. Fyodor, too, suspects this, as he has been very cleverly depriving Dmitri of the lion's share of his inheritance (from his mother) and as Dmitri is a contender for the hand of Grushenka. Therefore, he barricades himself in the house at night. He will open the door of the house if and only if a coded knock is made which is known only to Stinky and which is to be used by him to secretly announce the arrival of Grushenka in case she chooses to spend her night with Fyodor. But Stinky, the diabolical one, has betrayed the coded signal to Dmitri and the latter, therefore, can enter the house if he so decides. A situation arises, Stinky can pretend an epileptic attack. If something untoward happens, no one will be able to suspect the complicity of Stinky, Ivan can choose to leave for his favorite Moscow, so there will be no obstacle. Things heat up because, if Fyodor Karamazov marries Grushenka and the couple has children, all the Karamazov estate will go into the possession of the children. Let us see what kind of a dialogue takes place between Ivan and Stinky: it reveals the characters of both Ivan and Stinky.

(Page 354-356)

"But what for should he go into Father's rooms, and on the quiet, too, if, as you yourself say, Agrafena Alexandrovna (i.e., Grushenka) won't be coming at all;" Ivan went on, turning white with anger "That what you've been saying all the time, and ever since I came to live here I've been sure that the old man has been imagining things, and that the slut will never come to him. Why should Dmitri break into the old man's quarters if she doesn't come? Speak up! I want to know what's in your mind"

"You know very well why he'll go there, so what difference does it make what's in his mind? He'll go there out of sheer malice or because my illness makes him suspicious. He'll grow doubtfull and search the rooms in his impatience, the way he did yesterday, to make sure she hasn't slipped past him. He knows for sure that Fyodor has a big envelope ready with 3000 roubles enclosed, under three seals and tied round with a pink ribbon, and an inscription in his own hand: 'To my angel Grushenka, should she wish to come', to which he added three days later, 'and my little chick'. It's that which makes things so suspicious, sir."

"Rubbish!" cried Ivan, almost beside himself. "Dmitri will never come to rob for money and murder his father into the bar gain. He could have killed him yesterday on account of Grushenka like the savage and crazy fool he is, but he'll never commit robbery!"

"He's badly in need of money, sir, very hard up, indeed, Ivan Fyodorovich. You've no idea how badly he needs it," Stinky explained with the utmost composure and explicitness. "Besides, he considers the three thousand his own; as he himself told me: 'Father still owes me exactly three thousand', were his words: And apart from all that, Ivan F, there's another piece of pure truth you should consider: It's almost certain that Agrafena will make him marry her if she has a mind to, I mean the master, Fyodor Pavlovich, of course, if she has a mind to. And she may wish to : I've been saying she

won't come, but she may be after bigger things- I mean, becoming the mistress of his house. I know for certain that her merchant Samsonov told her quite frankly it wouldn't be a bad idea at all, and he laughed as he said that: And she has wits about her; sir, has she? Why on earth should she marry a pauper like Dmitri F? That's why, Ivan F., now that you know everything you should consider: if that happens, then neither Dmitri nor you and your brother Alexei will get anything, not a single rouble, after your father's death, because she'll marry him only to get all his fortune settled on her. Were your father to die now, sir, before anything of the kind has come about, then each of you would get a cool forty thousand right away, even Dmitri F, whom he hates like poison. That's because he's made no will – And Dmitri – F. is very much aware of it"

... .

(A few seconds later Ivan says)

"If you care to know, I'm leaving for Moscow early tomorrow morning and that's all!"

"That's the' best thing for you to do, sir; said Stinky," except, of course, that you can easily be reached there by telegram, sir, should there be some cause:

(The words above speak volumes about what is in the minds of Ivan and Stinky)

The foregoing discussion makes it amply clear that it is desirable that Fyodor dies as early as possible before making a will and testament so that the Karamazov brothers will inherit the entire estate which is worth a cool one hundred thousand roubles. Dmitri is very badly in need of money; Fyodor may get married to Grushenka; Ivan and Alexei may lose all their inheritance. So on hearing the words of Stinky, when Ivan runs away from the room in a frenzy of horror and revulsion and then to Moscow, we readers begin to suspect that Ivan is permitting matters to take their own course and, making himself scarce from the scene, is guarding himself from any possible suspicion in the event of his father's unnatural death. If Ivan is away in Moscow when his father gets murdered, he cannot have any hand in that; yet he gets his full share of the estate. In case Dmitri is caught and punished, Ivan may get half of his share too. Over and above these things, all the obstacles in his way of marrying Katerina will be removed, too. In short, if rich, he can marry Katerina and live happily ever after. Hence his departure.

The situation in which Dmitri finds himself is a fuming volcano. He is miserable being in a cauldron of anger, guilt, frustrated desire, self-pity, impatience, a feeling of inferiority, pauperism and the like. How is he going to give back to Katerina the three thousand roubles? How is he going to prevent his father's marrying Grushenka? All his efforts to raise money by borrowing fail. He goes to Grushenka and to his utter disappointment she is not at home. He suspects that she has left for the Karamazov home to be with his father: He takes a small but heavy pestle from the kitchen, rushes to his father's house and enters the garden stealthily. Then, totally unexpectedly, he is surprised by Grigori. They grapple with each other; the young man strikes down Grigori with the pestle and wounds him. Covered with Grigori's blood he returns to Grushenka's place and learns that she has gone away with her former paramour, a pole, who had seduced her many years ago and abandoned her. The man has returned and Grushenka has been ready to go with him. In a way Dmitri is relieved because Fyodor, his father, has not succeeded in his pursuit of his girl. Nevertheless, Dmitri is restless and badly needs Grushenka.

Dmitri's enquiries in the village enable him to follow Grushenka and her Pole. He soon catches up with them in an adjacent village. The Pole is a no good creature, is just a petty cardsharp: He can be bought with the tempting offer of a small sum of money. So Dmitri gets rid of him quite easily. Without wasting time Dmitri and Grushenka start a wild round of Bacchanalian festivity: They call in dancers and musicians and give an expensive, lavish treat to all the villagers and peasants. This festivity and the expenses incurred on that head are used against Dmitry afterwards, who just a few hours earlier was known to be a pauper. The silence of Dotoevsky at this juncture adds to the overall suspense. It is during the peak of the

festivity that the police arrive and arrest Dmitri charging him with the murder of Fyodor Karamzov. Dostoevsky gives us a brilliant exposition of peripeteia here, a kind of fall form the sublime to the ridiculous. Let us quote (pages 156-158 Vol II).

"I love you, nobody but you. I'll go on loving you even in Siberia." (words of Dmitri)

"But why go to Siberia? But if you wish, let it be Siberia, it makes no difference-we'll work there. There's so much snow in Siberia, and I like driving on the snow-especially to the jingling of bells. But listen, do you hear the gingle of bells? Where from? Somebody's coming here-The jinglin's stopped-"

She closed her eyes helplessly, and seemed to doze off momentarily. Indeed, there had been the jingle of horse bells from somewhere in the distance, which suddenly stopped. Mitya let his head sink on her breast. He did not notice that the bells had stopped jingling and that the singling had ceased abruptly, the songs and the drunken uproar yielding place to dead silence throughout the entire house. Grushenka opened her eyes.

"What, did I doze off? Oh, yes- the bells. I've just had a dream about driving along the snow-with the bells jingling, and me in a doze. I was traveling with someone dear to me-with you and going somewhere far away. I was embracing and kissing you, nestling close to you, for I was feeling cold, and the snow was sparkling-when the snow is sparkling, you know, and the moon is shining, it's like something out of this world-when I awoke, my darling was close to me-how sweet.

'Close to you," Mitya – murmured, showering kisses on her dress, her breast, her hands, Suddenly, a strange feeling came over him: she seemed to be gazing straight before her, not at him, or his face but somewhere over his head, in an intent and strangely fixed stare. Her face was expressive of sudden surprise, even fright.

"Mitya, who can it be looking here at us from over there? She suddenly whispered. He turned round and saw that someone had indeed parted the curtains and was watching them. No, there seemed to be more than one person there. He jumped and strode rapidly towards the watcher.

'This way, sir, step this way," said a voice, speaking in a low but firm and insistent tone.

Mitya stepped beyond the curtain and came to a sudden standstill. The room was full of people-not those who had just been there, but newcomers. A cold shiver ran down his spine, and he shuddered. He recognized all of them instantly. The tall stout old gentleman in a grey coat and cockaded cap was Mikhail Makarovich, the uyezd chief of police. That smartly dressed "consumptive looking" man, "always in such highly polished top-boots" was the deputy public prosecutor (He's got a chronometer worth 400 roubles, which he has shown me"). And that small and be spectacled young man- Mitya knew him but his name had slipped his memory-he was the court investigator; just out of the Faculty of law, and was a recent arrival. Then there was Mavriki Mavrikievich, the rural police inspector-he knew him quite well. But why the others with the brass badges? And another two, peasants by the look of them-And there, in the doorway, were Kalganov and Trifon Borisovich, the innkeeper.

"What's this all about, gentleman? "Mitya began, but suddenly seeming not himself, he cried out at the top of his voice: "I understand".

"We have something-in short, I shall ask you step this way, this way to the sofa-there is an imperative need to question you." "It's the old man!" cried Mitya frenziedly, "the old man and his blood! I un-der-stand!"

He collapsed into a chair standing close by.

"So you understand, do you? Monster and parricide, the blood of your old father cries out against you!" the old police Chief suddenly roared walking up to Mitya. Purple-faced and trembling all over he was quite beside himself:

"This is most irregular!" cried the small young gentleman. "This will never do, Mikhail Makarvoich. Will you please allow me alone to speak – I never expected such behaviour from you-"

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"But this is nothing but delirium," the uyezd police chief exclaimed. "Just look at him: drinking at this time of night, with a disreputable woman; and his hands in his father's blood! It's unbelievable-delirium!"

"I shall request you most insistently, my dear Mikhail Makarovich, to curb your feelings, "the deputy public prosecutor began in a hurried undertone, "for otherwise I shall be obliged to take"

However, the little court investigator interrupted him. Addressing Mitya in a firm, loud and impressive voice, he said: "Retired Lieutenant Karamazov, it is my duty to inform you that you are charged with the murder of your father Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, committed this night-

He went on speaking, with the prosecutor putting in some words, but though he tried to listen, Mitya could make out nothing of what was being said. He started at them with eyes full of consternation.

THE ABOVE IS BRILIANT IRONY MITYA SUSPECTED THAT HE HAD KILLED GRIGORI, THE OLD SERVANT, AT THE SAME TIME SOMEONE HAD KILLED KARAMAZOV. BOTH ARE OLD. SO WHEN HE CRIED OUT, IT APPEARED AS IF HE CONFESSED HIS OFFENCE.

(Note the quick of fate: It is one of the finest pieces or literary irony in world literature.)

Immediately afterwards we learn that Fyodor Karamazov has been murdered and a sum of three thousand roubles has been reported to have disappeared. The pauper Dmitri has been on a spending spree with new-found money. All the circumstantial evidences (study what is given above) are against him. Mitya suspects and then is sure that it is Stinky who is behind all the mis chief-both the murder and the theft. Grigori has testified against Mitya. There is high voltage drama now:

"Do you recognize this object?" Nikolai Parfenovich asked, placing on the table a large envelope of the size used in government offices, with the three seals still intact. The envelops itself was empty and torn open at one end. Mitya started goggle eyed at it.

"I suppose it must be my father's envelope," he muttered: "The same that contained the three thousand roubles and – it there's an inscription let me see, please – To my little chicken'- here, you see? Three thousand; he cried, "three thousand! You see?"

"Of course, we do but we found no money in it. It was empty and lying on the floor near the bed, behind the screen'

For a few seconds Mitya stood as though thunderstruck.

"Gentleman, it's Smerdyakov!" he suddenly shouted at the top of his voice. "It's he who murdered and robbed him! He alone knew where the old man had hidden the envelope-it's he that's clear now!"

"But you, too, knew of the envelope and that it was kept under the pillow." "I never knew it. I've never seen it before; this is the first time I've seen it, I only heard of it from Smerdyakov – Only he knew where the old man kept it hidden, I didn't know-"

Dmitri is interrogated. Dmitri uses very vile language and makes a very bad impression on all. Within a short time he is on trial. It is Child's play for the prosecutors to make an impregnable case against him. Grigori's testimony establishes that Dmitri was at the scene of the crime, he was carrying a weapon and he used it against him. He was unexpectedly and inexplicably rich and lavishly spending money which could be accounted for only through the alleged theft; he and his father were not getting on well; they were rivals for Grushenka and so on. Dmitri tries to explain.

He had misappropriated 3000 roubles from Materina; but had not spent the whole of it, had kept half of it which he had been spending with Grushenka when the police arrived. He had no part in the murder, did not know anything at all about the money missing from the Karamazov house. He was obstinately insistent about his innocence:

During Dmitri's trial Ivan met Stinky several times and discussed with him matters relating to his father, his murder, the money which was missing and alleged to have been

stolen by Dmitri etc. etc. The discussions brought out the truth (Page 380).

Smerdyakov:"...Here we are, the two of us, sitting alone in a room, so what's the use of fooling ourselves and making pretence? Or do you really want to put the whole blame on me to my face? You murdered him. You are the chief murderer. I was only your accomplice, your servant and I done it because you told me to."

Ivan froze with horror. "You did? Did you murder him?"

Something seemed to give way in his brain and he began trembling all over. Smerdyakov himself now looked at him in surprise: the genuineness of Ivan's horror must have struck him at last.

"Did you really know nothing about it" he muttered distrustfully staring at him with a wry smile.

"Take a look, sir, "Smerdyakov said still in the same voice. Ivan stepped up to the table; took up the sheaf and began unfolding it, but suddenly pulled his hand away as though it had come into contact with some loathsome reptile.

"Your fingers keep trembling, sir, just as if they were in convulsions, "observed Smerdyakov and unhurriedly unfolded the sheaf himself. Under the wrapper were three rolls of rainbow coloured hundred – rouble notes (It was the money stolen from Fyodor Karamazov's room after the murder) Smerdyakov charges Ivan with the murder of his father (Page 385)

"...Still it's you, sir, who're responsible for everything that's happened for you knew about the murder and entrusted to me and went away knowing all about it. That's why I want to prove to you your face this evening that you, alone, are the real murderer, though I did the killing. Yes, sir, it's you who's the rightful murderer.

Well, sir, if I was sure of your consent, I'd have known that when you came back you wouldn't raise a hullabaloo about the missing three thousand, even if for some reason the police suspected me instead of Dmitri, or thought that I was his accomplice. On the contrary, you'd have protected me from the others – and having obtained your inheritance you might have rewarded me as soon as possible afterwards; and for the rest of my life, for it would be, after all, through me that you'd have got it, seeing as how otherwise your father would have married Agrafena, and you wouldn't have got a brass farthing."

Oh, so you intended to torment me afterwards-for the rest of my life, did you?" Ivan snarled...

(Page 391)

Ivan:"..Perhaps, I too, was guilty. Perhaps I really did wish in my heart that my father were dead, but I swear to you I am not guilty as you think... My mind is made up! I'll tell them everything, everything, But I'll appear in court together with you!.... But you, too, must confess in court. You must, you must!! We shall go there together! That's how it will be!"

Stinky: "Nothing of the kind will happen, sir, you won't go, sir!" He offers the stolen money to Ivan and the latter takes it. But he wants Stinky to join him, in the court the following day. But it does not happen. Alyosha turns up and informs Ivan that Stinky had just killed himself.

Later, in the court, Ivan tries his best to tell the truth and save Mitya. He displays the 3000 roubles and cries: (Page 461)

"I got it from Smerdyakov, from the murderer yesterday-I went to see him before he hanged himself. It was he and not my brother who murdered my father. He murdered him, and it was I who prompted him to do it. Who doesn't wish for his father's death?

Because; Ivan was delirious, raving mad, none believed him. Ironically, the truth is kept aside.'

The denouement comes with the protracted prosecution and the defense followed by a verdict of 'guilty' (page 548)

"The foreman of the jury, the civil servant who was the youngest member of the jury, announcement in a loud and clear voice amid the dead silence in the courtroom: 'Yes, we find him guilty!" "upon which Mitya

cires: I swear by God and His Last judgment I'm not guilty of my father's blood! Katya, I forgive you! Brothers, friends, spare the other woman." It is at once speculated that Mitya will have to serve at least twenty years hard labour in Siberia and if will also be the end of Mitya.

This is followed by a scene of reconciliation with Katerina along with the parting with Grushenka. We also learn about the attempts, made by Katerina and Ivan for Mitya's escape on his way to Siberia for which they have collected a large sum of money to bribe the officers. Mitya refuses to accept and co-operate with the plan of escape. Dmitri's case is a glaring instance of the miscarriage of justice, as all of us know. Though he is wrongly convicted of his father's murder, he is a sinner in his own eyes, nonetheless. He will accept and undergo the punishment as a necessary atonement for his past several offences. It is punishment he deserves, he claims.

We have now come to the end of the story. Apart from the main plot outlined above, there were several subplots, almost all of them revolving round Alyosha. One of them is about a crippled girl called Lise to whom Alexei is for a while engaged. Another revolves round Zossima, the starets; it is so extensive as to form another novel within the novel: We are told about the circumstances that make him a starts. A third one is about a cashiered army officer named Snegiryov who has been insulted by Dmitri and who is being helped by Alexei out of his generosity and compassion. The two are brought together through llya (the officer's son) who is a friend of Alexei. The boy's death which is mourned by his family and a team of loyal school friends provides Alexei with a chance of regaining his faith in the resurrection of the body. The novel ends in a positive note.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

All the four masterpieces of Dostovsky are murder stories. But each one of them deals with a different aspect of murder. His 'Crime and Punishment' is based on the idea whether the murder of an evil old female, who is also an unscrupulous moneylender, is justifiable if it assists in providing the means of learning for a brilliant, but poor student. His 'The idiot' deals with the murder as a consequence of carnal passion set against the backdrop of the Christian ideal of forgiveness. His third novel The Devils' (or The Possessed') has a political motive behind the murder. And needless to say, our present novel, 'The Brothers Karamazov' has patricide, the most heinous of all murders, being examined under a microscope. Dostoevsky is reported to have been under a morbid fascination to study it. This is supported by his correspondence and also his wife, Anna. Dostoevsky is said to have seen a performance of Schiller's play 'The Robbers' in his childhood, read aloud the play for the benefit of his family and reread it at the time of writing 'The Brothers' and the theme of 'The Robbers' is parricide and the rivalry between two brothers. Apart from this, during Dostoevsky's term in Siberia he met a young man serving a twenty year sentence for parricide who provided the author with the central idea for the plot. His case was exactly similar to the case of Dmitri Karamazov, a clear case of miscarriage of justice. The young man was later proved innocent, yet at the beginning he was punished on the strength of circumstantial evidence.

Within a few months of completing the novel Dostoevsky died. The novel can be looked upon as the outcome of the religious fervor of the author's final years.

The translations I have with me run to nearly a thousand pages each. The one I have used for quotations is 421 + 575 = 996 pages long-which makes it a pretty long one. It is full of digressions. It gives the reader the impression that the aging author wanted to load every line with ore, thinking and feeling that he might not get another chance to write. He has carefully selected as his theme a family, which, in its several members, stands for the various aspects of Russian life in the second half of the last century (Kindly read the character sketches I have provided in the beginning). Fyodor Karamazov is the revolting, aging head and he is the least admirable. He has everything in him that a decent human being loathes. He is violent, sensual; he is, nevertheless, full of energy and vitality. Alexei, his third and youngest son, symbolizes Holy Russia of Orthodox

Christianity. Alexei is beautifully sketched – a serene, devout young man of 20, happy, modest, loving, lovable, healthy and a real blessing to everybody around. Ivan, 24, is something of a brooding philosopher and skeptic, standing perhaps for that aspect of Russia that connects Russia to Europe. He is restless because he is anchorless and is badly in need of some strong deep roots and strong moorings. Dmitri, (perhaps) the central character, is a mystifying one and a bundle of all the contradictions that Russia could conjure up. He is Russia in ferment. He has inherited his father's sensuality and violence, but he is generous to a fault whereas his father is stingy and mean. When Dmitri talks to Alexei, he gives us an excellent picture of himself. There are moments when he yearns to rise above all others in terms of holiness, humanity, culture arid refinement, but at all terms of holiness, humanity, culture arid refinement, but at all times he falls except at the last moment when he accepts his punishment as expiation for his sins. As per the Christian ethos the very thought of sinning is as bad as committing sins. He is a big puzzle-sensual, rough: vindictive, eloquent, active, spirited, fast changing, immature, contemptible and generous, contemptuous and gregarious and noble all rolled into one. He knows that he is base and how much so. He is turbulent, very unpredictable and exhausting and is everything that a temperate, practical, bourgeois European is not.

We are at frequent intervals at a loss to understand who the real hero is. Is it Mitya or is it Alyosha? It seems that the author gives both equal weight. Nevertheless, Dmitri seems to threaten Alexei's claim for the center stage and heroship. Though Alyosha is idealized and admired, he is made to stand on the sideline whenever and wherever Mitya is present. This is illustrated in the contrastive relationships they have with women-Mitya with. Katerina and Grushenka and Alyosha with Love. It is Lise who is made to take the initiative in the relation between her and Alexei. When the young girl, who is neurotic and spoiled, decides to break off the engagement, Alexei seems not affected at all. In an academic sense Alexei may be the central figure. But if we take the drama element as important, it is Mitya who steals the show. He is the bearer of the major portion of the action and we are increasingly worrying about what is going to do next and what his future is going to be like, particularly in relation to his fight for his inheritance, his handling of Katerina, his infatuation for Grushenka, his estimate of himself as a son, a brother, a lover and a man. Ivan is portrayed as an enigmatic figure. Though an intellectual, he seems to be in danger of perdition. Dmitri's soul is the battlefield where a fight between good and bad is on, though the outcome is kept in abeyance. Readers have an uncanny feeling, perhaps caused by poetic justice, that good will triumph over evil. But they have to wait and see.

There is a paradox in the case of Dmitri. His sinfulness will be the means and instrument of his salvation. He realizes how wretched and vile he has been and sincerely repents his evil deeds of the past. We may even venture to state that even righteous people are denied the chance of repentance leading to salvation. He has robbed Katerina who trusted him implicitly, struck and seriously wounded Grigori who had taken care of him when he was a child and willed his father's death and so on with the result that his retribution, even though in legal/technical terms a miscarriage of justice, is fully deserved. Bear in mind that Dmitri's longing for his father's death is as bad as causing his death, killing him, in Christian religious terms. Eventually and spiritually rebellious, he accepts his punishment and learns to look upon it, not as punishment/torture/persecution but as purgatorial treatment leading to purification and ennoblement. We are reminded of D.H Lawrence's sinning your way to Jesus. Perhaps the best comment comes from the Holy Bible itself in the words of Christ: except a seed fall in the ground and die, it shall not bring forth fruit. (Carefully note the allegory)

If Dmitri is the chief character in the novel, who is the 'traditional' villain? All fingers point at Stinky, the fawning, sexless, epileptic flunky full of base emotions like greed and jealously and hatred. He never cares for other people and their scruples. He

is the murderer of Fyodor (alleged to be his father, certainly his present master) but he never undergoes any moral conflict. May be it is because he has only a single track mind. He is no thinking and feeling villain (like lago, Macbeth, Edmund etc. from Shakespeare). He has a competitor, though. Morally and psychologically, it is Ivan. He has obviously longed for his father's death: Even though he did not kill his father himself, he has at least half consciously instigated it. The discussion between Ivan and Stinkv bears testimony to this. His rootlessness leads him to the speculation that if there is no God, then anything is permissible. Ivan certainly impressed on Stinky that he was with him and the latter took the hints in their face value. We strongly feel that he is a kind of extension of Ivan's personality where the dark and evil side of Ivan gets sort of extrapolated. (We have a parallel in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment'* too) What is enigmatic about Stinky is that his motive is not fully revealed or explained (except his intention of starting a café in Moscow.) He could easily have got away with both the murder and the theft: Then why does he take Ivan into his confidence and thereby expose himself? He even tells Ivan about his plans to blackmail him in the future. We can make surmises but we are never certain. Perhaps, the best guess is that he is disappointed in Ivan whom he had taken for his partner, as more willful and stronger than himself, a kind of superman figure. On realizing his mistake, he accepts the bitter truth that he is all alone and hence commits suicide which results in the prick of conscience of Ivan who recognizes his hidden hand in the parricide (patricide) and which drives him delirious and then crazy.

We are also persuaded to see the novel rather autobiographically. Smerdyakov is suffering from fits, the disease that had afflicted the author too. Dostovesky's tyrannical father was murdered, not by his sons, but by his peasants who rebelled against the brutality of their master (recall how uncaring Fyodor Karamazov was). What is crucial here is the dual nature of Stinky (illegitimate) son and servant of the man and also an epileptic. Freudian psychology informs us that the rivalry between the father and the son is for the ownership and possession of the mother. Here the mother figure is transferred to Grushenka for whose possession Dmriti and Fyodor compete with each other. When Dmriti looks for Grushenka in her place and does not find her there he thinks that she is in the company of Fyoder, his father and rushes to his place, stands outside at this father's bedroom window believing she is inside. At the moment hatred wells up in his mind, he contemplates murder and indeed strikes down 'the old man' taking him for Fyodor, though the old man turns out to be Grigori. He leaves believing his victim to be dead. This conclusion is drawn on the strength of his words: (page 91 Vol II). A burst of fierce anger suddenly seethed up in Mitya' heart. There he is, my rival, the tormentor of my life. Even if Dmriti could identity his purser to be Grigori because Grigori brought him up for some time during his childhood, he is the surrogate father; The Oedipal circle is there fore now completed. This may also explain to some extent why Dmriti is drawn to Grushenka while he was engaged to Katya Father's competition is in Grushenka's case-Grushenka is the recipient of fyodor's love and admiration and Mitya wants Grushenka: Psychological criticism has not bothered to look at Zossima. A large chunk of the novel is devoted to him and the role Zossima plays in the life of Alexei. We may even look at the lengthy digressions as a non-integral part of the book. Zossima does assert his strong spiritual influence on Alexei. The latter has the saintly figure to look up to. Stinky looks up to the evil Ivan. There is a kind of spiritual pendulum swinging between good and evil, heaven and hell in the book and it is obviously due to Zossima and Alexei. The heavy density of the plot might be smothering but for the intervention of the two. The subplot of Ilusha and his friends clearly stays outside the main action, though it helps in presenting Alexie in action, having left the monastery at the behest of Zossima. Alexei presents a serene and moral solace. He works among the school boys, himself being hardly more than a boy.

Besides the main figures who are just about half a dozen, we have a large number of characters who are carefully drawn. For

instance, Katerina and her histrionics, the fantastical father Ferapont the teenaged Kolya., Mime. Hohlakov, the servants, the policemen, the pole, the innkeeper etc., They are all round characters and convincingly drawn.

There is the remarkable section in the novel-that of the parable of the Grand inquisition. Ivan's fantasy about the return of Jesus Christ to earth only to get into trouble with the church authorities. Perhaps this is Dostoevsky's way of showing his detestation of the Russian Catholic Church, he being an Orthodox. Perhaps the author is questioning all sorts of despotism.

The novel is an exploration of the human psyche in relation to sin, its expiation, its accountability and moralizing, love, understanding and forgiveness.

All his major novels are classics and immensely readable. I strongly recommend that the learners read all his novels so that the learners can have the author's vision of life.

Answer the following questions as exhaustively as you can:

1: Comment on the differences in the characters of the Karamazov brothers:

2. How has the author explained away the miscarriage of justice in Dmitri's case?

3. Write an essay on the role of religion in the novel.

4. Dostovsky draws the picture of Fyodor Karamazov in most despicabe's terms, Why?

5. What elements of Freud do you find in the novel?

6. In many ways Dmitri acts as a foil for Fyodor. Explain?

7. Many characters in the novel are symbolic. Substantiate.

8. Write an essay on realism as shown in the novel

9. Stinky murders Fyodor; Ivan cries that he prompted the murder; Dmtri accepts punishment for the murder. Comment.

10. Discuss the novel as a history of Russia of the second half of the last century.

Lessons prepared by

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Trichur

UNIT - VI
HERMAN HESSE
SIDDARTHA

Herman Hesse was born of Protestant family in Germany his father and mother had been missionaries in India. Hesse was not circumscribed by any nationalistic restraints as his ancestors hailed from different countries. He accepted the Swiss citizenship.

He received his early education in Germany. He had been a Minister, a bookseller, and a dealer in antiques and published several books. He was also a great traveler, visiting Italy frequently. His maternal grand father was an authority on India and Hesse with his father had come to India in 1916. A democrat in politics, an individualist in outlook, he confessed that he was tremendously influenced by ancient Hindu philosophy. He was not much concerned about social problems but was with the problem of individual. He observed. "The tendency of the new history to subordinate the personality to the pleasure of the conventional mass is something I hate to death".

His books are Lyrical in nature. His works run into several volumes. He is chiefly known as a novelist and not as a poet though he wrote poems and essays too. John Bronson says that Hesse is "one of the most cultured and sensitive is majestic and biting and at times transcendental".

Hesse was influenced by Plato, Shakespeare, and Nietzshe. Buddha's influence and his search for religious serenity in Eastern mysticism can be seen in "Siddhartha". He kept aloof from the storm of national enthusiasm and he realized that our intellectual culture was merely a collection of habits. Hence he maintained a genuine contact with the myth. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature "for his inspired writings which, while growing in boldness and penetration, exemplify the classical humanitarian ideals and high qualities of style".

THE INFLUENCE OF INDIA

Some English writers who lived in India or who made brief visits to India made India the subject matter of their novels. Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster are such successful writers. We have equally successful Indian writers writing in English and for them too the subject of the story is mainly Indian life and culture. The former depicts an objective view of India, as seen through the eyes of a European. They have their limitations as they could assimilate from India only what their European sensibility permitted. In case of Indian writers writing in English, they too have their own limitations. As Raja Rao says." One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own". He, therefore, proposes an Indian English which will be something like the Irish or the American.

To depict Indianness in the strict literal sense of the word is not an easy task. There may be a number of definitions and interpretations of the word, "Indian ness", but it certainly carries what India contained, and what has been slowly but surely eroding. The word, in fact, stands for human perfectibility. The shifting of Consciousness into new orbits of awareness, leading to the realization of self is the essence of individualism in India. This is beyond the perception of a European writer. However, "Siddhartha" is the first European novel to achieve this. It depicts an individual, a Buddha, who peals reality like pealing an onion until he succeeds in showing the unreality of reality and discovering his own self in this world of illusion:

Herman Hesse, the author of "Siddhartha" was very much influenced by the hidden spirit of India. It came through his family and can be found reflected in his essays and novels. Hesse's parents and grand parents had long connections with India. His grand father, Herman Gundert, came to

India in 1836. After two years he became the head of German mission here. In order to be the head, he should have been married man and thus he chose a lady traveling with him from Europe to India.

In fact, Gundert needs no introduction to the people in Kerala, Marie Hesse, Hesse's mother, was born at Thalassery, in North Malabar. His father came from a North-baltic Estonian family. More than his parents it was his grand father who influenced Hesse in his childhood. He writes in Childhood of the Magician: "This man, my mother's father, was hidden in a forest of mysteries, just as his face was hidden in the white forest of his beard". He found many people coming to his grandfather and talking in English, French, Indian, Italian, Malayalam, etc. and he wondered at the long conversations. "From him, from this unfathomable one, I know, came the secret that he surrounded my mother, the secret, the age old mystery and she too had been in India for a long time, she too could speak and sing in Malayalam and Kanarese.....and at times she possessed like him, the stranger's smile, the veiled smile of wisdom".

Gundert wrote the first Malayalam – English dictionary, the first Malayalam grammer book and had translated the Bible into Malayalam. This itself explains Gundert's abiding interest in India. In Gundert's family Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Protestantism, mingled without contradictions and this influenced the young mind of Hesse. There were marvelous collections in the family. Rolls of palm leaves inscribed with ancient Hindu writing, little images of God in wood and clay and the dancing Shiva were objects which fascinated the writer in childhood. He could understand the inner meaning of these objects, he realized that the infinite lurked in them and he recognized the unity of vision which is the essence of Indian life.

Thus Hesse grew up with a rich and fairly good knowledge of Hindu forms of belief. "I breathed and participated in spiritual Hinduism from childhood as much as I did in Christianity", confessed the writer. Not only that Hesse learned and recognized the spirituality in Hinduism, he also became an awakened soul. He was often called a Buddhist. "At first I could only laugh;..... And yet there was something accurate, a grain of truth hidden in this", admitted Hesse. He knew that Buddha was an awakened soul. He had seen the falsity of many illusions. Hesse also understood that what the Buddha attained was something incommunicable. This fact is very essential in understanding Siddhartha.

His western upbringing and the conscious application of the intellect helped Hesse in discerning the spiritual greatness of Buddhism and Hinduism. The main superior qualities he noted in the Eastern religious approach to life are "a quietude of soul, a smiling transcendence, a totally unshakable firmness" and he was very much fascinated by the endless patience and kindness. Hesse also learned that Hinduism shelters "the most monstrous opposites, the most contradictory formulations, the most opposed dogmas; rites, myths, and cults conceivable, the delicate side by side with the coarsest, the spiritual next to the massively sensual, the charitable next to the cruel and horrible'. This is the essence of experience Hesse puts across to the western readers though the character of Siddhartha. He is bundle of contradictions till he realizes the multiplicity in appearances and the timelessness in this temporal life.

Hesse became a quester, a seeker after truth. As every seeker, he finally sees a unity in diversity. His search for truth also confirmed this strong conviction that mankind has a meaning. It must be remembered that without understanding the religious consciousness of India, a novel like "Siddhartha" could not have been written. Siddhartha is the sum total of ancient wisdom, Upanishad wisdom and the very essence of the experience of the Buddha. It is the journey through the self till one discovers the true place of one's self in this world of illusions. It detaches the readers from sentimental attachments and attaches them to spiritual attachments only to detach them again from all absurd beliefs.

All these led to Hesse to study all religions, all beliefs in comparison. Like Siddhartha he possessed a protestant attitude to all

conservative beliefs. He could not be riveted to any particular faith.

SIDHARTHA

Siddhartha was a Brahmin's son. He was very handsome and was brought up by his father strictly according to the religious ways of Brahmins. He took part in learned men's conversations and engaged himself in debates with his friend, Govinda. Apart from holy ablutions and holy sacrifices, he learned to perform the art of contemplation and meditation. He also learned to pronounce "Om" silently and to recognize Atman. He was intelligent and thirsty for knowledge. In short he was growing up to be' a great learned man, a priest, a prince' and his mother was proud.

Govinda loved everything in Siddhartha-his king-like eyes, his intellect ardent thoughts, strong will etc. He was proud to be a Siddhartha's friend, companion, servant, and even his shadow. At the same time Siddhartha was full of dreams and restless thoughts. He realized that ablutions, sacrifices and supplications were good but they did not satisfy him. He had already mastered Rig-Veda and now the doubts lingered whether he should seek God or Atman: He found wonderful wisdom in Upanishads: It is pure as honey collected by the bees. He found his father quite holy and noble. But how can he follow him if he wants to be a seeker?

Siddhartha finally decided to join the Samanas, the wandering ascetics. Govinda realized that "destiny was going to unfold itself". If Siddhartha went, he too should go. Siddhartha requested his father to permit him to join the Samanas. The father was not willing to permit him to do so. But Siddhartha stood with folded hands throughout the night, finally forcing his father to agree

Thus Sid. .rtha and Govinda became Samanas. They wore simple dress, are simple meals, and found the life outside as mere illusions of one's senses. Now life for them was pain. The only desire in them was to let the self-die, to experience the peace of emptied heart. Guided by the eldest of the Samanas they practiced self-denial and meditation. They learned many ways of losing the self. At times Siddhartha asked Govinda whether they were on the right path. Govinda had no doubts about it but Siddhartha started entertaining doubts about the path he had chosen. Is not self-denial a temporary escape from the cage of the self? He told Govinda, "I have always thirsted for knowledge, I have always been full of questions". His days became more and more skeptical and painful on the life of samanas also could not quench this thirst.

It was at this critical time of his life that Siddhartha came to know Gotma, the illustrious, the Buddha. The rumour was that Buddha had conquered in himself the sorrows of the world. He had attained Nirvana. Siddhartha found magic in these rumours. Thus Siddhartha and Govinda decided to leave the Samanas in search of the enlightened, the Buddha.

After passing through forests and many villages, they discovered the place where the Buddha was surrounded by the large number of believers. They also heard his voice. "Gotma talked about suffering, the origin of suffering, the way to the release from suffering. Life was pain, the world was full of suffering but the path to the release from suffering had been found. There was salvation for those who went the 'way of the Buddha". He taught the eight fold path. Even after listening to the Buddha's teachings Siddhartha remained unconvinced. He found the Buddha's doctrines almost perfect. But he told the illustrious one that there was a flaw in it. So Siddhartha decided not to follow these doctrines any more but to go on his own way. However the Buddha had robbed him of his friend because Govinda decided to become a Buddhist monk. He was no more a mere shadow of Siddhartha but had become Gotma's shadow.

Left alone, Siddhartha analyzed his feelings and found their causes. To know the causes is to enrich knowledge. He also realized that he was a man now. He also found that he was without any teacher, even the greatest teacher Buddha is now left behind. He was a thinker now, the subject of his thought being the self. The self a was riddle for him. "The reason why Siddhartha

has remained alien and unknown to myself is due to one thing, to one single thing – I was afraid of myself, I was fleeing from myself" So he decided not to escape from himself- "I will learn from myself, be my own pupil." He found the world beautiful; no more meaning less appearances of the world. Nothing is an illusion for him. He felt awakened now. He also realized that he was no longer anascec a priest or a Brahmin. He was simply Siddhartha, the awakened.

Having removed fleeting and illusive veil from before his eyes he could recognize the visible. He sought his place in this visible world. His awakened soul enjoyed everything beautiful around him. He must gain experience now: He wanted to experience and learn the inexpressible and incommunicable truths the Buddha had learned as enlightenment. He found the need to listen to both the thoughts and the body. He would follow only his inner voices, probably under the bodhi tree, the Buddha too listened to his inner voices:

He reached the banks of a river and slept in the straw hut of the ferryman. Next day the ferryman took him the other side of the river : At the end of the village he met a young woman washing clothes. He asked her about the road to the large town but she came close to him. "Placed her left foot on his right and made a gesture, such as woman makes when she invites a man to that kind of enjoyment of love which the holy books call ascending the tree". Siddhartha became passionate and kissed the tip of her breast. Looking up he saw her face smiling, full of desire and her half-closed eyes pleading with longing".

Now the conflict in Siddhartha is between the stir of sex in him and the inward voice telling 'no'. The former was stronger than the voice of a Samana. He entered the town and was happy to be with the people. He had his haircut and the beard shaved. He met the woman Kamala again, but not as a shaman. This encounter and the subsequent experience of Siddhartha with this well-known courtesan are the most important part of the novel. " I am already beginning to learn from you" says Siddhartha to Kamala, and the readers later realize that Siddhartha was undergoing tremendous transformation as a result of his sexual relationship with Kamala. He becomes a merchant with the help of Kamaswamy. Siddhartha even recited this verse.

"To make sacrifices to the fair Kamala

Than to offer sacrifices to the gods"

Siddhartha's visits to the merchant, Kamaswamy, at the advice of Kamala and his conversations with him throw more insight into Hindu wisdom: He worked with Kamaswamy but spent most of the time with Kamala. "Here with Kamala lay the value and meaning of his present life". At times he listened to his inner voice too and wondered whether he was not living a strange life. However he knew that he was traveling his defined path. One has within oneself his guide and path. He knew that he had learned from the body of Kamala what the learned teachers could never have taught.

Thus Siddhartha lived the life of the world, tasted riches, passion and power but at heart he remained a Samana. The years went by. All his experience at home, as Samana, with Gotma, and with Kamala remained as a secret knowledge of the self, of the eternal self, that was neither body nor consciousness. He envied the common people, their pleasure and follies. Gradually this wordily life too became expressions of discontent, of sickness, of displeasure, of idleness, of loveless ness. A kind of should sickness crept over him. The fear of old age and death also gripped his conscious self. He looked back and wondered whether he had achieved anything in his life. It was all a game, a game called Samsara, a game for children. He realized his game was finished. He sat under a mango tree, thinking about everything about himself. Finally he got up and decided to leave the place. His disappearance shocked Kamala who by this time had conceived Sidhartha's child.

Siddhartha wandered into the forest, realizing that he was deeply entangled in Samsara. At last he reached the long river in the wood. He looked into the water. He wanted to be dead, to be devoured by the fishes in the water. He leaned against a tree and meditated over death. From the past of his tired life, from a remote part of his soul he heard a sound. It was one word, one

syllable, the holy Om, meaning the "Perfect One', or Perfection'. He was now conscious of Brahman, of the indestructibility of life. Slowly he slipped into a deep sleep.

When he woke up he found a monk. It was Govinda. He wondered what pilgrimage Siddhartha was engaged in such rich robes. Siddhartha explained the transitory nature of everything. Govinda left him again. Siddhartha, left alone, brooded over his past life, its ups and downs. He found that all his struggles in life were with his own self and not anything outside himself. He learned what no teacher could teach him. The various roles Siddhartha played were all different versions of his arrogant self. He looked into the flowing river. He felt the river had something special to tell him. The old, tired, despairing Siddhartha was today drowned in it.

He remembered that he had crossed the same river once; "It seemed to him that who ever understood this river and its secrets would understand much more, many secrets, all secrets". He saw the water continually flowed and yet it was always there. It was always the same and yet every moment it was new. He requested the ferryman to take him across. His name was Vasudeva. Siddartha told him what he experienced looking into the river. Vasudeva enquired whether Siddhartha would learn another secret from the river that "there is no such thing as time". Only the present exists for it, not the sorrow of the past, that of the future, Siddhartha thought, "Was then not all shadow in time, all self torment and fear in time?" Now for both the river was not just water but the voice of life, the voice of Being, the perpetual Becoming".

Many years passed. One day there was a rush of monks across the river, rushing towards the dying Buddha. Along them was Kamala who had also become an ascetic. Her son was with her. He was not interested in Buddha. Anyhow fate took him to his own father, Siddhartha, as Kamala died, bitten by a snake.

The eleven year old child was a spoilt mother's child. Siddhartha found him entirely different in everything. He could not protect him from his desires. Siddhartha remembered his own young days and his revolt against his father's desires. Finally the boy ran away from his father as Siddhartha had done in his childhood.

This new experience of his attachment to his son and his deserting him in order to live the life of his own desires made Sidhartha look at the world and the people from a new angle. He saw life, vitality, the indestructible and Bhraman in all their desires and needs. "Within Siddhartha there slowly grew and ripened the knowledge of what wisdom really was and the goal of his long seeking. It was nothing but a preparation of the soul, a capacity, a secret art of thinking, feeling and breathing thoughts of unity at every moment of life". His urge to seek his son put the clock of his memory hack. "Had not his father also suffered the same pain that he was suffering for his son ——— was it not a comedy, a strange and stupid thing, this repetition, this course of events in a fateful circle?"

He told Vasudeve about his painful feelings and he felt that disclosing his wound to the listener was the same as bathing it in the river. He felt this motionless listener was the river itself, God himself; He was eternity itself. Slowly he realized that his wound has healing and his self had merged into unity". "From that hour Siddhartha ceased to fight against destiny. There shone in his face serenity of knowledge, of one who is no longer confronted with the conflict of desires; who has found salvation, who is in himself to the stream belonging to the stream of events, with the stream of life, full of sympathy and compassion, surrendering wanted to go the unity of things". At this stage Vasudeva also left him as the harmony with into the forest and also because that was the ripe stage to hand over the work of ferryman to Siddhartha.

Govinda again arrived. He was still a seeker. So Siddhartha told him everything about the meaning of seeking. Seeking means: to have a goal; but finding means: to be free; to be receptive, to have no goal". Though he had many teachers in his life, Siddhartha told him, most of all the learned from the river and his predecessor Vasudeva.

He also learned that wisdom is not communicable knowledge can be communicated, not wisdom. In every truth opposite is equally true. The Buddha divided everything into Samsara and Nirvana, illusion and truth in order to teach. Actually there is neither a Saint nor a sinner. And time is not real. In every sinne there exists a potential Buddha. Every sin carries grace within ! Siddhartha distrusts even words because the contradiction is also an illusion. He felt himself with Gotma now. "Not in speech no thought do! Regard him as a great man, but in his deeds and life".

Govinda now realized the greatness of Siddhartha. "This is the holy man! His ideas may be strange, his words may sound foolish, but his glance and his hand, his skin and his hair, all radiate a purity, peace, serenity, gentleness and saintliness which have never seen in any man since the recent death of our illustrious teacher". He saw the perfect on smiling.

CAPITAL COMMENTS

In "Siddhartha" the characters are all Indians in an Indian milieu. It was written seven years after Hesse's first visit to India It deals with the evolution of the soul of the central character. Many parallels between the actual life of the Buddha and Siddhartha can be found in the novel:

Siddhartha outgrew the ritual practices of his family. From the Vedas and Yoga he learned that no self-realization would come to him through the rituals and practices. Siddhartha remembered the lines of Chandogya Upanishad.

Om is the bow, the arrow is the soul,
Brahman is the arrow's goal
At which one aims unflinchingly.

The desire to hear the perfect sound takes him to the forests as a Samana. With his friend Govinds, he learns to live a simple life.

But his ego, the '1', within him returned. The thirst to empty himself, he felt, was an escapism. The visit of Gotma gives him an opportunity to lean new things. Even the Buddha would not satisfy him. He left Govinda and came back into the world-samsara. Kamala and Kamaswamy enter his life. The former teaches the art of making love and the latter the art of making money. Sex and profit also could not satisfy him. He reached a river and wanted to drown himself in it. It was at this time the holy syllable "Om" came to his lips. Here he tried to probe in to the real causes of his misery. He understood that it was his ego, his self standing in the way of perfect happiness. Vasudeva enters his life and it makes all the difference in his life. This ferryman takes him across the river of the world. Self-realization comes to him finally. Vasudeva leaves and Siddhartha takes over the responsibility of ferrying the people across the river. Govinda comes again. He too is ferried across which makes Govinda realize that Siddhartha has become the perfect one

The book is highly symbolic. First of all it reveals the stages in one's life, from early childhood to the final realization of the self. Siddhartha's father's resolve to make him an intelligent man, a good Brahmin is foiled by the child's desire to become what he desired. The father is guided by the rituals and practices and the son by his inner voice which had its roots in the Upanishads. However, Siddhartha realizes that be it a Brahmin's way or a Samana's way, life is lived without understanding the world. Every mode is a way of escaping from the self. And no way is right without seeking the path of Samsara of Kama. That is why Govinda is shown as a contrast. Govinda by following the Buddha and by coming back to Siddhartha as an eternal seeker is shown as a Sanyasi escaping from the world of sex and profit to learn the self and this Universe.

The novel also gives the reader a clear distinction between knowledge and wisdom. This must be a very interesting gain for the European readers because what is really great and superior in orientalism is the importance given to wisdom. "Knowledge can be communicated, not wisdom". The people from the West, trying to have a passage to India, can or could experience India only through knowledge. This is shown in Forester's "Passage to India" too . Godbole represents in that novel ancient wisdom and all the characters from the West find it difficult to understand Godbole's attitude to

the central problem in that novel. The novel"Siddhartha", also tells us the difference between Samsara and Nirvana and illusion and truth. Siddhartha finally understands that not only is the world and illusion but even the self is an illusion. The illusive nature as father, son, beloved etc. is exposed in the novel with the precision of an experienced Rishi. All dissolve into the eternal stream.

Time is the next hitch for the self. The arrested and temporal time distorts reality and the self is tormented as it finds itself trapped in the temporal time. Only when Siddhartha identifies himself with the perpetual flow of the river he is able to know the illusory nature of time. Time is still as well as flowing like water. There is only perpetual isness.

However the most interesting in the novel is the repetition of life. Everything is cyclical. Father repeated with another father, the son repeated with another son, the Buddha repeated with another Buddha. What is not repeated is only the eternal flow river. This is what is called dejavu, the cyclical repetition of nature. Intellect, knowledge, linear time etc. are of the West. Intuition, wisdom, the cyclical time etc. Are of the East, the oriental. "Time is not real. Govinda. I have realized this repeatedly".

Nor is there a difference between the sinner and the saint. Govinda remained a saint throughout the novel. What of it? It is Siddhartha, the sinner who attained perfection. It also shows that the path to salvation is never through abstaining. Body is not an enemy to spirit as the west would have it. That the body is a hindrance to the spirit is not only contested by Hesse, but he asserts that it is the body which can lead to wisdom, unlike the Christian belief. The body in the novel is also shown as the right source to spiritual wisdom or salvation.

MYTH AND SYMBOLISM

"Siddhartha" is a small novel but it is the Oriental Wisdom in its condensed form. Almost all the characters in it are archetypal. The Buddha's name was Siddhartha. All events in the novel show that Hesse has taken them from the actual experience of the Buddha. The Physical torments undergone by Siddhartha recall the spiritual adventures of the Buddha.

Kamala is one of the names of Lakshmi, wife of Vishnu in Hindu mythology. She rides the owl, has the lotus flower for her seat and possesses a golden pitcher full of wine. Swami means master and kama means desire. So Kamaswamy means master of desire. Vasudeva is one of the names of Krishna, Vasudeva means "he in whom all things abide and who abides in all".

The most important thing in the novel, perhaps, is the treatment of time. The realization of the self and the realization of the meaning of time are synonymous in the novel. It takes the readers to the very core of the teachings of the Upanishads. So is the symbolic sound "Om". This imperishable sound is the whole of this visible universe. Its explanation is as follows. What has become, what is becoming, what will become..... And what is beyond these three states of the world of time – that, too is the sound AUM'.

QUESTIONS

1. "The evolution of the soul of the central character is the crux of "Siddhartha". Discuss
2. "Herman Hesse uses his Indian experience to create an outstanding work of art in Siddhartha". Examine:
3. Comment on the symbolism used in Siddhartha
4. Bring out the "Indian Ethos' constantly at work in "Siddhartha".
5. Comment on the meditative and spiritual strain in "Siddhartha".

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UNIT - VII
THOMAS MANN
THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN

Thomas Mann, the German author, received the Nobel Prize in 1929. He was a jew. There was a tendency to neglect the German writers during the war years but with the award to Mann the Nobel committee of the Swedish Academy opened the door once again to German literature. The prize was given for Mann's "Buddenbrooks" and not for "The Magic Mountain" published in 1924. He was a bit upset because of this, because he considered "The Magic Mountain" as the more important work.

Thomas Mann was born on 6 june 1875. After his father's death in 1891 he went to Munich to live with his mother. He worked in an insurance office during the day and attended classes during the night. Later he went to Italy where he began writing novels.

Thomas Mann had six children. His daughter, Erika, married the English poet, W.H. Auden. In 1933, owing to the rise of Hitler he went to Switzerland and settled down there. Later he moved to America and become an American citizen. He died in 1955 at the age of 80.

In 1901 "Buddenbrooks" was published and it brought immediate fame to the author. "Royal Highness" was published eight years later. Before "Magic Mountain" came out in 1924 two more great novels had been written and published, "Tomio Kroger" and "Death in Venice". However, it was "Magic Mountain" which the readers liked. It is the acme of Mann's achievements. It is a very long novel. Despite its length the reader's interest never flags. It is a symbolic and philosophical novel, treating modern man's problems at the highest level. All the ideas and issues of this century are touched upon by the author. It is considered to be one of the most gigantic works of modern literature. It has in it psychoanalysis, science, Eastern dogmatism and Western Literature.

Roy Pascal says: "Mann was a great writer of great range and subtlety equally successful in the evocation of figures and scenes in philosophical discussion. His works lack simplicity and some times human feelings, indeed he disturbed simplicity in a world that so easily abused it. But despite its sophisticated irony his work is full of tender concern for mankind".

MANN THE WRITER

Thomas Mann's early stories and sketches deal with life among the poor. He was a self-critical artist and he continued to grow as a writer. He studied the peculiar problems of the artist. He also painfully examined his conscience and did a lot of soul searching. He worked hard for enlightenment. "The Magic Mountain" is the great summation of his efforts, sublimating his distress; it is one of the greatest novels in the world.

Mann uses novel as a vehicle for theory. He does not create sentimental characters but invests the human personality with a sense of value. His picture of life may look very tragic and cruel. But there is in his treatment of character a sensitiveness, a feeling of quality. Mann was a great artist, always looking for raw materials to translate them into art. In order to achieve this he immersed himself in volumes of Babylonian lore, classical mythology, theology and treatises on various diseases. With a pencil in his hand he took copious notes. He would assemble a mass of concentrated information and later he would give them an aesthetic touch. He was also a master of prose fiction.

Thomas Mann's development as a novelist takes place along with the development of modern narrative prose. He started writing in the traditional realistic form. But his journey from "Buddenbrooks" to "Dr. Faustus" embraces all the developments in the art of writing novels for about half a century.

Mann's novels must be read as a single work giving a structural unity. Each novel has a developing motif but taken as a whole, all the novels have a theme which unfolds itself at a macroscopic level. The central theme is a sort of enquiry into everything concerning mankind: art, artist, culture, knowledge, etc. As a result of the industrial revolution the world gets regimentalized, isolating the artist from his society. The artist's responsibility to pinpoint the role of the intellectual in a society has not been well understood. A writer like D.H. Lawrence thought that the glorification of the vital urges in man would bring about changes in the life of man. Right from his childhood, Mann bore within himself the tension he found in our society, which was rapidly changing. Almost all his works deal with the studies of unfortunates or outcasts. And in "The Magic Mountain" he deals with the peculiar removal from life, the isolation and insulation that goes with illness and the atmosphere of healing.

Therefore, we can call his novels as realistic fiction. Mann's imagination depicts the minutest circumstances of human suffering, perverted emotion. Painful embarrassment etc. They are shown with great precision and irony. The irony of times turns into symbols. His style originates from his personal experience; it is autobiographical. Mann's greatness, perhaps lies in his instinctive ability to organize all his experiences symbolically with a unique organic interrelatedness. Both in "Buddenbrooks" and "Tonio Kroger", the fundamental, personal problem is developed autobiographically, from the standpoint of the artist.

The artist is shown by Mann in an ironic situation expressing life he is unable to live. The invalid, the outcast, the adventurer and the criminal are the different shades of the artist himself. Mann shows in "Death in Venice" that discipline is what preserves the artist and once discipline slackens the demon breaks loose. In the whirlpool of debauchery, both art and artists are swept into sickness and death. In "The Magic Mountain" Mann thrown questions like What is life?; What is the norm of man and his measure? etc. He is an enquirer, a self-questioner and follows the path of the middle, the irony. Mann is convinced of the dignity of man, the worth of man's aspirations and possibilities. His integrity as a writer lies in his ability to be honest to both his convictions and doubts. He may not be showing but a way certainly emerges as we read Mann's novels. Once he said,"In matters of humanity every decision may prove premature".

THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN

The story of "The Magic Mountain" is taken from Thomas Mann's actual life. In the year 1912 his wife was suffering from a lung complaint. So she was taken to a sanatorium at Davos, Switzerland, which was at a high alttitude,. Mann stayed with his children at Munich of in Tolz, his country home. But he visited his wife at Davos. In the novel it is Hans Castorp who visits his cousin Joachim at Davos.

During his visit to Davos Mann got a troublesome bronchial cold. He consulted the doctors there. The head doctor "thumped me about and straight away discovered a so-called moist spot in my lung". The physician advised him to remain there for six months and take the cure. Mann says "If I had followed the advice, who knows, I might still be there! Wrote "The Magic Mountain" instead The confession came after a gap of almost a generation. In the novel he made use of the impressions he gathered during his three weeks' stay there. The treatment of tuberculosis has entered upon a different phase today, says Mann, "and most of the Swiss sanatorium have become sports hotels"

The story in the novel is briefly like this: The leading character Hans Castorp, a young engineer from Hamburg, makes a three weeks' visit to Davos before starting out his professional career. His cousin is taking a temporary cure at a famous hospital for consumptives at Davos, Platz. Hans has not even stayed out his three weeks before he comes down with a bad cold. And before long certain rough spots in his lungs has been discovered. Thus he is condemned for several months' stay at the sanatorium. Then the months extend themselves to years. He gets accustomed to this invalid life. And he loses touch with the world down, the "flatland"

Hans now gets lost in himself, in the endless business of "balancing his accounts" intellectually and spiritually. The most important thing in this process is that Hans loses tracks of time, time which keeps the ordinary people to measure their experiences. By the time the World War breaks out he has spent several years at the sanatorium. In fact the war wakes him up from his dream.

All these seven years he has been taking his rest-cure on his airy balcony. He eats well; has a comfortable chair relax in and takes stock of himself. Everything at Davos is magical like the number seven. Hans is one among the seven shown in the novel: he takes temperature seven times. "He was also nursing his love for a married lady with Asiatic eyes and cheek bones, with ill-kept finger nails and a beautiful skin". However, his main activity was balancing his accounts" for which three men of great personalities helped him in different ways.

The first of those three men is Locodovico Settembreini. He is an Italian and suffering from tuberculosis. He is a Freemason, a humanist, and a believer in the eighteenth century Enlightenment. He is also a member of "International League for Organizing Progress". The second of the three is Herr Naphta. By conversion he is a Catholic and Jesuit but by origin he is a jew. He believes in the dictatorship of the proletariat as a solution for many evils in our society. He believes in the spirit and has a contempt for the body. He is also a TB patient.

These two characters are good in arguing and converting the ideas of the listener. So they engage themselves with Hans in unending debates. The reader becomes helpless not knowing which side he should take. And the other never interferes. One obvious difference between Settembrini and Naptha is that the former is for life and action whereas the latter is of suffering and death. Settlembrini thinks that Hans' illness is self-induced. He would be better if he returned to the lower world. What is lacking in Settembrini and Naptha is a clear philosophy of life. For this Mann gives us the third important character after the central character, Hans Castrop. His name is Mynheer Peeperkorn. He is a Dutchman from Java . He was badly hit by tuberculosis and alcoholism. "He is an elderly man of great stature, with face deeply and nobly lined and a beard to match". He looks like a royal personality and everybody thinks of him great deal. In order to make way for the woman Hans loves, he commits suicide in the end. His suicide comes as a demonstration of the love he is meant to symbolize.

Mann gives a minute sketch of his characters. Their looks, dress, habits and speech are given with a superb skill. The best example of this is the way the ugly nurse, Fraulein Von Mylendole is depicted in the novel. But most of all it is Mann's close observation of the life at Davos which brings reality to the novel.

In the first chapter, "Arrival", we are introduced to the life at Davos. There is a total difference between the way one looks at life on the mountain and at the valley down. "Three weeks are nothing at all to us up here .... You are going to see something you've never dreamed of; just wait". Hans' cousin'Joachim introduces the patients and the staff in the hospital to Hans "Behrens is a cynic himself.....Krokowski is the assistant ..... He psycho-analyses the patients".

The clinical touch Mann gives to the treatment in the Sanatorium also makes the reader almost perplexed, "Methyl aide-hide; yes that is too much for the bacteria, no matter how strong they are. But it has a powerful stench, of course perfect sanitation is absolutely essential". At Davos there are different kinds of cough, "dry and loose," and people always say that the loose one is better than the other, the barking kind". The first encounter between Hans and the doctor, Krowkoski, is interesting. Hans said that he was perfectly healthy to which the doctor replies. "I, for one, have never in my life come across a perfectly healthy human being".

The writer introducing the main character, Hans, and the sanatorium, takes the readers to Han's early life as he himself ruminates over his past life. He became an engineer and have respected his works. After introducing Hans, he is again shown in the midst of the patients in the sanatorium, struggling to grasp various views on life and

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society expressed by them. Hans Castrop listened with good – natured enjoyment. "It was indeed great fun to listen to, so eloquent was it, so precisely rendered, so free from every trace of dialect". One day he told Settembrini. "You have such an amusing way of talking" to which Settlembrini replies, "I have a plastic way of speaking."

Occasionally, Joachim enquires whether Hans likes the people at the sanatorium. "Dear me, don't find them very interesting". Settlembrini has coined a word for the inmates —— "horizontallers".because he feels that they are living horizontally. One day Hans was quite attracted by the presence of a lady named Chauchet during the midday meal. She looked like a French lady but was Russian; The days passed and along with them the discussions and the debates, Hans was full of dreams too. "With sleep returned the involved dreams took him everywhere. In one such dream he was borrowing a pencil from Madam Chauchet in his old school courtyard, In another dream the found himself kissing Chauchet at the dining table

Occasionally the readers are given a hint at the confusion of time on the mountain, "The truth is, the seasons here are not so distinct from each other, they run in together, so to speak, and don't keep to the calendar". And the society is all mixed up. In such confusing atmosphere and surrounding Hans is constantly drawn to become the listener to the plastic views of Settembrini "so disease ..... is in itself, a dedication of mankind....!! "Again, "tragedy begins where nature has been cruel enough to split the personality, to shatter its harmony by imprisoning a noble spirit within a body not fit for the stress of life". Hans has slowly mastered the art of living at the sanatorium...."it is not the question of my being bored; on the contrary, I might say that I am royally entertained".

Hans was generally contended with the company of his cousin and has even earned the title "disinterested spectator". However, Settembrini's talk continued to make a confused impression on him. He sat listening to the Italian mostly due to the promptings of his conscience, "Two principles, according to Settembrini, of cosmogony were in perpetual conflict for the possession of the world. Force and justice, tyranny and freedom, superstition and knowledge, the law of permanence and the law of change...One might call the first Asiatic, the second the European principle". Hans learned something about Dante from the Italian windbag.

Hans is still under the impression that he has only a cold. One day after an examination the Directress told him. "There ought not to be any talk about colds up here; that sort of twaddle belongs down below, You have a beautiful bronchial catarrh". And he had temperature too and it was a harmless temperature. Joachim suggested that he should have a check up by the specialist and the obliged. The result is as expected in the sanatorium and it was proclaimed by the highest authority there, by Hofrat Behrens. Hans told Joachim. "I am not the first who thought of making a flying visit up here for whom it fell out differently". Now Hans lived each day as it came. He is also a patient now. As Settembrini came to know of this he tried to philosophies the whole situation, "I haven't got that far yet". But the Italian goes on, death is worthy of homage, as the cradle of life..... For, death, as an independent power, is a lustful power, whose vicious attraction is strong indeed. Though his life seems to be diminishing, his love for Chauchet grew stronger and stronger. He is now eager to know her age, her origin, her husband etc. When he went to get X-rayed Frau Chauchet too was in the waiting room. Joachim spoke to her. But Hans felt that he himself was talking to her.

Off and on the readers, like Hans, have to listen to the Italian , Settembrini. He warns Hanns, "Guard yourself, Engine, from her sort of irony that thrives up hers.". This is in fact, in responses to someone calling the sanatorium "a pleasure resort". His observations sometimes stand as a contrast to Dr.Krowkoski's Monday Lectures. In short, as the days pass, the conversation on the mountain deviates into philosophical and psychological areas, embracing all human experiences. It becomes a commentary on life, and death. "Hans Castorp did not keep

inward count of the time". He has also not forgotten to look at the "flaccidity" of Chauchet's back. He posture of her head, as she came to the dining table. The stress and strain along with the bliss his beloved object brings, leaves him in a confused state of anguish.

Every character contributes his or her best to enrich the readers and Herr Hofrat and other members of the medical staff are no exception. What is the physical being of a man? Hofrat answers, "The human body consists, much the larger part of it, of water. No more and no less than water ... The solid parts are only twenty-five percent of the whole and of that twenty are ordinary white of egg... Besides that a little fat and a little salt, that's about all ...Life oo is principally oxidization of the cellular albumen,"

The central part of the novel is full of matters which are highly philosophical. As Hans continues to probe into the mystery of life and the various ways it is looked at the readers also get drawn into the bylanes of knowledge assimilated by great thinkers and vriters. It embraces every field, particularly the areas directly related to human body and soul. Hans Castorp puts several questions to himself." For himself it was precisely because he did not know the answers that the put the questions." "Two weeks ago...my prospects were the best. And today I am regularly infested .. No walk of getting away". In the meantime Chauchet has also left. Hans' ever chart displays a sharply rising curve. The author continues to give us the "mental furniture" of his hero and his physical suffering at the sanatorium with utmost skill. However, it is the fund of information which Hans gathers there that makes the novel all the more baffling. It is this peculiar quality of the place which makes it a magic mountain.

As the life of the hero unfolds itself at the sanatorium there take place deaths, departures and also new admissions. One day he notices a stranger with Settembrini. He is a professor of ancient languages. The conversation between Prof. Naphta and Settembrini touches a high level of knowledge and at times it becomes mystical. For example"... bed is the place of intercourse between the wooing and the wooed. Symbolically it typifies devotional retirement from the world for the purpose of contact with God".

When Hans is alone on his balcony he occupies himself in mental activities which he called "talking stock". The readers either find him listening to the conflicting views of Settembrini and Naphta or is seen lost in his cousin. This gave him much food for thought and made his 'taking stock' more philosophical. At last his cousin Joachim left the sanatorium. It is not clear whether one leaves the mountain as a man cured of his illness or goes as an impossible case. Hans now changed his dining table and started meeting more strangers. He also continued his visits to Naphta either alone or with someone he knew. At times Hans remained sandwiched between Naphta and Settembrini as they threw their net wider into areas medieval: religious, political, psychological, etc. But listening to them provides a liberal education on topics which are otherwise difficult for one to gather from books. When Settembrini says 'Disease was very unhuman", Naphta says " Disease was very human". And Hans' assessment of them is that Naphta is almost a libertine whereas the other is a fool of virtue.

Snow is an enemy to tuberculosis. And this particular winter they had no sun, only snow. Hans has only one desire-to be alone with his thoughts. If he has one more desire it is to be in closer and freer touch with the mountains. But his constant temperature does not permit him to go out. Yet he comes to a decision to walk out, into nature: A valorous desire, indeed. He moves through the snow, down to the valley through various groves and meets very joyful people and children at the flatland, down below. However it was all the dream and on waking up he joins Settembrini, as usual, for the 'plastic' talk he gives. Occasionally he receives letters from his cousin who is back again as a soldier, a devoted soldier to his chosen career. But soon he receives a message that Joachin is returning as the physician has advised him sick leave recommending high mountain. So Jaochim is now given his after cure treatment and the

cousins renew their usual walks. His throat is pained everyday. He has changed completely, turning weaker every day. So his mother Louisa Ziemssen is summoned. Joachim's condition worsens and at last he dies. The author says "let us stake our stand in spirit with Hans Castrop on his lonely height, and gaze down with him upon a damp burial-ground in the flat land."

Time and narration like music flow on. Hans seems to be not aware of the mortal time. When did Joachim come and go? Or when did Chauchat come back? ".....time is an illusion, that its flow in sequence and causality is only the result of a sensory device". When Chauchat returned, there was a fellow-passenger with her named Mynheer Peeperkorn. Now Hans gets one more, "to sustain the conversation in the realms of the intellectual". Among the "admirable performers of death" at the sanatorium Peeperkorn is a new addition. He is old and very weak. But as Settembrini puts it, for Hans in his attempts at "hunting paradoxes", Peeperkorn is an excellent contributor.

Mynheer Peeperkorn is a colonial Dutchman, a man from Java, a coffee planter. This 'newcomer' is not the bearer of logical confusion, says the writer, but he added" dismay and perplexity upon the hero of our tale". For example Peeperkorn says, "Life, young gentleman, is a female; A sprawling female, with swelling breasts close to each other, great soft belly between her haunches, slender arms, bulging thighs, half-closed eyes. She mocks us. She challenges us to expand our manhood to its uttermost span, to stand or fall before her" Peeperkorn is mostly shown in conversation with Settembrini and Naphta while Hans remains a silent listener, "I love and honour sleep." Says Peeperkorn, "I venerate deep, sweet, refreshing bliss of it. Thus the adventure of our hero is given a further boost with the addition of Peeperkorn. But, unfortunately, the old man did not live long. As he couldn't endure his illness for long he died, or it would be better to say that he committed suicide. His death brings Hans and Chauschet closer.

The deteriorating atmosphere at the sanatorium is described in the novel with allot the clinical touches: We get a detailed description of the inadequate treatment there or the inevitable deaths multiplying. However, the intellectual discussions and debates go on unabated. One day they go for a pleasure trip which ends up in a quarrel, followed by a duel. They draw up a line and Settembrini and Naphta pull out their revolvers. They challenge each other. Naphta finally ends his life by killing himself. The life at the sanatorium, however, continues as usual.

"Seven years Hans Castorp remained amongst those up here ..... Seven years is a goody handy figure ..... our hero had sat at all seven tables in the dining room..... Yes we will go even further, and relate his carelessness to the carelessness of the world. One day he packed his trunk and walked off to join the thousands at the 'flatland' who have joined the army as the war broke out. "There is our friend, there is Hans Castorp! We recognize him at a distance ..... He is running .... With the bayonet swinging in his hand". The story ends as the author says farewell to him: "Farewell, honest Hans Castorp, farewell. Life's delicate child! Your tale in told ..... farewell ..... and if thou livest or diest!".

The summary of the story given above gives the students only a brief idea about the important characters and events. "The Magic Mountain" is a very lengthy novel . There are several inmates in the sanatorium, who add freshness and reality to the story. The author also gives a skilful portrait of the clinical life at the ill-fated place. The novel also demands from the readers a basic knowledge about religion, politics, philosophy, psychology, medicine etc. It is obvious that all these important aspects of the novel cannot be retold here. So the students are advised to read the novel so that they become directly familiar with the story.

CRITICAL COMMENTS

"The Magic Mountain" is a very impressive and bewildering novel. It is autobiographical because the realistic account of the young man's experience in a sanatorium given in the novel is based on the experiences Mann himself had experienced. This novel can be called a psychological novel because of its Freudian way of analyzing the

subconscious. But, above all, it forms a brilliant study of disease and its effects. The novel's impact is so forceful that at times even the readers feel that they are also getting infected by being in touch with the story at the sanatorium. That marks the telling effect of the story.

"The Magic Mountain" is also a philosophical novel, apart from being realistic and psychological. The title itself suggests its symbolic meaning. There is a mystical aspect also to this story with the repetition of number 7 – Castorp submits himself to X-ray examination after seven weeks' stay; he remains at the sanatorium for seven years, the thermometer in his mouth is kept for seven minutes, there are seven tables in the dining room etc. are not mere accidents. Under the surface of the story there are many layers.

The patients at the International Sanatorium, Berghof, may be symbolizing the sickness of a bourgeois society. The atmosphere of the mountain prepares Castorp for his adventures. It is important to note that the sanatorium is in Switzerland, the most cosmopolitan place of European countries. Herr Mann is able to assemble representatives of almost all nations. This also gives the story a universal colour and it enables Mann to give a synthesis to many different points of view. In the isolated setting of the mountain Mann distils the character of Hans and gives the readers its pure essence. He is placed against the background of nature, away from the busy world of practical affairs.

Mann goes beyond the immediate problems which are political and social in order to grapple directly with metaphysical problems. He is able to deal with the absolute issues of human life. His sincere attempt to sideline time deserves our attention. Time ceases to exist for the patients of Berghof. The total isolation from time and place has given the novel a title-epic of disease . This may not be true but death and disease have an unhealthy fascination for Hans. He is awakened from his dreams only by the World War.

Hans Castorp represents the whole German nation. If we analyse the result of Han's adventures we can get a new range of meanings, a new set of symbols. The most persistent influences on Hans are those of Settembrini and Clauda Chauchet. They are symbolic of Western enlightenment and Eastern mysticism. His passion for Chauchet is strong but in the end he goes his own way. Symbolically, he achieves a synthesis of both opposing cultures; Hans remains truly German, a blend of two extremes.

Looking at the novel more closely readers can slowly understand that Hans tries to transcend his author and his country to become a representatives of the aspiring mankind. His spiritual adventures take him beyond his narrow self and his country. Mann advocates the principle of sympathy in his novel. The metaphysical specifications of Hans are balanced by his intensive scientific studies. Themes and characters are arranged in Paris. Settembriniis balanced by Naphta, Clavdia by Joachim, Behrens represents the physiological. Krowkoski the psychological. Among all the opposites, human spirit stands out vividly.

Mann is fundamentally value idealistic. And he is concerned about spiritual essences and values. He takes these values from his own integrated experience which is what happens to Hans Castorp in the novel. There are many questions raised in the novel which are left unanswered. At the end of the novel Castorp goes to war. To war means perhaps to death, "Farewell .... And if thou livest diest! .... Out of these universal feasts of death, out of the extremities of fever, kindling the rain-washed evening sky to a very glow may it be that love one day shall mount?". There is irony and skepticism in these words.

Settembrini is always on the side of reason, he gets intoxicated on his own eloquence. His idealism is vague but noble. Naphta, on the other hand, is negative in his approaches. Castorp rejects both of them. Peerkorn kills himself because the Principle of life could not be maintained in a sickly atmosphere. But his suicide is majestic and becomes an act of devotion to what he upheld in his life. Perhaps he failed to mix a bit of reason in his ideal life. Contrasted to all these characters

is Hans Castorp who is unassuming, undistinguished and unheroic. He is the plastic pupil of a dozen tutors. On the mountain he achieves an all-inclusive synthesis, a view of life in which all the faculties of man, rational and irrational, are properly fused. Lost on the mountain during a snowstorm he escapes the orbit of disease and triumphs over death. "I have made a dream poem of humanity", he says. He becomes a better man thereafter.

Thomas Mann spoke of two important fundamental themes in his book, "The Magic Mountain". The first is the time-romance, the mystery of the time element and the second is the theme of 'heightening" enhancement. Hans is a simple-minded hero from Hamburg society, a good society. He is a good engineer. But in the feverish atmosphere of the enhanced mountain "the ordinary stuff of which he is made undergoes a heightening process and makes him capable of adventures in sensual, moral, intellectual spheres he would never have dreamed of in the 'flatland'. Mann says that his story is the story of heightening process, "It passes beyond realism by means of symbolism. "All the characters undergo the same process. They are representatives or emissaries from worlds.

So "The Magic Mountain" is not a mere satire on life in a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients. It is a novel in which "feeling, intuition, spiritual implications reassert their right and art secures its position as a genuine instrument of knowledge". In it many conflicting ideas are reconciled. Through his character, Hans, Mann re-examines and refines the whole humanistic tradition. Mann feels that modern socialism "has all too long allowed its spiritual life to languish in the shallows of a crude economic materialism". Mann achieves a balance between the old and the new, the heritage of the past and the needs of the present. He embraces many perspectives, Freudian, Marxist, behaviouristic etc...by presenting a few patients at the sanatorium who are highly enlightened in these areas. He perceives that the rationale of science is a splendid means but not a sufficient end.

Thus " The Magic Mountain" carries an enormous weight of fact and thought and carries it lightly. Yet the novel becomes highly readable because of Mann's craftsmanship. It is written in the conventional style, the author maintaining his close intimacy with the characters. He selects his points of view, they are stuffed in his central characters, and with his musical and beautifully expensive prose the readers are enlightened. Clarity and order are typical of the style of Mann.

Creation and criticism go side by side in the novel. Though some of the discussions are highly philosophical and beyond the reach of ordinary reader, they are well dramatized and objectified. The novel thus becomes highly realistic mainly because all facts are integrated into Han's experience. He is able to achieve with a thermometer what the old poets achieved in their poems with highly symbolic objects like the nightingale. We notice a kind of synthesis of poetry and science in the novel.

However, the vital achievement of the novelist is in his ability to reproduce the anarchy of his age. He is, therefore, successful as an artist and as a philosopher. The complexity of thought and experience in his age makes it difficult for an artist to embrace all perspectives. Mann did it and that makes the novel fantastically great. "Yes, certainly the German reader recognized himself in the simple-minded but shrewd young hero of the novel. He could and would be guided by him", says Mann. He advises the readers to read the novel once again because the way he has composed it demands a second reading." Only so can one really penetrate the musical association of ideas". He agreed that there was the influence of Wagner while composing his book.

There is another aspect of the novel worth mentioning here. "The Magic Mountain" is a novel of initiation. Hans Castorp understands that one must go through the deep experience of sickness and death in order to arrive at a higher sanity and health, as he must have the knowledge of sin in order to find redemption. This is the way of genius. "It is this notion of disease and death as a necessary route to knowledge, health and life that makes the novel a book of inixiation.

The clinical side of sanatorium life is handled, admit the critics, with competence and thoroughness. Dr.Krokowski's Freudian lecture is a fine example of this. Mann is therefore, so much of a scientist as he is of a philosopher. However, his greatness as a writer rests mainly on his extraordinary humaneness. And this writer has wisdom and ripeness of understanding far beyond those of the average successful novelist. As Joseph Warren Beach puts it "What an enormous amount of discursive philosophy can be conveyed in the form of fiction if the writer has the genius of Thomas Mann for dramatizing it, for rendering it in the proper terms of story".

QUESTIONS AND HINTS

1) Adventures of Hans Castorp

(Hints: Visits to Davos – cousin –rough spot; in lungs-long stay-loses tracks of time-"balancing his accounts".-number seven-his contact with great personalities-enlightenment-Settembrini, Naphta, Peeperkon-debates-philosophy of life-Madam Chauchet-life on the mountain-deaths and departures-return to flatland-soldier-novel as discursive philosophy-)

2) Influence of some characters on Hans

(Hints: Goes as an ordinary person: dining table-strangers-study of disease and its ill-effects – Settembrini, Naphta, Peeperkorn-Settembrini's reason – Naphtha's negative approach-Peeperkon's principles-discussions-psychology-philosophy, mysticism-enlightened patients-balancing account-plastic talks-spiritual adventure-sensual, moral, intellectual-heightening experience-synthesis of utterance and thoughts)

3) Describe the clinical life at the sanatorium

(Hints: Location-cousin Joachinm-author's own experience-Knowkoski's Monday lectures-cold, cough- check up and frustration-mess and dining tables-number seven-patients symboling sickness of society-enlightened patients-discussion of life and death-the feeling of timelessness-mountain and flatland-Freud-isolation and insulation-strangers' meeting place-liberal education-spiritual implications-the result of inadequate treatment and inevitable death adventure symbolizing sickness of society)

4) Discuss the importance of the title of the novel, The Magic Mountain

(Hints: Peculiar removal from life-illness and the atmosphere of healing-meeting place for strangers-cosmopolitan nature-Hans as representative of mankind-doubts and questions about life-number seven-loses track of time-talks-balancing accounts on airy balcony-enlightened personalities-complexity of ideas-Freud,Marx, behaviourism-sensual-moral-intellectual-spiritual adventure-Fund information-peculiar quality of place-magic mountain-synthesis achieved a book of initiation)

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UNIT VIII
KNUT HAMSON: AN INTRODUCTION
THE GROWHT OF THE SOIL

1.0 Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

(i) form a general idea of Norwegian literature, especially Norwegian fiction of the twentieth century; and

(ii) understand about the life and personality, as well as the achievements of Knut Hamson (1859-1952)

1. Introduction

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about the age to which he belonged; for however unconventional or individualistic a writer may be, he nevertheless belongs to his epoch and is a product of society. So let us begin this *Unit* with a brief note on Norwegian literature, particularly fiction, in the nineteenth-twentieth centuries, the age of *Knut Hamson*

1.2 Norwegian Literature in Modern Times

For the purpose of convenience, it is customary to deal with Danish, Norweign, Swedish, Finno-Swedish and Icelandic literatures under the heading Scandinavian literature. This literature is generally characterized by stoicism, seriousness, gloom, tragedy. This is to be expected in a region of long, severe winters with their obvious consequences. But the compensatory aspect, mainly aesthetic, also exercises its influence, the landscape is majestic. And the bright sunlight that illumines it for some time of the year is of especial significance. The Scandinavians tend to be practical, and their contribution to philosophy has been small; they are disinclined to make abstractions. In terms of liberalism, modern Scandinavia is advanced and enlightened. The three chief nations, namely Sweden, Norway and Denmark have kept their monarchies, illiteracy is negligible. To an educated Scandinavian the main languages are mutually intelligible in print, if not in speech. There is a sharp difference between "town" and "country" writing.

Located on the outskirts of Europe and with much of its inland population almost completely isolated until this century. Norway has been able to preserve much of its old folk culture. On the other hand, as seafarers and traders, the Norwegians have always received fresh cultural stimuli form abroad. A number of Norwegians have made important contributions in return, notably playwright *Henrik Ibsen* and the composer *Edward Grieg*.The Norwegian recipients of the Nobel Prize for Literature are *Bjornstjerne Bjornson*, Knut Hamson and *Sigrid Undset*. Although Norway comprises one of the world's smallest language communities, the country is among the leaders in books published per capita. Norway is better known for Ibsen's contribution to the drama than for fiction of the first quality; nevertheless the novels of Knut Hamson earned him the Nobel Prize in 1920, and Sigrid Undset (1882-1949) received the same honour in 1928, though the work of both has failed to engage the lasting attention of world, readers of fiction, thereby making little mark beyond.

From the sixteenth century until 1814, Norway was a province of Denmark. The movement that led to the breaking of its link with Denmark also gave the impetus to the creation of a national literature. It was during the nineteenth century that the synthetic literary language *LANDSMAL* WAS ORMED. Nowadays New Norwegian, as Landsmal is now called is employed by a number of important writers. In the1870s, Norwegian literature was still dominated by Ibsen Bjornson, and others. All survived into the twentieth century ; but all are essentially nineteenth century figures: fore-runners but not part of modern literature.

Let us now turn to a brief study of the life and achievements of Knut Hamson.

1.3 Life and Achievements of Knut Hamson

Life:- Although essentially a Norwegian author, Knut Hamson may be claimed in part by America, because he spent some of his formative years in the United States. He was born at Lom, Norway, into what the Scandinavians refer to as the "peasant aristocracy" on August 4, 1859, that momentous year which saw the appearance of Darwin's Origin of Species which became a landmark in the course of Western thought and civilization. His childhood and youth were spent in the north of Norway, at Harmaroy in Nordland. He started work at an early age and had a jack-of-all-trades existence. By the age of nineteen, Hamson has composed a few poems and attempted a novel. As a young man he hoped to enter the University of Christiania, and he worked at all kinds of jobs in order to save up enough money. Finding himself unable to save the necessary funds for a university education in his native land, he like tens of thousands of his generation in Europe, emigrated to the United States. Also like so many of his fellow Scandinavian immigrants, he made his way to the Middle West, where he worked at many short-time jobs on farms and in the towns. Disappointed at finding so little opportunity in America, he returned to his native Norway in 1884 and there lectured about the United States and his experiences in that country. Two years later he returned to America to spend the years 1886-1888 in the Middle West. Thus he spent two periods in America here he did hard work as a harvest hand in the wheat fields of North Damota, and an unhappy period as a horse car conductor in Chicago. He is reputed to have been dismissed from the last named job because he insisted upon reading while he should have been working at collecting fares from the passengers! Upon his return to Norwayin 1889 he started writing and soon acquired enough money and prestige to continue as a professional writer. He settled in a little fishing village near Grimstad, in his native Norway. He married and reared five children.

Works: Hanson's early work was a reaction against current' Norwegian including Ibsen whom he criticized for their social preoccupations, and their lack of understanding of "The unconscious life of the mind". His first novel *Hunger* (1890) which became an immediate success, is a brutally egocentric account of the mental perceptions of its hero, a friendless wanderer. Hunger is a repulsive book; but a powerful one. His novel *Mysteries* (1802) was intended to be a demonstration of what the new literature should be. It is in many respects a remarkable work and in advance of its time carrying within it the seeds of most of the experiments in fiction that have been made since. A young man spends a summer in a small resort; he ends by destroying himself. His other novels include Pan (1894), *Victoria* (1898), *Vagabonds* (1930), *August* (1930), *The Road Leads* On (1937) and of course *Growth of the soil.* In General, Hamson's novels are not so readily accessible, and hence have not become very popular, Most of the rest of Hamson's output, including his plays and verse, are of little intrinsic interest: They celebrate, with some incidentally beautiful impressions of nature, his self love.

The Man: As a person Hamson was not popular or well liked. The self taught man whose art was congenital had a superb contempt for everything that was not of aesthetic value in his own eyes. He shunned publicity. He was a shy man, most at home with children. He esteemed fairness and justice was the highest human qualities. Hamson was an unpleasant man, but his primitivism (crude simplicity) when it remains intuitive, is instrusctive; the result of h8is attempting to rationalize it into "thought" was his apparent fascism.

Nobel Prize: In 1920, Hamson was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his masterpiece *Growth* of *The Soil.* Upon first reading Hamson's novels, many a reader has wondered how the author could have been awarded this most coveted title. The fact is, it takes a deeper study to fathom (understand) the author's genius. Thomas Man, the great German novelist and another Nobel Laureate remarked thus: "I shall never forget what Hamson's books meant to my

young sensibilities. Never has the Nobel Prize been awarded to one worthier of it."

German links and last years: Unlike his countrymen Knut Hamson felt a strong kinship with the Germans. During both the great World Wars he sympathized with the activities of Germany. Even the German occupation of Norway under the Nazis during the II World War failed to arouse his resentment. He even visited Hitler in 1943, but outwitted him by his peasant cunning. As a result of all this, many of Hamson's fellow Norwegians, who actively resented the German occupation, nursed ill-feeling for him after 1945. They sent him back their treasured copies of his books in thousands, as he had turned traitor during the war. He was sentenced to a large fine and time in a "home" after it. Beyond this, no official action was taken against him by the Norwegian government, however, considering his advanced age. Hamson died at his nome in Grismstad, Norway, in his ninety second year. His death passed without comment in the Oslo press because of his infamy as a traitor.

Estimate: Knut Hamson was a powerful and important writer who lived too long into the twentieth century to understand it. His good work, which arose from complex instinct and not intellect, was done in the first half of his rather long life. He was the consummate modern native novelist who refused to yield to the least sentimentive impulse in himself. In the final estimate, Hamson is the most considerable literary figure in Norway since Ibsen, and his reputation seems to have recovered from the set back it received because of his pro-Nazi attitude during the last war. Now, and rightly, the Norwegians have forgiven him. All said and done, Hamson remains the supreme Scandanavian Novelist. We still need to look into what his unpleasantness really cost him. There is no adequate criticism of him

Let us now turn to the study of Hamson's novel 'Growth of the Soil'. It is naturalistic novel. Let us begin with an introduction.

1.4 Growth of the Soil: an introduction

"Growth of the Soil" which was published in 1917, is Hamson's best and most popular novel, a work rich in both form and content. It was translated into English in the year 1920. As a literary naturalist, he portrays life in the hard countryside of northern Norway, the super human efforts of man to wrest the best from the soil, and also illustrates the corrosive influence of urban existence on humanity, without however glamorizing rural life.

Read the study material carefully and become familiar with the life and personality of Knut Hamson. We shall study his novel in detail in the next *Units*.

UNIT –2

GROWTH OF THE SOIL: A SUMMARY OF PART I

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a general idea of Knut Hamson's novel "Growth of the *Soil*" Part I; and

(ii) from your own impressions of the main characters and their struggle with the soil.

2.1 Introduction

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation, something of the original favour and flair is bound to be lost. A chapter-wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original, it will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, our initial ideas about the character, the background and so on. But if you can lay your hands on a good translation, do read it. Only then, will you able to understand Hamson's masterpiece.

However, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first half of the novel; it comprises the first twelve chapters of the broke.

2.2 Summary of Chapter One (Book I)

The long road over the moors and up into the forest had remained untrodden and deserted for ages. Man, a human being, was the first that came here, he was followed by some *Lapp*,who had gained scent of the path. (The *Lapp or Laplander* is a native or inhabitant of Lapland which comprises the north of Sweden, Norway and Finland). Thus was made the road through the great Almenning – the common tracts without an owner; in other words, no-man's land.

Bearing a sack carrying food and some implements the hero of the novel came along. He was strong, course fellow with a red iron beard and title scars on his face and hands. He trudged on (walked with difficulty) resting occasionally. At last he reached a hillside far below which he could catch a glimpse of a stream. He nodded approvingly, as if to say that he had found himself a place to stay. This no-man's place was his. Now there was work to fill the days. He started at once by stripping birch bark in the woods farther off, pressed and dried them; and when he had gathered a heavy load, carried it all the miles back to the village to be sold for building. One day he secured three goats, which he led in a leash. He was proud of them and tended them kindly. Then came a nomad (wandering) lapp, who realized at once that the man had come to stay. The man told him that his name was *ISAK*, and enquired whether the Lapp knew of any woman who would be willing to come and help.

By autumn, Isak had built a little hut of turf for himself; it was a real home with two rooms, sound, strong and warm-one room for himself, and one for the animals. The house had a door and also included a hayloft. For a long time, he had to manage alone, but he was innovative and so he did not have much problem. Soon winter came and the man did need a helping hand. There was none, but still he worked on and on.

Isak read no book, but his thoughts were often with God; it was natural, coming out of simplicity and awe. The stars in the sky, the wind in the trees, the solitude and the wide spreading snow, the might of earth-all these filled him many times a day with a deep earnestness. He was sinner and feared God; on Sundays, he washed himself out of reverence for the holy day, but worked nonetheless (however) as through the week.

Spring came, Isak's livestock multiplied. He made a bigger house to house the seven animals-three goats and four goat kids. And then at last help came in the form of the woman he needed. She was a big brown eyed girl, full built and course with good heavy hands and rough hide brogues (strong leather shoes) on her feet, as though she had been a Lapp, and with a calfskin bag slung from her shoulders; she was probably thirty years old or thereabouts. Her name was *INGER*. Isak and Inger went inside the hut and shared their food. And in the night, he lay wanting her, and she was willing. She did not go away at all as Isak had feared. She helped about the place, milked the goats, cleaned the pots and so on. And now it was another life for the solitary man. True this wife of his had a curious slowly way of speech, and always turned her face aside, by reason of a hare-lip. (Remember this detail) Except that her mouth was disfigured she would hardly have come to him at all; he might well be grateful for that she was marked with a hare-lip. And , as to that, he himself was no beauty. Indeed, Isak, with his red beard and rugged body presented a grim and surly figure of a man.

Inger was blessing in other ways too, though she had no clever a head, nor was she great in wit. She brought two lambing ewes (pronounce 'yu' – *female sheep*). She also brought ewes and little trifles of her own, a looking glass, a spinning wheel etc; and filled their hut with her things. She spoke to Isak about her rich *UNCLE SIVERT*, who was district treasurer besides. Love makes a fool of the wise, Isak felt that he must do something grand himself and overdid it. He came home in the evening hauling (pulling) a huge tree trunk by a rope. The simple and innocent Isak desired that she should come out and wonder at him. Seeing that she had hoed (dug up) the potatoes, he went back and returned with another trunk, it was not to his liking that she had done almost as much as he.

2.2.I Critical Comments on Chapter I

Note the way, the story of the hero Isak begins right at the beginning. We note how he comes to no-man's land and makes it his through hard work and honest labour. How does Isak impress you as a child of Nature? Inger's arrival is likewise very natural. Will they stay on together? Let us see.

Let us pass on to the second Chapter.

2.3 Summary of Chapter Two

One day, Inger packed up some food and told Isak that she intended visiting her people to see how they were faring (Progressing). Isak agreed; but he had a secret fear that she might not return. However, she assured him that she would certainly come back. Isak was left alone again. With his strength and his love of work, he toiled all through the day. A deep and solemn loneliness clung about the walls and the floor of his hut, which appeared sadly bare and empty. Inger had taken nothing of her belongings. But Isak, unthinkably simple as he was, grew afraid of the dark in the light summer nights and saw shapes and things stealing past the window.

On the fifth evening, when he had almost lost hopes of seeing inger, Isak was wonder struck to see his wife and a cow vanishing into the shed. She explained to him that the cow was hers. Her name was *GOLDEN HORNS*. Inger raved about the cow, for she had reared it herself. Isak was doubtful; he wondered whether Inger was telling lie; perhaps she had stolen it. But he brushed aside the matter. He loved her and she loved him. They were frugal (simple) folk who lived in primitive wisdom and lacked nothing.

At night, Isak woke pup and went to the cowshed. He patted the cow decently and looked her over once more in every part, to see if there should, by chance, be any sign or make of her belonging to strange owners. Finding none, he returned relieved. The next morning, he started building a house with two rooms for them and the cow. Isak with his lordly ways, was full of secrets.

October came and Inger looked weak; she worked less, Isak was getting ready for a journey down to the village. Inger very humbly asked him to bring home a good-sized basket or a box. Isak repeatedly asked her what it was for. She asked in turn if he did not have eyes in his head. Isak went off, deep in thought. Two days later, he returned with a good-sized packing case, full of provisions, to boot (also)

Isak took out a bottle of medicine from his pocket. It was naphtha; he instructed Inger to take it regularly and get well again. He fitted doors and windows on the new building and seemed proud. They then moved into their new house, and the animals had the turf hut to themselves; only a lambing ewe was left with Cow, lest she should feel lonely! They had indeed done well, these builders in the waste; it was a wonder and a marvel to themselves.

2.3.1 Critical Comments on Capter Two

In this chapter we note a few more aspects of Isak's character; his love and longing for his wife; his suspicion about her dishonesty in the matter of the cow; his concern for the cow and other animals and so on. Why does Inger want a large sized box or basket? Perhaps, you have guessed right. Wait a little more.

Let us move on to the third chapter.

2.4 Summary of Chapter Three

Isak worked on the land until the frost set in. He stuck to his work in the forest, felling (cutting down) trees and cutting them into logs. In course of time, Golden Horns calved. It was a great day in the wilderness (wild area), a joy and a delight. Inger suggested the name Silver Horns for the pretty red calf. The first snow came. As soon as there was a passable road, Isak set out of the village full of concealment and mystery as every, when Inger asked his errand. He came back this time with a new and unthinkable surprise- a horse and sledge. Inger asked him if he had stolen it or found it. He confessed that he had only hired it to a cart his logs. He then brought home a host of (many) things; a grindstone, a water iron, tools etc – all in exchange for his logs. He was deeply pleased to see the look of wonder on Inger's face. At the same time, the fact that Golden Horns might turn out to be a stolen cow continue to nag him.

The next morning, Isak drove of quietly with the last load of logs and was away for

two days. Coming back on foot the third day, he stopped as he neared the house, and stood listening, he could hear the curious noise of a child cry. And Inger had never said a word. He stepped inside and there he saw he packing case hung from the ceiling like a cradle a bed – place for the child. Inger was up pottering about (moving slowly) half-dressed. She had milked the cow and the goats, as if it might have been just an ordinary day. She simply told him that the child – a boy – had come the first evening he was gone. She had not told him of the matter earlier for she could not say to minute when it would be. Isak wondered what they would call him.

Isac peeped at the little child. He felt himself curiously weak. The rugged man stood there with a miracle before him-a thing created first of all in a sacred mist, showing forth now in life, with a little face like an allegory. Days and years would pass, and the miracle would be a human being.

Early in May, they had a visitor – a woman from across the hills, one of Inger's kinsfolk (relatives) called OLINE, and they made her welcome. After complementing the couple, Oline expressed surprise that Inger and I ask were not wedded yet. Inger said that they would see about it at the time of the boy's christening ceremony. They would have been wedded before, but some how had not been able to come by it, getting down to a church and all. Inger asked Oline if she would help them by coming for a few days in the off time and take care of the animals, while they were away. She would be properly rewarded. Oline was only too happy.

In the course of the conversation, Isac asked Oline about Golden Horns. Oline explained that Golden Horns had been at her son's place from a calf. They still had her mother with them. Inger had got Golden Horns from Oline's son. Isak had not heard better news for a long while; it was a burden – lighter. So the cow was his and inger's by honest right. To tell the truth, he had half thought of getting rid of his trouble in a sorry way; to kill the cow off that autumn, scrape the hide, bury the horns, and thus make away all traces of Cow Golden Horns in his life. Now there was no need for all that and he grew mightily proud of Inger all at once, and richly praised her to Oline. The soft-spoken visitor with her wits about her, stayed with them for a couple of days; and when she left she had a bundle of wool that Inger had given her, from the sheep. Though there was no need to hide it, Oline took care that Isak should not see it.

Once again, it was back to the same world– the child, Isak and his wife, and the work of the day with many joys, little and big. Then one day Isak went down to the village; at last, when he returned after some days, he had a horse and a cart with him. In his characteristic manner, he remained dumb, swelling with things unspoken. When Inger gave up asking, and began talking to the horse instead, he came out of his lofty silence at last and told her that he had bought the horse and cart. Inger had always wanted a loom. Isak told her that they would manage that too, "as long as I've my health"!

There was no end to the things Isak bought – a bottomless well, rich in all manner of things like a city store. Inger said, "I wish Oline could have seen all this when she was here." Isak thought, "Just like a woman! Sheer, senseless vanity, as if that mattered!" He sniffed contemptuously.

The days now were occupied in field work. Isak cleared new bits of ground. A couple of days later, when there was a look of rain about, he sowed his corn.

2.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Three

This chapter tells us more about the cow Golden Horns, including Isak's agony that she might be a stolen cow. We see the arrival of the first born of Isak and Inger without any hue and cry. Oline who is to play major role in the novel makes her appearance here. Also note how the skill and thereby Isak's fortunes are steadily growing at his hands.

Let us pass on to the fourth chapter.

2.5 Summary of Chapter Four

It was the slack time between the seasons but Oline did not come. Isak was free of the soil now. He had put up two shelves inside the house. Inger was easily pleased. She thought a great deal of every thing. She had stitched a long robe of blue cotton print for

the christening. Had it not been for the cattle they could have gone off and come, also Isak and Inger properly wedded. Outlying folk had many troubles, great and small, what with all the fuss to be wed and christened. While Isak was planning to go to the village in order to find someone to come up, Oline herself turned up. And so they went to the church and were wedded; the child was christened, everything decently in order; they had remembered to have the wedding first, so that the child could be christened as of properly wedded couple. They named the boy Eleseus.

In the drought (long absence of rain) that lasted seven weeks, their potato fields were parched (dried up). They calmly thought that it was all in the hands of God. After this period of dryness, there followed a regular blessing of rain. Isak was hopeful that this potato fields would fare better. He observed how Inger always tried to comfort and speaks words of hope through her hare lip. It was not pretty to hear when she spoke, for it resembled a sort of hissing, like steam from a leaky valve; however it was a comfort all the same out in the wilds. And a happy, cheerful soul she was at all times.

Days went on; there were troubles, great and small. Isak bought a lamp, then a clock. Inger was overwhelmed and speechless. Of all the good things here in this lonely place nothing could be better than a clock to go all the dark winter through, and strike so pretty at the hours.

Isak turned woodman once more, felling trees and stacking logs for the next winter. He was getting farther and farther from the homestead now; there was a great broad stretch of hillside, all ready for tillage. Now, he knew well enough what Inger had been thinking of when she asked for another bed. She was going to have another baby soon. It was best to hurry up and get the bed ready. One dark evening, he came home from the woods, and sure enough, Inger had got it over – another boy – and was lying down. Only that morning she had tried to get him to go down to the village again. Now he understood: she had wanted to get him out of her way.

They called their second son SIVER T. While Eleseus was named after the priest of her parish Sivert was called after his mother's uncle, the district treasurer who was a well-to-do man with neither wife nor child to come after him. They could not do better to win his favour than name the boy after him. Then came spring and the new season's work. Life was very busy. Inger helped a lot. A wife like her was not so easy to find. And she had her loom besides.

They were doing famously (very successfully), these settlers in the wilds. They would be enviable folk, no less, Eleseus could already walk on his own, and little Sivert had been christened. By all signs and tokens, Inger was making ready for another turn; she was not what one would call niggardly (miserly) at child bearing! Another child was a mere nothing to Inger, though, to be sure, she was proud of them when they came.

Inger was young, and was making the most of it. She was no beauty, and had suffered all her girlhood by reason of the same, being set aside and looked down on. The young men never noticed her, though she could dance and work as well. They found nothing sweet in her and turned elsewhere. But now her time had come; she was in full flower and constantly with child. Isak himself, her lord and master, was earnest and stolid, but he had got on well, and was content.

There came another drought, a new bad year. OSANDERS, the Lapp brought news that folk in the village had cut their corn already, for fodder. He carelessly mentioned to Inger that people were talking that Isak had not bought his land from the State. It was common land and the State owned it. Inger could make nothing of this. She went inside to get a parcel of food for the Lapp. She was totally shocked and dropped it, when she saw a hare in his sack. The Lapp explained that her son had wanted to see it. Dogs ran it down that morning and killed it, so he brought it along to show the boy.

2.5.1 Critical Comment on Chapter Four

This is a significant chapter in the sense the complications are increasing steadily moving towards the turning point. The first complication is that Isak has been tilling the land belonging to the State and it does not belong to him. Secondly Inger is pregnant

again. Why is she shocked to see the hare, sticking out of the Lapp's sack? Has it anything to do with her own hare lip?

2.6 Summary of Chapter Five

One bad year comes alone Isak had grown patient and took what fell to his lot. What the Lapp had told Inger that summer was not so easily put out of mind. He wondered why he should but. The ground was there, the forest was there; he had cleared and tilled, built up a homestead in the midst of a natural wilderness, winning bread for himself and his family, asking nothing of any man, but working and working all alone. He had always put off the idea of asking the Lensmand about the matter, because the latter was not a pleasant man to deal with as people said. [The lensmand was a Sheriff's officer in Charge of a small district].

One day that winter, the lensmand GEISSLER himself came driving up the place. Isak was terror – stricken when the man told him that he should have gone to him at first and bought the land. He talked of valuations, boundaries, taxes and when he had explained the matter a little Isak began to see that there was something reasonable in it after all. Inger brought in some mild for the visitors; they drank it. The Lensmand stroked Eleseus's hair and looked at something the child was playing with. He observed that it was heavy and looked like some kind of ore. Isak, in all innocence, explained that there was plenty of such ore in the hills.

The Lensmand came back to business. He could not say what the land would cost, but promised to put it as low-as he could on his report. After asking Isak, regarding the boundary of his land, he made rapid calculations and suggested a hundred dealer as a fair price. Isak and Inger were stunned at the huge price. The Lensmand at last thrust the papers in his bag. The matter was settled.

It was hard to say how Isak felt about it. He hoped to pay off the money in due course. He made no further business of it. He was not a man to look about anxiously for what might come. He worked on. The Lensmand was no tyrant, but shallow and not over-conscientious. He ignored his assistant BREDE OLSEN. The Lensmand asked Isak what they called the land. When Isak and Inger blinked he suggested SELLANRAA and drove off.

Some weeks latter, when Isak was down in the village, he heard a rumour that there had been an inquiry about some moneys that the Lensmand Geissler could not account for, and that the matter had been reported to his superior. Then one day, he met the Lensmand and took him on the sledge. He comforted Isak by saying that he had suggested fifty. They came to the farm and the Lensmand stayed overnight, sleeping in the little room.

Geissler advised Isak to buy the land at once and let the price go up after, so that he would get high returns, Isak and Inger were grateful for his advice. He gave Inger some money and that was too much. He told to take a bit of meat or cheese to his folks whenever he went to the village adding that his wife would pay him for it. Isak went with his up over the hills. He received a whole dealer.

The Lensmand did not come back which was good. People said he lived too freely, and spent other people's money. It came out later that the Lensmand had left the place after a sharp reprimand (warming) from his superior Amtmand Pleym. However Isak and Inger had no cause to complain about the Lensmand. The new Lensmand was a miserable man of about forty, called HEYERDAHL. Isak plucked up (gathered) his courage and went to see him. Heyerdahl told Isak that the Department needed several pieces of information. He at last said that Isak would have to pay fifty dealer in annual installments over ten years. He hoped to succeed in proving Isak's possession of the estate.

2.6.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Five

This chapter introduce us to the Lensmand Geissler who turns out to be a good friend of Isak and Inger. The formal purchase of the land begins here much to the initial confusion of the simple man of the soil. What impressions have you formed of Geissler?

Let us move on to the sixth Chapter

2.7 Summary of Chapter Six

The big bull was to be sent away for he cost too much to fed. Inger suggested that Isak should take him down to the village and bring up a yearling (animal between one and two years old) in exchange. She had, no doubt, her reasons for getting Isak out of the place on that particular day. She had kept her feet till Isak was gone. Soon after, Inger delivered a girl. Her face was grey and blank in moment, without expression or intelligence. "Oh God, the direct of all!! No mercy, no hope, and it is a girl!!" Inger lamented. It was hardly an hour since Isak had left. In less than ten minutes Inger had borne her child and killed it!

Isak came back on the third day leading a half starved yearing bull. Inger herself was ill and miserable enough. She went about for some time with a bag of hay under her dress to hide any change in her figure taking out a little from time to time, and finally discarding the bag altogether. When Isak noticed something and asked in surprise, she cleverly and quickly changed the subject.

The daily round continued. Inger was as busy as ever, but she had taken to singing something new and she was teaching Eleseus an evening prayer, again something new. Isak missed her questioning; it was her curiosity and her praise of all he did that made him the contented man, the incomparable man he was. He felt that his wife was troubled after that last time.

Oline came over to visit them again. Inger greeted her from the first with some ill-will, there was something that made her look on Oline as an enemy. She had come for the third one to be christened. Gradually Inger became less harsh and they talked for a while companionably. She showed of her clock and lamp to her poor relation, feeling herself rich and generous minded. Oline stayed on all day and talked flatteringly so that her words went to Isak's head. She stayed that night; next morning, she went off again. Once more she had a bundle of something with her and went off without coming into Isak's notice. She came back again two hours later asking for Isak. She sat down. It appeared that there was some serious matter.

Suddenly Inger could control herself no more. Her face was all terror and fury. She accused Oline of having sent her a hare through Os-Anders, the Lapp. She struck Oline's face with a ladle (a large spoon). Online asked her, "So you're trying to murder me too!" Inger was certain that Oline knew her secret. Nothing mattered now. She gave repeated blows to Oline. She went for the knife; her fury uncontrollable.

"Y ou've been nosing about in the woods!" Cried Inger. "You're found that little bit of a grave there. Better if you'd dug one for yourself the same time."

"Ah, you wait. You'll see what Oline can do. There'll be fine two roomed house for you, with musical clocks and all".

Oline did not curse; she hardly raised her voice. There was something almost gentle in her cold cruelty, but she was bitterly dangerous. The two women had a strong verbai fight. Oline pointed to Inger's hare – lip calling her a ghastly (terrible) sight for God and man. Soon the verbal attack because violent. Inger, retorted that she would have Online put in prison for making such a cruel statement. Online was jealous and envious of all that she saw. She had lain awake with envy since Inger got Isak and all that was there. Was it Inger's fault that Oline's children never got on (progressed) in the world and turned out badly every one of them? Now if there was one thing that could drive Oline to fury it was precisely this. She had been a mother many times and all she had was her children, such as they were; she made much of them and boasted about them, told of great things they had never really done; and hid their faults.

The quarrel now revolved over their children. At last Oline said, "But there's one of yours now lying buried out there in the woods." Inger shouted to her to go out; Oline's stolid indifference paralysed her. Once again the two women started sailing words of abuse at each other. At last they stopped. Inger asked Oline to wash and tidy herself. They talked about the buried child. Inger learnt from Oline that Isak had come and seen the child. He had been as speechless as Oline herself. Inger accused Oline and

said that it was all her fault; she began to cry. They talked it all eve again quietly. Oline thought she might be able to help and be a savior to them in distress. She could come and stay on at their place to look after things while Inger was in prison. Inger started off again she accused Oline of being a heap of wickedness to have sent her the hare. She would never trust Oline for the latter would steal her wool, cheese etc. and they would go to Oline's people instead of Inger's.

Inger was altogether upset. She knew she had lost. Isak was sitting down, holding the crowbar between the knees and resting on it like a Staff (stick). Inger stole away into the edge of the wood. There was a spot where she had set a little cross in the ground. She found that the cross had been thrown down, and where it stood, the turf had been lifted, and the ground turned over. She stooped down and patted the earth together again with her hands. Inger had come there out of curiosity to see how far the little grave had been disturbed by Oline. She lingered on (stayed) there now because the cattle had, not yet come in for the night. She sat there crying, shaking her head and looking down.

2.7.1 Critical Comments of on Chapter Six

This is one of the most pathetic and significant chapters of the novel. It describes the pathetic infanticide of a baby girl born with a hare lip. Why does Inger kill her own child? Why does she accuse Oline? Is Inger superstitious? In a sense does this chapter mark a turning point in the novel as you will discover soon. Moreover, it presents a fine piece of feminine psychology as well.

Let us move on to the seventh chapter.

2.8 Summary of Chapter Seven

The days passed on. Work progressed. Their great sorrow and disaster was that the thing was done and what it brought must come. Good things mostly leave no trace, but something always comes of evil. Isak took the matter sensibly from the beginning. He simply got out from his wife that she had strangled the baby because her mouth with the hare-lip was all the same as herself. At first he told her that she should not have done that. She agreed. Isak could not make out how she ever could bring herself to do it.

After that nothing more was said about it at the time; the days went on peacefully as ever; by degrees the thing slipped in to the background of their minds, however, it hung over them, and over the place. They could not hope that Oline would keep the secret; others would speak; dumb witness would find a tongue; Isak and Inger were sensibly – what else was there to do? He knew now why Inger always taken care to be left alone at every birth; to be alone wither fears of how the child might be and face the danger with no one by. Three times she had done the same thing. Isak was touched with pity for poor Inger's ill fate. He learned of the coming of the Lapp with the hare and acquitted her. After this they grew closer to each other in their peril.

There grew upon Inger un-Christian hate of all Lapps and she spoke plainly enough to any that passed. The days went on. The settlers were healthy folk; what was to come would come; they went about their work and waited. Then, one day October the Lensmand came up with a man carrying a bag. The investigation took some time. Inger was called up and examined privately; she denied nothing. The grave in the wood was opened; the body was sent for examination.

Time went on. Inger was not locked up. The law was merciful. The Lensmand Heyerdahl told her in reply to her question that it was not any particular person who had informed against her. She too had said something about it to the Lapps. All that the Lensmand remarked was not that it was great pity that such things should happen at all. Inger pleaded that her mother had seen a hare just before she was born, but he discounted her ignorant superstitions.

Inger would talk nostalgically about her dead daughter off and on. Isak's life was spent in various kinds of work according to the season. He had worked on the field for six years now, and Inger five, she was often to be heard singing hymns, but it was pitiful singing. She was like a bell without a tongue.

As soon as the roads were passable Inger was sent down to the village to be examined. For her crime, she could have been sentenced to life-imprisonment. But since she confessed

CUP/5026/1000/SDE — 11

everything, and since the magistrate was kind, he hoped that the Commission sitting to reform the criminal code might get it commuted and make it more humane. Inger came back in a state of dull resignation. When Isak returned, she was cheerful. She did not tell him how long the sentence would be or when. She became thoughtful and talked of what was to come. The only plan she had was to get Oline to come, though she considered her a "great lump of blubber" (whole fat) or a monster!

At last one day Oline did come. Isak went to seek out Geissler, Inger told Isak to take all his money with him. She neither cried or complain but merely said that they might be coming for her now any day. She hoped Geissler might be able to help.

When Isak returned from Sweden, Inger had gone. Oline was there with the two children. The authorities had come the day after Isak had left. Isak knew that Inger had got him out of the way on purpose; that is why, she had persuaded him to take the money with him. Isak missed Inger terribly. Oline had a message for him from the Lensmand; the State had at last given its decision in the matter of pay the mount. This was good news. But Inger was gone for eight years, and Isak felt himself in a mist of darkness and emptiness.

Lensmand Heyerdahl married the year before. His wife had no intention of ever being a mother. He told Isak that he could have the title deeds of his land transferred and registered in his name on the terms: Ten dealer a year for ten years. The terms appeared frightful to poor Isak. The Lensmand further told him that it was a lucky thing for him that the Department had not got to hear about Inger's crime; or else they might have sold it to someone else.

2.8.1 Critical comments on Chapter Seven

This is another touching and impressive chapter. Note the absolutely straight forward, stoical manner in which the simple folk Isak and Inger accept their punishment. What do you feel about it? Do you think Inger deserves eight years of separation from her husband and her two small children? How would the same crime be judged today?

Let us pass on to *eighth* chapter.

2.9 Summary of Chapter Eight

Time does fly when a man is growing old. But Isak was not old. He had not lost his vigour and so the years of separation from Inger seemed long to him. He worked on his land and let his iron beard grow as it would. Once Geissler came, and enquired about the lumps of ore he had seen earlier. The two men who had come with him examined the prices and said it was *copper*. Geissler stayed for two days and collected two bags of the ore.

When Isak told Geissler that the purchase of the land had gone up to a hundred daler, instead of fifty, the Lendsmand told him not to worry. The copper ore which was in abundance on Isak's part of the hills was worth thousands. He advised Isak to register the land at his earliest, lest the state should interfere. Geissler offered money to Isak for the meat and cheese he had taken for his wife. He was not the sort of man to take things for nothing. Isak told Geissler that his wife had written that she was well there and had a girl child born. While Geissler talked about sending the lumps of ore to some mining experts to determine the percentage of copper, Isak was obsessed with the thought of getting his wife back. The local authorities had let Inger go free firstly because they had no lock-up in the village; and secondly, they wished to be as lenient as possible.

Isak got his land registered at last. He worked hard, but it was a grey and lonely life without Inger. He kept Oline as there was no one else. But she was sly (cunning) and expensive. She gave away cheese etc. to folks like os-anders, demanded new shoes etc. Poor Isak had to oblige; he was so dependent on her.

Half-way down to the village, a new rich settler appeared. He was BREDE OLSEN the Lensmand's assistant. He had a wife and four children. He was not yet thirty. Isak felt the contrast between Brede's happy family life and his lonely life. At home he discovered to his annoyance, that Oline was making coffee in Inger's little pot. He had seen her do this on the sly (secretly) earlier

too. He suffered everything silently, probably in the hope that Inger might be given back to him soon, for his gentleness.

2.9.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eight

This is a short chapter which describes Isak's lonely existence after Inger's departure. The arrival of Brede Olsen and family is a significant development in the course of the story.

Let us pass on the *nineth* chapter.

2.10 Summary of Chapter Nine

The years rolled on. Once more there were visitors to Sellanraa; an engineer, with a foreman and a couple of workmen, marking out telegraph line again over the hills. He thought it would make the place less desolate; a glimpse of the world would make it brighter. The engineer offered Isak the job of the linesman for twenty five dealer a year; but except and more animals to keep alive. It was the land; that kept them. It was their living. The engineer then decided to approach Brede Olsen.

Years passed by Isak had to put up with Oline. He taught his sons many good and useful things. But this born tiller of the soil could not send them to school which was far away, to give them any manner of higher education. So the lads grew up in a paradise of dirt and ignorance, but they were nice. Little Sivert was a splendid fellow, though Eleseus was even finer and deeper. Inger had written home to say that she was named *Leopoldine*, after the day she was born, November, in battles of words with Oline Isak was altogether lost. He told her bluntly that she had cheated him by stealing three of his animals. As usual Oline created a sensational scene, eventually making Isak go off grumbling like a bear.

2.10.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Nine

This chapter introduces further changes in the life of the wilderness. The coming up of the telegraph men is bound to affect the lonely life of the settlers. Also note that Inger is learning new things.

Let us move on to *tenth* chapter.

2.11 Summary of Chapter Ten

The next day was fated to bring a great event. Geillser came. He had come to buy a piece of Isak's land, up in the hills, containing the copper mine. He assumed Isak that Inger would be out before long. Deissler had talked to Inger. Her case had been submitted to the king. Isak listened with great eagerness. He then asked Isak to show him the ground up to hills. Being very clever, he marked out the track he needed. Indeed he was not fool for all his hasty movements, but quick to judge. He offered Isak two hundred dealer on the spot. As usual he collected a sack full of ore. He complemented Eleseus who had drawn a horse and a goat with a coloured pencil; he gave him a coin. Isak did not understand a work when Geissler told him about buying the land. He was obsessed with his wife's pardon and freedom. Geissler read out the contract for the purchase of the land: Two hundred dealer cash down and later a nice high percentage of receipts from working, or ultimate disposal by further sale of the copper tract. It was signed and the matter settled. Oline was looking on all the while.

Isak worried that there was no nearby school where his boys might study. Geissler comforted him by saying that with more people buying and settling there, they would start a school soon, Isak decided to paint the house and went to the village to buy some black paint. Soon he received Geissler's telgram saying that *Inger had been set free.* Poor Isak was excited and emotional. He told his children to be good. Their mother was returning and she would teach them many new things. Elesseus was all for learning, whereas Sivert only wanted to ride in a cart or jump about.

2.11.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Ten

In this short chapter we hear about the sale of Isak's copper tract as well as the **release of Inger. Do you think Geissler is** exploiting Isak? Do you think Inger will be the same person as before?

Let us move on the *eleventh* chapter

2.12 Summary of Chapter Eleven

Isak drove till he reached a pool on the moor. Using a pair of scissors, he cut off his *five* year's growth of red iron beard. He was shy to trim his beard at home, as Oline was

there. The next day Inger and Leopoldine arrived in the mailboat. She had brought away with her a sewing machine and a chest. Isak noticed that Inger was strangely dressed and was fine to look at with no harelip now, but only tiny scar on the upper lip. The most wonderful thing was that she spoke with clarity. Inger observed that Isak had not changed much. Isak in turn replied that she had grown granted, Isak suddenly felt shy and unsure of himself. He could find no self-possession, and kept aloof, as if ashamed of himself. On the way they talked more feelingly together. She showed him the things she had brought for the boys; neat braces (trouser straps) with buckles, copy books, pencils, pen-knifes, a prayer book with her name written: it was a present of the Governor by way of remebrance. She gave Isak a black handkerchief; he was overwhelmed. He wondered at the woolen stockings she was wearing; she had knitted them herself.

A little later Inger heard herself whispering. "Oh you ..... Your're just the same – the same as ever".

Isak was pleased when Inger expressed surprise that he had paid for his land a long while back. He did not forget to add that he had no debts nor owings *(debts)* at the store or anywhere else. Inger told him how Geissler had struggled to get her set free. He had demanded a revision of the case, a new trial and finally the king had to sign. En-Lensmand Geissler had always been a good friend to them both and they wondered why.

Inger hardly knew the place again and stopped dead. The boys could hardly recognize their mother, for they had forgotten what she looked like; they had never seen their little sister. But they did not know their father at a distance, for he had cut off his beard!

2.12.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eleven

This small chapter describes the reunion of Isak, Inger and their children after five long years. Do you receive any change in Inger's attitude to her husband? Or is it too early to remark?

Let us move on to the *twelth* Chapter.

2.13 Summary of Chapter Twelve

Once again things returned to normal. Oline was gone and Inger had taken up her old work in the house and the guard. She over did in matter of order and cleanliness. But after the first week, she began to be less eager about the work. She had learned great deal among the townfolk. She wanted a pressing iron. Isak was ever ready to all her bidding. He noticed that she had grown very clever and spoke elegantly. She was careful with the children and taught them everything, educated them. Elesues in particular had grown as a clever boy while little Sivert was only a madcap. Inger also noticed that Eleseus still had his pencils and drew well.

On one of his journey down, Isak came upon several gangs of men on the moors who had come to fix telegraph pole. On being asked Isak refused to sell them telegraph poles, as he had no timber to spare himself. He snubbed Brede Olsen when the latter asked him to do so. He had seen three sheep in Brede's field; he recognised the one with the flat ears – Online had bartered away.

Isak wanted to set up a saw mill, but he was a bit diffident, for Inger was not exactly cooperative. The fact was that Inger had changed a good deal; she thought now less of their common good than of herself. She was getting ready to set up as fully trained dress maker. She had a profession now. She made a cloak for herself. She went to the village with the boys to put them in school, for she wanted to show it off. And that journey might have seemed a little thing, but, it left its mark.

Presently Inger began to have visitors. Later in the year, she was sent down to the village to do dress making for some of the great folk there. Inger could not go, for she had no servant. Isak was taken aback when she wanted one. She added that housewives in towns always had a servant. Isak was not in the best of moods, for the work at the sawmill was a toilsome business. He was beginning to feel tired in the evenings. If only Inger had been as in the good old days! Strange how little thought, how little care she seemed to take now! She was shallow and needless. One day she spoke of the child she

killed. She was a fool to have throttled (*strangled)* the baby-girl. They might have had her mouth sewed up too. However she cared for her mother children. It was her ambition to see them get on in the world.

2.13.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Twelve

This chapter presents a changed Inger. The five years she spent in the city-prison have taught her so many new things, habits etc. that she can no longer feel contented in her old lot. Do you feel that the change is natural and normal? Also, don't you feel sorry for her for having throttled her child?

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the story so far. Also note down your impressions of the main characters, plot developments, etc. so that you will be able to write essays on your own.

We shall study the latter half of the novel. "Growth of The soil" in the next Unit.

UNIT 3

GROWTH OF THE SOIL: A SUMMARY OF PART II

3.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a general idea of the plot of Knut Hamson's novel *Growth of the Soil* Part II.

(ii) Analyse the important characters; and

(iii) Discuss the various ideas presented in the book.

3.1 Introduction

Please read *Unit Two* a few times and understand the plot of the novel so far; only then can you appreciate the whole novel. In this *Unit,* we shall summarise Chapters 13-19 of Book I as well as the whole of Book II consisting of twelve chapters.

3.2. Summary of Chapter Thirteen [Book One]

The winter work went on as before. Isak went to the shopkeeper and bought a gold ring for Inger. Gradually, he got his sawmill roofed in. The telegraph work was going on. The engineer gave Eleseus a heap of big sheets to draw away.

One evening, the workmen drank and made merry talking by loudly, singing and dancing. One of the men asked Inger to dance. She laughed a little laugh and danced a few rounds. Who would have thought what was in Inger's mind? Perhaps, she was facing for the first time in her life – sought after riotously pursued by thirty men and alone, the only one to choose from, no one to cut her out. How the burly telegraph men lifted her! Isak was out in the fields all the time. Someone offered him a bottle when he returned. Isak drank a little and watched Inger dance; he remarked kindly that she was having a gay (*Cheerful*) time.

Isak woke up at night. Inger was not there. Perhaps, she had gone to see the cows. He called out to her, but received no answer. The he went out into woods. There he fond Inger with one of the telegraph men sitting in the heather (*a kind of plant),* she twirling (twisting) his peaked cap on one finger, both talking together. It seemed they were after her again. Isak trundled (*moved heavily)* slowly towards them Inger turned and saw him and bowed forward where she sat; all the life went out of her, she hung like a rag. Isak enquired after the ewe (*female sheep).* At first she did not say anything. Then he turned towards him and she followed. She cooked up (*made)* some false excuse for stirring out. She bluffed that one of the men came up and helped her to look for the ewe. They had not been sitting a moment when Isak came. At last, they went indoors together.

Inger tried to make up to Isak, but he was not easy to turn. The little moment of shame was unbearable to him. He was far from gentle too. The next day, which happened to be a Sunday, Inger tried to join him, but he turned away. There was trouble in his

mind, but he bore it silently, and made no scene. There was something great about Isak, as it might be Israel promised and ever deceived, but still believing.

As the days went on, the impression of that unhappy Saturday evening grew fainter, for time can mend a great deal of things. Next Saturday paytime, the last there was to be, Isak managed to be away from home; he wished it to be so. When he returned on Sunday night, he saw that there was a bundle left on the floor of the barn, and that there was a peaked cap on top of it, an offence to the eye. He heaved the bundle out into the yard, flung the cap out after it, and closed the door. He was fuming inwardly. Yet he was not sure whether he had acted rightly in flinging the bundle. At last he tied up the bundle neatly once more, picked up the cap, and carried them all back into the barn again.

Everything about Inger was different now. As for instance, when he had given her the gold ring, instead of being pleased as she used to in the past, she commented that it was not very thick, to which Isak retorted that it was worth no more than a bit of grass. However she wore it and showed it off.

Brede Olsen came. He was a boaster, but Isak could bear him no grudge. During the conversation, Inger spoke of the engineer as a kindly man beyond measure. He had looked at Eleseus's drawings and writing and said something about takings him to work under him in the town. Isak was not pleased and protested that they did not have Eleseus to spare on their farm. There was a painful silence after that. Isak was not an easy man to talk to Brede said that his eldest daughter *Barbro* was going to help at the Lensmand's. Before taking leave he added that he had left a bundle and a cap in Isak's barn.

3.2.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Thirteen

In this chapter we get a glimpse into the changes wrought by life in a city. The changed Inger is no longer satisfied with the drab (*dull*) existence in the wilderness as Isak's wife. She wants fun and excitement; she wishes a city life for her son Eleseus. Is the desire legitimate or natural? You compare here with Flaubert's Madam Bovary.

Let us pass on to the *fourteenth* chapter.

3.3 Summary of Chapter Fourteen

And time went on. Eleseus was sent to the town after all; Inger managed to do it. After a year, he was given a regular place in the engineer's office and grew more and more clever at writing, as well as in other things. Now and again, he asked for pocket money. Altogether it was no light matter to keep Eleseus going in a berth (situation) in town. Isak could not digest it, but Inger encouraged the boy.

Uncle Sivert had said something about making little Sivert his heir. He had heard of Eleseus's grand doings in town and the story did not please him. He was an obstinatre man and insisted that little Sivert should come and stay with him. How could that be done? He was all the help to Isak on the farm. Moreover, the boy himself did not want to go to his uncle's. He was grown up, and he worked willingly like a man. He got on well with his father and worked steadily at his side; he was made of the same stuff. It was Leopoldine who was getting fancies in her head; it was natural, she being the only daughter, besides considering Inger's changed nature; and she was no great use at any kind of work either.

Inger had not yet given up her idea of keeping a servant. Isak opposed her ides, each time she brought it. When she suggested getting Barbro, he refused flatly; he did not approve of the girl. In Isak's view, Barbro was shallow and unsettled like her father, a careless creature, no steady character at all.

Brede remarked that though Geissler had bought Isak's tract of land, it just lay there year after year, and nothing was done. Isak too had wondered about it, was a curious mystery. Brede made no secret of this matter of the sale; there was more of the ore in several parts of the land and he intended to find out. He said that three new settlers from another district had now arrived. Isak was sick and tired of Brede's visits and went out of the room, whenever he came in. Inger and Brede would talk heartily together. Inger had grown talkative in the years she had been away, and was ready to gossip with anyone. She was no longer straight forward.

Girls and women came up continually to Sellanraa to have something stitched, and Inger entertained them all. Oline too came off and on. Inger showed off and boasted to all of them that she had gained all her knowledge and art from *Trondhjem*. She enjoyed their flattering compliments. She was amiable and kind. Oline told Inger that she had forbidden Os-Anders from visiting Inger. Inger replied that he could not hurt her as she did not intend to have any more children. They parted each holding as good a trump card (*a strong point)* as the other: for Online stood there knowing all the time that Os-Anders the Lapp had died the previous day!

Inger had learned all sorts of things at the institution. She spoke of the kind doctor who had her operated on her mouth, and made a human being of her. The doctor did not feel that infanticide was a criminal offence. Now, Inger was not afraid of letting her calves (*fleshy back of leg below knee)* be seen. She and Isak did not quarrel, as he had no talent for it. He showed signs of being tired now at times; yet he was full of old health and unwasted strength.

Inger felt a sense of superiority. She felt that there was nothing particularly handsome or grand about Isak, and so she kept him in his place, and treated him no better than what he deserved. He was only a peasant, a clodhopper of the wilds. If only her mouth had been, as it was now, from the start, she would never had married him. The home he had given her was not the place for he now; she had learned to look at life differently and she felt no pleasure in old pursuits.

Once Inger stole Isak's money for Eleseus's sake. Though the miserly Isak found it out only by accident, he gripped her by both arms, lifted her from the floor, and thumped her on the floor again; so she was forced to return the money. He merely said, "You're not fit to have in the place". She hardly knew him again. It must have been some long-stored bitterness that would not be repressed. She wept that day just as she had done on the day she had throttled her newborn child. Clearly, the relations between Isak and Inger had become strained.

3.3.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Fourteen

The tone and theme of this chapter is a continuation of the previous one. The estrangement or strained relations between Isak and Inger is evident. While Eleseus and Leopoldine take after her, Sivert is more like his father.

Let us move on to the *fifteenth* chapter.

3.4 Summary of Chapter Fifteen

It was strange evening altogether: a turning point Inger had been running off the line for a long time now. Neither spoke of what had happened. Isak felts ashamed of himself for having been petty over the money issue. There came many times when he found it his turn to be humble. The next year the drought come again killing off the growth slowly and wearing down human courage. The one day, Geissler came; he was poorly dressed. Inger thanked him for all he had done at Trondhjem for her. Geissler said that he was going to Sweden. Isak told him that seven settlers had arrived. He walked with Sivert to his meadow and advised him to dig and make channel from the river.

Later in the day, Brede brought some samples of rocks for Geissler to see. The ex-Lensmand refused to oblige. He did not approve of the sort of farming. Actually Geissler had come to get a lot of men to work on his copper mine and start off the mining of copper. He explained how it might be a bother for Isak with men around the place, blasting up on the hills and so on. He asked Isak to fix his own prices. Besides his share in the mine, he promised Isak a high percentage of his earnings. Isak replied that Geissler had already paid him fairly and that was more than enough. Geissler left the next day.

Geissler's water work remained after he had gone working wonders day and night, week after week. The settlers from the holdings farther down began to come up, all anxious to see the marvel for themselves. Among them was AXEL STROM, the man who had no wife. Isak learnt that Barbo had offered to help him with the work. Isak wished he could get rid of the boastful Brede. After a week, Barbo came. She was straight

and thin, showed sense and experience in various ways; certainly she was not a child. Axel Strom was pleased with the results of his summer help; he brought a paper for her sake, bore with the frequent visits of the Brede family. In due course, he came to know other aspects of her character; so the summer passed.

3.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Fifteen

This small chapter records a number of happenings. Of particular interest is the arrival of Axel Strom and Barbro offering to work for him.

Let us move on to the *sixteenth* chapter.

3.5 Summary of Chapter Sixteen

Great Changes took place at Sellanraa, Inger had altered; she was good and clever again and had grown thoughtful. There were less visitors and so more quiet reigned. No one could live in the depth of the wilds and have time for such foolishness. Happiness and nonsense were two different things. Inger grew despondent *(very sad)* at last. The wilds oppressed her. She turned religious. She overdid things finely and worked harder that she ought. She told her husband that she did so for conscience sake. The word 'conscience' made Isak thoughtful once more.

Isak was superstitious by nature. One night, as he was returning in the dark, he felt there was something standing there before him; perhaps it was a Being or a spirit. Was it ghost work or reality? Possibly the Holy ghost or the Evil One. At last he took two steps forward straight at the vision, crossed himself and cried out, "In Jesu name". The two eyes in the air vanished and Isak could see Sellanaraa over the hillside. As soon as he reached home, he regained his poise. Inger was shocked at the sight of him and asked him what had made him so pale. He recounted his experience of meeting the Evil one. Inger was anxious about him and it did him good to know it. She forbade him from going out alone.

Soon Inger became pregnant. Both Isak and Inger were equally astonished. A few days later Isak brought a girl called JENSINE to help Inger, who protested that she did not need help. Isak said that he had sent a telegram to Eleseus. Inger herself has written to the boy; but Eleseus had no idea of returning to the life of a peasant. He was a man-about-town. Inger realised that he was selling the stuff she sent him periodically and spending the money on other things. Isak saw it too though he chose not to speak of it. Altogether it came to this: Isak must be Man and Leader again, the head of the house, and so step in and interfere.

For a long time Inger exerted herself to show her husband how good and useful she could be. It was like a return to the old days. In course of time, she gave birth to big girl, sturdy and sound. Isak decided to build a new house again at Sellanaraa. Sivert helped his father. Eleseus was coming home. Isak and Sivert often discussed grave *(serious)* matters like two men. The next day was Saturday and they had to be off to get across the hills with the child. Jensine was to go with them. They named the child *REBECCA*, a name chosen by Isak. Inger looked nice. In the church, Isak noticed that Inger wore the gold ring he had bought her earlier, on her finger.

3.5.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Sixteen

This chapter portrays the happy reconciliation of Isak and Inger after a period of estrangement. She has become the good old Inger, much to Isak's joy and relief. We also note the birth of their daughter Rebecca.

3.6 Summary of Chapter Seventeen

Eleseus came home. He had been away now for some years. He did not give himself airs, but seemed anxious to appear natural and kindly. His mother was pleased and surprised. He shared the small bedroom with Sivert, and the two boys got on well. But when it came to sharing the work in buildings the house, Eleseus became tired and miserable, being unused to bodily fatigue of any kind.

Oline came one day and informed them that Uncle Sivert was dying, and so young Sivert had to go. It turned out that the incorrigible old knave was not on his death bed; being seventy years old, he needed help, that was all. He was amused to know that Oline had reported that he was dying. He

showed Sivert his money chest and told him that he would inherit all that his uncle might leave at his death. He also told him to ask Eleseus to come and see him. Oline was still at Sellanraa when Sivert got back. She was full of gossip regarding Axel Strom and Barbro. Eleseus tried his best to adapt himself to the others and he managed well; at home he was constantly forced to keep down his own superiority. He was not good at building houses; he was good at writing letters. However, the house was finished at last.

Then one day Geissler returned with a big crowd of rich travelers on horse-back. They had come to inspect the copper mine; it was supposed to contain Blue copper. Later in the evening Geissler asked Isak if they ought to sell the copper mine. He explained to the non-plussed *(totally confused)* Isak that since neither could run the mine, it would be a wise move to dispose of it. Isak said that he would do as Geissler advised. This complete confidence seemed to comfort Geissler wonderfully in his thread-bareness *(poverty)*. Unlike his father, Sivert followed the business with more understanding. At last they settled the deal. Geissler sold his mine for 40,000 Kroner, and Isak got ten percent, that is, 4000 Kroner as his share in the profit. The gentlemen, who were relatives of Geissler's wife, took leave. Just then Brede appeared. He approached the men for selling his property; but they shook their heads and went away, Brede was hurt, for Geissler refused to help him. The next day Geissler took a parcel of food from Inger, paid her and then went off. He came to Sellanraa again after, and it was long years before he died. Each time he went away, the Sellanraa folk missed him as a friend.

3.6.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Seventeen

This chapter takes the story forward in several directions the arrival of the town-bred Elesseus, the sale of Geissler's copper tract, Isak's profit, his absolute trust in his friend and so on. Altogether at the moment, these are going on smoothly in Sellanraa.

Let us pass on to the *eighteenth* chapter.

3.7 Summary of Chapter Eighteen

Uncle Sivert died at last. Eleseus spent three weeks looking after him, and then the old man passed away. Eleseus arranged for his funeral which went off well. The brothers felt that there would not be much money left by the old man. But Sivert was not at all upset over the matter.

Eleseus was getting rather spoiled, idling away and doing nothing. He was attracted towards Barbro. He went down one Sunday, met her and enjoyed her company. Axel Storm dropped out of the conversation leaving the two of them alone. Eleseus got her photo and kissed her in return. They flirted and joked and laughed and were excellent friends.

Time dribbled away; they came no nearer each other. Barbro was as cross and contrary as ever. Her indifference annoyed Eleseus and he hinted his displeasure. He went away. Axel Storm suddenly appeared from behind the bushes. He had seen Barbro and Eleseus together. He was not in the best of temper himself. They argued and went home with the quarrel at its height. Barbro had been with Storm for a couple of years; they were not always the best of friends. She often talked of finding another place.

On the other hand, he wanted her to stay there fore ever and share the house and life with him. At last, he managed to pacify her. But Eleseus found it hard to get over the sharmeful way Barbro had treated him. He sent her back her photo. He lay in hiding only to watch Axel Strom and Barbro come along in a long affectionate condition.

3.7.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eighteen

This chapter brings out both Barbro and Eleseus in bad light. Will Barbro marry Axel Strom? We are yet to see the further developments of this relationship.

Let us move on to the last chapter of Book One.

3.8 Summary of Chapter Nineteen

Isak came back from the village with a horse, he had bought it from the Lensmand's assistant. He brought a news that Brede Olsen's place Breidablik was to be sold; there was a notice outside the church. Brede was going to live in the village after that. Isak had further news: the Lensand's lady had a

baby, in spite of talks on increasing birthrate among the poor.

Isak understood his work, his calling. He was a rich man now, with a big farm. He put his money aside, for the land saved him. Not living in the village helped him; it prevented him from buying useless trifles. Here in the wilds, he was sheltered from all kinds of immoderation, Eleseus advised his father to put the money in a bank. The boy worked till his hands were blistered. Isak was surprised at his change. He thought Eleseus was turning out for the good.

Isak got mowing machine-the first of its kind in the worlds – red and a blue, a thing of splendour to men's eyes. He was really happy. He started wearing spectacles which often fell off, causing embarrassment as his sons saw it.

3.8.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Nineteen

At the end of this chapter which constitutes the end of Book I, we observe how the soil has grown at Isak's hands, and how he is a self made, prosperous tiller of the soil who still loves his soil and understands little else. Much water has flowed under the bridge. Don't you think so?

Read the Summary of Book I fully before proceeding to Book II.

3.9 Summary of Chapter One [Book II]

Sellanraa was no longer a desolate spot in the wildness. It had developed into a fine homestead and seven human beings lives there – Isak, Inger, their children Eleseus, Sivert, Leopoldine, Rebecca and the servant girl Jensine Brede, Axel Storm, and even Oline came to see the new mowing machine. Oline herself had been cheated of her due by Uncle Sivert. She was not overblessed with the world's goods. Practiced in evil she was used to edging her ways by tricks and little mean acts from day to day. She was strong only as a scandal–monger, as one whose tongue had to be feared. She had toiled all her life, bad born several children, begged and stolen for them – a mother in a poor way. Her powers were not less than those of other politicians! She could live and die in commonplace insincerity and readiness of wit.

The Sellanraa folk took the blew over Uncle Sivert's "will" with patience. They were not altogether unprepared. Inger could not understand it, for the old man had always been so rich. Brede's property was auctioned. Axel Strom bought it for a brother of his in Helgeland. Strom told Isak that he had been offered to take over the telegraph business given up by Brede. They had offered him double the amount. Isak asked him to think it over.

Eleseus began to make preparations for his return to town. In reply to his letter, the engineer had written that times were bad, they would have to economise. However he offered to try to get him a placement elsewhere. Eleseus would go back to the town undoubtedly. Left at Sellanraa was having its effects on him again. It was an inglorious, commonplace life, but quiet and dulling to the senses, a dreamy life. He dreaded the moment when he would have to say goodbye.

There was an atmosphere of solemnity and stillness in the house. Eleseus had got it over at last. On the way, he and Sivert met Barbo. She was unnecessarily eager now. Eleseus cared nothing for her now. The brothers shouted a word of farewell to each other and went, each on his way. Call it fate or chance, Eleseus went back to the town to work for Axel Strom, after all.

3.9.1 Critical Comments on chapter One [Book II]

This chapter mentions the fluctuating fortunes of some of the main characters; Isak and family well settled. Uncle Sivert's treachery, Oline's bitterness, the purchase of Brede's property by Axel Strom and Eleseus's going back to the town to work for Strom. At this juncture their lives are criss-crossing to a large extent.

Let us move on to the *second* chapter.

3.10 Summary of Chapter Two

On 3rd September, Barbro was not to be found. Axel Strom was engaged in some carpentry work. He went in search of her and eventually found her a long way off lying on the ground, hidden by some bushes. She told him that she had slipped into the water, she had delivered a dead child. She had been

looking for juniper twigs for cleaning buckets. That night she slept well, and things went on as usual the next morning.

Axel Strom could see that his hold on Barbro had loosened with the death of the child. At last, she even took of the rings from her fingers and wore neither. It could hardly mean anything else than faithlessness and desertion on her part. He found the little body by the side of the stream, under a heap of moss and twigs, kept down by flat stones and wrapped in a cloth. It was a boy. He ran home for a spade and dug the grave deeper.

Axel Strom was afraid of losing Barbro, and being left without help, with no one to look to the place and the animals again. She know his secret fear. He suggested that if she pleased, they could shift to her father's place which he had bought. She gave no answer. She was bitter because he would not allow her folks to come and stay with them. Once again they quarrelled openly and accused each other. But it ended abruptly, for Barbro sensed danger, as Axel knew of her dead son. He suggested that they should get married at once. But she wanted to go to the town first about her teeth. All the money he had given her disappeared, God alone knew where. She seemed to think only of Bergen and town life. Here she was eternally discontented from morning to night, year after year.

Barbro ceased to care at all for what Axel Strom said about the death of her child. She tried to make him see that he was taking it too seriously. She knew two girls in Bergent who had done it. One of them was even acquitted. She coolly told him: "The law's not so cruel and hard as it used to be. And besides it is not always it gets found out." As he listened to all this, Axel Storm grew more and more afraid of Barbro. Infanticide meant nothing to her. She was unalterably shallow and foolish. When he repeatedly warned her that her crime might be detected as in the case of Inger, she, perhaps from set vanity, suddenly threw a bombshell thus: "I've done something myself and that never got found out". She implied that she had killed her own illegitimate child. Axel was staring at her. Barbro wanted to look big herself and silence him. She burst out, "you remember that in the paper about body of a child found in the harbour? It was me that did it". With artificial strength, she supplied glory details. She continued: "What about all the married people in the towns and the things they did? They killed their children before they were born. There were doctors who managed that".

Axel went out of the house, heavy in mind. This last child he would not willingly have lost it. Later he told Barbro that if it got found out, he would go and talk to the Lensmand requesting his wife to intervene.

3.10.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Two

This chapter depicts Barbro in truly bad light. She has no remorse over her repeated acts of infanticide, and even ventures to justify it. We are automatically reminded of Inger's similar act years ago, but with all the difference in purpose and attitude. Well, as Barbro herself says, the law is not that cruel and hard. Let us move on to the third chapter.

3.11 Summary of Chapter Three

That winter, Axel was left to himself again at Maneland. Barbro was gone; that was the end of the affair. She went to Bergen, though she had bluffed to Axel that she was going elsewhere.

There was a terrible storm and heavy snow fall. Brede and Axel met, but did not greet each other. Axel's axe was getting snowed up. Brede refused to help. Axel shouted that Brede was leaving him in the snow to die, just like a murderer! Axel felt nimb and rigid; he must have slept off. Oline happened to come that way. She found Axel buried in the snow and cut him free herself. Axel could not walk, his leg was dead to the lip. With Oline's support he managed to walk. On the way they met Brede who pretended to show concern. Oline sensed that she must appear indispensable; only then Axel would be totally indebted to her. So she would not let Brede help. But Axel's sharper mind was getting to work again. He quickly realized that Oline would be a costly thing, as well as a plague. And so, he let Brede take his basket and the tools. All the three managed to walk on, Axel insisting that

both Brede and Oline had played their parts in saving him! During the next few days Oline would talk of only this great event.

Axel heard from Sivert of a man who was coming to take possession of some land. He was bringing up houses all ready made, to fix up in no time. His name was *ARON*. He came from Storbory.

3.11.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Three

In this chapter we have an interesting battle of wits, Oline, Brede and Axel, each trying to outwit the other.

Let us move on to the *fourth* chapter.

3.12 Summary of chapter Four

Teams of horses driving up over the moors carted up ready made houses for the new man to settle in the wilds. Gradually Sellanraa was growing, getting bigger and bigger. Jensine had to stay on. Inger was not altogether pleased with herself and with life all the year round. Eleseus was a disappointment. He had written that he was expecting a first rate post to turn up. They had to send him money. Inger wrote to him to come back and lend a helping hand, but Eleseus did not care about coming home again. He had several old accounts outstanding. His mother's greatest disappointment was that Eleseus was serving as an assistant in a shop. As for Isak, eldest son was slipping out of range.

In spring, engineers and workmen from Sweden came to work on the nine. They intended to ship the ore to South America. The mine was now owned by a big company with a very large capital. Blasting work continued all through summer. As a result, there was life in their wilds now; money was growing, blossoming everywhere. Aronsen, the new settler had no time for working on the soil, as the mine was working. And at last Inger herself put on her best gold ring and fine dress and went up to the hills. Actually she went only to show herself off, that was all. The workmen knew her and greeked her kindly. She had never had such a gay time, not even in the days when she had been out in the world. Though she was a woman getting on in years, she sat and talked intimately to one of the workmen called *GUSTAF*.

The work of the mine went on, but there were whisperings that the yield was not as good as it had promised to be. They found that the southern side of the field had already been sold a year ago and bought by Geissler. They tried to locate him. Isak took an interest in the mine and learnt a few things. He asked the engineer about a portable forge, and the latter said that the company would make a present of it to him.

Isak trundled (*moved heavily)* down the hillside with his precious forge on his back. When he reached home he was surprised to see a horse and cart turned into the countryard. Obviously it had brought a highly remarkable load. The driver was a man from the village, and beside him walked Geissler.

3.12.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Four

Habits die hard, they say. In this chapter we see once again Inger's old weakness for male company popping up its head. Isak is the same as ever, toiling and moiling on his soil, unaffected by most things.

Let us move on to the *fifth* chapter

3.13 Summary of Chapter Fives

Isak wondered where Inger was. He was anxious that's Geissler was well received. Inger and Gustaf the Swede had been plucking berries – getting on in years, and all in love again and wild with it. Inger was all weakness towards Gustaf, and smiled piteously being so deep in love, desperately, mercilessly. Indeed it was a sweet and cruel thing to be so deep in love. Her heart was full of kindliness towards him; she only cared to be close and precious to him. They plucked more berries, and little while they had a sheltered place among the bushes. Hours passed. It wonderful in the wilderness, in the Garden of Eden! The sun was setting when at last they walked home. Inger came home, alone fortunately in time. On seeing Geissler she wondered whether he had an inkling (*small idea)* as to what was happening up at the mine and had wanted to see for himself.

Geissler had brought along a patent raker that might be handy on the farm. Isak harnessed himself to the thing and tried it on the ground. It was marvelous. They spoke of the mine and the work up in the hills. The

next evening, a messenger came asking for Geissler to come up to the gentlemen at the mines. The Ex-Lensmand had grown to be an important personage. He considered himself a man of power, of all the power in the world. He sent back the messenger with the information that he would be in Sellanraa, if they wanted to see him. It was below his dignity to be sent for by word of mouth.

The engineer and the two mining experts came to Sellanraa to meet Geissler. Both parties were polite to each other initially. The engineer said that they had made a rough investigation and found that the occurrence of the ore was due to eruption. It was irregular, decreasing towards one side, and for the last mile or so, there was no one to be found worth working on. In reply, Geissler replied that they had not gone deep enough and they admitted this point readily. They wondered how he knew that. By afternoon, they had brought the price down from two millions to half a million kroner, not a hair's breadth farther. They had not decided the price even by lunch time. What could be in Geissler's mind? What might he be pondering and speculating about? After dinner, he went out for a long walk over his land, came back and chatted easily to the men at their work. Geissler had been so long accustomed to changes of fortune. Here and now, he was the man he was by the merest chance. Form sheer idleness, he had become a mining king, a lord of the mountains.

In Sweden, the first little patch of land had passed form hand to hand, and Geissler had taken care to keep himself informed as to its fate. The successive purchasers had bought it foolishly, without fore-sight. "Children!" Geissler thought in his lofty mind. He felt his power now felt strong enough to be short and abrupt with folk. At their next meeting, he told the gentlemen that he still insisted on a quarter of a million kroner; he even offered to buy their bit of the mine instead. He did not appear to be bothered about the business. He stayed away till evening.

Geissler then went to see Axel. He offered to present Axel a moving machine and a harrow; in return Axel would have to help him two neighbours up above, breaking new land. Axel agreed to these terms. The two men talked on various matters including Brede. Barbro was under arrest now in Bergen. Oline had a role in spreading the word. The law would have to take its course. Axel was anxious. He told Isak that he would have the work at the mine stopped. Geissler left in a couple of days.

3.13.1 Critical Comments on Chapter five

This chapter highlights the special aspects of Geissler; his clever, calculating nature, his pragmatic friendship and his generosity in helping those who were good to him and trusted him. Now that Barbro has been arrested, do you think, history will repeat itself?

Let us move on to the *sixth* chapter.

3.14 Summary of Chapter Six

The work at the mine was stopped. The building at Sellanraa was finished. Inger was sad because Gustaf, the splendid bad at the stone work, seemed as if he were in a hurry to get away. May be he was getting tired of the game now. He wag going across with the other now. Inger was down hearted because she was honestly in love, without any thought of vanity or conquest. She was not ashamed. She was a strong woman full of weakness. She gave herself to her passion entirely, hungry to taste, to enjoy. Isak might punish her, but it would not, in any way, make her feel less for Gustaf.

Days went on. Axel has asked his brother Federick, a newly married, light-hearted fellow, to help in the draining of the bogs. Aronsen was in a nasty humour; he felt he had been cheated by that Swedish mining concern. He wanted to sell apart of his land. By now there were eight settlers with their homesteads in the wilds. Isak hinted to Sivert that they could buy Aronsen's land.

Inger had grown quieter and kept to herself. She had found her way home again. She was humble now, and god-fearing soul. She cried a great deal, suffered much and blamed none but herself. Once she even confessed and apologised to Isak, "I've not been all as I ought towards you. I'am sorry about it". Her simple words move him. He had a strong, sound way of taking things, and he straightened them out when they

turned crooked. Gradually, Inger's trouble passed off too. Though she got over it, she kept on with her hours of devotion and found a merciful refuge there.

When the little chief clerk from Strorborg, one Andreson came up to Sellanraa, Inger was not in the least affected. Indeed she had amended. It was Leopoldine's turn to be affected, to begin the same eternal round. Isak and Inger seemed interested to know that Aronsen was going to sell the place again.

Sivert came to know that Axel was busy in town in connection with the child-murder case in the wilds, but he said nothing. An immediate effect of the Barbro Scandal was that Jensine was called back home by her mother.

3.14.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Six

In this Chapter we watch Inger amending her sinfully behaviour after a final disillusionment. Does she remind you of Madame Bovary and Anna Karenina? The Barbro scandal is waiting to be opened.

Let us move on the *seventh* chapter.

3.15 Summary of Chapter Seven

Axel Strom returned from the town, found not guilty in the child-murder case. But the times he had been through were horrid. Barbro had been clever and good enough to take all the blame on herself. Fru Lensmand Heyerdhal [Lady Heyerdhal] had made a lengthy speech in Barbro's defence. She argued that the girl had hidden her condition because of fear of society, which despises the unmarried woman who bears a child. Not only does society offer her no protection, but it also pursues her with contempt and disgrace. As long as society maintains its present attitude, an unmarried woman should be counted guiltless, even if she does kill her child. The lady continued that experience has shown that such girls whom society had forced to kill their own children, make the best nurses. The man, who is the partner in the crime, is invariably acquitted, because the laws are made by men. Madam Heyerdhal finally requested that Barbro must be acquitted; she would personally take charge of the girl hence forth. Barbro would make the best nurse she had ever had. Axel was cross examined. Geissler was sitting in the court. He spoke to the advocate of the Crown. At last the case was closed and Barbro was acquitted.

On the boat while returning home, Axel encountered the Lensmand Heyerdhal and his wife, Barbro and two girls who had been called as witnesses. Fru Heyerdhal asked Axel if he were not glad that the whole thing had turned out so well. Axel agreed with her. She further told him that she thought highly of him, but explained that in her speech she had been obliged to shift the blame a little his way in order to save Barbro from being convicted.

Fru Heyerdhal kept her word. On board of the steamer, she took immense care about Barbo's comfort. She took the girl to live with her. She saw to it that Barbro did not get up to any nonsense with the male from Bergen. The first time it occurred, she said nothing, but simply called Barbro to her side. But a little later Barbro was again with the same man, her head on one side, talking Bergen dialect and smiling.

Axel reached home, glad at heart. Geissler had sent him the mowing machine and harrow, as promised. The ex-Lensmand was indeed an extremely unfathomable (*difficult to understand)* man. He had not mentioned a word about it while in the town.

3.15.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Seven

We have a bit of feminism and women-activists' arguments in this chapter. Do you think Barbro deserves all the passionate words of sympathy poured by Lady Heyerdahl in her defence? Also note the change in the attitude of the law towards infanticide.

Let us pass on to the *eighth* chapter.

3.16 Summary of Chapter Eight

Axel was busy. The telegraph line was out of order. The work had been a nuisance from the start. He had a brief encounter with Brede. Then up on the hillside, he met Aronsen who was in a foul mood. Aronsen wanted to shoot Geissler. Axel laughingly told him to leave the ex-Lensmand alone; the whole thing would be overwise and

mysterious for Aronsen in the end. Aronsen told Axel to find him a buyer so that he could sell out. Axel suggested that Isak might be interested, for he had the means to buy five of his strorborg houses.

Accordingly, Aronsen approached Isak. At first Isak appeared indifferent. But when Eleseus came home for Christmas, he reconsidered the matter. Both Inger and Sivert were all for buying the place. Eleseu himself was not sure. Inger and her two sons went down to strorborg to see the place. But when he realised that there appeared to prospect for selling the place, Aron suddenly started acting big.

It was clear to the villagers that ex-Lensmand Geissler was taking his revenge upon the village, because they had helped his superior to get him dismissed. By merely demanding an unreasonable price for a mine Geissler had succeeded in checking the entire development of the district. Finally, Aronsen, who had raged for a while and grown more and more desperate, went up one day to Sellanraa and closed the deal. Eleseus got the place for a fifteen hundred kroner., the sum he had offerd. But the young man was not exactly delighted; his future was sealed now, he was to bury himself in the wilds. However he had the satisfaction of taking Anderson, the chief of Aron, into his service. Anderson was a good worker and looked after matters when Eleseus was away.

As for the Barbro case Oline was sorely disappointed, since both Axel and the girl had been acquittred. Meanwhile Fru Heyerdahl kept a watchful eye on Barbro and took care not to let her go to the Christmas dances.

3.16.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eight

This chapter highlights the purchase of Aronsen's property at Strorborg for Eleseus who is not at all happy to settle down in the wilds. We also see the vengeful aspect of Geissler's mysterious nature. The loyal friend of the trusting Isak can be a relentless enemy to anyone who crosses his path.

Let us pass on to the *ninth* chapter

3.17 Summary of Chapter Nine

The next spring, something unexpected and important happened. The work at the mine was resumed after a break. No one knew why or how. Geissler had an unfathomable mind. May be his conscience had pricked him; or perhaps, he needed money. Eleseus had never been happy in the wilds. Anyway he decided not to sell Strorborg. He seemd to have changed his mind somewhat, as to his position. Andreson, on his part, refused to leave Eleseus and go away with Aronsen. Jensine left Sellanraa. Inger's deep religiousness did not pass off. But she felt all her world was going awry (*in disorder*). Leopoldine was bursting with sinful health. Isak continued to work, but he did not have his old strength now. More and more settlers were coming into the wilds.

3.17.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Nine

This chapter describes the continuation of the usual round of activities at Sellanraa and whereabouts. We also get an idea of the problems of growing up. As ever, Geissler remains mysterious.

Let us move on to the *tenth* chapter.

3.18 Summary of Chapter Ten

In spite of her best efforts, Fru Heyerdahl could not prevent Barbro from being wayward. At last, she sent her away. Barbro left the village. She returned to Axel. After initial hesitation, they reconciled. A little later they lay talking together. Axel, who had been managing the household on his own, told Barbro that he could get a woman to come from America. In his heart of hearts, he desired for Barbro, but he cleverly acted as if he could do without her. Barbro was upset and asked him what would become of her. She confessed and sobbed. As expected Axel method and he comforted her. Barbro seemed resolved to build up his happiness herself. Finally, they decided to marry. In due course, she became pregnant. Things started looking well and grand with Axel now.

Oline continued to interfere in everybody's affairs, though with little effect. One night she simply died an aged creature, not missed dearly by the world.

3.1.1 Critical comments on Chapter Ten

One by one the loose threads are being tied up. In this chapter we see Barbro reconciling with Axel and accepting to live with him.

We also hear of the death of the scandalmonger and busy body (*one who interferes)* Olive.

Le us move on to the *eleventh* chapter.

3.18 Summary of Chapter Eelven

And time went on. Brede and his family opened a coffee shop; they did well, especially since one of the girls, Katherine was highly enterprising. Eleseus continued to be parasite, but he cared little for women. He had been frightened off utterly by Barbro. Eleseus heard from Brede of a man on his way to America and he wanted to go there himself. But he had managed his business so badly that the had incurred heavy loss. However with Sivert's most generous help he left for America. He never came back. Isak decided to go and get Jenseine back. Andresen was to marry Leopoldine; so Eleseus said that he could have Strorborg.

3.19.1 Critical Comments on chapter Eleven

More loose ends are being bound. In this chapter we hear the end of Eleseus – from a somebody to nobody.

Let us move on to the last chapter of the novel.

3.20 Summary of Chapter Twelve [Book Two]

Andresen took charge over the business at Strorborg and prospered well. Aronsen returned pale and haggard. He had done badly in life. He had now come to sell things to Andresen, his former clerk. He did not stop cursing Geissler.

Geissler came down to Sellanraa. He was al praise for Isak and Sivert. He was satisfied. He told Sivert that it was number of men of his father's stamp that the country needed. They had everything to live on, to live for and to believe in. By ever breeding more and more animal and growing more and more crops, they maintained life; generation after generation, the new stock went on. That was the meaning of eternal life properly set described as lightning, which was nothing itself, a mere flash of barrenness. His son was the modern type, a man of the modern times.

And life went on, Isak and Sivert continued to toil on the soil. Inger and the girls took care of the other jobs.

3.20.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Twelve

In this last chapter of the novel, Geissler as the novelist's mouthpiece speaks in favour of an existence in harmony with nature and denounces fashionable, hollow living.

Read the above study material carefully number of times. It is a long story, though not a very complicated one. Become familiar with the characters, and the main themes elaborated in the novel.

UNIT-4

GROWTH OF THE SOIL: A CRITICAL STUDY

4.0 Objective

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

(i) Understand various aspects of Knut Hamson's *Growth of the Soil;*

and

(ii) Make an overall estimate of the novel and the author.

4.1 Introduction

Before you begin to read this Unit, it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous Units. If you do so, you will be able to form your own impression of the novel, its characters, its mode of narrations, the atmosphere, the ideas and themes treated in it, and the like. Then, when you read this *Unit*, you be able to appreciate the several aspects of *Growth of The Soil.*

Let us study these aspects one by one.

4.2 Plot Outline

Knut Hamson's novel *Growth of the Soil,* as the title partly suggests, is the story of a man who clings to the soil and wrests a livelihood from it, and finds a successful existence; it is the story of the developments of a homestead in the wilds of Borway,

amidst the temptations of an urban civilisation with all its snares of easy living and loose morals. It depicts the rugged determination, single-pointed aim and stoicism to the protagonist who calmly looks on the ups and downs of life including infanticide, infidelity, way-wardens, extravagance, treachery etc, but continues to toil on the soil which thereby grows and helps him too to grow.

Read *Units* 2 and 3 in the light of the above sketch outline.

You can easily fill it out to get the whole plot.

Let us turn to characterisation now.

4.3 Characterisation in "Growth of The Soil"

The slow evolution of character is said to be the function of a novel. In fact, most great novels tend to be more novels of character than novels of mere plot. The chief interest in this classic novel of Hamson lies in the memorable characters he presents before us. *Isak* is a flat character, while his wife Inger is a round character. [A flat character is uni-dimensional and remains unchanged form start to finish, while a round character is multi-di-mensional and undergoes change in the course of the plot.] Geissler is another interesting character. We shall begin with the protagonist.

4.3.1 Isak

Isak is the hero or the main character of the novel. It is about him as the axis that the entire plot revolves. He and the soil are inseparable. The soil in his life, his very means of existence. Throughout the novel we see him tilling laboriously, making improvements, felling trees, building houses and so on. He bestows great care on his animals and when their numbers increase, his joy knows no bound. At the outset, Isak comes to a no-man's land just to till the soil and eke out an existence for himself. At the end of the novel he is quite a rich man with a fine homestead besides properties for his children in the wilds. And yet he continues to work on the soil. Indeed Isak is the son of earth and Nature.

By nature Isak is a simpleton, absolutely straight forward, trusting, hard-working and afraid of consequences. The novel furnished us with several instances. When his wife Inger brings in the cow Golden claiming it to be hers, Isak is not convinced whether she is not telling lies. He knows no peace till Oline vouch safes for Inger's ownership of the animal. Fearing the consequences he even contemplates killing off the cow, tearing it and burying it!

It is Isak's absolutely trusting nature that wins him a germ of a friend in the mysterious Lensmand Geissler. Thanks to Geissler, he officially buys and registers his land, gets further profits from the copper mine In short Geissler becomes a benefactor and well-wisher of Isak's family.

Isak loves his wife Inger truly, perhaps much more than she does. He realises that had it not been for her ugly hare-lip she would never have considered marrying him. He loves to act grandly and pompously in her presence, carrying heavy trunks etc., for her look of wonder and words of praise are his strength. His adoration of his wife increases when he realizes her honesty in the matter of the cow. He is sad beyond words when she kills their new born daughter, born like her with a hare-lip; but he does not criticize her, or abuse her. He is able to understand her frustration. When she is put in prison on the charge of infanticide, he misses her terribly and is eternally immersed in her thought; yet he bears his sorrows like a stoic. He bears upon Geissler to get her released and succeeds too.

Though he is simple and straight forward, Isak does not lack self-respect; he too can be hurt. After her release from the prison Inger becomes a totally changed person. With her hare-lip operated on and rectified, and with five years of exposure to urban civilisation, she feels dissatisfied with the drab existence in the wilds as the wife of Isak. She starts flirting with the telegraph men who came to work there; she has a more passionate relationship with Gustaf, one of the stone-workers. When Isak comes to know there is a regular scene; he realizes that she is not fit to live with him. Yet Isak is not hard-hearted; that is why he relents and forgives her when she confesses and apologises.

In his exclusive love for the soil, Isak denounces urban culture and civilization. From the beginning, he opposes the idea of sending their eldest son Eleseus to work in the town, while there is so much to be done on the soil. As events prove Eleseus comes to nothing, proving good Isak's point. He is rewarded in his other son Sivert, who resembles him in his attitude to the soil and to hard work. Isak disapproves of Brede Olsen's daughter Barbro who strikes him as experienced in the bad ways of the town.

In summing up, we may say that Isak is an elementary character with a single aim in life. His oneness with the soil nurtures him physically and spiritually. He is religious, even superstitious as all such folk are. He wonders at the mystery of creation, he accepts with resignation the fluctuating, fortunes of life. Isak resembles Daniel Dofoes *Robinson Crusoe* in his abundant resourcefulness; he resembles R.S. Thomas's peasant creation Iago Prytherch as well as Earnest Hemingway's old man in the novel *"The Old Man and The Sea"*. Like them all Isak too is a flat character.

4.3.2 Inger

Inger is the main female character in the first part of the novel, though another character, the wayward girl Barbro assumes considerable importance in the second part. Unlike the hero Isak, Inger is a round character; multi dimensional and ever changing. Her striking deformity is her hare-lip. It is this which triggers of all the actions and events in her life. In the first place, she becomes Isak's wife since the other men would not look at her or dance with her. As a wife initially, she is loving, caring, loyal and useful; so much so Isak is in the seventh heaven of delight.

Inger is a toughened character and very independent and capable. She thinks deeply about everything. She manages to sent Isak away each time she has a baby. When her daughter is born with the same horrible hare-lips, Inger does not hesitate to throttle the baby to death, for she wants to spare her from all that she had to suffer. In this respect we cannot summarily state that Inger is cruel, because she is full of remors then and later too. In fact when her own hare-lips got operated upon and rectified, her remorse increases further.

Inger has all the failings of a typically petty woman. She boasts and shows off her wealth and possessions to Oline, an evil scandalmonger but who is rather poorly-off. In a way it is this attitude that rises Oline's envy and hatred and makes her spread word about the infanticide committed by Inger. Inger herself blurts about it to anyone and everyone as an act of defiance. Naturally she paves the way for her arrest and subsequent imprisonment.

The Inger who returns from the town-prison is an utterly changed person – in looks and attitude. She starts despising her life with her husband, the ugly, simpleton Isak, whom, she repeatedly thinks, she would not have married, had it not been for her deformity. She is no longer interested in working on the soil, with Isak, as former days. She even asks to get her a servant. Though a woman getting on in years, she flirts with the telegraph men who have a fine time lifting her up and dancing with her, much to her enjoyment. Later she develops a passionate relationship with Gustaf, a splendid lad at the stone-work. She does not care whether Isak will punish her for her infidenlity, she loves the young man so desperately. When he leaves the wilds abruptly with the other workers she is despondent, and switches over to religious ways.

Fortunately, Inger has a substratum of basic goodness. After a brief bout of moral aberration (error) she realises and apologises to her husband who is mangnanimous enough to fogive her. Indeed she is a strong woman with a lot of petty weaknesses.

Inger's love for town life and urban civilisation pass on to her eldest son Eleseus. To a larger extent, she is responsible for his coming to nothing eventually, for much against her husband's wish, she insists on sending Eleseus to work in the town. She repeatedly sends him money on the sly. Her daughter Leopoldine also resembles her in her free and easy ways.

Inger reminds us of Flaubert's Madame Emma Bovery, particularly in their

disappointment in their extra – marital life. Fortunately for Inger, she does not go too far as Emma does; more over Isak has more character than Charles Bovary and hence the relationship as well as the family is saved from going to ruins.

In summing up, Inger is not a bad sort. Her deviations from the right code of behaviour and conventional morality are quite natural considering the type of desolate background where she lives. It takes her a couple of encounters to realize the snare of urban civilization, and mend her ways. Unlike her younger counterpart, who justifies her acts of infanticide, Inger is truly repentant. Inger is only an ordinary woman who is awed by town life temporarily. She is a type character, a near victim of the glamour of city culture.

4.3.3 Other Characters

a) Geissler

From the beginning of the novel to the end, Geissler remains a mysterious character with an unfathomable mind. He appears as the lensmand who is dismissed from his post by his superiors for tampering with people's funds. However as far as Isak and Inger are concerned, he is a real friend helping them in every matter. He arranges the purchase and registration of Isak's land and names it Sellanraa. He buys a portion of the land which contains a copper mine and gives Isak a share of the profit. It is thanks to Geissler that Isak becomes a rich man of the soil at the end. He intervenes and gets Inger's imprisonment for infanticide reduced from eight to five years. But Geissler can be very revengeful to anyone who crosses his path or opposes him. His refusal to help Brede Olsen and the stopping of the mining work causing a heavy set-back to the progress of the village are two instances. Geissler is all praise for Isak and his son who work honestly on the soil, eking an honest, successful existence and he says that it is such people that the country really needs.

b) Barbro

Throughout Barbro is portrayed in bad light. Isak takes an instant dislike to this daughter of the boastful Brede Olsen? For the girl shows bad tendencies and seems to be experienced in undesirable things. Barbro works for Axel Strom for a couple of years. Eleseus is attracted by her but she is indifferent to him: so much so, the young man given up his liking for women; she manages to frighten him off with her shameful indifference. She does not think seriously about infanticide when Axel is upset over their child she has killed. She tries to make him see that he is making a mountain out of a mole-hill. These are done things in towns, she explains. Even Lady Heyerdahl who defends her case and gets her acquitted is not able to make her amend her wrong ways. At last Barbro settles down as Axel's wife, as she had no other go.

c) Oline

Oline is a female character who appears off and on, interfering in the lives of everybody, and causing them to suffer. She is a distant relative of Inger's; she is poorly off, has a number of useless children, steals and begs for their sake. She is a busy-body (one who interferes) and a scandal-monger. She is partially responsible for getting Inger sent to the prison for infanticide. When Inger is goneshe comes to stay with Isak and the children and has a fine time stealing and carting things and even animals. However she is not able to mete out the same punishment to Barbro and Axel. When Oline dies at last, she is hardly missed. Oline also is a type character: a petty, jealous woman, instigated by an evil nature and poverty to disturb the peace of other folks.

Let us now analyse the main themes and ideas of the novel.

4.4. Main Themes and Ideas in Growth of The Soil

Like the plays of Ibsen and Shaw, Knut Hamson's *Growth of The Soil* is a novel of ideas and grave themes, besides other things. A major theme is the crime of infanticide. Two characters commit the act – Inger and Barbro. In the former case, ignorance, superstition and personal experience propel the act. Inger feels that she has delivered a baby-girl with the hare-lip because she saw the hare sent by Oline and shown to her by the Lapp Os-anders. Her own mother had seen one before she gave

birth to Inger who therefore was born with the same deformity. As a girl, she suffered greatly since the boys would neither look at her or dance with her: Inger wanted to spare her child from such bitter experiences. At the city prison where she is made to spend five years, she learns a lot of things. Her hare-lip got operated upon and her deformity rectified. She then truly repents her murderous act. The author convincingly shows how the crime is natural considering Inger's background. The punishment is rather cruel on her husband and their two little sons; the rigidity of the punishment is due to a strict moral code that existed in the early decades of the twentieth centuries when town culture with its new-fangled ideas had not become that wide-spread.

Barbro is a typical specimen of the evil effects of urban civilization. She has not remorse what-so-ever and boasts that she have committed the act of infanticide even on earlier occasions. In her eyes infanticide and abortions are quite common in cities not only among us, unmarried girls but even among married girls. In her case, the law is not half as strict. The women's activist lady Heyerdhal is able to defend her as a victim of male-dominated society and get her acquitted.

The novelist does not offer any commentary of his own. He indirectly shows how a laxity in legal procedures may be more human but it encourages people to take serious crimes like infanticide causally. While Inger shows repentance and repeatedly regrets having throttled her new-born baby, Barbro cannot care much about such matters. Perhaps, the novelist is merely pointing to our times.

The dignity of labour and honest unrelenting toil are shown in good light against the easy living in towns and cities. Isak and his second son are children of the hard earth who slog and are rewarded. In contrast Eleseus who opts for an easy going life in the town comes to nothing. The novelist is at pains to show that man grows on as far as the soil grows.

Let us discuss the naturalistic elements of the novel.

4.5 *Growth of the Soil* as naturalistic novel

In the novel Knut Hamson reveals his great power as a regionalist and as a rural naturalist in the literary sense of the term. As a regionalist, he presents beautifully the setting of a rural community in northern Norway, making extensive use of both local language and customs. Hamson who knew well both city and rural life saw urban existence as a corrosive factor. Isak, Inger and their children are not idealised, nor is their way of life glorified as by Charles Lamb or by Oliver Goldsmith; but they are compared favourably with life in a more complex civilisation. They may be "mute, inglorious Miltons"; yet they are not culpable of the heinous crimes of Oliver Cromwell. Indeed urban civilisation is the real villain of the novel. Only those characters like Isak, Sivert, and Inger initially, who cling to the soil and wrest livelihood from it find a successful existence. *"Man's oneness with the soil nurtures him"* this is borne out by the lives of these simple folk. Frank Maghill observes:" As a literary naturalist, Hamson is a little difficult to analyse. There are times when the characters seem more like Rousseau's noble savage than for example the peasants in Emile Zola's naturalistic *Earth* (1887). The central character in *Growth of The Soil* is close to nature and stays as far as possible from the culture of city".

Let us wind up this *Unit* with an overall estimate of the author and his novel.

4.6 An Overall Estimate of Hamson and Growth of The Soil

Knut Hamson (1859-1952), Norwegian novelist, playwright and poet is best known for his masterpiece *Growth of The Soil*, for which he was awarded the Noble Prize in 1920. Hamson's work is largely autobiographical- that is, it deals usually, either with his own painful youth and young manhood or with observation of the people among whom he was born and he grew up. His books have been translated into twenty five languages. Yet his real genius has never ben truly recognized because of the infamy of the Nazi-allegiance that surrounded him in the last years of his life.

Growth of The Soil depicts the saga of Isak, the silent pioneer to whom the soil is life. He

come to a no-man's land all alone and starts working on the soil. Within a year Inger, a woman with a hare-lip joins him. They marry and have children. The first two are boys, Eleseus and Sivert. The third, a baby-girl is born with a hare-lip. Inger throttles it to death. Later she is imprisoned for the crime of infanticide. Online, a distant relative of Inger's comes to stay with Isak and the children. With the help of a mysterious friend, the ex-lensmand Geissler, Isak secures possession of his land from the State. After five uears Inger returnes - a thoroughly changed person with her hare-lip operated on and her attitude of life and morals different. She no longer finds joy and calm in the drab existence as Isak's wife. She flirts with the telegraph men and has a passionate affair with a youngster-worker, but at last realizes her weakness, confessness and apologises to her husband and they reconcile. Eleseus is attracted to a town life and ultimately after a series of set backs goes to America and is heard of no more. Sivert takes to the soil like his father.

With the story of Isak and Inger are blended the plot of the boastful. Brede Olsen, his daughter Barbro who is charged with infanticidee, acquitted, leads a wayward life and finally marries her employer Axel Strom whose child it was that she had killed. Geissler criss-corsses their lives and helps Isak and Inger in several ways before he finally dies.

In a sense each of his character is like he creator, who after being an urban dweller chose to lead the simple life in a Norwegian fishing village. There is too, a suspicion that Hamson was comparihng in abstract fashion his own relatively agricultural Norway to the urban and industrialized United States, a land which had not been kind to him during the years he spent in America. Undoubtedly, Hamson always felt that urban life with its cities and factories and their attendant prohibitions and conventions, was an unnatural, if not vicious, environment, for mankind.

Hamson's *style* is a careful one, and well suited to his subject matter and themes. Much of his writing is a carefully constructed prose poetry. The simplicity and power of his style are reminiscent of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. Reading Hamson's book is like crumbling the earth between one's fingers; it brings nature to life on the printed page. Poetic repetitions and complicated parallelisms abound. Altogether Hanson's diction is simplicity itself, and is noticeably independent of the adjectives so common in American writing.

In *Growth of The Soil,* Hamson seemed to be calling a war-weary world back to the soil. In spite of many predilections and prejudices, he was not in essence a critic of society. His attitude to his characters is consistently marked by irony and ambivalence; his narrative technique is of particular interest; and the felicities of his style do not entirely disguise the void which surrounds human life as he sees it.

Please read the study material given in the four *Units* a number of times, and make sure that you have understood the novel and its various aspects. Note down any idea, impression or opinion that suggests itself to you.

You may next try to prepare your own essays. Please remember: The study material can be properly utilized to write essays; but do not mistake them for prepared essays.

4.7 Questions based on Growth of The Soil

1. Describe how man's oneness with the soil which nurtures him is highlighted in *Growth of The Soil.*

   [Hints: Refer to Isak's character as well as his attempts to wrest a livelihood from the soil and his final success.]

2. The treatment of Infanticide in the novel *Growth of The Soil.*

   [Hints; Refer to the two casers - Inger Barbro - their different reactions - punishment in one case - acquitted in another]

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UNIT - IX
ALBERT CAMUS
THE STRANGER/THE OUTSIDER

Albert, Camus, The man

Albert Camus was born in 1913 in Algeria as the son of an Alsatian farm – worker father and a Spanish mother. The family was miserably poor. The poverty got aggravated upon Albert's father's death in the First World War. Albert worked his way through the University of Algiers and got his degree in 1936 for a thesis which he submitted at the University. While he was a student, he was a Communist Party Worker; but discontented, he left the Party pretty soon. Between 1935 and 1938 he worked as manager in a theatre owned by a company in Algiers.

Camus is considered one of the finest French novelists; though he was not, strictly speaking, French. Recall his Spanish mother and Alsatian father. His writing began with two volumes of essays "Back and Front" (L' Envers et I' Endroit, 1937) and "Nuptial" (Noces, 1938). In 1939 he became a journalist. In 1940 he wrote for "Paris-Soir". When the Second World war broke out, Camus was rejected by and excused from military service on account of his chronic tuberculosis which he had been suffering from for quite a few years. He returned to Algeria in 1940 and for a while taught school there.

It was in 1942 that Camus came into the limelight. He published his first novel L'Etranger (released later in England as "The Outsider" and in USA as "The Stranger"). The same year he also published "The Myth of Sisyphus". These are two of his best works. Meanwhile, France had fallen and Camus had returned to France. He became very active in the French Resistance Movement and was in the underground writing articles for the underground press, particularly the paper named "Combat:" When the War ended, Camus became editor of "Combat", now a daily.

In 1944 Camus produced "Caligula" a play written 1938 in which he strongly upheld the ideals of the Resistance. He was deeply hurt by the Nazi atrocities and the Nazi occupation of France. The ideals and principles were those of the spirit of self-sacrifice, courage in face of disaster, destruction and death, and public duty. The same year he wrote another play, "The Misunderstanding". In 1948 he wrote yet another play titled "The State of Siege".

In 1947 Camus also published 'The Plague'. In 1953 his essay "The Rebel" came out. In 1956 he published "The Fall".

The following year (i.e 1957) he received the Nobel Prize for literature. Very soon he was to take charge of a government funded experimental theatre, but was killed in a tragic accident. The absurd car accident occurred on 4 January, 1960. Albert Camus was just 47.

Albert Camus, The Writer

Camus is associated with the philosophy of "atheistic" existentialism and the theory of the "Absurd". His views were formed under the influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzche and many other German existentialists. He believed that the outside world, the Universe, is the state of the subject and it is irrational. He held that the only philosophical problem is the 'problem of suicide'. He adheres to strong pessimism. Man is always in an absurd state, encounters absurd situations (ambition, jealousy, selfishness etc.) and is doomed to meaningless and aimless activity. The Universe does not seem to have any order, design or purpose. We can be sure of only one thing – DEATH. We do not know why man is born and why he has to die, except for the biological law that all living things have to die. Life is what happens between birth and death. When birth and death

cannot be explained, life also defies explanation. In other words, life is irrational. Once a person accepts this basic truth, he can come to terms with life and he is in peace. (THIS IS APPLICABLE ONLY TO THINKING HUMAN BEINGS.) Then fear, despair, hopelessness, sense of futility, absence of the sense of purpose and direction, ennui and the like, which are the outcome of the contemporary socio-historical situation and practice, stop bothering him.

The Title: The stranger/the outsider:-

A stranger is one who is outside of one's familiar circle or kindred. An outsider is one who is not a member of a particular company, one not considered fit to associate with and/or one who is not an inmate. In order to understand the novelette we have to understand the "existentialist" meaning of the title.

The existentialists maintain that the essential defect of rational thought is that it proceeded from the principle of antithesis of subject and object. The world is divided into two domains-the subjective and the objective: Rational thought looks upon all reality (man is included, of course) only as an object, as a substance something alien to man, outside of man. Existentialism insists that genuine philosophy must necessarily proceed from the unity of subject and object. In our novel the titular hero is "outside". He ought to have been both outsider and insider put together – which is ideal. This unity is incarnated in existence; (i.e, the whole diversity of mutable things in their concatenation and interaction – the simultaneity and unity of essence and existence, being and becoming). In order to be aware of himself as existence (being) man must find himself in a borderline situation. Like Janus he must be looking forward and backward. In the light of the ethical teachings of Jaspers, borderline situations are fear, suffering, guilt, struggle, death, dissatisfaction etc. and they form the limits of human spiritual life and practical activity, beyond which non-being is to be found. In as much as a borderline situation is fatal and universal, man cannot escape it, and the overcoming of it means the loss of existence (i.e being). When man faces a borderline situation, say, death, the world becomes "intimately near" to him. The true knowledge which is intuition dawns on him. He then feels free.

Existentialism pays a lot of attention to the question of freedom, defined as the 'choice' by the individual of one possibility amidst an infinite number of possibilities. The voluntarism of explanation of freedom has its source in the divorce of choice from circumstances. i.e. the isolation of the individual's freedom from society.

In the light of the above the title becomes clear. However, it becomes still clearer when the novelette is studied closely. The novelette treats the above philosophical abstractions in a concrete way using the first person narrative of the protagonist.

SYNOPSIS OF THE OUTSIDER

This synopsis is based on the text translated from French by Stuart Gilbert and published by Hamish Hamilton. London.

Caution

This synopsis should never be treated as a substitute for the original text.

Characters:

Meursault: The central character and narrator of the story. He is an ordinary, low-paid clerk living in Algiers. His life, which is without any direction, purpose or conviction shows his sense of the basic absurdity of existence.

Maria Cardona: A pretty woman and Meursault's mistress. She used to work in Meursault's office.

Celeste: A friend of Meursault and the ownerof a restaurant where Meursault usually has his food from.

Raymond Sintess: A resident of the building where Meursault stays. He is a pimp, but he says that he is working in a warehouse. He strikes up an acquaintance with Meursault. It is Raymond who drags and involves Meursault in his quarrels and paves the way for his destruction.

Perez: One of the inmates of a home for the aged. He has fallen in love with Meursault's aged mother who has been another inmate of the home.

Salamano: An unpleasant, irritable and old man. He too is a resident of Meursault's building. He owns an old dog which is afflicted with skin diseases, which he abuses. Yet he is very fond of and attached to it.

Masson: A friend of Raymond at whose beach house Meursault, Maria and Raymond spend a weekend at which Meursault happens to kill the Arab, supposed to be the brother of the Arab girl kept by Raymond.

The other characters are all miner characters who do not figure in any significant event in the novelette.

PART-1

Meursault, the narrator of the story, is a low-paid, ordinary clerk and young man living in Algiers. His father is no more. His mother was admitted to the Home for Aged Persons at Marengo, some fifty miles from Algiers. The novelette opens with Meursault receiving a telegram informing him of the passing away of his mother. The woman entered the Home three years earlier. The words of the warden tell us about it as follows:

"MadameMeursault entered the Home three years ago: She had no private means and depended entirely on you ..... I've looked up the record and obviously you weren't in a position to see that she was properly cared for. She needed someone to be with her all the time and young men in jobs like yours don't get too much pay.....'

As the mother and the son had nothing to say to each other, Meursault visited her only infrequently. "When we lived together, mother was always watching me; but we hardly ever talked". Meursault and another reason not to visit her" ..... it would have meant losing my Sunday-not to mention the fag of going to the bus, getting my ticket, and spending two hours on the journey each way".

Meursault astonishes the porter by saying that he does not want to see his mother's body. It is UNUSUAL. Usually people want to have a last look at the dear departed. But not our Meursault. Soon he has coffee with the porter, smokes and conducts hi self in such a way that he begins to be looked upon as a STRANGE human being (Recall one of the titles). The matter is simple, though. Meursault is different. But then difference is frowned upon and considered uncommon, strange and unacceptable. And anything uncommon, strange and unacceptable is unusual and vice versa.

Meursault stays near the coffin. Soon other inmates pour in and sit down. Merusault observes: I inclined to think they were greeting me ..... For a moment I had an absurd impression that they had come to sit in judgement on me. (Well, that was exactly what they were doing and in the end it gets quite clear).

Meursault has no tears for his mother. But one of the women starts weeping (which is the NORMAL/USUAL thing to do).

The night is spent that way all sitting around near the coffin. The following morning when Meursault is offered a last glance at his mother, he rejects the offer. Mention is made about Perez's love of the woman and he being allowed to accompany the cortege and attend the funeral. The priest, the undertaker's men, the nurses, the warden, Meursault and Perez accompany the body to the village church. The words of the nurse need quoting in full:

If one goes too slowly, there's the risk of heart-stroke. But if one goes too fast, one perspires and the cold air in the church gives one a chill.

Merusault observes: Isaw her point; EITHER WAY ONE WAS FOR IT.

We get an idea of the character of Meursault from the opening words of the story:

Mother died today or may be yesterday: I can't be sure. The telegram from the Home says: Your mother passed away. Funeral tomorrow. Deep sympathy. Which leaves the matter doubtful; it could have been yesterday.

Also from:

'Sorry, sir, but it is not my fault, you know,' (when Meursault asks his employer for leave to take part in the funeral).

And also from:

1. Then I can spend the night there, keeping the usual vigil beside the body.

2. I'd lunched, as usual, at Celeste's restaurant.

3. I was just going to explain to her that it wasn't my fault (that his mother died), but I checked myself as I remembered having said that the same thing to my employer...

(He does not like his routine to be disturbed. He suffers from boredom of a special kind. He stands for non-involvement, non-commitment. He is quite indifferent to many things which society thinks important). Meursault, of course, has taken time off from his office work to attend his mother's funeral, but the above quotations show that he feels no grief at all and goes through the ritual of mourning. (Anything that is repeated over a stretch of time tends to become ritualistic). He mentions: I had to call in at Emmanuel's place to borrow his black tie and mourning band. It is purely perfunctorily done, as he is detached. He is contrasted with his mother's girl friend who sobs her heart out and with Perez, the elderly boy friend, who is sincerely grieving. As Meursault feels no grief, he spends his next few days as 'usual' smoking, drinking coffee, going to the theatre with Maria Cardona and spending a night with her, going swimming in her company etc. All these indicate that he is different from the rest of mankind. He sums up: It occurred to me that somehow I'd got through another Sunday, that mother now was buried; and tomorrow I'd be going back to work as usual: Really nothing in my life had changed.

(At this juncture it is worth noting that we have a common place, i.e. life is change and change is life)

The ennui that haunts him is brought out in the following:

Just then my employer sent for me... He wanted to discuss a project he had in view, though so far he'd come to no decisions. It was to open a branch at Paris, so as to deal with the big companies on the spot, without postal delays, he wanted to know if I'd like a post there.

"You're a young man', he said, 'and I'm pretty sure you'd enjoy living in Paris. And, of course, you could travel about France for some months in the year.

I told him I was quite prepared to go, but really I didn't care much one way or the other.

He then asked if a change of life, as he called it didn't appeal to me, and I answered that ONE NEVER CHANGED ONE'S REAL LIFE; anyhow, one life was as good as another and my present one suited me quite will.

At this he looked rather hurt, and told me that I always shilly shallied and that I lacked ambition ..... I saw no reason for changing my life.

We are then introduced to old Salamano and his sick dog, aged and afflicted with some kind of skin disease. They are purely incidental to the main story.

Soon Albert Camus brings Raymond Sintes to focus:

Just then the man who lives on my floor came in from the street. The general idea hereabouts is that he's a pimp. But if one asks him what his job is he says he's a warehouseman. One thing's sure he isn't popular in our street.

Raymond and Meursault are on friendly terms, though not friends. They frequently meet and talk. It is Raymond who is responsible for the messy involvement of Meursault in the unpleasant situation which prepares the way for our hero's destruction: Listen to the words of Raymond:

There's girl behind it-as usual. We slept together pretty regular: I was keeping her, as a matter of fact, and she cost me a tidy sum. That fellow I knocked down is her brother.

The woman and her brother are Arabs. We suspect that Raymond is trying to push her into prostitution. Later in the novel it is the brother Arab who is shot by Meursault and killed. Raymond alleges that despite his maintaining her, she has been unfaithful to him. She is to be cut to her proper size and taught a lesson. Raymond seeks Meursault's advice and help.Meursault agrees.

After some discussion, it is decided to write a letter – "a real stinker that'll get her on the raw". But "Raymond didn't feel upto writing the kind of letter that was needed". So he asks Meursault who says, I'd have a shot at it.

Note the following

I wrote the letter, I didn't take much trouble over it; but I wanted to satisfy Raymond as I'd no reason no to satisfy him.

The expression – I'd no reason no to.... Appears at several places in the novelette and emphasizes the indifference of Meursault. This makes the two better acquainted. Then Raymond explained that he had heard of 'my mother's death', anyhow, he said, that was something bound to happen one day or another.

Meursault spends the following weekend with Maria ".... A moment later she asked me if I loved her, I said that sort of question had no meaning really: but I suppose I didn't".

The more we learn about Meursault the stronger grows our conviction that he is very different from the rest of mankinig. But the question is: HASN'T HE EVERY RIGHT TO BE DIFFERENT?

Meursault and Maria happen to witness Raymond striking his Arab concubine and hear her accusation that he is a pimp; a policeman arrives, intervenes, the Arab girl leaves and so does Maria. Raymond further entreches Meursault in his affairs. Salamano loses his dog and is very unhappy.

Camus brings out the apathy of Merusault at every possible turn. Look at the following.

Maria came that evening and asked me if I'd marry her. I said I didn't mind. If she was keen on it, we'd get married.

Then she asked me again if I loved her. I replied, much as before, that her question meant nothing or next to nothing but I suppose I didn't.

It is quite clear that he does not believe in the institution of marriage at all whereas society considers it most important.

"If that's how you feel!", she said "why marry me?"

I explained that it had no importance really but, if it would give her pleasure we could get married right away. I pointed out that any how the suggestion came from her. As for me I'd merely said "yes".

Then she remarked that marriage was serious matter: To which I answered "NO".

She kept silent after that, staring at me in a curious way. The she asked: "Suppose another girl had asked you to marry her – I mean, a girl you liked in the same way as you like me – would you have said "Yes" to her, too?" "Naturally."

Maria murmured about Meursault being "a queer fellow".

Later in the evening he talks to Salamano. The talk confirms that Meursault is indeed a queer fellow in many respects. Meursault visits the police station and gives evidence in favour of Raymond about the girl having been false to him. Raymond is let off with a warning. But some Arabs follow Raymond and Meursault – which is an indication of what is to come.

That weekend Raymond, Maria and Meursault spend their time at the seaside bungalow of Masson and his wife.

At noon after lunch, Raymond and Meursault are walking along the beach. They notice two Arabs walking in their direction. Masson and Raymond plan an assault. One of the two Arabs has a knife. In the ensuing scuffle Raymond's arm is gashed. Hurt badly, the two Arabs disappear fast. Raymond's arm is bandaged by a nearby doctor. Some time later Meursault and Raymont are once again on the beach. Raymond seems to be heading for a particular spot on the beach. Soon they see the two Arabs. For sometime the two groups stare at each other. After a while the Arabs move away and vanish: Raymond has a gun which Merusault forbids to use. He takes the gun from Raymond and keeps it in his pocket. They return, Raymond goes into the bungalow. Meursault stays on the porch. However, after a while he decides to take a walk along the beach. All alone he walks in

the direction of some huge rocks and their shelter. He finds the Arabs again there. They see him too. Now I quote from the text to state what happened.

"On seeing me the Arab raised himself a little, and his hand went to his pocket. Naturally I gripped Raymond's revolver in the pocket of my coat. Then the Arab let himself sink back again, but without taking his hand from his pocket. I was some distance off, at least ten yards and most of the time I saw him as a blurred dark form wobbling in the heathaze. Sometimes, however, I had glimpses of his eyes glowing between the half – closed lids. The sound of the waves was even lazier feebler than at noon. But the light hadn't changed; it was pounding fiercely as ever on the long stretch of sand that ended at the rock. For two hours the sun seemed to have made no progress, becalmed in a sea of molten, steel. Far out on the horizon a steamer was passing; I could just make out from the corner of an eye the small black moving patch, while I kept my gaze fixed on the Arab.

It stuck me that all I had to do was to turn, walk away, and think no more about it. But the whole beach, pulsing with heat, was pressing on my back, I took some steps towards the stream. The Arab didn't move. After all there was still some distance between us: Perhaps because of the shadow on his face, he seemed to be grinning at me.

I waited. The beat was beginning to scorch my cheeks, beads of sweat were gathering in my eyebrows. It was just the same sort of the heat as at my mother's funeral and I had the same disagreeable sensations especially in my forehead, where all the veins seemed to be bursting through the skin. I couldn't stand it any longer, and took another step forward. I knew it was a fool thing to do, I shouldn't get out of the sun by moving on a yard or so. But I took that step, just one step, forward. And then the Arab drew his knife and held it up towards me, athwart the sunlight.

A shaft of light shot upwards from the steel, and I felt as if a long, thin blade transfixed my forehead. At the same moment all the sweat that bad accumulated in my eyebrows splashed down on my eye yields, covering them with a warm film of moisture. Beneath a veil of brine and tears my eyes were blinded. I was conscious only of the cymbals of the sun clashing on my skull, and less distinctly, of the keen blade of light flashing up from the knife, scarring my eyelashes, and gouging into my eyeballs.

Then everything began to reel before my eyes, a fiery gust came from the sea, while the sky cracked in two from end to end, and a great sheet of flame poured down through the rift. Every nerve in my body was a steel spring and my grip closed on the revolver. The trigger gave and the smooth underbelly of the butt jogged my palm. And so, with that crisp, whip-crack sound, it all began. I shook off my sweat and the clinging veil of light. I knew I'd shattered the balance of the day, the spacious calm of this beach on which I had been happy: But I tried four shots more into the inert body on which they left no visible trace. And each successive shot was another loud, fateful rap on the door of my undoing.

Meursault is now a murderer though the murder is impulsive, unpremeditated and motiveless.

PART II

Meursault is arrested. Investigations are on. Ironically, Meursault does not seem to be aware of the immensity of his crime. He has hardly known the victim. He has no motive. He has had no intention of killing the man, yet he has done it. See what he says: 'I regarded the case as very simple.'

It is alleged that he had shown 'great callousness' at his mother's funeral. "All normal people, I added, as an afterthought, had more or less desired the death of those they loved, at sometime or another." The lawyer advises Meursault against saying any such thing in public or to the investigating magistrate.

The lawyer is unable to make him out and naturally it annoys him. But Meursault thinks that he is like everybody else.

"The magistrate observes to Meursault: what really interests me is-you! ..... There are several things that puzzle me about your crime.... " Meursault has no explanation as

to why he killed the Arab firing five successive bullets (while just the first one would have been enough). The crime is without any motive – which makes it unusual, to say the least. When he says that he does not believe in God, the magistrate is stunned and insists that 'all men believe in God, even those who reject him'.

Meursault insists that he is no criminal. He remarks:.... I had an absurd impression of being a one of the family'. I can say that during the eleven months these examinations lasted I got used to them that I was almost surprised at having ever enjoyed anything better than those rare moments when the magistrate after escorting me to the door of the office, would pat my shoulder and say in a friendly tone. "Well Mr. Antichrist, that's all for the present!' After which I was made over to my warders.

Meursault seems to come to grips with reality and his predicament when he learns that Maria is not allowed to see him. Later she gets permission to visit, but nothing good comes out of their meeting. His habit of thinking like a free man irritates him and he suffers his imprisonment. However, he gets used to it and starts having 'the prisoner's thoughts' because 'in the long run one gets used to anything', even the deprivation of liberty.

Meursault learns how to kill time by reminiscing (like Marcel Proust). "So learn that even after a single day's experience of the outside world a man could easily live a hundred years in prison.He'd have laid up enough memories never to be bored. (ISN'T IT THE TRIUMPH OF THE PRISONER OVER THOSE WHO IMPRISON HIM? John Milton says in Book I of Paradise Lost. The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven)

Meursault has been six months in Jail. But note what he says.

There are some things of which I have never cared to talk. And, a few days after I'd bee sent to prison, I decided that this phase of my life was one of them. However, as time went by, I came to feel that this aversion had no real substance. In point of fact during those first few days, I was hardly conscious of being in prison; I had always a vague hope that something would turn up, some agreeable surprise.

The change came soon after Maria'a first and only visit. From the day when I got her letter telling me they wouldn't let her come to see me any more, because she wasn't my wife-it was from that day I realized that this cell was my last home, a dead end, as one says. (Shades of the prison house have closed upon him inexorably). The following quotations trace the change that eventually comes over Meursault.

1. There was one thing in those early days that was really irksome: my habit of thinking like a free man...

2. Still, that phase lasted a few months only. Afterwards, I had prisoner's thoughts.

3. 'Liberty', he said, 'means that. You're being deprived of your liberty.'

4. Later on, I understood the idea behind it; this privation, too, was part of my punishment.

5. So I learnt that even after a single day's experience of the outside world a man could easily live a hundred years in prison. He would have laid up enough memories never to be bored.

6. I'd read, of course, that in jail one ends up by losing track of time. But this had never meant anything definite to me. I hadn't grasped how days could be at once long and short. Long, no doubt, as periods to live through, but so distended that they ended up by overlapping on each other. In fact I never thought of days as such; only the words 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' still kept some meaning.

When, one morning, the warder informed me I'd now been six months in jail, I believed him-but the words conveyed nothing to my mind. (SPATIO-TEMPORAL DISORIENTATION TENDS TO MAKE MAN A VEGETABLE. MAN IS DEPRIVED OF WHAT MAKES MAN HUMAN.) To me it seemed like one and the same day that had been going on since I'd been in my cell' and that I'd been doing the same thing all the time.

7. And, something I'd been told came back to me; a remark made by the nurse at Mother's funeral. No, there was no way out, and no one can imagine what the evenings are like in prison.

The day of the trial dawns. The trial starts. The conduct of Meursault at the time of his mother's funeral and immediately afterwards acts against him. He is considered a heartless monster of a man who has no tears for his mother. Meursault's friends are unable to establish that he is basically a good fellow and is incapable of murder. Meursault is called a criminal at heart in the context of his callousness towards his mother's death.

That evening he is taken back to his prison. Camus says: I always felt so well content with life. Then, what awaited me was a night of easy, dreamless sleep. This was the same hour, but with a difference; I was returning to a cell and what awaited me was a night haunted by forebodings of the coming day. And so I learnt that familiar paths traced in the dusk of summer evenings may lead as well to prison as to innocent, carefree sleep.

The following paragraphs reveal Meursault's mind and the thoughts that run through:

'.....We are not concerned with an act of homicide committed of a sudden impulse which might serve as extenuation. I ask you to note gentleman of the jury, that the prisoner is an educated man.... He is intelligent and he knows the value of words. And I repeat that it is quite impossible to assume that, when he committed the crime, he was unaware what he was doing' (Words of the prosecutor) I noticed that he laid stress on my 'intelligence'. It puzzled me rather why what should count as a good point in an ordinary persons should be used against an accused man as an overwhelming proof of his guilt. While thinking this over, I missed what he sad next, until I heard him exclaim indignantly: 'And has he uttered a word of regret for his most odious crime? Not one word, gentlemen. Not once in the course of this proceedings did this man show the least contrition.'

Turning towards the dock, he pointed a finger at me, and went on in the same strain. I really couldn't understand why he harped on this point so much. Of course I had to own that he was right; I didn't feel much regret for what I had done. Still, to my mind he overdid it; and I'd have liked to have a chance of explaining to him, in quite a friendly, almost affectionate way, that I've never been able really to regret anything in all my life. I've always been far too much absorbed in the present moment, or the immediate future, to think back...

... Really, he said, I had no soul, there was nothing human about me, not one of those moral qualities which normal men possess had any place in my mentality.

The prosecutor refers to Meursault as a menace to society. HE REFUSES TO LOOK UPON MEURSAULT AS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OF MANKIND.

When the judge asks Meursault if he has anything to say, "I rose, and as I felt in the mood to speak, I said the first thing that crossed my mind: that I'd no intention of killing the Arab. (WHICH IS, NEVERTHLESS, TRUE).

The court proceedings prove to Meursault that his was a hopeless case. "The futility of what was happening here seemed to take me by the throat, I felt like vomiting, and I'd only one idea: to get it over, to go back to my cell, and sleep.. and sleep:'

(Note the abject helplessness of Meursault)

The court room drama comes to an end as follows:

'The foreman of the jury will read out the answers. You will be called on after that to hear the judgement:

When the bell rang again and I stepped back into the dock, the silence of the courtroom closed in round me and, with the silence, came a queer sensation when I noticed that, for the first time, the young journalist kept his eyes averted. I didn't look in Maria's direction. In fact, I had no time to look as the presiding judge had already started pronouncing a rigmarole to the effect that 'in the name of the French people' I was to be decapitated in some public place.

I heard the judge's voice asking if I had anything to say. After thinking for a moment, I answered, 'No…..

(ISN'T MURSAULT HIMSELF FRENCH? HASN'T HE A RIGHT TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THE REST? WHO INSTITUTED THE LAW THAT OEN HAS NO RIGHT TO BE DIFFERENT? CAN'T A MAN BE AMORAL? WHEN EVERYONE HAS TO DIE (WHICH IS AN IRREVOCABLE LAW), ISN'T MURDER JUST ADVANCING THE DATE OF DEATH OR A KIND OF FACILITATING IT? LIFE IS ABSURD, THE WORLD IS ABSURD, ALL THE INSTITUTIONALIZED SYSTEMS ARE ABSURD. THEREFORE, ISN'T IT A KIND OF REPRIEVE? IN OTHER WORDS, ISN'T IT EUTHANASIA (MERCY KILLING)? IF WE LEARN TO LOOK AT MURDER IN THIS LIGHT, WE REALIZE THAT THE MURDERER HAS JUST ROBBED THE VICTIM OF SOME TIME AND NOTHING ELSE. THIS LOPPING IS A BLESSING IN DISGUISE FOR THE THINKING MAN, TO SAY THE LEAST).

Meursault now starts thinking about execution. He cannot 'hope'. He talks at length about execution-how the machine dominated everything; how they killed you discreetly, with a hint of shame and much efficiency. He remains himself that 'it's common knowledge that life isin't worth living anyhow'… Also whether I died now or forty years hence, this business of dying has to be got through, inevitably. Still somehow this line of thought wasn't as consoling as it should have been; the idea of all those years of life in hand was a galling reminder! However, I could argue myself out of it, by picturing what would have been my feelings when my term was up, and death had cornered me. Once one is up against it, the precise manner of one's death has obviously small importance…

(These are some of the finest observations in world literature on life and death)

Let us see how Camus winds up the novelette:

'I explained that I didn't believe in God… He (the chaplain) looked away and, without altering his posture, asked if it was because I felt utterly desperate that I spoke like this. I explained that it wasn't despair that I felt, but fear-which was natural enough.

'In that case,' he said firmly, 'God can help you. All the men I have seen in your position turned to HIM in their time of trouble.'

Obviously, I replied, they were at liberty to do so, if they liked it. I, however, didn't want to be helped, and I hadn't time to work up interest for something that didn't interest me.

…: It wasn't because I'd been condemned to death, he said, that he spoke to me in this way. In his opinion every man on the earth was under sentence of death.

There, I interrupted him; that wasn't the same thing, I pointed out, and, what's more, could be no consolation.

He nodded. 'May be. Still, if you don't die soon, you'll die one day. And then the same question will arise. How will you face that terrible, final hour?

I replied that I'd face it exactly I was facing it now.

..he said: 'Have you no hope at all? Do you really think that when you die, you die outright, and nothing remains?'

I said, 'Yes:

When the priest refers to a load of guilt with which Meursault is saddled, Meursault says that he is ;not conscious of any sin. "…. all I knew was that I'd been guilty of a criminal offence. Well, I was paying the penalty of that offence and no one had the right to expect anything more of me:'

Meursault has had enough of the chaplain's company. See what Camus writes: "Then, I don't know how it was, but something seemed to break inside me, and I started yelling at the top of my voice. I hurled insults at him I told him not to waste his rotten prayers on me; it was better to burn than to disappear. I'd taken him by the neckband of his cassock, and in a sort of ecstasy of joy and rage, I poured out on him all the thoughts that had been simmering in my brain….. Living as he did, like a corpse, he couldn't even be sure of being alive. It might look as if my hands were empty. Actually, I was sure of myself sure about

everything, far surer than he; sure of my present life and of the death that was coming. That, no doubt, was all I had; but, at least, that certainly was something I could get my teeth into just as it had got its teeth into me. I'd been right, I was still right, was always right. I'd passed my life in a certain way, and I might have passed it in a different way, if I'd felt like it. I'd acted thus, and I hadn't acted otherwise; I hadn't done 'X' whereas I had done 'Y' or 'Z' ..... Nothing, nothing had the least importance, and I knew quite well why'.... What difference could they make to me, the death of others, or a mother's love or his God; or the way one decides to live, the fate one thinks one chooses, since one and the same fate was bound to choose not only me but thousand of millions of privileged people who, like him, called themselves my brothers.

...All alike would be condemned to die one day...

I had been shouting so much that I'd lost my breath....

Once he'd gone, I felt calm again .... The marvelous peace of the sleepbound summer night flooded through me like tide....

With death so near, Mother must have felt like someone on the brink of freedom, ready to start life all over again (Recall the borderline situations) .... And I, too, felt ready to start life all over again. It was as if that great rush of anger had washed me; lean, emptied me of hope, and gazing up at the dark sky spangled with its signs and stars, for the first time, the first, I laid my heart open to the benign indifference of the universe. To feel it so like myself, indeed so brotherly, mad me realize that I'd been happy, and that I was happy still. For all to be accomplished, for me to feel less lonely, all that remained was to hope that on the day of my execution there should be a huge crowd of spectators and that they should great me with howls of execration.

Meursault is liberated as he knows for sure what lies ahead of him. Indeed, only those who have been sentenced to death know their future. It is an advantage and an edge over ordinary people.

Critical Opinion:

The best way of evaluating 'The Outsider' is through studying the character of Meursault and what becomes of him when he is subjected to imprisonment consequent upon his murdering the Arab who is a virtual stranger to him. He has been one who was leading his life like an ordinary man doing the 'usual' times, except for some idiosyncrasies like being unable to properly mourn the death of his mother, reciprocate to the declaration of love by Maria and the like. Such idiosyncrasies can be found in everyone, though in his case they turn out to be disastrous, working against him under the peculiar circumstances. Why so? To answer this question we have to go backwards to the Dark Ages and slowly return to the present day.

In the Dark Ages when society was broadly divisible under three heads, namely, the ecclesiastical, the scholastic and the feudalistic, where ultimately the ecclesiastical and the scholastic were, for all practical purposes, one, Christianity gave people a centrifugal force and a coherent system of meaning which held everything in tact, despite the rottenness at the core of every conceivable thing. Religion was held in high and superstitious esteem and almost everybody was obsessed with the idea of their 'life in the other world' (i.e: the kingdom of death/God). In other words life on earth was not so much to bother about. Well, as the Dark Ages (middle Ages) waned, with it waned the Christian religion (on account of Humanism, Reason, Science and the like). To fill in the vacant slot arrived various forms of philosophy like the systems of thinkers like Descartes and Hegal (and many in between them) which tried to establish that the world and, needless to stay, life in this world, are perfectly rational and intelligible. However, for quite a few this was unacceptable. They, more than ever, strongly felt that the universe was absurd, life was meaningless and directionless and no coherent system of philosophy or intellection could ever succeed in making life sensible. Camus shared this view. For him man in this world, in his life, is a rudderless ship and constantly floundering, not knowing what he is doing and where he is to go. He comes from no one

knows where and goes no one knows where. In between his coming and going is his life which makes no sense at all. This is further aggravated by the theory of evolution which indirectly proclaimed the death or disappearance of God from the midst of mankind. Man is alone he has nothing, no one to fall back upon, he has no destination as such except the one he sets himself for himself. There is nothing called absolutes in this world-neither moral nor intellectual. Today there are millions of thinking human beings who share this view. Camus speaks for all of them and speaks and appeals to all of them.

To proclaim that our world is absurd does not describe the world in itself as much as our reaction to it. We experience absurdity when our dreams and hopes, plans and their outcome, expectations and the results are frustrated. They go haywire. There is the wide gap between what we expect from life and what we actually get from life. As Yeats says:

Things fall apart, the center cannot hold.
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

This sense of frustration, despair and disillusionment colours out attitude to and judgements about life, e.g. pessimism, cynicism etc. Things happen, events follow, but apparently they are not concentrated they do not hang together, there is no connection between one and another. This idea of the lack of coherence is what we find in the actions of Meursault. No amount of rationalization can help in explaining his killing the Arab: The deeds of our hero are incoherent. The world appears as a spectacle of a man silently gesticulating behind the glass panes of a telephone booth. The same absurdity/pointlessness rules in the intellectual sphere. All systems of philosophy are questionable. Along with them all systems of man-made law and ethics that pretend to offer absolute standards of behaviour, character and conduct fall too short of acceptability. General rules can never provide absolute yardsticks to measure specific situations (e.g. the court finds Meursault guilty of the murder of the Arab on the basis of his 'criminal' mind which was supposedly evident on his not properly mourning his mother's death etc., whereas Meursault's explanation I'd no intention of killing the Arab... it was because of the sun – is absolutely true. Spectators laugh at his statement.) The sunlight reflected off the blade of the Arab's knife startled him to panic action. It was an impulsive, reflex action which made him shoot. What one can never deny is the authentic experience of the immediate moment. It is the moment of truth and the truth of the moment. Needless to say, life is clearly defined and it is lived under the ever present shadow of death, the great and ruthless leveler, who reduces saint and sinner, sense and nonsense to the same level. One who learns to look at this world in this way has one of the following three ways of responding.

1. he can be blindly faithful.
2. he can commit suicide
3. he may choose to go on living with sharp and painful awareness and calm acceptance of his situation , surrendering and resigning himself to it.

The person who is able to do the above, any one of them, feels free, absolutely free; he becomes aware of a great sense of liberation from all earthbound ties. If there is no God, any moment is as good as/ bad as any other moment and all men die and so a man may do anything he likes.

This is further illuminated if we look at Meursault as biologically, psychologically, 'socio-culturally' and religiously different from every other individual. But institutionalized society uses a common yardstick to measure man with and refuses to accept the status of Meursault as a 'different' individual. Difference is non-conformity and so Meursault does not belong and conform. Consequently, brutal force ostracizes and persecutes him.

Meursault has no past or future. Life for him is at the moment of living, as language exists only when it is in action, i.e. spoken and heard (Recall the Dark Ages when people thought only about afterlife.) He does not mope, though. He has very few memories, he has no very great plans for his future (Recall the offer of a Parisian job). He does not make any demands on his friends

or acquaintances, nor does he allow anyone to make any demands on him (Recall how he deals with Maria Cordona). But he is absolutely honest. Even when his life is in impending extinguishment, he does not pretend to have any ideals or feelings – which he does not seem to care for. He is amoral. That is the reason why he is not affected by any guilt on killing the Arab, the killing being sudden, automatic, reflex, involuntary, unmotivated and, above all, absurd. He thinks he is not guilty and so he is no murderer. The Arab has to die one day any way and Meursault caused it to happen expeditiously as an instrument – that's all. So where is the guilt? But the world, his society, thinks otherwise. It has certain absolutes (not acceptable to Meursault, though...) So the murder delivers him into the inexorable hands of the world that believes in absolutes, set ones, in an accepted code of conduct and behaviour for mother-born sons, in the difference between murderer and the murder – victim, in a code of law where crime and punishment are placed on the two pans of its scale of justice and evenly balanced (how stupid, to say the least, for vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord.) Meursault says that he killed the Arab, but society alleges that he murdered him. Are these the same? (I am reminded of Jesus and James Connolly in this context: The Jews crucified Christ, but Jesus sacrificed himself; similarly, Connolly, the Irish patriot, is said to have remarked: You can shoot me if you like, but I am dying for my country. Thus one and the same thing is referred to as two things: crucifixion and sacrifice and shooting and dying. Note the two viewpoints and the two positions taken by the two sides. Similarly, in our novelette: killing and murdering). The irony is that the court has to see it as killing (say, as self defence) when he can be acquitted on the plea of self defence, interpret it so and declare it so. Instead, he is branded a murderer because he does not shed a few tears for his dead mother, smokes, drinks coffee, spends the following night in the company of Maria by going to the cinema and having sex with her. The court refuses to accept him as different. Is this justice?

Towards the end of the novel Meursault comes to terms with his life in prison. He feels miserable about the loss of freedom, misses his sexual relations with Maria, his swimming sessions and the 'usual' thing's he used to do; yet he adjusts himself. It is when he bravely accepts what is ahead of him that he feels total freedom. Man feels free when he understands his nothingness. He becomes master of his fate and gets ready to face death. He is no longer afraid.

As our novel is a translation, no comment can be made on its style since it will be incorrect. We have covered its content. No amount of commentary can do justice to the content. The novel traces the journey of Merusault through the labyrinth of events over which he does not seem to have any control. This is beautifully brought out by the first person narrative technique which is bare and straight. We may say that it is 100% the objective correlative of the Odyssey of Meursault through a hostile territory dominated by conventions, totally unacceptable to him and ending in his execution.

Assignments:

I. Evaluate the character of (a) Merusault (b) "Raymond Sintes.

II. Attempt an essay on the philosophy projected in 'The Outsider'.

III. How does Merusault come to terms with his life in prison.

IV. Write notes on Existentialism, absurd philosophy, individual and society, the problem of crime and punishment, and freedom and denial of freedom.

V. Consider the novel as an all-time classic.

Bibliography: I regret that I have not been able to get any secondary materials on Albert Camus. Hence no bibliography.

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CUP/5026/1000/SDE—13

UNIT-X

FRANZ KAFKA – THE TRIAL

Franz Kafka (1883-1924) And the Trial

Franz Kafka has had a great influence on the reading public as well as literary thinkers of this century. His writings are variously interpreted and differently evaluated. His novels give us considerable insight into the mind of this strange but powerful man of genius.

"The Trial", his masterpiece, is a famed allegory of human life that hovers on the rim of nightmare. Behind the complicated story of a man faced with an unspecified charge, Kafka in "The Trial" is wrestling with some of the fundamental issues of existence.

Franz Kafka was born in 1883 in Prague, the part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His family was Jewish though not conspicuously religious and it was not until later in the life that he felt any great interest in his Jewish heritage. In language and in culture, he belongs to German literature.

His father, Hermann Kafka, was a self-made business man, robust, successful, blustering, and, in comparison with this son, rather coarse and insensitive. In Kafka's eyes, his father represented a kind of animal vitality and normality which he envied but could never achieve for himself. His feelings toward his father are most explicitly stated in a long (15000 word) letter which he wrote in 1919, explaining with a wealth of anecdotes and much psychological probing his sense of inadequacy in the presence of so overwhelming a personality.

Kafka was educated in the German language schools of Prague and at the University, where he took a degree in law simply to postpone making a decision about his life's work. After graduating in 1908, he found a post in a semi-governmental office that handled insurance claims. Its chief attraction was that his work was over by two in the afternoon. His one real vocation was writing. To this he devoted all his spare time, becoming part of a literacy circle which included Franz Werfel and Martin Buber.

Kafka wished to marry, but never did, partly because he feared that marriage would distract him from writing, but more fundamentally because his relation with his father had crippled him emotionally and left him a prey to neurotic indecision in 1912, he met a certain Felice Bauer with whom he contracted a tortured engagement which lasted, off and on, for five years. Then in 1917 he developed tuberculosis, an illness which he believed to be psychological in origin and intended to save him from marriage.

The war did not touch Kafka directly; he was exempt from military service by his official position and his illness. By 1918, he was spending much time in the country, trying to recover his health. He also began to study Hebrew and to investigate the world of Eastern European Jewry which he (as an urban and German speaking Jew) was unfamiliar with. His friend and biographer, Max Brod, insists that a more hopeful and affirmative spirit began to show itself about this time, but other critics, pointing to the unrelieved gloom of Kafka's writing, have accused Brod of wishful thinking. In the early twenties, Kafka had freed himself from his family ties sufficiently to go and live in Berlin. In 1923, he met and fell in love with Dora Dymant, a young girl whose family were Orthodox Polish Jews. Both families opposed the marriage, but Franz settled down to live with Dorai n Berlin.

Kafka was thoroughly happy at last, but by this time his disease was entering its last fatal stages. Indeed, his euphoria may have been in part a symptom of the disease. On one level of his mind he wanted to live; on another the prospect of death seems to have given him some relief, as if it were easier to suffer in his body the struggle which had hitherto been raging in his spirit. In 1924 he

returned to Prague and was placed in a sanatorium near Vienna. In June he died, and was buried in Prague.

Kafka in his life was known only to a few friends. His present great reputation is wholly posthumous. His instructions in his will were that the manuscripts of most of his stories, including "The Trial", were to be burned. However, since his executor, Brod, had already warned Kafka that he would disobey his wishes, and since Kafka still retained Brod, we may wonder how serious the instructions were. At any rate, the stories were saved, and remain as a monument to a powerful and tormented genius.

The Characters

Note: There is really only one character in "The Trial": the protagonist, Joseph.K, whose struggles make up the entire story and who is "on stage" at all times. Most of the other actors are nameless and almost faceless, and may simply be projections of certain aspects of K's own unconscious. The most sharply defined characters are the following:

Joseph.K- A thirty-year-old bachelor and a successful bank official: He is a colourless person, without conspicuous vices or virtues or close personal attachments.

Frau Grubach – K's landlady, a respectable woman who adopts a motherly attitude toward him.

Fraulein Burstner – A typist who lives in K's boarding house

Huld – A lawyer whom K, consults. He boasts of his influence with court officials; but accomplishes nothing.

Leni – Nurse and housekeeper to Huld. A sensual woman, she makes advances to all her employer's clients.

Titorvelli – A painter who offers to help K.

The Chaplain – A priest in the cathedral who tries to explain to K, the gravity of his situation.

Other characters – An inspector, two guards, an examining magistrate, various clerks and court officials, the wife of a court attendant, a law student, a friend of Fraulein Burstner a nephew of Frau Grubach, K's uncle, a manufacturer, a client of Huld's a client at the bank, a crowd of teenage girls, two executioners, and others.

The Story

The Trial takes place in an unspecified city with no distinguishing features; it could be Prague in the first decade of this century. The details do not matter, however, for in this psychological and spiritual allegory the real scene is the soul.

The protagonist is Joseph K., thirty years old, who has a good job at a bank and is well thought of. He lives in a boarding house, eats at quiet cafes, and works till nine at night. He is a gray, empty person, a bachelor with no close friends.

One morning his tidy routine is shattered by the appearance of two men who tell him that he is under arrest. K. is aware of having committed no crime, and it takes him some time to realize that he is in the hands of no ordinary civil court. Everything is bewildering. He is never told what offence he is guilty of, or what code of law applies in his case. His guilt is always assumed by those he meets, and yet he is free to come and go about his usual occupations. Proceedings are conducted in squalid, out-of-the way places. The most unexpected people turn out to be officials of the Court, or familiar with it. The procedure is involved and complicated, so that nobody, not even the court officials themselves, can grasp it all. The lesser officers are corrupt. The most powerful judges are so remote that no one is sure that they even exist. And, worst of all, though cases drag on for years, no one is ever acquitted.

The novel is the record of K's attempt to clear himself of the charge; or at least to discover what the charge is. For a whole year, he goes for help from one person to another, without success. The first is his neighbour in the boarding–house, Faulein Burstner, a typist. He tries to explain what has happened, but she is not interested. When he tries to make advances to her, she puts up with him wearily for a time, then dismisses him. He is summoned to a hearing set for the following Sunday, which proves to be disorderly and confused. He makes a windy speech in his defence and supposes that he

has won the sympathy of the audience in the courtroom. They all turn out to be agents of the court: The next week he returns, but this time the room is empty. He takes the opportunity to look at the books of law, which turn out to be full of childishly obscene drawings.

By now, K is obsessed with the proceedings against him, so that his work at the bank begins to suffer. His uncle Karl takes him to a lawyer named Huld who has a reputation in such cases. The lawyer is an invalid, and while he discusses the case with the uncle, K. leaves the sickroom to make love to the lawyer's nurse, Leni. Afterward, his uncle warns him that he has seriously Jeopardized his case. K. proposed to submit a petition to the court, but his lawyer tells that it may not be read. In fact, it is a question whether the law even recognises the right of the accused to defend themselves.

Acting on a tip from a business associate, K. seeks out a painter named Titorelli who lives in a squalid tenement surrounded by a swarm of rowdy and impertinent girls. Titorelli is the official portraitist of rowdy and impertinent girls. Titorelli is the official portraitist of the court, and professes to wield great influence. He tells K. that there are three possibilities for the outcome of his case: a definite acquittal, which never happens, a provisional acquittal, which will leave him open to subsequent arrest, and an indefinite postponement, which results neither in acquittal for in sentence. K. is disheartened and leaves, after buying a number of paintings he does not want.

Next, feeling that his lawyer has been neglecting the case, K. tries to dismiss Huld. He meets another client of Huld, a ruined businessman named Block, whose case has dragged on for years with as little success as K.'s He too complains of neglect, and has been consulting other lawyers on the sly. Huld is indignant that K. should presume to dismiss him, and to demonstrate his grip over his clients he calls in Block, forces him to kneel, and humiliates him.

The last interview takes place in the cathedral of the city, where K. has gone on other business. The church is dark and empty. Suddenly a voice speaks from the pulpit addressing K. by name. It is a priest who identifies himself as a prison chaplain and therefore a servant of the court. He tells K. that his case is going badly, that he does not yet understand the nature of the Court, that he relies too much on the help of others, especially women.

The climax of the interview in the cathedral is an ambiguous and disturbing parable which the priest tells K. A certain man begs for admission to the Law. At the gate is a doorkeeper who tells him that he cannot be admitted at the moment: For year upon year, the man waits before the door. He tries to bribe the guard, who takes his money but still does not admit him. At last, he dies. On his deathbed, he asks the guard why, since all men seek to attain the Law, no one else has come to seek admittance. The door-keeper replies, "No one but you could gain admittance through this door since this door was intended only for you. No I am going to shut it". K's instinct is to protest that the man has been deceived. But the priest proceeds to comment on the story with such casuistry that K. becomes confused about the real issue and the application of the parable to himself.

The last chapter is set a year after the first, on the eve of K's. thirty-first birthday. Two plump men in top hats and frock coats come to K's door and lead him away unresisting. He suspects that they are his executioners, but he has lost the will to fight back. He even refuses to hail a policeman who might save him. At the last moment, a window in a nearby house flies open, and silhouetted against the light he sees a figure leaning out with hands stretched, perhaps in sympathy or to offer help. Whatever it means K. never discovers. One man holds him by the throat while the other stabs him in the heart.

A Critical Assessment

"The Trial" must be read on several levels, and does not yield its full meaning at once. There are two principal interpretations which, however, do not necessarily exclude each other: the psychological and the theological. The psychological interpretation takes for its starting point the facts of Kafka's life and his sense of inadequacy before his

overpowering father. All his life Kafka felt judged and found wanting. These feelings were expressed in the plight of Joseph K., pursued by an all-powerful court of justice, in vindication of a law which he does not understand and cannot possibly obey: Because the world of men torments him, K. tries to find solace in the company of women, but with them he is generally fumbling and ineffective. He clings as long as he can to the public, rational world of business and banking, but these defences crumble as the trial goes on. In the end, the courts destroys him.

Another psychological approach sees "The Trial" as if it were a nightmare and interprets it accordingly. There are many scenes that are particularly dreamlike: scenes in which trivial or mysterious acts seem pregnant with some ominous meaning, or scenes which blend and shift so that commonplace events become suddenly charged with terror. K. may open an ordinary door at his bank or boarding house or in some tenement house, and discover behind it a different world in which the court carries on its work. Such episodes suggest the way in which repressed anxieties may break through the defences of ordinary life, and open a door into unsuspected depths of the unconscious.

Some psychological interpreters go further than this, and propose detailed symbolic meanings for each episode. According to one, the bank where K. works is the conscious mind, the boarding house is the preconscious, and the Court with its irrationality, infantlism and obscenity, is the unconscious. K, is said to be an anal personality, plagued by castration anxiety. Huld, the lawyer, symbolizes a psychoanalyst; Frau Brubach is a mother figure; the two warders who guard K. on either side are his testicles; and so forth. Whether the reader accepts these identifications will depend largely on his attitude toward psychoanalytic theory in general.

The theological reading of the book does not necessarily rule out the psychological, though it goes beyond that. It suggests that Kafka saw in his own inadequacy and guilt a parallel to the human condition, and that the story is actually a parable about man's attempt to find grace at the hands of a God who remains forever hidden. In this interpretation, "The Trial" is the most impressive indictment of God since the book of Job. K. is accused before the Law, in the eyes of which, as Saint Paul argued, no man can be justified, since all have fallen short of the glory of God. The Law expresses the will of Court so unutterably beyond man that the highest judges are never seen, and their decrees, once they have been adapted to human ears, seem mysterious and even irrational. Man's contact with this court is through a hierarchy of functionaries (representing organized religion) who are stupid, narrow, and corrupt. The court's proceedings promise great things but accomplish little. Beyond these functionaries, to be sure, there lies the possibility that divine grace may break through, that man may find acceptance and justification from the highest judges themselves. But this possibility depends, it seems, on being able to accept the fact of one's guilt and this K. is to the very end unable to do.

If this latter interpretation is valid, then K's failure is doubly tragic, for it is God's failure also. The Court, for all its omnipotence and omnipresence, leaves K. alone to carry on his daily routine. That is, it does not interfere with the freedom of his will. Rather it leaves him to work out his salvation as best as he can amid the conflicting counsels of his many advisers. The Court cannot or will not penetrate K's mind making him understand his true situation. At one crucial point the chaplain exclaims, "Can't you see anything at all"? and his cry is described as "the involuntary shriek of one who sees another fall". Man cannot save himself nor can God save him either. God and man reach out to one another. But they are so far apart that they cannot communicate.

A third and subordinate line of interpretation is possible: Kafka may be attacking the ponderous and authoritarian bureaucracy of the old Austrian Empire, smothered in self-importance and red tape. Kafka, as a minor functionary himself, was familiar with the ways of government. "The

Trial", however, is not an attack on the courts in the way "Break House", for instance, clearly is. The details of court procedure in the novel may have been suggested by actual models, but they are only the symbols of the truth that Kafka is concerned with, not the thing itself.

The richness of this book makes it susceptible to many interpretations. Whether we read it in psychological, religious or political terms, there is probably no book which so effectively explores the anxiety of our own age. Its critical reputation and its influence have continued to grow steadily. For the general reader who wishes to characterize a real life situation that is a mixture of anxiety, frustration, dreamlike unreality, or sheer horror, it is sufficient to say that it is like something out of a novel by Kafka.

"The Trial" Evaluated

A) What Kafka has done as a writer is to fuse into a unique literary style all the dsicrete elements of the modern experience from the unconscious to the refinements of metaphysical analysis, from the banal to the apocalyptic elements which in our daily life are fragmented and incoherent, although never wholly absent. In The Trial Kafka welds into a continuous associative chain the daily bureaucratic routine of Joseph.K; the stylization of a court of law; and the primitive, almost superstitious level of existence at which humanity, fearing the chaotic freedom of its own consciousness generated the notion of Law in the first place. A similar chain links the formal relationship between men and women in the post Victorian era; the animal savagery of desire which the formalities are designed to check; and in the figure of Leni, the archetypal imagery of dissolution and loss of self which the primitive (male) version of the world, conditioned by fear, has always assigned to women. Thus the bottomlessnes which the reader senses when confronted by almost any sentence of "The Trial" derives not only-indeed not primarily – from the psychological complexity of Joseph.K. Kafka has established the narrative perspective at a point very close to the vision of his protagonist, but not in order to devalue the world of the novel into something secondary like Joseph K's dream or private obsession.

Martin Walser had diagrammed the rhythm of "The Trial" according to the thesis that Kafka's novels are exclusively devoted to portraying the inflation and deflation of man's illusory assertions of identity. Walser rests his case with the assertion that the meaning of this literary enterprise is "meaninglessness":

Finally, and most tragically of all, Joseph K. of "The Trial" dies, after a parody of justice, in the deserted suburb where two men execute him without a word. But it is not enough that he die "like a dog"; they have been unable to obscure themselves: On the contrary, they shine marvelously from the futile effort they have made to extinguish themselves; that is why we do not understand them except in the act of betraying them, and our reading turns anxiously in a circle around a misunderstanding.

B) The event begins only at the moment when the disruption occurs. In "The Trial" this takes place before the beginning of the actual text since it is not Joseph K., but the court which is disrupted, having been attracted by Joseph K's "guilt". However, since the narration is from the hero's viewpoint, the story begins only at the moment when the hero becomes aware of the ramifications of the disruption he has caused in the sensitive organism of the court.

When "The Trial" begins, the two antagonistic orders are already on the scene, the confrontation has already begun. The initial situation, which was inaugurated by the disruption, already implies the entire possible course of action until the end of the first event which is marked by the first negation. But since the orders there upon relapse automatically into their stance, the possibility is thus already present for another disruption and consequently for another negation. The disruption thus inaugurates the event by, as it were, awakening the counterorder, summoning it to the scene and thereby bringing on the inevitable course of action: The K.s are responsible for the respective disruptions. They force the counter world to concern itself with them.

In its eyes that already make them guilty, the "burden of proof" that the disruption is justified rests on the shoulders of the K.s. Our concept of "disruption" is, it goes without saying, framed in the perspective of the counter-order to the K.s. However, the K.s cannot permit to be classified as disruption what for them is simply the assertion of their existence. That means that if they were to retract the disruption, as demanded by the counter-order, then they would have to negate their own existence; but it is precisely this they wish to assert, and so they disrupt. And this disruption is again negated by the counter-world in the manner already indicated; that it thereby negates the existence of the K.s happens to a certain extent unintentionally as a by-product.

The negation is the caesura which concludes the event. That is the variable element in Kafka, the form of the void which, in the multiplicity of its fulfillment brings the work into being.

The Rhythm of the Trial

The spacious rhythm in "America" which is really only the rhythm of Karl's punishment is no longer present in The Trial. The erection of mutually attuned orders whose confrontation is played out in a precisely functioning series of figural relationships – this basic situation no longer permits a long-breathed rhythm. Above all the rhythm is no longer so one-sidedly confined to the negating caesura: Joseph.K.'s disruption s constituted not just by a question of principle, but by a transcendent confrontation. Disruption has not been actualized as projecting itself in Joseph K's assertion of his existence.

The workers invade K's room because guilt attracts the court. The disruption thus emanates from Joseph.K. If he wishes to defend himself, to declare his innocence, then the warders negate every defence, since he must admit that he does not know the law; how can he then claim innocence? To this is at once added a further negation by the Inspector, who makes all discussions impossible since he is only a lowly official, whose only job is to communicate to K, the fact of his arrest. This first negation is thus achieved because K. is ignorant of the law, the second because the Inspector lacks access to these things. With this, everything is provisionally accomplished from the court's viewpoint. It has responded to the disruption caused by K's "guilt". Now, however, K himself begins to work (in the structural sense, one could say he begins to function). He has the feeling that he has caused a "great disorder" in "the whole household of Frau Grubach" and "that it was his task alone to put in right again". Indeed, he even believes that Frau Grubach would have to give him notice if she wanted to keep her house respectable. K disrupts the order in the boarding house. Thus there begins in this work a second series of events which interlocks with the one that is related directly to the court. The form of the void is valid for it, too. K. has disrupted life in the boarding house; his efforts to calm, it down again are subject to the rhythm of negation. The exchange with Frau Grubach and the compulsive replay of the interrogation in front of Fraulin Burstner do not negate the disruption, do not restore the order; on the contrary, they negate K's efforts on behalf of order and make the disorder even greater. The third sequence of disruption and negation begins immediately thereafter in the bank: The negating force is the Assistant Manager. Then the action reverts to the realm of the court: K. invades the empty courtroom, supported by the Usher's wife. (disruption); she is carried away from him (negation); he recognizes this himself as his "first unequivocal defeat:' His penetration of the offices (disruption) ends with a fainting spell; he is carried out (negation). After this, there is another incident in the boarding house. In order to neutralize a disruption, he seeks an interview and is told. "Interviews are neither deliberately accepted nor refused. "In the following chapter occurs the only passage which contains a positive reaction to an action of K's. But this reaction has the effect of making K, do all he can to undo it, to negate his own original action, because what he has wrought constitutes a disruption of the bank's order ("The Whipper").

Joseph K. himself negates the efforts on his behalf of his uncle, for whom the trial is a painful disruption of the family's peace. The next negating force is the Lawyer. While K.

is still thinking about the negation by the lawyer; there follows immediately the entrance of the Assistant. Manager to undermine his existence, his professional position (i.e. to' negate it). After this there are the assertions of existence with Titorelli, again with the Lawyer and with the prison chaplain. All of them are subjected to negation. That is the last of the attempts by Joseph K. actually included in the work to assert himself, to end his trial. Since the court asserts that it is only attracted by guilt and is in turn attracted by Joseph K. every attempt by K. demonstrates his innocence, and thus to prevent the trial from properly getting under way, must constitute an act against the court, a disruption of its order. All the other accused submit; Joseph.K disrupts and therefore his efforts must be negated.

"The Trial" is made up of three stands of action: the boarding house, the bank and the court. Here we can only give a suggestion of these stands; for, this is precisely the advance in relation to "America", the construction of this work is seamless – the three stands are intricately interwoven. Just as one effort follows another, so does one negation inevitably follow another. The boarding-house, the court, the bank-it really matters little where the sequence starts, the configuration is everywhere the same. The rhythm of these events is shortbreathed, harsh and decisive. There is no pause for rest, no digression and no possibility of escape The confrontation of the orders is not interrupted by long description with K. as, a mere, spectator, as in the case with Karl in America; on the contrary, wherever K. may be, he is everywhere on trial. When he walks the street there is laughter from the windows above him, when he sits in his office and thinks about his trial, the Assistant Manager enters laughing, when he comes home in the evening he thinks he sees a guard in front of his house: ... His entire thinking is an uninterrupted effort to assert his existence; the events which intervene negate this effort completely automatically. Naturally all the turns for the better which helped to create the long-breathed rhythm in "America" are lacking here".

C) "The Trial" prompts us to interpret and speculate upon the enigmatic meanings that are at the core of human existence. As a novel it has puzzled and fascinated generations of readers. It goes on challenging us in very intriguing ways.

"The Trial" is certainly a parable with a mystery at its centre. Yet instead of resisting interpretation it urges the readers to dissect the work: to speculate on its enigmatic links. The highly concise nature of the narrative structure does not stop us from exploring the meanings at various levels. The readers themselves are partly helped by the characters of the narrative who obsessively but incompletely interpret their situations. Yet as a result, the events of the parable become more incoherent, less understandable and so open to sometimes mutually canceling interpretations.

There is a tendency to highlight "The Trial" as the central piece of Kafka's achievements. But the fact remains that "The Trial" is only a fragment, not prepared for publication by the author. All the same, like other texts of Kafka it simultaneously generates interpretations, and thus limits the validity of any single interpretation. The manuscripts reveal how Kafka deleted all passages that would make the "meaning" very clear: This is not because Kafka wanted to puzzle readers and make his book "obscure", but because he distrusted his own interpretative activity. What is important to remember is that the line between his personal writing and his literary activity is so thin that often they overlap. Kafka tries all the time to focus and concentrate on the diversity of existence into a text that would be far from the limitations of psychology.

A mere, objective, sylistic analysis of "The Trial" may not yield much. Not would a highly metaphysical interpretation which answers questions the text of the novel never asked. What is to be avoided is a very systematic explanation of the novel. Because what Kafka has done as a writer is to fuse into a unique literary style all the divergent elements of modern experience from the unconscious sensations to refined metaphysics, from what is very ordinary to what is surprisingly apocalyptic. These

elements are present in our daily life in fragmented and incoherent shapes.

In "The Trial" Kafka welds into a continuous associative chain the daily routine of Joseph K. marked by his torture at the hands of an insensitive and even insensible system of law which is presented as having shed even its pretensions to justice. The ghostly presence of the narrator undermines each and every one of Joseph K.'s certainties, fundamental questions about the hero's existence.

Joseph K. is, in a very limited sense, "everyman", because the very concept "man" is challenged by Kafka. Throughout his literary career, Kafka explores the strange conflict underlying every phase of human existence. The smallest functions of his daily life crumble into meaninglessness upon examination, leaving only "the impossibility of living", a phrase from Kafka's earliest work, "Description of a Struggle". Kafka attempts all the time to portray the rise and inevitable fall of man's illusory assertions of identity. What he tries to explore and expose is the meaning of life's "meaninglessness".

Yet another vision of "The Trial"

"The Trial" is a crisis in the life of the Chief Clerk. Joseph K. is charged by a mysterious Court, without being aware of the nature of the charge. From some level of the law that is unknown to him, and about which, nevertheless, an unrest within him is cognizant, comes the demand to justify himself. That is the divine challenge to man, and in his innermost soul he understands it as such. But, at the same time, he feels its protractedness to be a threat to his self-assurance, a flooding in of a chaotic world of incommensurate claims and influences: And with the power to harken to the divine voice, there awakes in him some fundamental anxiety (Weltangst) that drives him hither and thither, between convulsive attempts to master the immediate things which thrust themselves upon him and an escapist withdrawn into the narrow orbit of his superficiality. In this way the impression of a double reality is created. The well-ordered, safe-guarded everyday life of the Chief Clerk is pierced by glimpses into a chaotic world, which presents itself to him in the semblance of a Court of Law. This Court, which has its offices in the attics of a slum tenement-house and where the officers are venal and corrupt, cannot be subjected to rule like Life, which the successful man thinks he has mastered. It evades ordinary treatment. It has nothing to do with public justice; its powers rest entirely on concealed spiritual urges in the Chief Clerk K. himself. The power of this Court bears witness to the fact that K. has not mastered his life after all. In some way he himself does not know that he has failed. The secret awareness of this failure is manifest in his unrest, his "bad conscience" that repeatedly drives him into the confines of the court. No particular crime, no definite point of failure, is mentioned. But the description of K.'s character shows clearly enough why this man is brought to this trial.

K. is thirty and a bachelor, independent and egocentric, in the consciousness, it is true, of his rightful co-ordination into bourgeois life and the dutiful pursuance of his profession. From this bourgeois point of view, K. is not guilty: he is actually painfully innocent. Yet the son in "The Judgement" was just as innocent.

The character of this innocence is best revealed in K's relations with his girl, Elsa. She is a waitress in a cabaret: he goes to see her once a week. Although she is his girl, she would as, K: himself once says, be incapable of sacrificing herself for him, nor would he ask it of her: moreover, he would himself be capable of exchanging her for somebody else. Even love, then, which is an indissoluble mixture of wrong doing and blindly-offered sacrifice, runs its course for K. in a functional, unbinding and correct relationship, which places no burden either on the freedom of his afternoon-off, or on his conscience. He lives within his constricted shell, a supposed rectitude, without any idea of the entanglements and guilt that usually accompany human existence. His attitude to existence in general is in line with his rational relationship with Elsa, and he diligently avoids any attempt to solve its riddles. It is the trial that first makes him conscious of the nullity of an existence such as this, with its general round of

superficialities. Thereafter he will unconsciously seek real relationship with women, as is shown in his interest in the 'girl in the next room, 'Fraulein Burstner. But this interest is wrecked by his persistence in the general fundamental attitude that is concerned only with possession, mastery and co-ordination into the transparent structure of the world of business, and not with surrender of unfathomable. K's relations with Frau Grubach, the woman who runs his boarding-house, are similarly without obligation. That is made plain in his behaviour towards her after his arrest; when he betrays an unconfessed need for nearness, and, at the same time, keeps her at arm's length by his hysterical rejection of any long talk.

The shell like nature of his conditions of life is also illustrated by the "regular crowd" who frequent the inn, and are described in the unfinished chapter, The Public Prosecutor. The "crowd" consists "almost entirely of judges, public prosecutors and barristers", who occupy themselves with "difficult problems that are only remotely connected with ordinary life", and in doing this they find comfort in their emphatic self-assurance.

At the bottom end of their table they have sitting – as a joke – a number of inexperienced young people whom they make use of as a foil to their superior knowledge. Here, in this juristic dog-matizing, far removed from real life K. finds himself at his highest level of self appreciation.

A further intimation of the seclusion of K's existence is to be found in the fragmentary chapter. "A Visit to Mother". K. has not been to see his mother for three years, and now, as a result of the uneasiness the trial has awoken in him, determines to make up for it. This is one of his uncertain movements towards self-discovery and escape, by which he implicitly confesses his remoteness from a real foundation of life.

His position in the Bank is the clearest expression of K's attitude towards life: His career, the business – like pursuit of straightforward aims, conditions not only his professional life, but also his whole being. Particularly revealing are his relations with the acting Manager and the manager.

The acting-Manager is K's competitor in the Bank, and a hidden rivalry prevails between the two: in their mutual struggle, K is fulfilling the unquestioned commandment to self-preservation. The trial, that brings to task the business-like, problem-free, straightforward attitude toward existence, weakens him in this struggle. In his relations with his competitor, the schism in his existence, which is to bring about his downfall, is mercilessly disclosed. The life to which he belongs suffers no theoretic interim during which, possibly in the form of a trial which has to be settled in the meanwhile, his foundations might be strengthened. No, man is continuously subject to the laws of life, but must, at the same time, conduct his "trial", that is in the consciousness of the nullity of every empty existence, seek a foundation. Nevertheless, K. remains so deeply rooted in immediate life, that it can again and again distract him from his trial.

The Manger, in contrast to the acting-Manager, is a kind man... His character bears the reflection of divine love. It must be admitted that the acting-Manager can thrust the Manager into the background, just as the forces of the world can thrust the divine into the background, and K, therefore, sees himself caught up in the constant necessity to fight. Delivering trust fills him only as a rare intimation.

On the whole, K's existence differs not one iota from that of any right-minded citizen. That he is a bachelor seems only to underline his egocentricity. The same conditions would be possible were he married; such is the case, for instance, in Tolstoy's "Death of Ivan Ilyitch", that has many points of contact with "The Trial". But it is just innocence, his unbounded feeling of his own right doing, that is hit by the attacks of the Court.

The consciousness of being persecuted by the Court relates all K's conditions of life to the problem of existence, so that over and above their ordinary significance they find themselves set against immeasurable backgrounds. From the very beginning K struggles against this possibility of a new

significance. He attempts to fit everything into the valid judgement formed by his own experience and he has, further, a certain justification for so doing because, as we are told, he has just celebrated his thirtieth birthday, which is to say that he stands at the middle point of his life, when this fundamental experience takes on the character of validity if not consciously then at least of necessity and unconsciously. At the same time, it is true, this period can be the central moment at which often in the shape of a deep disappointment or a sudden fear-something protests against the peremptory validity of fragmentary experience.

Unrest is something that is represented by the Court. In it is revealed all that which threatens to break in from the edges of such an orderly life, as something unmastered and unseen. The life of the others, which, in the modern city (and particularly) in the congeries of peoples in Prague, which everyone who knows this city will involuntarily imagine to be the scene of this novel), in the darkness, of its inner driving forces, the mainfoldness of it aims, the dubiety and strangeness of its meaning, can lead to an irresistible relaxation to the individual's consciousness of reality and to a weakening of his grip on appearance, conglomerates into one single threat in the description of the Court. In the strange, crowded tenements on the staircases and passages that lead K. to the Court, is apparent, as paralyzing archetype, the perplexing superfluity of cross-roads on human affairs. The offices of the court are housed in musty attics and in a lumber-room, where 'the thing that once was used lingers on, emptied of meaning and yet not suppressed, where transitoriness and invincible, dead permanences unite, and where an irritating clinging to all that is superfluous and confusing chokes up and invalidates the gift of happy oblivion that is found in ordinary life. The colourless aim of settling things, which dominates modern business life, in the court turns into a nightmare of an endless piling-up of legal documents that can never be got through, and demonstrates with oppressive power the futility of all activity. In the women, who withhold themselves, or yield all too readily, who seduce yet hold themselves back, to give their obedience to some low ruffian, the revealing and uniting phenomen of love appears as a blind, incomprehensibly instructive event. Out of fragments of world a new reality is pieced together, which, being unfamiliar and threatening, encompasses the ego. The world loses its traditional appearances and intrudes on the ego under new guises. The ego feels that it is being driven out into empty space and, at the same time, destructively encompassed by something mightier than itself.

The novel presents no thesis and does not proceed from the sure consciousness of a divinity, but from an interest which remains within the limits of this world; just as the animal in "The Burrow" faced with the mysterious noise, in helpless terror can think of nothing else but unceasing and intensified caution by digging in deeper. "The Trial" proceeds by fits and starts, and for good reason. The abyss over which existence is poised justifies an arbitrated and unpredictable sequence of events.

It is neither a work of synopsis, nor a collection in tranquility of things overcome but rather resembles some memorandum of spiritual arguments, that may begin anywhere and break off at any time. At the end Death still remains incomprehensible, with life ever relentless in opposition to it.

The Court, in all its various aspects, can never be taken to mean the whole of God's claim on man that is concealed within it. It is only from K's behaviour, his racking anxiety and his opposition, his fear and his frivolity, that one comes to see what it is all about. Just as there is a conclusion in the conversation between father and son in "The Judgement", which is never actually put into words, but which, if properly "understood" at least is accepted in obedience by the son the conclusion that his destruction is just so in this novel, under the surface of the figures and the events there is a level of wakeful listening, and only at this level can light be thrown on K's actions. Only the existence of this level can explain the progression of the trial, as is exemplified in the strong attraction that "Before the Law", the legend related by

the priest in the cathedral, has for K., in spite of the fact that he apparently misunderstands it.

This hearkening, the Court which despite his being hard of hearing and unable fully to comprehend, continues to determine K's actions, is the basic assumption in the construction and movement of the novel; for had he not hearkened in the first place K. would never have attended the Court. The fact of this secret hearkening is the one piece of evidence that can be established categorically. And yet it is true that it is never mentioned; it is, at the same time, the thing most open to question for K. himself, and as such it is general instrumental – and yet this can never be described in terms-in summoning him to the Court, and can be, said to correspond to unfounded anxiety, "sickness unto death", conscience. It is the perception of nullity that threatens finiteness. Everything that takes place in the novel derives from definite movements of this all-embracing unrest of the world and demonstrates, therefore, fragmentary and special perspectives of existence. The exact significance of each specified event is always melting away before something invisible which would seem to imply full significance by its repeated intervention, by its refusals and denials and yet is "accidental", that is to say, the mere instrument of the invisible, which can refute the vision or turn it into darkness.

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UNIT XI

BORIS PASTERNAK : DOCTOR ZHIVAGO

Boris Pasternak an Introduction

1.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to :

(i) form a general idea of Russian life and society during the Revolution:

(ii) Become familiar with the Russian novel of the time; and

(iii) Understand about the life and personality of Boris Pasternak (1890 – 1960)

1.1 Introduction

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about his age; for, however unconventional or individualistic a writer may be, he nevertheless belongs to his age and is a product of his society. So let us begin this Unit with a brief note on the Russian novel in the nineteenth – twentieth centuries, the age of Boris Pasternak, as well as the age of political upheavals culminating in the Revolution.

1.2 Russina Novel in the Nineteenth-Twentieth Centuries

No Russian writer, whether Tsarist or Soviet, has been free, or has felt really free, to express himself as he wished while he lived and published in his own country. There was however, a relaxation between the February Revolution of 1917 and 1930, in which year Stalin clamped down. The principle of Trasrist censorship was to suppress anything that might tend to subvert the authority of the central government. The principle of Soviet Censorship may be summed up in the words of Lenin in 1905 : Literature must become imbued with the party spirit. Away with non-partisan writers. The belief entirely unjustified, was that the Revolution would change human nature for the better and that therefore literature must aid in this process. Stalin's interpretation invited on a crudely Marxist line, but in the interests of maintaining a Stalinist dictatorship. The position has, more or less, remained essentially the same, for in practice the writer became less free in Soviet Russia than before. Some of the prominent nineteenth-twentieth Centuries 'Russian novelists include Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorki, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Mikhail Sholokhov, Alexander Solzhenistsyn and a host of others. Tolstoy although he survived into the twentieth century, was nineteenth century writer – rather than a modernist – who left an enormous legacy to the future. He believed that literature which was not intelligible to the masses and which did not in effect, improve their lines, was of no use. He was not a Marxist but an anarchist who disliked all governments. *War and Peace, Anna Karenina, Resurrection* etc. are among his best novels. Maxim Gorki, the author of *Mother* was the man who freed realism from its conservation. He was horrified by Boolhevist violence; he is associated with the rise of the proletariat in Russia, and then with socialist realism.

After the terrible days of the Revolution itself, when to many people Russia seemed to have died, literary activity slowly renewed itself; for a time moderation prevailed. A number of writers were fellow travellers, as for instance Leouid Leonov, some wrote propaganda books in the Thirties. Earlier writers like Dostoevsky were preoccupied with more permanent and universal themes like the purification and redemption of man through suffering and sacrifice, the affirmation of life and Christian faith, all of which is exemplified in his masterpiece *The Brothers Karamazaov.* Today Dostoevsky is haid as a the precursor of modern psychology, of the unconscious and the pathological, as one of the masters of Nietzche and of the existentialist. Turgenev, the first of the great Russian novelists is renowned for his deep, physiological insight,

melancholy realism, the subtle creation of mood and his pessimistic agnosticism.

Only a very few representative name of Russian fiction writers have been mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs. The main point to be noted is the sudden shift in theme, tone and style as one of moves from the relatively settled past to the turbulent and terrible times of the Revolution.

Let us now proceed to study something about the life and achievements of Boris Pasternak.

1.3 Life and Work of Boris Pasternak

Life : Boris Leonidovich Pasternak (1890-1960) was born in Moscow of partly jewish parents.His father was a noted bourgeois painter and his mother was an accomplished pianist. Early in life, Pasternak became a votary (devotee) of art, beauty and loftly ideals. He grew up and spent most of his life in or near Moscow. Early influences on him include Tolstoy – whom he knew. A nanny who introduced him to Greek Orthodox church, Rilke and music. His early passion for music owed much to the personal influence of the composer Skryabin. A period of study of philosophy at Marburg (1912) was followed by his graduation at Moscow University. He preferred the intellectual variety of music, studies of musical theory and composition; but eventually he turned to literature. He traveled in Germany and Italy.

Works : As a writer initially Boris Pasternak was associated with the Futurists. (Futurism was a literary movement in Europe which advocated a complete break with tradition, and aimed at new forms, new subjects and new styles, all in keeping with the advent of a merchanist age. It become politically Fascist, but did not have much influence on literature, except in Russia). His first collection of poems *A Twin in Clouds* (1914) and the second one *Above the Barriers* (1917) appeared under a futurist label. He was, in fact, participating in futurist games of various kinds until they came to an end. He published his best poetry in the twenties with the volumes *My Sister Life* (1922) and *Themes and Variation* (1924); he never wrote poetry than in these volumes.

Most of Pasternak's shorter prose works also date from the twenties and early thirties; they include short stories and the brilliantly evocative autobiographical sketch *Safe Conduct* (1930 to 1959), *The Childhood of Luvers* (1925 to 1945), the best prose he ever published, is a fragment of a longer novel which was written very early on – it was destroyed in Anti – German riots at the beginning of the First World War.

From his maturity, Pasternak remained as aloof as possible from politics and movements. During the First World War, he worked in a factory in the rural areas and after the Revolution he was employed as a librarian in the Ministry of Education. He was much criticized in Russia for his 'non-political' writing; his work was displeasing to the authorities, and he probably survived the purges only because Stalin approved of his versions of Soviet Georgian poetry. In 1934, with the mounting pressure exerted by the Communist Party to ensure the ideological conformity of Russian Writers, and of the principles of 'socialist realism". Pasternak stopped publishing poetry for nine years.

During the period he turned to translation work, and produced Russian versions of Shakespeare and Keats, Goethe and Schiller and the Georgian poets. Once again in 1946 when the Communist Part launched a new attack on devocationist writers, he fell silent until Stalin's death in 1953. Since 1946, Pasternak had worked on his fuctional masterpiece *Doctor Zhivago*, which, banned in the Soviet Union, was published in Milan in 1957. He was awarded the most prestigious Noble Prize for his achievement in 1958, the year an English translation of the novel appeared. Unfortunately Pasternak was forced to renounce the prize under severe political pressure, extremely acrimonious (bitter, hateful) reaction and scurrilour (abusive) attacks of the Soviet authorities; in the USSR, critics and political leaders resumed (and were not far wrong, according to Geoffrey Grigson) a direct connection between the awarded and the first Italian appearance (in 1957) of the "traitrous" novel.

Pasternak's talent is one of the most vigorous, wonderful and puzzling of our century. His handful of short stories and his two autobiographical sketches are strangely fragmentary (incomplete) and elusive. All his work is alive, all of it comes from a man of creative integrity and personal courage, whose ability; has renewed itself under the hardeats of circumstances. "What distinguishes Pasternak from most of the other Russian individualists who have incurred official dipleasure in their own coutnry, is a robustness of spirit, resilience, a sharp freshness that will ensure his survival as a world writer. His vigour strikes us not only in acute perceptions of landscape and atmosphere, of his earth, fresh, dark, brilliant and solid, and of personal relationship, but even in his reaction to political events". (Geoffrey Grigson). But as Martin Seymour Smit observes, it is still difficult to rightly estimate Pasternak because he was pawn in the propaganda efforts of Western journalists who care almost less than they know of literature, and this influence more serious writers who ought to have know better. The West still has little idea of his avant grade (experimental, new) past or of his anti-fascism.

Let us pass on to Doctor Zhivago, Pasternak's masterpiece.

1.4 "Doctor Zhivago" : An Introduction

Doctor Zhivago is a revolutionary novel based on the Russian revolution, civil war and the reign of terror and brutality unleashed (released) in the early decades of the Twentieth Century. The local (setting) is Moscow mainly as well as the Eastern front and Siberia. The Russian – Japanese war of 1904 brought about a series of Russian defeats on land an sea. Political discontents grew steadily at home. On Sunday January 22, 1905 a large crowd of workers led by a priest named Georgy Gapon, who had been active in one of the officially sponsored worker's societies marched to the square in front of the winter palace. Troops opened fire and several thousands were killed or injured. Bloody Sunday was followed by disorders in gathering momentum. There were strikes, workers demonstrations, street lightings, peasant insurrections (revolts, uprisings) and mutinies in both the army and the navy. The revolutionary movement reached its climax in October with a nation – wide railway strike and the formation in St. Petersburg of a Soviet (Council) or Worker's Deputies. Faced by the threat of collapse, the Tsar issued a manifesto promising to convoke (call) a National Parliament. Rivalries between the Red Partisans and the white Rebels led to a civil war which was marked by the worst of acts of brutality, bloodshed, torture, all of which had the most awesome (terrible) effect on the life of the individual. The novel is written against the background of the main events of Russian history during the first three decades of the Twentieth Century.

Doctor Zhivago is a profound study of the gradual disintegrationo f an idealist intellectual who had welcomed the Revolution initially, but was later disillusioned by the chaotic tribulations of the Civil War period, and had after his death in 1923, left behind him a group of poems which were eventually published after the II World War.

Before you start studying the novel, it is better to become familiar with the main characters; particularly, since some of them have more than one name. You may refer to the list occasionally, in case you have doubts.

1.5 Main characters in "Doctor Zhivago"

1. Yury : (Dr. Zhivago, Yura, Yury Andreyevich): a physician, poet and a man of good will, husband of Tonya and later of Marina, and passionate lover of Lara)
2. YEVGRAF Andreyevich Zhivago (Major General Zhivago)
   : Yury's half brother and benefactor
3. Uncle Koyla (Nikolay Nikolayevich Vedinyapin)
   : Yury's maternal uncle, an unfrocked priest with new, progressive ideas.
4. Alexander Alexandrovich Gromeko

: A professor of Agronomy

: Tony's father

5. Anna : Gromeko's wife

6. Tonya : Yury's first wife; mother of Sasha and Misha

7. Lara (Larrisa Guishar, Nurse Antipov)

: Yury's passion, Pasha Antipor's wife, an exceptional woman, the novel's heroine.

8. Antipov : (Pasha)

: A Red commissar and revolutionary; marries Lara, desert her and Katya their daughter; later emerges as STRELNIKOV.

9. NICKY DUDOROV

: Son of a revolutionary terrorist

10. Misha Gordon

: Son of a Jewish lawyer and a friend of Yury.

11. Ippolovitch Komarrovsky

: An immoral, cunning lawyer, seducer of Lara; responsible for the suicide of Yury's father.

12. Liberius Mickulitsyn

: A Red partisan leader.

13. Tania (laundry girl)

: daughter of Yury and Lara.

Let us study the novel in detail in the next Units.

UNIT 2

DOCTOR ZHIVAGO : A SUMMARY OF PART I

1.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to :

(i) have a general idea of the plot of Doctor Zhivago part One : and

(ii) form your initial impressions of the main characters as products of pre-revolutionary Russia .

2.1 Introduction

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation something of the original flavour and flair is bound to be lost. A chapter – wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about the various characters, the atmosphere and so on. But if you can lay your hands on a good translation , do read it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Paslernak's masterpiece.

However, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first part of the novel.

2.2 Summary of Chapter I

The Five O'Clock Express

This chapter consists of nine sections.

1. The grand funeral of Marya Nikolayevna was going on. At last when the grave was filled and a mound grew up on it, a ten year old boy climbed on top. He raised his head, and from his vantage point on his mother's grave absently surveyed the bare autumn landscape and the domes of the monastery. The boy covered his face with his hands and burst into sobs. The wind hearing down on him lashed his hands and face with cold quests of rain. Nikolay Nikolayevich Vedenyapin, the dead woman's brother and the uncle of the weeping boy, and who was a priest, went up to the boy and led him out of the graveyard.

2. They spent the night at the monastery, intending to travel south to a provincial town on the Volga, where Uncle Koyla worked for a local progressive newspaper. During the night, the boy Yura was woken up by a knocking at the window. He ran to the window and pressed his face

against the cold glass. Outside there was nothing but the glizzard (snow storm), the air smoking with snow. It was as if the snow storm was trying to terrify the little boy. Though his first impulse was to go out., he did not do so. He was afraid that the snow would drift over the field in which his; mother, powerless to resist it, would sink deeper and further away from him into the ground. Once again it ended with his bursting into tears. His uncle woke up and tried to comfort him by speaking to him of Christ. They started to dress . It was getting light.

3. While his mother was alive, Yura did not know that his father had abandoned them, long ago, spending his time in Siberia and abroad in drinking and immoral pursuits, thereby squandering (wasting) the immense family wealth. He was always told that his father was away on business. Later his mother was found to have consumption (T.B) and she would go to France and Northern Italy for treatment, and Yura accompanied her twice. Against this untidy background, the boy spent his childhood, surrounded by continual mysteries and often left with strangers, so that he got used to changes and permanent unsettlement. He could remember a time in his early childhood when an infinite variety of objects were still known by the name he bore. There were Zhivago factories a Zhivago bank, Zhivago buildings and so on. The Zhivagos had been famous all over Moscow. Suddenly it all vanished. They became poor.

4. One day in summer 1903, two years after his mother's death, Yura along with Uncle Koyla drove in a two – horse open carriage across fields to Duplyanka to see Ivan Ivanovich Vozkoboynikov, a teacher and writer of popular text books. Uncle Koyla had with him the proofs of Voskoboynikov's book on the land question. The book which later made him famous were already in the form of ideas. He hardly realized that soon he was to take his place among the writers of his time – university professors and philosophers of the reolution. Father Nikolay, a priest, had been both a Tolstoyan and a revolutionary idealist and was still traveling on. He craved for an idea, inspired yet concrete, that would snow a clear path and change the world for the better. Yura liked being with his uncle, for he reminded him of his mother. Like hers, his mind moved with freedom and was open to the unfamiliar. He had the same aristocratic sense of equality with all living things and the same gift of taking in everything at a glance and of expressing his thoughts as they first came to him and before they had lost their meaning and vitality. Duplyanka was a beautiful place and this too reminded him of his mother who had been fond of nature. He also looked forward to, seeing Nicky Dururov, a school friend, again.

5. Nickolay and Ivan Ivanovich spent some time correcting the revised manuscript. Ivanovich then insisted that Nikolay should stay for tea. They walked down to the river while tea was being prepared. They talked about serious matters. Nikolay spoke of coming across brilliant men but that they were isolated. In his view, it was always a sign of mediocrity in people when they herded together to whom – so – ever they owed group loyalty. "The truth is only sought by individuals, and they break with those who do not love it enough". He observed that one should be loyal to immortality, which is a stronger word for life, and also to Christ. To Ivanovich's enquiry he remarked that he considered it a trifle to have been unfrocked. (Being a revolutionary thinker, father Nikolay was deprived of his rank authority and function as a priest, at his own request). He tried to explain to him about the need for a spiritual equipment, love of one' neighbour etc. but soon realized that such ideas could not be digested by the latter. Suddenly they saw a neat little yellow and blue train which had stopped. Ivanovich observed that there was something wrong. They went to have tea.

6. Meanwhile Yura tried to find Nicky, but in vain. He guessed that Nicky was hiding because guests bored him and he did not look on Yura as his equal. As he wandered aimlessly, like an aural hallucination his mothers voice haunted the whole place. Yura felt more and more depressed. He prayed soulfully and religiously for her sake. In his heart-rending anguish he called her down

CUP/5026/1000/SDE — 14

from heaven like a newly canonized saint, and suddenly unable to bear any more, fell down in a faint. Presently he recovered on hearing his uncle calling him. He thought he would pray for his missing father another time. Yura did not remember him at all.

7. In a second class compartment of the train which had stopped in the field sat Misha Gordon a eleven year old boy with a thoughtful face. He was traveling with his father Grigory Osipovich Gordon, a lawyer who had been transferred to Moscow. His mother and sisters were already there. Misha and his father had been traveling for three days. Anxiety was Misha's mainspring. He knew this hereditary trait in himself and it distressed and humiliated him. The train had stopped suddenly because his father and pulled the communication cord, when a lunatic traveling companion had pushed him aside in an attempt at suicide. The body of the suicide lay on the grass. The dead man's friend and traveling companion, a haught lawyer unfeelingly observed that the man had been an alcoholic. Passengers came to have a look at the corpse but returned soon to their compartments for fear that their belongings might get stolen. Misha's father had told him that the suicide had been a well – known millionaire Zhivago, a good-natured profligate (extravagant, immoral), by then half out of his mind. Unrestrained by Misha's presence the man had talked about his late wife and his son, a boy of Misha's age, and then about his second family whom he had abandoned like the first. To Misha he had shown an unaccountable affection, which probably reflected a feeling for someone else. He had drunk incessantly and as soon as he sobered he suffered unimaginable torments. At last the train moved on.

8. Nicky hid under the bed in Ivanovich's room refusing to see Yura. Nikolay, and Ivanovich along with Yura sat talking about the student unrest in Petersburg and Moscow. Nicky had no sleep the night before and was out being a child. He had certain oddities (peculiarities) of character. When he was excited he talked aloud to himself, copying his mother's choice of lofty subjects and her taste for paradox. His father was the terrorist Demenity Dudorov, condemned to death by hanging but reprieved (pardoned) by the Tsar, and now doing forced labour. His mother was a Georgian princess of the Eristov family, a spoilt and beautiful woman. Still young and full of wild enthusiasm for rebels, rebellions, extremist theories and so on. She adored Nicky. It was dangerous for Nicky to bear his father's terrible name. Ivanovich suggested that he should adopt his mother's name. Nicky was full of hatred and anger for whole world. Especially Nadya, who was fifteen.

9. Nicky and Nadya were picking water – lities in the pond. Nicky told her that he was sick of school and wanted to go out in the world and earn his living. He asked her whom she would marry when she grew up. Her indifferent reply led to a quarrel. He grabbed her by the waist. They fought, lost their balance and fell in. They could both swim. At last they reconciled. Nickly even apologized. Recollecting the incident, Nicky felt again what he wanted most was to fall into the pond again.

2.2.1 Critical Comments on Chapter I

The first chapter of novel *Doctor Zhivago* is traditionally in the form of an introduction corresponding to Exposition in Drama. The hero is introduced to us as a tender, sensitive boy of ten who has lost his mother. We also come to know about the wealthy Zhivago, the boy's father and about his suicide. Uncle Koyla, Misha and Nicky who are to Circe cross in Yura's life are also introduced. We are also prepared for the revolutionary setting.

Let us move on to the second chapter.

2.3 Summary of Chapter II

A Girl from A Different World

This chapter consists of twenty one sections.

1. The war with Japan was not yet over and waves of revolution swept across Russia. It was at this time Amalia Kariovana Guishar, the widow of a Belgian engineer, and herself a Russianised French woman arrived in Moscow with her two children. Upon the advice of Komarovsky, a lawyer-friend of her late husband and a cold-blooded

business man, she put her son Ronyan in a military academy and her daughter Larissa in a girl's high school. Nadya Kologrivova studied in the same class. Madame Guishar bought Levitskaya's dressmaking establishment. The lawyer stared at the girl Lara so that he made her blush.

2. They moved into a small three-roomed flat adjoining the work shop in the most sordid part of Moscow. Since their father's death, madame Guishar had lived in constant fear of destitution; the children had a deepseated fear of the rich. Their mother gave them a living example of fear. She was a dreadful coward and was terrified of men. That is why out of sheer panic and confusion, she kept changing lovers Her children's presence embarrassed her during Komarovsky's visits.

3. Oly Demina was a clever girl who worked at madame Guishar's. She had a great liking for Lara. Madame Guishar had no experience of running a workshop; but the staff was honest. She was terrified to think of her future. Komarovsky often came to see them, much to the disapproval of the seam stresses (female tailors) who described him as "Amalia's heartache", "Old goat", "Lady killer" etc. An object of even greater hatred was his bull dog Jack, which sometimes accompanied him. One day Jack sank his teeth in Lara's leg and tore her stocking. Olya swore "Who would kill the pest". Lara admired Olya's goodness and her unspoilt child like nature. She wondered; "And why is it my fate is to see everything and take it all so much to heart?"

4. Lara was only a little over sixteen, but her figure was completely formed. She had a clear mind and an easy nature; she was very good –looking. In fact everything about her – her voice, figure and gestures – was graceful, fitting and harmonious. She worked hard at her lessons in order to secure exemption from fees. With the same ease she washed her mother's dishes and ran her errands. She and her brother Rodya realized that nothing in life would come to them easily. Lara was the purest being in the world Komarovsky had invited Madame Guisher to a party, but the women asked him to take Lara instead. Lara and the lawyer waltzed (danced). Komarovzky took full-advantage of the situation to hold her and kiss her. Lara decided that she must stop all this non-sense.

5. That autumn there was unrest among the railway workers on the Moscow network, owing to the strike on the Moscow – Kazan line. Fuflygin, the Divisional Manager and Pavel Ferapontovich Antipov, the Track Overseer strolled up and down. After some time Fulfygin drop off with his wife who had come for him.

6. Three or four hours later Antipov and Tiverzin rose out of the ground and walked quickly away in different directions after bidding farewell. On the way Tiverzin caught sight of the over-fed wife of Fuflygin and it irritated him. Suddenly a crowd gathered outside the workshops. Someone was yelling and a child was crying. As usual the old foreman Pyotr Khudo Leyev was thrashing the apprentice Yusupka. Khudoleyer took to drink and rowdiness after Marfa rejected him and married his workmate, the engine driver, Tiverzin's father. Yusukka was the son of Gimazedtdin, the porter who lived near Tiverzin's house. Tiverzin went in and asked the old foreman to stop plaguing the boy. A fight followed between the two, especially because the old man abused Marfa. They were however separated by the crowd. The base world of lies and fraud seemed all the more hateful to Tiverzin. He learnt much later that the strike committee had decided to begin the strike that night. More and more railway workers were on strike.

7. Tiverzin came home two days later, totally exhausted with lack of sleep, and chilled to bone. The porter Gimazetdin cautioned him to go into hiding, for the police had been asking for him. Tiverzin was unmarried and lived with his mother and younger married brother. At the moment this brother who had been wounded in the war with Japan was convalescing at the military hospital. Tiverzin's mother too tearfully asked him to go into hiding. He learned from her that Prove Afanasyevich Skolov had come there. He had told her that the Tsar had signed a manifesto; consequently everybody was going to be treated right, they would be equal to the gentry, and so on.

8. Pasha Antipov whose father had been arrested as one of the organizers of the strike came to live with the Tiverzins. He was a clean tidy boy, with a great sense of humour and an unusual gift of observation. Soon after the Manifest was published on October 17, there was a big demonstration which aptly illustrate the proverb "too many cooks spoil the broth". It was snowing heavily. Much against his discussion Tiverzin's mother and Pasha too went to see the demonstration. Presently in the confusion they parted; however she spotted him at last. The boy was visibly frightened. All the way home she cursed the unruly demonstrations as filthy murderers. At home she fell to scolding her son.

9. Nikolay Nikolayevich saw the fleeing demonstrations from his window. He looked to see if Yura were there among them. Nikcolay had recently arrived from Petersburg and was staying with some distant relatives. Earlier when he had left Yura was living with the professorial family of the Gromekos. The Gromekos daughter Tonya was of Yura's age and Misha Gordon Yura's friend and classmate spent most of his time. The atmosphere was eminently suitable and they made a comincal triumvirate with their obsession with chastity and purity. However Nikolay felt they were carrying it too far; for the word "vulgar" was applied to instinct to pornography, to prostitution and almost to the whole physical world.

10. Vyovolochnov, A Tolstoyan came to see Nikolay and make him agree to address and meeting in aid of political prisoners. The business deal being over, the rest of the conversation became, strained and disagreeable, for their ideas differed. The Tolstoyan failed to understand the mystic. At last he left, leaving Nikolay extremely cross. He got out a thick notebook and put down a few of his stray revolutionary ideas.

11. The Petrovka seemed a corner of Petersburg mislaid in Moscow. Its inhabitants were solid, self respecting well-paid members of the liberal professions. Here Viktor Ippolitovich Komaraovsky rented his magnificence third-floor flat and put on the appearance and civility of a fine gentleman in all his dealings.

12. It was raining. Lara walked all the way in a daze and only realized what had happened to her when she reached home. Everyone was asleep. If her mother get to hear of it she would kill her and kill herself too. Now she was a fallen woman. She wondered how it could have happened. Some day, many many years later she would tell Olya for consolation. Lara sat with bowed head weeping.

13. Komarovsky was in an awful mood. What he needed desperately was Lara and there was no possible chance of seeing her that Sunday. He paced up and down like a caged animal. He tried to get over his exhausting, nagging, anxious mood but in vain. He wondered if this girl, a mere child, the daughter of his dead friend would turn into an obsession.

14. What a bewitched circle it was If Komarovsky's intrusion into Lara's life had only filled her with disgust she could have rebelled and broken with him. But it flattered her that a handsome man, old enough to be her father, a man who applauded at meetings and mentioned in the newspapers should spend his time and money on her. After all she was still a school girl. Komarovsky's philandering (flirting with her) in a carriage behind the coachman's back or in an opera box in full view of the audience pleased and challenged her by its mixture of secrecy and daring. Yet a nagging broken – spirited horror at herself was taking root in her.

15. Lara hated Komarovsky, he was the curse of her life. She had become his prisoner for life. It was she who had a hold on him, for he needed her badly. But she lacked his treachery, his chief asset in dealing with the weak and the depended. This difference made the whole of life so frightening. Life was all treachery and ambiguity. Even the strong are ruled by weak and treacherous.

16. She tried sophistry (false arguments). She wondered what difference it would make if she were married. She knew it meant nothing when he proposed to marry her after telling her mother. And he continued taking her veiled to dinner in the private rooms of that ghastly (terrible) restaurant where the waiters and the clients undressed her with

their eyes as she came in. She had horrible humiliating dreams.

17. Lara was not religious, but she did pray once in a away when her heart was heavy. Once she heard the sermon; "Blessed are the down trodden" and thought it was meant for her.

18. It was the time of Presnya rising. The Guishar's flat was in the rebel area. Lara knew Nickly and Pasha who went to it. Nickly was proud, straight forward, taciturn (saying little) and too much like Lara to interest her. Pasha was childishly simple and she realized that she had an influence over him and began unconsciously to use it, though it was not until several years later that she to take his easy-going character seriously in hand. By then Pasha knew he loved her very much and committed to her for life. But now it was as children that Lara thought of them.

19. Madame Guishar was inconsolable. In the name of the strike, her staff including Olga, left, though they whispered to her that they were staging the strike for the good of the owner and the establishment. Lara tried to reason with her not to take it personally, but in vain. They decided to go to the hotel after entrusting their house with the porter Filat. They could hear shooting. As she walked on Lara was relieved that she would not see Komarovsky for as long as the district was cut off from the rest of the town. In her desperate condition she thought that the gun shots were splendid.

20. The Gromekos were cultivated, hospitable and great connoisseurs (having good taste) and lovers of music. They often held musical evenings. On one such occasion when a piano trio was being performed. One of the performers, Tishkevich had to leave in the middle as news came that some body of his was dying. Yuar was asked to get the carriage ready. Yura and Misha asked Gromeko to be allowed to go with Tishkevich, for the sake of the drive through the frosty night, to Montenegro.

21. They drove to the hotel in Montenegro. There was great commotion there especially in room no 23. Madame Guishar had tried to poison her self with iodinde, but she was saved. Gromeko regretted having brought along the boys to witness such a sordid and scandalous business. There was an exchange between Madame Guisher and Tishkevich, and latter remarked that the whole thing was awkward. Presently Komarovsky came out from behind the partition, looking self – confident. The lamp in his hand woke up a girl sleeping in an armchair. It was Lara. Not a word passed their lips, only their eyes met. It looked as if he was a master of puppet show and she were an obedient puppet. Yura felt that the scene between the captive girl and her master was shamelessly frank. When they came out into the street, Misha told him that it was this lawyer who had made Yura's father drink and caused his death. [Do you remember the lunatic in Chapter I, section 7?] Yura was thinking about the girls and the future, not about his father and the past.

2.3.1 Critical Comments on Chapter 2

This chapter, as the title indicates, introduces us to Lara, her background, her immoral relations with the lawyer Komarovsky and Yura's disillusionment and confusion on seeing the "vulgar" scene between the two. What are your impressions about Lara ? Do you think she is to blame ?

Let us move on to the third chapter.

2.4 Summary of Chapter III

Christmas Party at the Sventitskys

This chapter consists of seventeen sections.

1. One winter Alexander Alexandrovich Gromeko presented his wife Anna with an antique wardrobe. As it was being fitted, Anna tried to help, but fell down and hurt herself badly. She did not like the wardrobe and nicknamed it the tomb of Askold. After this accident, she developed a pulmonary weakness.

2 Anna spent the whole of November 1911 in bed with inflammation of the lungs. Yura, Misha and Tonya were due to graduate the following spring. Yura in medicine, Tonya in law and Misha in Philosophy. Everything in Yura's mind was mixed up together and misplaced. He was unusually impressionable, and the freshness and novelty of his vision

were remarkable. He settled on medicine as a career, for though he was attracted towards art, he considered that art was no more avocation than innate cheerfulness or melancholy were professions. Yura thought well and wrote even better. He wrote poetry. He realized how great a part his uncle had played in forming his character. Uncle Koyla's books had come out both in Russian and other languages. He developed his views of history as another universe – built by manwith the help of time and memory in ansure to the challenge of death. Masha was even more deeply affected by these than Yura.

3. One evening at the end of November, Yura came home late from the University when he was told that there had been a terrible scare that afternoon. Anna had convulsion. She wanted Yura to be sent to her. Yura realized that she was more sick at heart and terrified of death. She wanted to set her mind at rest. Yura dwelt (spoke) at length of the immortality of the human soul and of eternal life after death. The next day Anna was better, but Yura felt he was turning into a charlatan (a person falsely claiming skill or knowledge).

4. Anna continued to improve. In December, for the first time in their lives Yura and Tonya had evening clothes made for them; they were going to wear them for the first time at the Christmas party at the Sventitsky's Yura had refused the legacy to him from his father, for he felt it was actually nothing but debts and muddle with a lot of false claimants including the ten year old Yevgraf, the child a certain princes had by Yura's father. As she talked she coughed badly. Yura and Tonya hurried to her bedside; their hands touched. Anna caught their hands in hers and told them to get married and stay together. She had betrothed them.

5. By the spring of 1906 before Lara was in top form at school, the six months of her liaison with Komarovsky had driven her beyond the limits of her endurance. At last she came to a sudden decision which altered the course of her life. She wrote to her neighbour Nadya Kologrivova to help her find a teaching job, as well paid as ever. Nadya suggested that she could join their household for her parents were looking for a governess for Lipa.

6. Lara spent three safe years at the Kologrivov's. She was devoted to them, just as she felt estranged After three years she got a visit from Rodya. He had gambled seven hundred roubles which the cadets had collected for a farewell gift to the head of Academy and entrusted to him. He wanted her to approach Komarovsky for his sake. At last Lara told him to come with his loaded revolver the next day. She got the money from Kologrivov.

7. Along with her work at the Kologrivov's, Lara continued her studies and was to graduate the following year. Unknown to Pasha she sent money to his father in Siberia. Pasha who was a little younger than Lara loved her madly. It was her dream that after they had both graduated, they would marry and become school teachers. Lara was accepted as a member of the Kologrivov household. Lipa had grown up, so Lara regarded herself as superfluous (more than necessary). She found it hard to accept any more money from them and wanted to run away both from herself and the Kologrivovs. She felt she was a hostage because of Rodya's stupid fault. At last she decided to approach Komarovsky. If he refused help or tried to humiliate her, she would shoot him with Rodya's revolver.

8. When she reached Komarovsky's flat, the landlady told her that he was at a Christmas party at the Sventitsky's. She could not met him there. At last she decided to meet Pasha.

9. Lara asked to Pasha marry her, for she was in constant danger. He agreed, but when he asked her what was troubling her, she evaded his question.

10. That winter Yura was preparing an essay on the nervous system of the eye for the University Gold Medal competition. His interest in the physiology of sight was in keeping with his creative gifts and his concern for the relation between imagery in art and the logical structure of ideas. Just now he and Tonya were driving to Sventitsky's for the Christmas party. There was one

thought which was in both their minds: that they had been intended for each other. The scene at Anna's bedside had transformed them in each other's eyes. Tony a had suddenly become a woman and Yura was filled with the ardent sympathy and shy wonder which are the beginning of passion. The change in Tonya's attitude to Yura were equally deep.

11. An immemorial ritual was followed at the Sventitsky's Christmas parties. Without stopping in the ballroom, Tonya and Yura went through to their host's rooms at the other end of the flat.

12. The Sventitsky's were writing names on cards for presents and for seats at the supper table. In the end Tonya and Yura spent half the evening with the Sventitsky's and their nephew Georges behind the scenes.

13. All this time Lara was in the ballroom. She was hoping Komarovsky, who sat facing the doorway, might see her. He was playing cards with the men. He either did not see her or pretended not see her. Lara was filled with mortification. She also found out that the elegant young man Koka with who she was dancing was the son of Kornakov the assistant public prosecutor at the Moscow central court.

14. It was almost two in the morning. Tonya was dancing excitedly with an unknown partner. At one point she cought at Yura's hand and gave him a warm smile. Her hadkerchief stayed in his fingers. He pressed it to his eyes and lips, lost in its kindly smell. At that moment a shot rang inside the house. Utter confusion, uproar (*confusion*) and screaming followed. Lara had shot at Kornakov's left hand though she had aimed at Komarovsky. Yura was dumbfounded when he saw Lara being led by a group by her arms. He felt sorry for the proudly beautiful girl. Lara was fainting. Before Yura could do anything either for the victim or Lara, Tonya and Felisata asked him to leave at once; there had been a message from home. Yura ran for his things.

15. They did not find Anna alive. She had been dead for ten minutes when they reached the home. Tonya was overpowered with grief. Yura compared his present grief with that caused by his mother's death ten years earlier. In his twelve years at school and college, Yura studied and understood a lot and had become quite mature. Earlier he had prayed in confusion, fear and pain. Now he was afraid of nothing, neither of life nor of death.

16. The funeral service for Anna were over. She was buried in the same churchyard as Yura's mother. Yura decided that he would write a poem in memory of Anna.

2.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter III

The pivotal (central) point of interest of this chapter is Anna – her life, qualities wishes and death. She is instrumental in rousing passion in Tonya and Yura. We also see how Yura was matured since his mother's death. Lara's story of desperate struggle too begins interwoven with the main plot.

Let us move on to Chapter four.

2.5 Summary of Chapter IV

The Advent of the Inevitable

This chapter consists fourteen sections.

1. Lara lay feverish and half-conscious in Felitsata Semyonovna's bed; the people of the household talked in whispers round her. The shooting incident had rattled (shocked) Komarovsky and he was pacing about angrily. He was terrified the scandal, gossip and loss reputation that seemed to torment him. He further realized that he once again experienced the same irresistible attraction for the wild desperate girl. He feared police interrogating. He would have to consult a psychiatrist and have the proceedings of the case dropped. He then took a room for Lara in the house of Ruffina Omissimovna, a women lawyer friend of his. There Lara was brought a few hours later, unconscious with brain fever.

2. Ruffina Omissimovna was a woman of advanced views, free from prejudice and liked everthing positive and vital. She took a dislike for her sick lodger and thought she was a pretender, and openly expressed her contempt for her by banging doors etc. Lara lying ill in bed filled her leisure with recollections. She remembered that evening seven or eight years ago, in the days of her unforgettable childhood. She had been

offered a piece of a huge water melon by Komarovsky which seemed to her to be a symbol of his power and wealth and which she had dared not refuse. Likewise who was later intimated by Komarovsky himself – this was the real explanation of things. But now he kept his distance, while assuring her of help. On the contrary, she was touched by the visit of Kologrivov. He advised her to finish her studies, take up some work. Despite her protests, he compelled her to accept a cheque for ten thousand roubles. When she recovered, Lara moved to the lodgings Kologrivov had recommended.

3. Pasha was giving a lot of trouble. He could not understand Lara or her puzzling actions and attitudes. She asked him to forget about her, for she was a bad woman. She wanted badly to free him from his corrupting attachment. But he dove her to distraction and at last they were married on whit Monday; by then they had graduated successfully. That nigh Pasha's spirit sank very low on listening to Lara's horrible confessions. They talked till morning. He had changed decisively and abruptly in the course of this night and he got up a different man now.

4. Both Pasha and Lara, having graduated successfully and secured jobs in the same town set out nine days later. They were given a farewell party by their friends. Komarvosky too had been allowed to join the young perople's party. Lara was curt and not too friendly with him. Nadya came to see Lara and gave her a necklace. At night a thief came, but fortunately missed seeing it. The next day the Antipovs were off.

5. Yura was now addressed as Dr. Zhivago or more and more often as Yury Andreyevich. He had just brought his wife Tonya to the maternity ward. He was in a hurry to get back at his own hospital, and hence had said good bye to her. Tonya was going to have a baby. She delivered a boy on the third day, Yury rejoiced, that she was safe, though he could not feel anything to be proud of in this unearned gift of parenthood.

6. The Antipovs had received a welcome beyond their expectations in Yuryatin. The Guishars were remembered with affection and this had helped Lara to settle down in a new place. They had now been here four years. Their daughter Ktya was not three years old. Lara worked very hard, shared all Pasha's interests, taught at the girl's high school and was happy. This was exactly the kind of life she had dreamed of. Pasha had graduated in classics and not taught Latin and Ancient History. Both Pasha and Lara overdid their generous behaviour towards each other Gradually Pasha was getting restless. His mind was full of disturbing thoughts. He felt the present life could not go on and on. He wondered in the first place why he had ever got entangled with Lara's life. Yet he could not imagine divorcing his wife. Suddenly he heard an army train in the distance. Pasha smiled. He had found an answer.

7. When Lara heard of Pasha's decision to join the military training school she was too stunned. She screamed and howled and pleaded to him not to leave her and their daughter. Suddenly she realized the main thing. Pasha misunderstood her attitude to him. He rebelled against the motherly feeling which she showed towards him, and could not understand that it was something more, not less, than the ordinary feeling of a woman for a man. And he left leaving a big void behind. Pasha's letters from Siberia told her about his moods. Now he badly missed his wife and daughter. Within a few months he received an emergency commission as an ensign. He had no time to see any one. When there was no living on her own, and decided to go and look for him. With this is mind she got a job as a nurse on a hospital train going along the Hungarian border.

8. Misha Gorden was among the passengers on the Red Cross train equipped with voluntary contributions which arrived at Divisional Head Quarters. He knew that his childhood friend Zhivago was attached to the Divisional hospital. He at last arrived at the village. Though he intended to spend just a day with Zhivago, circumstances kept him here for over a week.

9. To the south of the district here Gorden found himself, Russian forces had succeeded breaking through the enemy positions. Among the prisoners was Ensign Antipov. He was wrongly believed to have

been filed by a shell and buried in the explosion. This was told on the authority of his friend, Ensign Galiullin. This man was left with Pasha's photograph and the unsolved secret of Pasha's transformation from a shy, mischievous girlish child to a very brave, arrogant and erudite (learned), hypochondriac(persona having abnormal anxiety over health). Lara's enquiries about her husband had reached him but he had never found time to reply. Now he heard that she was somewhere in the front as a nurse.

10. The confusion of war was prevalent and Yury told Gordon that there was not a chance for getting horses. Going about with Dr. Zhivago day by day, Gordon too had seen terrible sights. He realized that it was immoral to look on idly while other people suffered with courage, and paid heavy risks with their lives and bodies. He believed in behaving simply and honestly according to the circumstances in which life placed him. Zhivago said he could not have brought Gordon along. He was bound to be scared stiff. They might start shelling them. The orderlies carried a badly mutilated man who thankfully died, putting an end to his encrusting (very severe) pain. He was private Gimazetdin (please refer to Chapter II, Section 6). The excited officer who had been shouting at the doctor in the wood was his Lieutenant Goliullin; the nurse who accompanied him was Lara. Gordon and Zhivago were the witnesses.

11. In this war-town area, the villages seemed to have been miraculously preserved. As they drove in silence, Zhivago told Gordon that the war experiences of the Jewish population was terrible. He could not understand the paradox of the root of this hatred of them which was stimulated by the very things which should arouse sympathy – their poverty, weakness and their inability to fight back. Gordon did not reply.

12. At night they were lying on their bunks. Zhivago was telling Gordon how he had once seen the Tsar at the front. Accompanied by the Grand Duke Nicholas he had inspected the grenadiers. He was cheered enthusiastically. Yury felt sorry for the Tsar who appeared shy, diffident, reserved and ill-at-ease; he was also horrified to think that there were the essential attributes of the oppressor. The two men engaged in serious conversation. Yury aired his view that in the true kingdom of God there were no nations, but only persons.

13. The following day, Zhivago told Gordon that they were all leaving as they were being hard-pressed and beaten again. He explained that was army life; as soon as one got used to a place. One moved to another place. During the night the Germans had broken through. The village was under fire. Yura sent Gordon in the first batch. Which he hurried back he was hit by a shell splinter. He fell in the middle of the road, bleeding and unconscious.

14. In February, Yury was convalescing in the officers ward. He was reading Tonya's letter. Galiullin lay on the opposite bed. Lara as a nurse, came into the ward. Both guessed her but did know that the other knew her. She asked galiullin for details regarding her husband's death. Galiullin's courage failed him and he decided to hell her a comforting lie. She did not believe him. Yury saw her agitation and tears but asked her nothing fearing she might think he was interfering in her personal affairs. Nurse Antipova observed that Yury was intelligent, alive and with an attractive mind. But she was in a hurry to get back to Katya. Lara had noticed a sharp change around her recently. Now that the war was lost, duty to one's country, army or society, nothing was any longer sacred. The moral climate had changed drastically. There was neither family nor people whose judgement one respected. However she had Katya to fulfill her need of the unconditional, her need of a purpose. Yury heard from Moscow that Grodon an Ductov had published his book without permission and that it was praised and regarded as showing real literacy promise. There was growing discontent among the masses, grave political events were imminent. Lara made up for her omission and thanked the lieutenant for preserving Pasha's things. She could not remember having met him. Suddenly people shouted that street fighting was going on in Petersburg. The revolution has started.

2.5.1 Critical Comments on Chapter IV

This chapter takes the stories of Lara and Yury forwarded separately, till the two meet again in the hospital where, Dr. Zhivago is wounded and nurse Antipova attends on him. We also hear the ramblings of the Revolution with its inevitable impact on the lives of ordinary people.

Let us move to the next chapter.

2.6 Summary of Chapter V

Farewell to the Past

This chapter consists of Fifteen sections.

1. The small town to which the hospital had been evaluated was called Melyuzeyevo. Everyday Dr. Zhivago, Nurse Antipova and Galiullin found new duties mushrooming. Yury and Antipova (Lara) were often brought together by their work.

2. Yury wrote to his wife Tonya about Antipova. He planned to leave for home the following week. Before he left, he got Tonya's sobbing letter begging him not to return but to go with that wonderful nurse. She would bring up their son Sasha on those principles which as a child Yury had seen practiced in their house. Yury hastened to reply to clear her misunderstanding.

3. In June, Zybushin, a small town which was administratively subordinate of Melyzeyevo, became an independent republic, lasted a fortnight and was overthrown before the end of the month by a unit loyal to the Provisional Government.

4. The hospital where Yury had been a patient and was now a doctor was housed in the former residence of Countess Zhabrinskaya. She had offered it to the Red Cross at the beginning of the year. The Coutess now lived in Petersburg under house arrest. Steeped in the love of passionate intrigue, she guessed with delight that Yury and Lara were attracted towards each other.

5. Yury was preparing to leave. He had to see the town major for a signature. There he was detained by the young commissar who raved wildly about talking to rebels, to touch their hearts and so on. The silliness of the commissar was matched by the hypocrisy of the major and his assistant and Yury was sickened by the emptiness and dullness of human verbosity and cleverly escaped. He knew he had that unpleasant explanation to Nurse Antipova pending.

6. Persuaded by the Mademoiselle, Yury went towards Lara's room, but thinking it discourteous to disturb her when she had just returned and was tired, he decided to leave the explanation for the next day. He leaned out of the window. Then he went out into the square to listen to speeches.

7. The moonlight was splendid. Yury listened and recognized that it was Commissar Gintz making a speech. Later Yury went to bed.

Yuri saw Lara the next evening in the pantry (stores room). They started talking in a general way, about the revolution, the new commissar's speech and so on. It led to Yury airing his views on life. He had a longing nowadays for an honest productive life. Lara sensed that he was being drawn towards her and tried to stop him. They had no more conversation of this kind and a week later Lara left.

8. Some time later still, Zhivago too set out for home. The night before he left there was a terrible storm. At night Mademoiselle Fleury was woken up by an urgent knocking. Yury too had heard it. They found no one. They went back regretting it had been a false alarm. They had expected to see Lara. Indeed Lara's image continued to haunt them.

9. An indirect responsibility for the trouble at Biryuchi station was attributed to the telegraphist Kolya Frolenko, the son of a clock maker. By evasions he had defeated all Galiullin's good intentions, and perhaps unintentionally had given a fatal turn to the events. Kolya had refused to call Commissar Gintz, as instructed by Galiullin, on the pretext that he was busy signaling to an approaching train. At the same time he delayed the train bringing up the Cossacks who had been summoned to Biryuchi. The Cossacks who did arrive were not impressed by Gintz's unfortunate, long speech. The worried Cossack officer told Gintz to vanish. He did but he was pursued by men with rifles. At the station entrance, on seeing Gintz sitting clumsily astride the butt, the men burst

into laughter and the one in front shot Gintz in the neck. He was dead by the time the other ran up and thrust their bayonets into this body.

10. Mademiciselle rang up Kolya and told him to find Dr. Zhivago a good seat in the train to Moscow, threatening him with exposure if he did not. She referred to him as a murdering little Judas.

11. The day Yury left was sultry. Plenty of bodies lay scattered at the entrance to the railway station. The stationmaster talked about the senselessness of Gintz's death. He also told Yury to go by a local train and change at Sukhinchi that night. The whole thing was to be kept secret.

12. When the secret train came, Yury managed to get on to a coupling, and from there into the corridor and sat sitting on his luggage all the way to Sukhinichi. There was utter confusion all around.

13. That night at Sukninichi, an obliging, old style porter put Yury in a second-class carriage of some unscheduled train which had just arrived. It went failry fast. The only other passenger was a tall fair haired youth who had been out shooting. Yury felt he was an extraordinary character.

14. Yury was too tired to sleep. On the one hand he felt anxious about his own life, he wanted it to be safe, he wanted to rush back home after two years of separation; on the other hand were his loyalty to the revolution and his admiration for it. He also thought of the war with its bloodshed and its horrors, its home lessens, savagery and solution, its trials and the worldly wisdom it had taught. Among his new thoughts was Nurse Antipova caught by the war, who never blamed anyone but whose very silence was almost a reproach (scolding), and Yury's sincere efforts not to love her.

15. Next morning Yury slept late. When he got up at eleven o' clock he still found his strange companion. He came to know that his name was Pogorevashikh, the nephew of some well-known revolutionary. He was a deaf-mute but was phenomenally gifted and trained in the art of speaking not by ear but by eye. To Yury's querry he said that he was connected with the setting up of Zybusino republic. With unpleasant school boy arrogance, Pogorevshikh propherised that disastrous upheavals (terrible changes)would take place in Russia in the near future. When the train drew into the Moscow station Yury got down with great expectations of going home. Before that, his strange companion had compelled him to accept a fat duck as a parting gift.

2.6.1 Critical Comment on Chapter V

This chapter sustains the atmosphere of the revolution throughout. We observe how Yury is being drawn to Lara, though she is careful and mature enough to keep away. Further upheavals in Russia are hinted at.

Let us move on to the sixth chapter.

2.7 Summary of Chapter VI

Moscow Bivouac

This chapter consists of sixteen sections.

A bivouac (pronounced 'biv-oo-ak') is a military encampment made with tents, usually without shelter or protection form enemy life.

1. Yury slowly made his way from the station. It was late afternoon. All kinds of unbelievable rubbish was being sold in the market. Yury was struck by the quantities of old newspapers and posters torn down from the walls and fences, littering the streets. He reached his house. He caught breath and his heart hammered as he got out. Tonya opened the door. They stood speechless; then they started talking excitedly. The homecoming turned out to be a happy one.

2. Tonya told Yury uncle Kolya would be coming two days later. He had gone bolshevick. She expressed her fear that hardships, dangers and insecurity were rumored to come in the near future. People said that money would be abolished; there will be famine; no supplies will be coming in, and so on. She suggested retaining only a few rooms and giving up the rest. By putting a metal stone in the middle room, they could manage with less fuel in the winer.

3. The most important novelty for Yura in Moscow was his little boy. He had been called up almost as soon as the child was born, so that he early knew him. He had

named his son Alexandria – Sasha for short – in honour of his father – in law. The first thing he had known about his son was his voice; as a baby, Sasha's voice was deeper and he seemed to shout less out of duty than with a deliberate, cold hostility. Now he was two and was learning to talk. When he saw his son in the cot, Yury felt that the child resembled Yury's mother Marya. When he tried to kiss the child, Sasha slapped him on the face and then burst into tears, for which he was scold by Tonya. Though Yury treated the matter highly he went out of the room depressed and with a feeling of ill-omen.

4. During the next few days, Yury realized how isolated he was. His friends had become strangely dim and colourless. Not one of them had kept his own outlook, his own world. Perhaps he had overestimated them in the past. The fooling, the right to idleness enjoyed by the few, while the majority suffered, could itself create an illusion of genuine character and originality. But how quickly, once the lower classes had risen and the rich had lost their privileges, had these people faded!

The large duck was an unheard – of luxury in those hungry days. The saddest thing about the party given upon Yury's return was that it was out of keeping with the conditions of the time. And so it seemed that the only real way of living was to live like every one else, to be lost in other people's lives; an unshared happiness was not happiness. Gordon told Yury the funny story of Dodderer's marriage; he had been married for about a year and had then separated from his wife. By then Dudorov came in. He had changed into an earnest scholar, discoursing amiably on every subject, writing books and so on. Meeting Uncle Kolya that evening was a tremendous, unforgettable event for Yuyr. He was seeing the idol of his childhood, the teacher who had dominated his mind as a boy. He was surprised at his calm, self-possessed manners. What brought them together was that both had the temperaments of creative artists. Yury and Uncle Kolya enjoyed also lute harmony in relationship. The party ended at last. Yury told Tonya that the only people he loved in the world were father and Tonya herself.

5. Winter was at hand. Ordeals were ahead, perhaps death. Yury realized that he was pygmy before the monstrous machine of the future. He was back in his job at the hospital; he also had the additional charge of statistics. His work was taxing and time consuming.

6. Every sort of incidents occurred to Yury once he stumbled over the unconscious body of a many lying on the pavement and it turned out to be that of a prominent political figure. Yury saw him through his illness and this acquired a protector who shielded him for many years, getting him out of trouble several times.

7. As per Tonya's plan, the family settled for the winter in three rooms on the top floor. One day Uncle Kolya came rushing into say that the Cadets where fighting for the Provisional Government against the garrison soldiers (troops stationed in town) who were backing the Bolsheviks. Gordon came in and repeated the same news. He spoke of increasing rifle-fire and of passers by killed by stray bullets. There was not a son outside. All the traffic had stopped. Sahsa was badly ill with a sore throat and a temperature. They could not secure milk and soda water for him, for the street fighting was at its height. Rumours came from all sides that the workers were getting the upper hand. Gordon and Nikolay were stuck up at the Zhivago's for three days.

8. They received a message that the guests had got home safely, but the fighting was still going on in places and several districts were still closed. Yury missed going to the hospital as well as his research work and notes. One evening in late October Yury went out. He bought a fresh newspaper and read of the official announcement from Petersburg that a Soviet of People's commissars had been formed and the Soviet power and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat were established in Russia. Yury's mind was full of the news. On the way he stumbled in the dark pile of wood. Without thinking twice, Yury took advantage of a moment when the watchman's back was turned loosened a beam of wood and cautiously carted it home. Its arrival was timely; they had run out of firewood. The beam was

chopped up, the logs were stacked. Yury talked to himself: "Just as in surgery, you take a knife and cut out all the old stinking sores, quite simply, without any nonsense, you take the old monster of injustice, which has been accustomed for centuries to being bowed, and you sentence it to death." This news thing, this marvel of history, this creation of a news world starts in the middle, of the rush hour. That's real genius.

9. Three winters came – dark, hungry and cold – one after the other. Everywhere there were new elections. Commissars with unlimited powers and an iron will, armed with powers of intimidation and revolvers were being appointed to each department. They knew the slinking bourgeois breed. The Hospital of the Holy Cross was now known as the Second Reformed. Zhivago stayed on in spite of inadequate rewards. He was tensed upover-worked and exhausted too.

10. Scarcity and want started mounting. Tonya had to exchange a small cupboard with looking glass doors for five or six armloads of cheap firewood. Yury was offered a bottle of German cognac or a pair of stockings in return for a sick call!! Shops and cooperatives remained closed not only because there were no goods, but also because the reorganization of all sides of life including trade, had so far remained largely on paper.

11. Yury went to attend his sick-call. A search was going on. It was luxury flat. The man of the house, a polite young man was worried over his wife's illness – all at one, an antique chiming clock which had not been wound for years, started of itself. The lady was terrified, she was convinced her last hour had struck and became delirious. Yury diagnosed her case as typhus and strongly advised the man to put her in a hospital. He added that a number of formalities had to be followed.

12. A general meeting of tenants was going on in the heated basement which had once been a warehouse for eggs. Rats bustled all over the place, and there was a general uproar. Yury entered and was surprised to find Aunt Fatima, Galiullin's mother. He had come to seek their cooperation in getting the typhus patient to the hospital. He learnt from her that her son Lieutenant Galiullin or Yusapka had taken the rong road. She also spoke to him to comrade Olya Demina who had worked as a seamstress for Lara's mother.

13. Yury parted form Demina. When he went home Tonya told him that father had broken their only alarm clock which he could not mend but which suddenly started ringing deafeningly after some time. Yury said, "My typhus hour has struck!" And then told her of his patient.

14. The Zhivagos were starving, and had reached the limits of endurance. The civil war was beginning. Yury tried to seek help from "supplies" with not much success. One day as he was walking home fell down. He never knew how he got home. He had typhus.

15. Yury was delirious at intervals for almost a fortnight. He was writing a poem entitled "Turmoi" describing how the black, raging worm-filled earth had assailed the deathless incarnation of love, storming it with rocks and rubbles. Two lines kept coming into his head. "We are glad to be near you" and Time to wake up".

16. Yury began to get better. Tonya fed him on white bread and butter and sugared tea. She explained that it was Yury's half brother Grany Yevgraf who had brought all those and much more. He came everyday when Yury was ill. He said that he had seen Yury on the stairs in some house (Yury had been reading the newspaper. Refer section 8), had meant to speak to him but Yury had frightened him to death. The boy wanted them to join him on his estate. In April that year Zhivago set out with his whole family for the former Varykino estate, near the town of Yuryatin.

2.7.1 Critical Comments on Chapter VI

In this chapter, we get a glimpse of Yury's life at home with Tonya and their son after the war. We notice changes in his thoughts and attitudes. We also note the beginning of the disintegration of the idealist and intellectual into a practical man trying to keep life going.

Let us move on the Seventh Chapter.

2.8 Summary of Chapter VII

The Journey

This chapter has thirty one sections.

1. Yury was against the journey. What bothered him was the complete uncertainty. They hardly knew anyone or anything about Varykino. But he gave in since the others had already made up their minds.

2. Yury went to the station. It was over-crowded with all sorts of unfortunates, mostly typhus patients. The chances of traveling seemed remote.

3. About that time both Yury and Tonya's father were paid handsomely in essential food items in return for services rendered and they were very happy at their high self-worth.

4 & 5. Preparations for the journey were being made.

6. They left the house at dawn.

7. The queue at the railway station was extremely long. The place was overcrowded and filthy.

8. The Zhivagos had been lucky enough to get a corner to themselves on the top tier of bunks. The coach looked to Tonya like a stable on wheels.

9. Trade was brisk in the train. Tonya exchanged her towel with a peasant woman for half a hare.

10 & 11. There were several conscripts (forced labourers) in coach fourteen. Prokhor Pritulyev, Vassya Brykin and Kostoyed Amursky were the prominent ones. They were getting acquainted. Each had his own story.

12. The Zhivagos had invited the cooperativist Kostoyed to dinner. He talked about the revolution. In his view the peasants were a frustrated lot. When the revolution came, the peasant realized that he had only exchanged the old oppression of the tsarist state for the new much harsher, yoke of the revolutionary super state. Reality in Russia had been frightened out of existence. He wanted to believe that the peasants were better off and the villages were prosperous.

13. Curious incidents began to happen when they left Central Russia. The train would halt in the middle of nowhere and a security patrol would inspect the passenger's papers and luggage. In one point the driver climbed out and fell into the deep snow in which he was half stuck. He shouted at the sailors chasing him with a gun. At last a huge sailor went upto the driver, told him to end this hysteria.

14. The train went very slowly the next day because of the snow. The Lower Kelmes station and a deserted village were damaged by fire.

15. The work of clearing the line took three days; even the Zhivagos took part in it. These were the best days of the journey. The country had a closed secretive look; the ruins and the suspicious wariness of the remaining villagers who were frightened of informers added to the air of mystery. The labour conscripts were kept apart form the civilians. The whole site was surrounded by troops.

16. They became almost fond of the ruined station. The line was finally cleared.

17. The train was expected to leave soon. Two women quarreled between themselves and Tonya was disgusted.

18 & 19. The train moved on.

20. From rumours Yury had gathered that the whites were about to seize Yuryatin, and that they were led by Galiulin. For the time being he revealed nothing to his family.

21, 22 & 23. The journey continued – Tonya told him next morning that some of the conscripts has escaped and commander of the labour unit is insisted on catching his prisoners before the train left. Yury said he was glad that they and the woman had run away like running water.

24,25 & 26. The journey continued. Yury asked Alexander how they ought to behave without feeling ashamed. The latter observed that the age of poverty in Russia was over and anyway the Gromekos had lost their acquisitive passion a generation ago.

27 & 28. On reaching a big station, Yury got down and walked along the rails. The sentry shouted to him to get back. He

learned that Yuryatin had been captured back from the whites. One of the guards took him to the Commission.

29. Yury thought excitedly about Yuryatin. He met Strelnikov whom he had not seen before. He allowed Zhivago to go.

30. Strelnikov was a non-party man who had taken up teaching after leaving university. He was nicknamed Rastrelkov, the Executioner. He took it calmly, he was disturbed by nothing. When he found that the world was not a place where people competed for perfection or obeyed rules scrupulsly, he was embittered by his disillusionment and was alarmed by the revolution.

31. Zhivago told Strelnikov that he had left Moscow in search of quiet, retirement and obscurity. He arranged to put Zhivago on the train. He spoke of a school boy with a bandaged head who needed attention.

2.8.1 Critical Comments on Chapter VI

This chapter contains a detailed description of the railway journey Yury makes with his family during the revolution. The significant development is his encounter with Strelnikov. Do you know who he is? Read on to find out.

We shall continue from the next chapter in the succeeding Unit.

UNIT 3

DOCTOR ZHIVGO : A SUMMARY OF PART II

3.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

i) have a general idea of the plot of Doctor Zhivago, Part II

ii) Analyse the important characters, particularly Yury and Lara, and

iii) Study the impact of the Russian revolution on the common man's life and attitudes.

3.1 Introduction

Please read Unit 2 a few times and understand the plot of the novel so far; only then can you appreciate the whole novel. In this unit, we shall summaries the second part of the novel, starting with the eighth chapter.

3.2 Summary of Chapter eight

Arrival

This chapter consists of ten sections

1. When the train arrived at the station, the Zhivagos felt that their connection with Moscow had snapped and was ended. The people here lived closer together than they did in Moscow or Petesburg and all of them were acquainted. Yury wondered how they earned their living, what their interests were, how they coped with the difficulties of the time and how they evaded the laws.

2. Escorted by the sentry, Yury went back to his carriage. He told Yury that usually at this time he was used to sowing the spring corn. If it had not been for this civil war and this plague of a counter revolution he would not be wasting his time in strange parts at this season. He condemned the class war.

3. Tonya was extremely relieved to find Yury safe. She introduced him to several new passengers including one Samdevyatov. She also told him about Anfim Yefimovich. Samdevyatov knew them all and who also had told her that their train was going to be switched to an other line which luckily was bound to their station.

4. Tonya was right. Their train was ultimately shifted into the open country. Yury and Samdevyatov sat on the floor of the carriage, their legs dangling over the side. The latter kept pointing into the distance and explaining what they saw to Yury: The Giant Cinema had been set on fire; the Russians were sniping (firing shoots from hiding) at the Czezhs, the artisans' quarter knokhriki was burning, luckily the center of the town including the library, the cathedral etc. were untouched so far. Samdevyatov spoke of his father as a shrewd man who held shares in a first rare agricultural firm. When Yury suggested that this was against the principles of Marxism, the other man coolly asked why

should a man, because he was a Marxism, be "a drooling boody" (a silly fool)? Marxism was a positive science, a doctrine of reality, a philosophy of history. Yury argued that Marxism was a positive science, a doctrine of reality, a philosophy of history. Yury argued that Marxism was not sufficiently master of itself to be science which is more balanced. He did not know of any teaching more self-centered and father from the facts than Marxism. Politics meant nothing to him. He did not like people who were indifferent of truth. Such people who wielded power were very anxious to establish the myth of their own infallibility (never going wrong). Samedevyatov took Yury's words to be the clever talk of an eccentric wit. He further noticed that a woman giving the "go" signal shook her fists and stuck out her tongue at him. He thought: What with Mother Russia in the throes (pain) of her upheavals and the thin time and so she thought Samdevyatov was to blame.

5. Samdevyatov said that he was a solicitor with twenty years of practice. Even in these bad times he managed to find business such as nationalisation, commercial operations and so on. He explained that it was a peculiarity of the transitional period that there was still a gap between theory and practice. One needed shrewd, resourceful – persons like himself at the moment. Half the province depended on him for its livelihood. In his view Yury's plan of going back to the land, the eternal call of mother Nature and to live by the sweat of the brow was naïve and idyllic. It was Utopia and he did not believe it. He warned him that in Varykino the *Mikilitsin* would drive him out, perhaps even murder him. It was all a matter of historical inevitability. Gluttons and parasites sat on the backs of the starving workers and drove them to death, not to mention all the other form of outrage and tyrany. In such a context, the rightness of the people's anger, of their desire to live in justice, of their search for truth were all understandable. He did not think a radical change was possible through the Duma, by parliamentary measures, or that they could do without a dictatorship. Yury could not see eye to eye. He remarked that he used to be very revolutionary-minded but now he thought that nothing could be gained by violence. People must be drawn to God by goodness. He suggested turning back. Samdevyatov told him that there was no need for that; Mickulitsin was criminally kind who would ultimately melt. He then told Yury Mickulistin's story.

6. Avercius Mickilitsin had been a student at the Technological institute. Twenty five years he had been deported from Petersburg and sent here under police supervision. He got a job as Manager of Kruegger's works. He married the eldest of four sisters of the Tuntsev family. They had a son who was named Liberius, Libby for short. The boy grew up wild and daring, faked his birth certificate and during the war went to the front as a volunteer, causing his mother to die of the shock. At the end of the war he returned as a hero with three medals and fully bolshevised. The forest brotherhood at the moment was commanded by Comrade Forester who was actually Libby. It was a brotherhood of partisans who were the cheekbone of the revolutionary army in the civil war. Milckulitsin's second wife Helen was a silly school girl naive and Milckulitsin was social revolutionary and was elected regional delegate to the Constituent Assembly. The other three Tunster sisters, all confirmed spinsters live in Yuryatin. The eldest Avdotya was an assistant at the Public Library, a desperated shy and nervous person. The next one Galasha was the family's blessing, a wonderful worker, full of drive; and the youngest Sima, an educated girl had religious mania. His station came and Samdevyatov got down. Yury had an unpleasant forebidding since the Zhivago's connection with the well known Krueger might attract more notice.

7. The Zhivagos were the only travellers to get down at Torfyanaya station. She was extremely relieved that they had reached the place safely. The station master was very friendly to them. Samdevyatov had phoned him and asked him to give every possible help to the Zhivagos. He arranged for their further trip to Varykino and advised Tonyo to be careful not to reveal her connections with Kruger to anyone and everyone.

8. The Zhivagos travelled in a horse cart and finally reached a palace where the Mickulitsins lived.

9. Their first meeting with the Mickulitsins took place in the yard of the manager's house. It was a painful scene which began in silence and embarrassment on both sides and ended in noisy confusion and absurdity. After being shocked and full of indignation at this uninvited arrival of the relatives of Kruger who merely wanted a hut and strip of land to grow their food, he relented, and invited them inside his house.

10. The Zhivagos stayed at the Mickulitsins that evening. They were to go to look at the hut offered by Mikulitsin the next day. In the course of the conversation Helen spoke admiringly of her science master Antipov in Yuryatin [Don't you remember Pasha and Lara, married and working as teacher?]. She also added that people said that scourge of their Commissioner Strelnikov was Antipov Risen from the dead.

3.2.1 Critical Comments on Chapter eight

The Political and economic changes following the Revolution, particularly the diversities in opinion, become apparent in this chapter. Marxism as a science comes for critical analysis. We also see how people are willing to twist law and theories if needed, as they wish to live.

Let us move on the nineth Chapter.

3.3 Summary of Chapter Nine

Varykino

This chapter consists of *sixteen* sections.

1.2. In winter, when Yury had more time, he began to keep a dairy. He extolled *(praised)* the honest, creative hard work. Yury felt that like Mickuitsin who was helping him, he too was dishonest. His use of the land was illegal. They had taken the law into their own hands and they concealed what they were doing from the state. He kept quiet about being a doctor, because he did not want to restrict his freedom. However his practice brought him in a little when some good soul finding out he was doctor brought him some eatable in exchange for medicines. Their mainstay was Samdevyatov, a fantastically complicated character, a genuine supporter of the revolution having the power to rob the State. Helping everyone but manipulating everything to his benefit.

3. Yury continued in spring that he believed Tonya was pregnant. He was all praise for her being strong, quick and tireless and for planning all her work well. All the work that year had brought them even closer together. Yury wrote at length about the immaculate nature of every conception and about the greatness of motherhood. At the beginning all women are mothers of great men. It isn't their fault if life disappoints them later.

4. He wrote about art, now it can appeal to us by its theme, subject, situations, characters etc.

5&6. The diary entries continued. Yury and Tonya went on discussing Pushkin.

7&8. Yury wrote that he would like to be of use as doctor or a farmer, and at the same time to be at work on something, lasting and fundamental like writing a work of art or science. Everyman was born with a longing to embrace and experience and express everything in the world. It was not so much their privations or their wanderings or their constantly changing and unsettled lives as the power in their day of rhetoric, of the cliché – All that "dawn of the future", "building a new world", "touch bearers of mankind"- that prevented Yury from being useful as a doctor or a writer. Such thoughts were third rate, lacking in imagination and hence were pompous. Yury extolled Pushkin's ideas of honest work, duty and the common round. He praised the childlike Russian quality of Pushkin and Chekhov, whom he had come to like best in the whole of Russian literature.

9. Yury wrote that one day his brother Yevgraf dropped in suddenly. He went off after a fortnight. Yury felt that he had even more influence than Samdevyatov and that his work and connections were even more mysterious. He promised to make things easier for them and kept his word true. Yury looked upon his half brother, about whom he knew virtually nothing, as his good genius, rescuer, resolving all his difficulties.

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At this point Yury's diary broke off: he never took it up again.

10. Yury would read all morning in the reading room of the Yuryatin public library. The readers were of two kinds: the majority belonged to the local intelligence, mostly women, and the rest were of more humble origins.

11. Yury realized that the librarian with the chronic cold was Mickultsin's sister-in-law. He noticed a new reader. Yury recognised her as Antipova. The librarian and Lara were talking softly; at the end the librarian returned to her seat happy, self-confident and smiling. Many in the room smiled looking at Lara with approval from these trivial signs. Yury gathered how well Antipov was known and liked in the town.

12. Yury resisted the temptation of going and talking to her. However he could not get Lara out of his mind. Lara's presence affected him in the same way as it had affected the nervous librarian. He read with greater concentration for an hour or so. Lara had gone. Yury found out that she been reading textbooks on Marxism. He took down her address written on her order slips which stuck out between the page of the books.

13. On a cold wintry afternoon at the beginning of May after his visit to the library Yury went to look for Lara where she lived in merchant street. She was carrying buckets of water. She told him she had seen him in the library the other day. She asked him why he had not come to see her earlier, though he had been here for more than a year. Yury felt that there was the same care and harmony in everything she did, whether it was reading or physical labour.

14. Lara lived in a flat belonging to a stranger along with her daughter Katya. It was cluttered with furniture and the place was dark. Forgetting that Strelnikov was said to be her husband, he told her, unthinkingly of his meeting with him [Refer Chapter 7 1st section]. Yury told her that they had passed through the country where he had brought death and destruction. He felt that Stelnikov was not a type who would be placed in a category, and least a part of him was what a human being ought to be. He was free from himself; he has a grain of immortality. Yury continued that he was a doomed man and would come to a bad end and a tone for the evil he had done. Revolutionaries who took the law into their own hands were horrifying not by criminals, but as machines that had got out of control. Stelnikov was as mad as the rest, but he had been driven mad by life and suffering, not any books. Yury predicted that the Bolsheviks who were using him would throw him out and trample him mercilessly the moment they did not need him. Lara observed that Yury had changed; he used to be less harsh about the revolution.

Yury explaind that those who inspired the revolution were capable only of change and turmoil on a world scale, that was their native element; they were unfitted without any real capacities. Man was born to live, not to prepare for life. Lara told him she had seen all sorts of horrors like murder, vengeance, extortions, blackmail-real Orgy. Galillin had always helped her and between them they managed to save many lives. Her attitude to the revolution was different from his. It was closer to her; there was a lot of it she understood from the inside. She had seen lot of poverty as a child. In real life everything got mixed up. Lara's daughter, the eight year old Katya came there. Upon her invitation he stayed for some more time.

15. Lara frankly told Yury that Strelnikov was indeed her husband Pasha Antipov. Strelnikov was his pseudonym, since he was an active revolutionary. It was he who took Yuratin and shelled them. Now he was in Sibneria in command of one of their most advanced positions, fighting and beating poor old Galiullin his childhood friend. Lara illustrated how the revolutionaries were made of stone, they were not human, with all their rules and principles. Pasha did not come to see his wife and child, his father who lives close by in exile nor even told him who he was. The old man was not hurt a bit. Even if she revealed the fact that she was Pasha's wife the appeal to sentiment would not move them. She knows for certain that Pasha loves her. But he cannot bear to come back to them empty handed. He wanted to return as a conqueror, full of glory to lay his laurels at their feet.

16. Yury was riding home from Yuryatin. He visited Lara, spent the night at her place. He was deceiving Tonya and what he concealed from her was becoming grave and illicit. He worshipped Tonya and valuedher peace of mind very highly. And yet now he was offending against it himself. He felt guilty. He considered confessing everything to Tonya and never seeing Lara again. When he explained to Lara she was understanding. He started homeward but suddenly he felt there was no need to hurry matters. He was once more on his way to Lara, in anticipation of a happy meeting with her. Suddenly a shot fired at close range defeaned him. Three horsemen blocked his way. If one of them was the chief liaison officer Kammenodvorsky of comrade Forester. He told Yury that the surgeon attached to their unit had been killed and so they were conscripting him as a medical worker. If he failed to oblige, they would shoot him.

3.3.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Nine

This chapter begins on relaxed pace with Yury'a entries in his diaries, mostly romantic, idealistic and noble sentiments. His sudden meeting with Lara complicates matters. We get a fine exchange of views on the revolution. The chapters ends rather dramatically with Yury being conscripted.

Let us move on to the *tenth* chapter.

3.4 Summary of Chapter X

The highway

This chapter consists of seven sections

1.2 There were town villages and Cossack settlements along the ancient mail roads, the oldest highway in Siberia. There who lived along highway were like one family. Now the region was ruled by the Supreme commander Kolchak, in command of the white forces. It was Holy Week, the end of Lent. The decree calling up three more age groups was put upon the monastery walls by order of Admiral Kolchak.

3 & 4. It was night of Monty Thursday, *Galuzina* the grocer's wife was restless. The mobilisation order posted up that day affected her poor silly boy *Teryoshka*. The stormy sadness of her thoughts oppressed her. Everything was so depressing and disheartening. The war had killed off the flower of Russian's manhood, and now there was nothing but rotten, good-for-nothing rubbish left. Things had been wonderful in her father's time when they had lived off the fat of the land. Her husband *Vlas* and his friends thought they could bring back those golden days. She was not hopeful. After some times he turned home, sighing bitterly.

5. She went straight to her bedroom, felt her old pains and half-away through the prayers, she burst into tears. Her ward *Ksuysha* woke up and entered the room they talked for some time.

6. Lidochka, the representative of the Central Committee was speaking in wearily and he did not hear the partisan leader asking him to stop it. The speaker suffered from nervous perspiration. The partisan leader kept interrupting him in the rudest manner and showed him no respect whatever. It was hard to believe that young a soldier, a mere boy, could be in charge of whole armies and that his men obeyed him and looked up to him with veneration, there were a dozen to fifteen other people in the room. They included old workers, veterans of the revolution of 1905, like Tiverzin and old Antipov. They were men in whom everything alive and human had been driven out by political conceit. The partisan leader was Mickultsin's son Liberius. The speaker was a former member of the co-operative labour party Kostoyed Amursky who had revised his political views and joined the Communist Party. The more the people talked, the less sense it conveyed.

7. A fare well party was being given for the new recruits conscripted by Kolchak. There was heavy drinking general pandemonium (confusion) when a loud echoing explosion was heard. Vlas threatened to throttle (*strangle)* the Judas who had been chucking hand gernades. The hall was on fire. The situation developed with terrifying speed. Half the recruits were by now dead to the world. Most of them, though they were not guilty had run away because they were drunk and had lost their heads. Terenty and Goshka and others huddled in some barn. As they were talking they heard the searches mention their names. They

wanted the boys dead or alive. Koska told the boys that her was only one place left for them to hide and that was the forest.

3.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Ten

This chapter begins with the description of the highway and there-abouts, next we see the miraculous power of the young Liberius; We also see the horrible consequence of recruiting small boys by the revolutionaries.

Let us move on to the *eleventh* chapter, which has nine sections.

3.5 Summary of Chapter Eleven

1. It was almost two years since Yury had been taken prisoner by the partisans. Each of his three attempts at escape from them had ended in capture. He did not suffer any penalties, but he was playing with fire, and he did not try again. Liberius, who favoured him and liked his company made him sleep in his tent. Yury found this enforced companionship with the partisan chief irksome.

2. Yury could not make any sense of the partisans' movements. The struggles and fortunes of the Red partisans and the Whites fluctuate. One bleak afternoon the partisan camp had come to a small town called Pazinsk. By chance Yury met *Pelagia Tygunove* who had been his traveling companion in the train from Moscow three years earlier. They moved to a hidden place talked. She told him of Vassya, the handsome boy who had been unjustly conscripted. She herself had to leave their village after being falsely accused of having a love affair with Vassya, who had settled with her married sister, Olga Galuzina. It was said that Vassya's house had been burnt down Pelagia's brother-in-law Vlas Glazin had either been put in jail or shot, and her nephew had vanished. Pelagia had a job as a dishwasher at the very chemist's whose stock Yury was about to requisition (*officially demand*). All the chemist's defendants including herself were faced with ruin by this measure, but Yury was powerless to prevent it. The requisitioned supplies was found to contain a whole jar of cocaine, to which the partisan chief had recently become addicted. As Yury and Pelagia talked, the faces of his dear ones, whom he desperately missed, rose vividly in his memory.

3. What with typhus in winter, and dysentery in summer as well as an increase in the number of wounded now that the fighting had been renewed, Yury was up to his eyes in work.

4. According to the Red Cross International Convention, army medical personnel ought not to take part in the military operations of the billigerents (*engaged in war*). But on one occasion he was forced to break this rule. The Whites were attacking the Red partisans in an open field in front of a forest. The Whites were mostly youngsters, first year students from the universities and top form schoolboys. Their response to duty as they understood it filled them with an ecstatic bravery unnecessary and provocative. The bullets of the partisans moved them down. Yury's sympathies were on the side of these heroic children who were meeting death. With all his heart he wished them success. They belonged to families, who were probably akin to him in spirit, in education, moral discipline and values. He lay on the grass unarmed, and watched the fortunes of the battle. But after some time he took the rifle of the telephonists lying at his side and fired a few shots. At last the whites ordered a retreat. Yury's assistant Angelar joined him. Yury examined the telephonist and found that he was dead. He was wearing an amulet containing the words of the ninetieth psalm which was believed to be a protection against bullets. Leaving the telephonist Yury went to the young white Guardsman whom he had shot. Thinking he had killed him, Yury repented. Fortunately the boy whose name turned out to be Seryosha Rantsevich had been saved because his amulet containing the same words of ninetieth Psalm had stopped the bullet from entering his body. With the help and confidence of Angelar, Yury exchanged the telephonist's clothes for those of the boy so as to pass as a recently enlisted ally. He and Angelar nursed. Seryosha back to health. When he was quite well they released him, although he did not conceal from them that he meant to go back to Kolchak's army and continue fighting the Reds.

5. Yury was getting more and more tired of the Red partisan leader's irksome company and his idle chatter on being compelled he expressed his personal opinion of Mickulitsin as one of those to whom Russia owed her recent disorders and disturbances. Like Liberius, he was a revolutionary type who represented the principle of ferment in Russian life. He continued that though all the ideas of social betterment and moral improvement which the revolutionaries preached were excellent they were far from being implemented, and the mere talk, had cost a sea of blood. Yury was not at all sure if the end justified the means. Above all, when he heard people talk about reshaping life, it made him lose his self-control and he fell into despair. But the nonchalant *(clam and casual)* Liberius was cocksure about ultimate Red victory. At last Yury lost his cool and said in a most embittered voice that he hated Liberius and his men, and if he were kind and generous as he claimed to be, he told him to let him go back to his wife, his son and home. Yury was filled with so much hatred and frustration that he raged in silent indignation that he would kill Liberius one day.

6. Yury and his Hungarian assistant discussed three serious matters. First regarding the court martial of the orderlies who had been distilling vodk Lajos said that there was unrest in the camp, there was sympathy with the vodka distillers. Besides the men were worried about their families who were fleeing from the Whites. A convoy consisting of wives, children and old people was coming and some of the partisans had refused to leave the camp until it came. The second matter of the reorganization of the field ambulance was brushed aside. The third point was Yury's suggestion of preventive psychiatry with which Lajos agreed fully. They were faced with the rise and spread of a form of psychic illness which was typical of their time and was directly caused by the historical circumstances. The cause of the trouble, as for instance in the case of Pambhil Palykh, a man with a high revolutionary consciousness was his anxiety for his family in the event of his being killed and their falling in to the hands of the Whites and being made to answer for him. Indeed it was a complex mentality. Yury remembered Palykh as a cruel person who was always for extreme measures, shooting and punishing and he had always found him repulsive. Still he offered to take up his case.

7. Preparations for moving out were being made as the fugitives were expected shortly. On an open space outside his tent Kamennodvorsky was burning papers. Yury was reminded of Lara. Russia was going through the October Revolution and Yury was a prisoner of the partisans. Absentmindedly he joined the liaison officer who requested him to examine Palykh. Yury agreed.

8. On his way to see Pambhil, Yury was overcome with fatigue, being the cumulative effect of several nights. He lay down on the soft rustling leaves. He thought indignantly that one day he would kill Liberius. He heard a soft muffled conversation which told him that it was concerned with some secret and illicit plan. Unseen by the conspirators he listened. He recognised the voices of the scum of the partisans, hangers – on such as Goshka, Sanka, Koska, TerentyGaluzin, Zakhar etc. The plotters were negotiating with envoys from the advanced positions of the enemy. Yury understood that they were plotting to hand over Liberius to the Whites or to kill him; he thought with horror and indignation, quite forgetting he had himself wished his tormentor dead. He wished to prevent it. However the crime did not take place; it was forestalled for the conspiracy, as it turned out, was known. That day it was discovered and the plotters were seized. Sivobluy had played the role of agent provocateur (a sort of spy). Yury felt even more disgusted.

9. The partisans were getting ready to welcome their families and soon after wards to move on. Yury went to see Palykh. In the early days of the revolution, men like Pamphil who needed to encouragement to hate intellectuals, officers and gentry with a savage hatred, were regarded by enthusiastic left-wing intellectuals as a rare find and were greatly valued. Their inhumanity seemed a marvel of class consciousness, their barbarism a model of protetarian firmness and revolutionary instinct. To Yury, this gloomy

and unsociable giant with his poor interests and his soullessness, seemed a degenerate, a man who was not quite sane. Pamphil told the long story of his life. Pamphil had served in the army, later joined the revolution, and after that became a partisan in the civil war. Now that they were losing to the whites, he was worried stiff of all the torture and torment his wife and children will have to undergo. He had killed a lot of intellectuals, officers and gentry but it had never worried him. But in the February Revolution in Kerensky's time near a railway station they had sent a young fellow, an agitator to talk them into going back. "Fight on to victory" had been his slogan. He had got up on a water butt shouting that slogan; suddenly the lid turned upside down under him and he fell right into the water. Pamphil laughed heartily at the funny sight but the next moment he killed him. The boy had made him laugh and he had killed him for a joke, for nothing, like a fool. He could not get it out of his mind and that gave him the creeps.

3.5.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Eleven

This chapter depicts Yury's life as a prisoner of the partisans. His frustration, despair at being separated from his loved ones, his longing to escape and his bitterness are realistically portrayed. We are also made to see the extreme cruelty of revolutionary madness. Who is the youngster whom Pamhil shot?

It is the young Commissar *Glintz* [Refer chapter, IV, Section 10 in Unit]

Let us move on to the twelfth Chapter

3.6 Summary of chapter Twelve

Iced Rowanberries

This chapter consists of *nine* sections.

1. The convoy with the partisans' families arrived. Among them was *Kubarikha*, as solider's wife, who was secretly a witch. The partisans had moved from Fox's Thicket to a new camping ground, which was surrounded by dense forest which was in places impenetrable taiga (*evergreen forests).* It was here that the death sentence against eleven ring leaders of the conspiracy and two orderlies conduemned for distilling Vodkas was carried out one cold, sullen morning. A guard of twenty of the most loyal partisans, stiffened by members of Liberius's bodyguard brought the condemned men to this spot. Closing around them in a semi-circle, rifles in hand, they drove them to the edge of the arena, where there was no way out, except over the precipice (*steep rock).* The questioning, long detention and the degradations they had suffered had removed all human likeness from the prisoners, and they were as terrible as ghosts. The scene was heart-rending. Rzhanitsky, a friend of Vdovichenko, who like him was an old anarchist, aimed his rifle at the spy Sivobluga but missed it, instead it hit the orderly Pactikolya in the foot. The two men nearest him dragged him on, so that he should not be trampled by his comrades. Terenty Galuzin, knelt down, sobbed, screamed and pleased to the forgiven and let off; he hadn't live yet, he wanted to live longer. Some comrade, hidden in the crowd made a similar request, others screamed at Sivoblug the Judas, the Christ-Killer. On the verge of the grave, Vdoichenko, true to himself as he had been throughout his life, spoke loudly and clearly. He told his condemned friends not to humble themselves for these master craftsmen of the new torture chambers would never understand them. He exhorted them to die as martyrs of the world revolution. Then followed a volley of shots moving down and killing the condemned. The boy Terenty Galuzin, twitched longest but finally he too lay still.

2. It was winter. Liberius was often absent, leaving Yury to himself. It was too late for the partisans to move anywhere and they had nowhere to go. This was time of their worst set backs. The Whites, resolving, on the eve of their own destruction dealt a crushing blow at the irregular forest units once and for all and encircled them and were pressing them from every side. The deep snow made the partisans inaccessible, that was their main advantage. They suffered from shortage of winter-clothing, medicines and even means of transport. Drunkenness broke out again and contributed to the general demoralisation.

3. Yury went to see Pamphil and his family. Pamphil's wife and three children had spent the whole of the past summer in flight on dusty roads; they were terrified by their experiences, and they lived in expectation of new terrors. Pamphil loved his children to destruction. But with the news that families were going to be sent since they were considered bad for discipline, Pamphil's spirits fell and his creeps came back.

4. Before winter finally set in, the camp went through a period of disturbances – anxieties and absurd, illogical events. The whites had completed the encirclement. Their generals Vitsyn Quadri and Bassalygo were known far and wide of their harshness and unyielding resolution and even their names were terrifying. As things developed, the camp command could not keep up with them and Liberius found his plans turned upside down.

5. He was in a bad temper as he stood talking to the trapper Svirid who had been deeply shocked by the shooting of Vdovichenko, whose only crime had been that his influence rivaled that of Liberius and brought dissension into the camp. Svirid wished he could leave the partisans, but knew that if he were to do so he would share Vdovichenko's fate. The weather was horrible. Svirid was sent to meet the fleeing women. He had lots to tell Liberius but the latter was impatient.

6. Yury crossed the highway when he heard the bold challenging voice of Kubarikha. Thinking herself alone, she was singing softly, as if to herself. In the same attempt to stop the flow of time a sorrowful self-restraining spirit found expression in the old Russian folksong.

7. Agatha, Pamphil's wife had brought her sick cow to Kubarikha. The knot of curious onlookers who stood at a distance annoyed the witch. Yury watched her from the back of the crowd. She did not see him. What astonished Yury was the change in Pamphil's wife. She was telling the witch that the cow did not give any milk and that the other trouble was her husband. Kubairkha said he would bring him back to her. Yury listened spellbound to her instructions on witchcraft. Suddenly memories of Lara came to him.

8. Suddenly there was distant firing followed by commotion in the camp. They stood round the bleeding stump of a man who was lying on the ground. His right arm and left leg had been chopped off; the chopped off hand and leg were tied to his back with a note that this atrocity was in reprisal *(return)* for similar atrocities committed by a Red unit – not connected with the Forest Brotherhood. It was added that the same treatment would be meted out to all the partisans unless, by a given date, they surrendered to General Vitsyn's army corps. The bleeding man said that he had been put down on the camp-post and ordered to crawl; he was urged on by shooting into the air. With great difficulty the man recounted the torture meted out by Vitsyn's men: Boiling people alive, beating to shreds, putting salt on wounds, forcing people to eat shit and vomit and so on. The wretched man cried out and died without finishing his tale. Pamphil's fear for his family rose to a climax. In this desperate anguish, he felled his wife and three children with his razor sharp axe. It was clear that he was insane. No one was sorry for him. Everyone avoided him. At dawn he vanished from the camp fleeing from himself like a dog with rabies.

9. High winter came with grinding frosts. Yury anxiously waited for news from home, but in vain. Yury recalled the autumn, the shooting of the rebets, Pamphil's killing of his wife and children; white and Red atrocities rivaled each other in savagery, outrage breeding outrage. He had not quite forgotten the smell of blood yet. The more and more he asked for information regarding their families, Liberius evaded it and talked about the impending victory of the Reds. Poor Yury filled his mind with memories of Tonya and Sasha in her arms. In a bid to escape he took out a pair of skis and took a run on it. Fortunately he was able to outwit the sentry and leave the camp.

3.6.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Twelve

This chapter reeks of gore, it is full of blood curdling atrocities perpetrated by the revolutionaries without rhyme or reason.

And Yury is alienate, helpless spectator of the whole thing.

Let us move on to the *thirteenth* chapter

3.7 Summary of chapter Thirteen Opposite the House of Caryatids

This chapter consists of *eighteen* sections.

1. In Yuryatin, the Whites had gone, surrendering the town to the Reds. The terrors of the war, shelling and bloodshed, had ceased. There were proclamations pasted on the wall: anyone found hoarding food would be shot on sight; anyone who failed to surrender his arms would be persecuted.

2. Yury had reached Yuryatin earlier but he was so weak that it had taken him an hour to reach Merchant Street. He went towards Lara's house full of expectation, though he was prepared for the worst disappointment. Luckily for him, Lara had left they key of the house, as well as a note. Someone had seen Yury near the town and reported to her. She was going straight to Varykino with Katya. She asked him to wait for her. The vague, incompleted note containing no news of his family made Yury unbearably wounded and sad on their behalf. Without going inside, he went down to read the various announcements.

3. The unending monotony and the endless repetitions of the notices made Yury's head go round. Only once in his life had this uncompromising language and single-mindedness filled him with enthusiasm. He wondered how in one short moment of over-sensitive generosity he had allowed himself to be enslaved for ever. He ironically observed that it was lucky to be blind like the revolutionaries. He fainted and fell down. When he recovered and people helped, he merely told them that he lived opposite.

4. He went back to Lara's house. He wanted to have a haircut and shave off his beard. He remembered that there used to be a tailor's workshop in Spassky Street; he decided to borrow a pair of scissors.

5. The shop was packed with sewing women. When Yury knocked on the window and made signs that he wished to be let in, they did not oblige; they took him for a madman. So he knocked at the back door.

6. The door was opened by a dark, severe woman. She agreed to oblige Yury by giving him a haircut. He bluffed to her that he had worked for the former union of credit cooperatives as their traveling inspector and he had been sent on a inspection tour to Eastern Siberia where he got stuck. She adviced him to give up his purpose and pretend to be a doctor or a teacher. The people had seen and experienced all sorts of atrocities. She also spoke highly of an exceptionally kind woman, very sensitive, not like anyone else, who always stood up for people. Yura thought she talking about Lara. From her conversation and the details she offered, Yury realized that she was Mickulitsin's sister-in law, Liberius's aunt, the one who was a local legend. Yury did not commit anything. From further details that she gave, he understood that his family was now in Moscow.

7. Before settling down to sleep, Yury decided to clear up the place a little. Then he stacked a few logs to put in the bedroom stove. He found the initials "K.D". on one of them. "K.D." stood for Kulabish Dale in Varykino. He immediately inferred that Lara was in touch with Sandewyatov and that he had supplied her. He had always found it irksome to accept his help. He thought of Sandewyatov's free-and-easy way and of Lara's feminine impulsiveness and felt there must surely be something between them. Yury's blind jealously turned from the merest suppositions into certainty as he watched the logs burning. But soon his mind turned to anxious thoughts about his own family. He wished the earth would swallow him up for forgetting his wife and children. Suddenly he felt alive and unwanted in this bedroom. He observed that Lara was the representative of life, its expression. Suddenly he felt that she was perfect and irreprocable. Tears of admiration and repentance filled his eyes. He missed Lara unbearably. He drew her crumpled leter from his pocket. She had written that Yury's people were in Moscow and that Tonya had a girl.

8. Yury lay down on the sofa and was soon fast asleep. He had two bad dreams,

one after the other. He dreamt that he was in a room with a glass door, that was locked. On the other side his little son Sasha was crying his heart out and begging to be let in, for he was terrified by a waterfall at the back. But Yury shut the child out of false sense of honour and duty to another woman, and not the child's mother, and who might at any moment come into the room through another door. Yury woke up sweating and in tears, but he dropped off to sleep again. Next he dreamed of a dark winter morning in some crowded Moscow street before the revolution. In a big flat, the hostess Lara moved swiftly and silently hurrying about her duties and Yury was following her step by step, making a nuisance of himself. The only form of communication that remained between them was her inimitable canelide laughter in reply to his muttering. Yury wondered how distant, cold and compellingly attractive was the woman to whom he had sacrificed all he had.

9. Together with his weeping soul, Yury too wept and grieved for himself. He felt he was ill. Once he thought he hears voices near him and was terrified, imagining that he was going mad. Crying with self-pity he complained that heaven had abandoned him. Suddenly he realized that he was neither dreaming nor delirious but he was lying, washed and in a clean shirt on a freshly made bed and Lara was sitting beside him. Weeping, he fainted with joy.

10. Under Lara's care Yury soon recovered. They talked seriously about great matters; they loved each other greatly.

11. Lara said that she certainly wanted Yury to go back to his family; but the traveling conditions were too difficult and Yury was extremely weak. So she advised him to take up a job, perhaps his own profession for a while. As he was a fugitive from the partisans it would be dangerous for him to be unemployed. She herself would go back to teaching. As such she was living on a volcano; all because of her Strelnikov who had a lot of enemies. Lara had great regard for husband. In her view he was outstanding and had a wonderful upright shinning personality as well as immense integrity. She was nothing in comparison with him. That is where her fault lay.

12. To Yury's question Lara replied that she and her daughter Katya had been cleaning up Yury's house thinking he might want to go there. Yury's daughter was called *Masha*. Lara spoke about the horrible role Komarovsky had played in her life. Something had broken in her life for she had been forced to discover life and see it from the very worst side, a cheap distorted version of it – through the eyes of that elderly, immoral rogue. It was because of his intrution in to her life that later on when she married a man who was really big and remarkable and who loved her and whom she loved, her marriage was destroyed. Yury recognised the man as the immoral Moscow lawyer who had made his father, a millionaire industrialist drink, got his business into a muddle, brought him to the point of bankruptcy and drove the elderly Zhivago to end his life by falling from the train. Lara made it clear to Yury that though she was indebted to Samdevyatov for his showers of kindness, there was nothing beyond friendship between them. Yury asserted that he loved Lara beyond mind or memory or measure, to the point of jealously.

13. Yury asked Lara to speak about her husband. Lara said that she, Pasha and Galiullin had grown up almost in the same house. Though the son of an ordinary signal man, by sheer brains and hard work, he had reached the summit of present-day academic learning in two subjects – classics and mathematics. Lara was impressed by his purity, his manly, straight-forward character, yet she realized that Pasha had handed himself over to something lofty but deadening and pitiless, which would not spare him in the end. Speaking about the evil effects of the Revolution, she observed that everything established, settled, everything to do with home and order and the common round, had crumbled into dust and been kept away in the general upheaval and reorganization of the whole of society. All that was left was the bare, shivering human soul, stripped to the last shred, reaching out to its nearest neighbour as cold and lonely as itself. Lara considered Yury and

herself as typical representatives of the Russian predicament. They were the last remembrance of all that immeasurable greatness which had been created in the world in the past thousand years, and it was in memory of all that vanished splendour that they lived, loved and wept and clung to one another.

14. Lara was extremely emotional. She first said that if Strelnikov became Pasha again, if time turned back, she would sacrifice anything precious including her love for Yury in order to get her husband back but she contradicted herself at once. She then went on to explain what broke up the happiness of her marriage. Before the revolution people lived in relative peace and security. Murders happened in plays, news papers and detective stories. Suddenly there was the jump from this calm, innocent, measured way of living to blood and tears, to mass insanity and to savagery of daily, hourly, legalized rewarded slaughter. At the beginning of disintegration, everything began to break down at once – train and food supplies, the foundations of home life and conscious moral standards. It was then that falsehood came into Russia. The great misfortune, the root of all evil to come, was the loss of faith in the value of personal opinion. People started living by other people's notions which were being crammed down everybody's throat. The terrible mistake Pasha made was to mistake the showly, artificial forced spirit of the time for a private and domestic one. He went to war because he imagined himself to be a burden to them, so that we should be free of him. That was the beginning of all his madness. It was his misdirected adolescent vanity and his stupid ambition that drove him to his death. Lara wished she could save him. Yury observed that her love for her husband was pure and strong and said he would not stand jealou in the way of her love.

15. Summer came and went. Yury had to take up three temporary jobs, for the rapid fall in the value of money made it difficult to make both ends meet. His main job was in the Army hospital. Lara kept house for him. The nearer he was drawn to Lara and her daughter, the stricter was the control imposed on his thought by his duty to his family and the pain of his broken faith. But he suffered a sorrow and a torment which was like an unhealed and frequently reopened wound.

16. After two or three months of living like this he told Lara that it looked as though he would be forced to resign form his jobs. His work merely considered of meaningless flow of words in praise of the revolution and their regime. He was sick and tired of it. For he was not good at that sort of work. Lara observed that they were indeed entering the second stage of revolution when the accent was on suspicion, intrigues and hatreds. Two old political convicts Antipov and Tiverzin had been transferred to the local revolutionary tribunal. Lara feared that both of them were capable of destroying her, Katya and even Pasha one of those days in the name of higher revolutionary justice.

The sequel to this conversation took place very soon. It Acache (*hiding place*) of arms as found in a certain widow's house and a counter-revolutionary plot was uncovered, many people were arrested and the wave of searches and arrests continued. After debating a lot as to what they ought to do in the circumstances, Lara felt she would be happy to leave Katya with Sima Tunstreva to be brought up.

17. Lara had a visitor, Sima. Their conversation was more like a lecture delivered by Sima and so Yury left the room, lay on the sofa in the next room.

18. Yury had come home tired from the station. Although the listened to Sima's reflections through a haze, he realized that she had taken them all from Uncle Kolya's books; he felt she was very intelligent and gifted. Just then Sima's sister Glaphira brought to Yura a letter written by his wife Tonya more than five months ago. She had written that several prominent people belonging to the cadet party and rightwing socialists such as Uncle Kolya, her father and rest of them were being deported to Russia – a very mild misfortune considering the terrible time. Speaking about her love for him she wrote that the whole trouble was that she loved him and that he did not love her.

Even if it had been the other way round, she would have been careful to hide the fact that she did not love him because not to love was like murder. Sasha missed his father, cried bitterly and would not be comforted. Tonya was grateful for all the help Lara had rendered to her especially through her confinement, she was a good person, but she was the exact opposite of Tonya, who was born to make life simple and to look for sensible solutions, whereas she was the sort to complicate and confuse the way. On reading his wife's letter, Yury involuntarily cried out and fell down unconscious.

3.7.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Thirteen

This chapter highlights the life of Yury with Lara following his escape from the Red Partisans. It contains a lot of their philosophies and attitudes to life. What do you think about their characters? Do you feel Lara's love for her husband and Yury's guilt at having broken faith with Tonya are fake or genuine? How does Tonya emerge in this chapter?

Now let us move on to the *fourteenth* chapter.

3.8 Summary of Chapter Fourteen

Again Varykino

This chapter consists of eighteen sections.

1. One day in winter when Yury returned from the hospital, Lara told him in a lost, shocked voice that Komarovsky would come that night to have a word with Yury. The lawyer had told Lara that she, Pasha and Yury were in grave danger and that he alone could save them, if they listened to his advice. Lara implored (*begged*) Yury to stay with her; she hated the very idea of being alone with Komarovsky. The man came at last. Yury, was rather curst, even angry. The lawyer warned them that Tiverzin and Antipov, the local priest to Themis were busy sharpening their claws. He explained at length a great period of savagery was ahead because the communists were planning a switch-over to a more democratic course. Yury and Pasha were already on the hit list. The lawyers offered to save them all. Yury was sceptical.

It was getting late, but Komarovsky stayed on much to the irritation of Yury and Lara who wanted to talk things over by themselves and go to bed. At last she lost her temper almost told him to go out or be put in one of the other rooms which were full of rats. The lawyer opted to stay on.

3. Yury observed that Lara was letting her worries affect her too much. They considered going to Varykino and lie low till the situation improved. They knew death was knocking at theirs doors and that their days were numbered. Without Lara waiting to tell him Yury told her that he knew she was pregnant.

4. They left town on a grey morning on a mare provided by Samdevyatov. They reached the Zhivagos' house when it was getting dark. Yury could not see half the destruction because inside it was dark already. After some time, they drove on.

5. They reached Mickultsin's house. Parts of the house were neat. Soon they settled down to sleep.

6. They made adjustments to make themselves comfortable.

7. Lara was getting more and more irritable, for she wondered whether they were getting anywhere. At last Yury wondered whether they could ask Samdevyatov to keep them there for six months at his expense on condition he spent the time writing something literary like a book of poems, or a work of translation which might fetch money. Lara agreed.

8. Yury concentrated to write with a happy, relaxed attentiveness. He started putting down the poems he remembered best such as "Christmas Star" and "Winter Night". From these old completed poems, he went on to compose a new poem. Soon he became inspired. He felt that the main part of his work was being controlled by some power above him.

9. Another day of quiet madness went by. Yurf felt that he would, inevitably, lose Lara soon; yet his greatest torment was his impatience, for the night his longing so to express his anguish that others should weep. At night he resumed his writing.

10. It was the thirteenth day of their stay at Varykino. As on previous nights, the wolves had again howled at night and Lara had firmly resolved to go. Yury did not argue. A little later she suddenly hesitated and began to cry. She wanted to stay on for one more night.

11. When he returned home the next day, Yury heard Komarovsky talking to Lara, who was upset and crying; he was saying something to the effect that Yury was not to be trusted as he was "serving two masters". He had once again come to tell them that a secret train would take them to the East and they would be safe. Yury was not willing. The lawyer wanted to have a word with the adamant doctor.

12. Komarovsky told Yury secretly that Strelnikov had been captured, condemned to death and shot. Lara was to to be told. Yury was dazed and overwhelmed especially because he knew the lives of Lara and Katya were now in danger. For her sake he decided to pretend to catch up with them later. He was adamant that he would not go with them.

13. Yury felt he had cheated Lara, given her away and he raved bitterly. He bade her a final farewell in his heart. He went into the house. He thought of going back to Moscow.

14. Yury was going out of his mind. Never had his life been so strange. He neglected both himself and the house. He drank vodka and wrote about Lara. A host of reflections on the life of an individual and of society darted into his mind. Samdevyatov came to see him. He promised to take Yury away from Varykino for good. Yury started getting hallucinalons too.

15. A couple of days later Yury decided that he must be sensible if he wished to kill himself and find a quicker and less painful method. He promised himself to leave as soon as Samdevyatov came for him. A little before dusk, someone was calmly approaching the house with a firm, easy step. After racking his brains he recognized the visitor to be Strelnikov!

16. They had been talking for hours. Strelnikov wanted to avoid being alone, so he talked on ceaselessly. He was evidently keeping to himself some important secret that burdened him. It was the disease of the revolutionary age that no one had a clear conscience. Now he spoke incoherently jumping from confession to confession. He spoke of Terenty Galuzin who survived and crawled out from a pile of dead bodies, he later on betrayed Strelnikov by letting the local Cheka about the latter's hideout, hoping that would help to rescue his mother. Strelnikov suddenly switched to the Revolution.

17. Strelnikov warned Yury that if he valued his life, he ought to leave Varykino at once. He spoke at length of his love for Lara, and he was surprised when Yury told him how she in turn loved him more than anyone else in the world.

18. Yury slept soundly. The next morning he discovered Strelnikov's body near the door. He had shot himself.

3.8.1 Critical Comments on chapter Fourteen

This chapter highlights the plans of Yury and Lara to escape as well as the intrusion of Komarovsky and the final separation of the lovers. Strelnikov's unexpected appearance as well as his suicide add to the drama of the action.

Let us pass on to the next chapter.

3.9 Summary of Chapter Fifteen Conclusion

This chapter consists of seventeen sections.

1 & 2 During the remaining eight or ten years of his life, Zhivago gradually lost his knowledge and skill as a doctor and a writer, falling into a state of indifference and depression. His heart disease, which he had himself diagnosed, developed to an advanced stage. He came to Moscow at the beginning of NEP, the most false and ambiguous of all Soviet periods. A good looking young peasant boy accompanied him wherever he went. Yury had made the last stage of his journey by train. Looking at the havoc and destruction, he felt God-dwelt in the woods and Satan was lurking in the fields.

3. At this point, Yury came to a deserted, burn – out village. In one burnt

house, he happened to meet Vassya Brykin whom he had earlier met in the train from Moscow, Vassya's mother had drowned herself thinking her son dead; his sisters were in some orphanage. He went on to Moscow with Yury and on the way told him of many terrible happenings.

4. Vassya spoke about how Aunt Polya had been harassed by one Rotten Kharlam; about the murder of a widow who had burned her surplus potatoes; how he was unjustly put in jail and how he had escaped.

5. Yury and Vassya arrived in Moscow in 1922. Trade prospered within certain narrow limits. Yury helped Vassya to specialize in printing, binding and book design by getting him into what has been the Stronganor Institute. As part of his practical work at the Institute, Vassya printed in small editions booklets containing Yury's philosophy of life, his poems etc., they contained controversial opinions. The booklets sold easily and were much appreciated by their readers. Yury acted as medical consultant to a number of institutions which sprang up. For a long time, he and Vassya remained friends, but gradually their friendship cooled, for Vassya had developed remarkbley. Yury moved to a corner of Sventisky's flat which the all-powerful Markel had set aside for him. He gave up medicine, neglected himself and lived in great poverty.

6. Yury had to bother the Markets for water. When he came in for the fifth or sixth time, Market frowned. Moreover he criticized him for deserting his family. However Markel's daughter Marina liked Yury a lot and soon she became his third wife, and a devoted one too. They had children. One day Yury saw a tenant reading with concentration one of his booklets printed by Vassya.

7. Marina and Yury had two daughters Kapka and Klazhnka, and Gordon lived nearby. It was 1929. Both Gordon and Dudorov moved in good university circles, spending their time among good books and thinkers. Yury felt that they were desperately commonplace but he said nothing. Dudorov had recently come back form his first term of deportation. His feelings and state of mind in exile, as he spoke about them, impressed Gordon, but his hackneyed, pious platitudes exasperated Yury. However he told Nicky that he found it painful to listen to him when he said how he had been reeducated and had grown-up in jail. Misha asked him to get things straight with Tonya and Marina. Yury hoped everything would get right. He had news that his children were doing well in France; he hoped Tonya would have found someone else. Fearing an attack of asthma he left abruptly. The next morning Marina came running to Gordon to say that Yury had not returned.

8. For two days Gordon and Dudorov searched for Yury. On the third day letters from Yury came by different parts to Gordon, Dudorov and Marina. In brief, Yury expressed deep regret for having troubled them and implored them not to search for him. He wanted some time to rebuild his life as completely and rapidly as possible and after that he would return to Marina and the children. He sent a huge amount for Marina so that she could hire a nanny for her baby girl and go back to her job. Though upset, Marina accepted her lot. They could find no trace of Yury.

9. Yet all the time Yury had been living very close to them. That day after leaving Gordon, Yury had met his half brother Yevgraf by chance. After gathering the gist of all his troubles, Yevgraf had suggested that Yurv should disappear and go into hiding for some time. Yevgraf took a room for him in Kamerger Street. He look steps to get him a good post in a hospital with plenty of opportunities for continuing his research work. He supplied him with money and helped him in every way. As usual, his help put a new heart into Yury, and as usual the source of his power remained a mystery. Yury did not even try to guess at it.

10 & 1.1 Luckily for Yury, Yevgraf's negotiations with the hospital were dragging on and so he wrote happily on. He was in a hurry. The articles and poems were all on the same theme, the Town.

12. It was Yury's first day at Bolkin Hospital. Yury took a train to get to the place.

On the way he felt sick and faint. Soon he breathed his last.

13 & 14 Yury was cremated. Yevgraf and Lara were present. They did not compete in sorrow with Marina or claim any closer tie with the deceased than the others. Their composure was remarkable. Yevgraf implored Lara not to vanish after the cremation without leaving her address. He would require her help in sorting out his brother's papers. Lara was totally upset and highly emotional. One had died, the other killed himself and the vulgar scarecrow Komarovsky whom she had tried to kill and missed, had turned her life into a chain of crimes beyond her knowing. She was worried about Katya's future unnoticed by anyone, and with terrible sorrow she made three broad signs of the cross over Yury's body and kissed it.

15. Her restrained sobs burst from her; she was filled with the thoughts of the free, lofty love that she and Yury had shared.

16. She went on speaking and weeping and tormenting herself when she realized that the room had been crowded. The coffin was taken away.

17. Lara stayed several days in Kamerger Street. She told Yevgraf an important fact. One day Lara went out and did not come back. She must have been arrested in the street, and she died or vanished somewhere, forgotten as a nameless number on a list somewhere.

3.9.1 Critical Comments on Chapter 15

This chapter brings the story of both Dr. Zhivago and Lara to an end. Yevgraf's role in the human action has only begun to surface. Yet many loose strands remain. What are your impressions of Yury and Lara at this point? Do you sympathies with them, or do you think they got everything messed up and complicated?

Let us wind up with the Epilogue.

3.10 Summary of Chapter Sixteen

Epilogue

This chapter consists of five sections.

1 & 2 Gordon had been recently promoted as lieutenant and Nicky had become Major Dudorov. It was 1943 and they were returning to their units. They talked softly. Both of them were returning to their units. They talked softly. Both of them had been evidently sentenced for political crimes and they were talking about their experiences. Dudorov spoke of his fiancé Christina Orlestova who had, by a miracle of courage and ingenuity, got inside the German lines and blew it up, and taken alive and hanged. It was said that the church had canonized her. Yevgraf had been going round the district collecting information about her. He referred to Tanya the laundry girl, a friend of Christina. Tanya resembled Yury, she was a waif of fatherless child.

3. Sometime later Gordon and Dudorov were in the town of Karachew which had been razed to ground. Tanya was watching the regimental laundry entrusted to her care conscientiously. She said that Major General Zhivago (Yevgraf) himself had spoken to her the previous day. She did not want to tell him that she was bzrprizornaya (a home less orphan). He offered be her uncle and have her educated. Gordon asked what she had told the general, so Tanya told them her terrible story.

4. Tanya believed that she was of gentle birth; her mother was Raissa Komarova, the wife of a Russian cabinet minister, but Komarov was not her real father. When the Reds moved up to the chief town of the whites, the minister put her and all their family in a special train. Tanya was born during this separation, though the minister did not know. Moreover, he hated children. So Tanya was entrusted to Marfa the signal woman and her husband Vassya. Tanya learnt all sorts of work like spinning, sweeping, cooking and so on. Once a terrible dark stranger came to export the money Aunt Marfa had got by selling their cow. This led to the death of little Petya, Aunt Marfa's daughter. Tanya escaped from there. After hearing her story Gordon and Dudovov guessed who Tanya was. She was the daughter of Yury and Lara. Yevgraf would look after her.

5. On a quiet summer evening in Moscow, five or ten years later, Gordon and Dudorov were sitting and talking. They were

leafing through a book of Yury's writings which Yegraf had complied, a book they had read more than once and almost knew by heart. In spite of everything, they reflected that although the enlightenment and liberation which had been expected to come after the war had not come with victory, a presage (o men, prediction) of freedom was in the air throughout those post-war years and it was their only historical meaning. To the two aging friends it seemed that this freedom of the spirit was there, that they had entered that future, and would from then on be a part of it. And it seemed that the book in their hands knew what they were feeling and gave them its support and confirmation.

3.10.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Sixteen

The last chapter of the novel ties up the remaining loose strand. Tanya the daughter of Yury and Lara is to be protected by Yevgraf. The novel concludes on an optimistic note.

Read the study material and absorb the important ideas and essential points.

UNIT 4

DOCTOR ZHIVAGO : A CRITICAL STUDY

4.0 Objective

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

i) Attempt a critical appreciation of Zhivago's poems.

ii) Understand the various aspects of Boris Pastemak's *Doctor Zhivago*, and

iii) Make an overall estimate of the novel and the author.

4.1 Introduction

Before you begin to read this Unit, it is imperative that you revise and assimilate the matter given in the previous units. If you do so, you will be able to form your own impressions of the novel, its characters, its background and atmosphere, its mode of narration and so on. Then, when you read this unit, you will be able to appreciate the several aspects of *Doctor Zhivago*.

4.2 Zhivago Poems and Pasternak's Poetic skill

There are in all twenty four poems. We will begin by briefly analyzing the theme of each.

1) Hamlet : This little poem presents the predicament of Hamlet, the lonely man facing life, who agrees to play his part in the drama of life whose order is planned and the end inescapable. He realize that "To live your life is not as simple as to cross a field".

2) March : This presents a descriptive picture of the sweltering heat of the sun in summer, which melts the snow; there is frenzied activity, all around. "The culprit and the life giver is the dung with its smell of fresh air."

3) In Holy Week : This is a beautiful lyric celebrating the Passion week, Christ's sacrifice and redemption; "Death can be vanquished through the travail of the Resurrection", at the end of the poem, as well as "God is being buried" are powerful lines.

4) White Night : This lyric presents a nostalgic description of a beautiful girl, daughter of a small landowner - the description is highly romantic and picturesque.

5) Spring Flood : This is a dramatic description of a weary horseman the legendary Robber – Nightingale riding towards a solitary Urals farm.

6) Explanation : This is a powerful poem on the Manage Square where there was street fighting during the revolution. The tone throughout is ironic. The poet urges the people not to cry; women are crucified in the attic; he is indifferent. "we are high-tension cables" is a powerful metaphor.

7) Summer in Town : This is a short but very effective description of a sudden night shower in summer accompanied by "fingers of lightening" and "brief thunder" which "echoes sharply" and the blossoming lime trees frowning for lack of sleep!

8) The Wind : In the howling of the wind, the poet in the guise of a parent sees an attempt to find "you" (the child) out of its grief, the words of a lullaby! The first line. "This is the end of me, but you live on" is effective.

9) Intoxication : A short romantic piece.

10) Indian Summer : Though a description of summer time activities, there is a nostalgic sense of loss over the fallen trees in the previous autumn; the language is highly alliterative.

11) The Wedding Party: This begins as a descriptive poem and gradually becomes philosophical; life itself is only an instant, the dissolving of ourselves in all others, as though in gift to them.

12) Autumn : This is a significant poem, for it echoes Zhivago's mental conflict in a veiled manner. The poet has allowed his family and all his dear one to scatter and a lifelong loneliness fills nature and his heart; he is alone with his lady love (obviously Lara) of whom he says, "You are the good gift of the road to destruction, when life is more sickening than disease."

13) A Fairy Talse : In a romantic and gentle manner this poem narrates a horseman's encounter with a serpent which had captured a girl, and how, at last, he killed it and rescued the girl.

14) August : This is a poem replete (filled) with multiple images.

15) Winter Night : This poem blends the images of snow falling outside with a candle on the table burning inside, and is tinged with Christian symbols like the cross and an angel.

16) Parting : This poem is a touching account of the sorrow of man who returns to his empty house which is full of signs of havoc and he misses his beloved (wife); one is reminded of Dr. Zhivago's experience or escaping from the Red partisans and returning to his empty house with Tonya away in Moscow.

17) Meeting : In this poem we have a tender description of the love between the poet and his beloved.

18) Christmas Stars: This is a long poem which recreates the journey of the Magi to witness Infant Christ. All through, the Christmas star was gazing at the doorway like a guest.

19) Day break : This poem brings out in a simple style, the effect of the way on the life of the ordinary man; how the poet had no news of is beloved (wife) and how he longs for ordinary, free pleasures.

20) The Miracle : This poem narrates the sad plight of a weary traveler when he comes across a fig tree that was fruitless, and hence comfortless.

21) The Earth : This poem contains a description of a homely scene in a private house in Moscow, full of comfort but tinged with sorrow.

22) Evil Days: This is a powerful poem describing the events leading to Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

23) Mary Magdalene I, II: These poems present the repentance and agony of the Biblical woman at her sinful past and her faith in Jusus.

24) Gethsemane : This poem also deals with Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

25) Fairy Tale : This is a slightly different translation of the same poem No. 13 This translation made by Lydia Slater, conveys the metre of original.

The twenty four poems printed at the end of the novel Doctor Zhivago are not a mere appendage as unwary readers have supposed, but an integral part of Pasternak's examination into the nature of life and death; they complete the pattern of meaning by a final statement on the themes of love, death and resurrection. Pasternak's technique throughout reveals the working of a poet's imagination and a poet's strategy with imagery and symbol, rather than the logic of the novelist – one reason, perhaps why the book conveys an effect of subtlety and richness. It is a novel filled with luminous compelling images of the land itself in all weathers and seasons so that the life of man remains rooted in the life of nature, not in systems or institutions. And life, says Yuri Zhivago, is stronger than men's efforts to

control it to their own ends. For him it is the principle of self renewal. The poems help to reinforce these ideas.

Pasternak's best work is contained in his richly suggestive poetry of the twenties when he had fully absorbed the influence of Blok, Mayakovsky and the formalists. To understand his poetry, it is necessary to realize that Pasternak is essentially a symbolist, who continually employs his own vision by means of sound, half-meaning and metaphor. The poetry he published during the II World War was simpler than his earlier work. He seemed to want to progress towards simplicity, and this is apparent in the poems appended to *Doctor Zhivago* which, according to some critics are better than the novel itself. He worked on them for more than twenty years. Pasternak, conscious of his isolation under the regime of socialist realism – and of the isolation that half-developed meaning imposes upon every artist – began, from about 1940. To reach for a clarity and simplicity, his early writing lacked. There is a new humanity in the Zhivago poemes, a feeling of being caught up at last in the general movements of the time-the II World War and the post Stalinist thaw of 1954-1956. He compromised nothing. In some of these later poems a Christian theme emerged which again alienated him from Soviet Critics. The new Pasternak vigorous as ever, but unobscure, may be seen in the poem entitled "March".

Thus we find that Pasternak's early poetry is characterized by a musical quality, and originality of imagery and diction, a sharpness of vision and an intense poetic passion. Its main themes are love, nature and poetic creation. His descriptions of the Russian countryside are especially unforgettable. After 1930, his poetry, shows a gradual development away from modernism and experimentation, towards a simpler, more direct, classical style.

Let us proceed to study some of the salient aspects of the novel.

4.3 A Critical Summary of *Doctor Zhivago*

Doctor Zhivago took the reading public by storm. While Pasternak's severe critics and detractors harshly denounced his work as traitor's, several intellectuals and scholars hailed the novel as a masterpiece about the revolution. As the German critic Der Monat observed: "No novel since War and peace has grasped so broad and at the same time so compressed a segment of history." The entire action of this revolutionary novel is set in Moscow, the Eastern front and Siberia during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

The Story

Ten year old Yury Zhivago, the son of a wealthy profligate(immoral person) who has deserted his family, attends his mother's funeral in the company of his Uncle Kolya; they stay that night at a nearby monastery, and to the boy, waking in the darkness the snow covered landscape beyond his window suggests as empty, alien world. Young Misha Gordon travelling with his father sees the older Zhivago kill himself in a leap from a moving train. Nicky Dudorov, whose parents were a Nihilistic terrorist and a Georgian princess, is being brought up in a household of Kilogrigov, as philanthropic, industrialist. After his father, a revolutionary railway worker, has been exiled to Siberia, Pasha Antipov is taken in by the Tiverzin family, also revolutionaries. Amalia Guishar, the French window of a Russian engineer arrives in Moscow and opens a dress-making establishment. Her protector is Victor Komarovsky, an unscrupulous lawyer, who eventually succeeds in seducing her daughter Lara.

Before long, these lives being to criss-cross. During their school days, Yury and Misha live in the home of Alexander Gromeko, a professor of Agronomy. Their companion is Tonya, daughter of Groneko and his ailing wife Annu Ivanovna. Pasha and Nicky take part in student riots. One night, by chance, after Madame Guishar has attempted suicide, Yury sees Lara looking at her betrayer and guess their secret. Lara following an unsuccessful attempt to shoot Komarovsky, becomes a governess in the Kilogrigov household. Later she marries Pasha and goes to live with him in a hamlet(village) beyond the Urals. Yury discovers his vocation as a poet, but instead chooses a career in medicine, because he believes that art is not a vocation. He marries Tonya and their first child Sasha is born shortly before the I world War.

During the War, Doctor Zhivag, serves in a hospital unit at the front. Wounded, he is nursed by Nurse Lara Antipova, who is to become the great love of his life. So he finds himself torn between two women, both whom he loves. After the October Revolution, Zhivago flees with his family to a village in the Rurals; they settle on the estate belonging to Tonya's grandfather. He is suddenly seized by a brand of Red partisans and forced into service as their doctor during a campaign of guerrilla warfare. After his escape he returns to find that family has gone back to Moscow. He meets Lara and they live together in an abandoned farmhouse for a brief period of a perfect happiness. Then, about to be arrested, because they have become politically suspect, Yury sends her back to safety with Komarovsky, who has become an official of the new regime.

Back in Moscow, Zhivago finds his life empty and meaningless. His family has found refuge in Paris. He marries a younger woman, the daughter of a former porter in the Gromeko household, practices medicine and writes a few scientific papers. In the end, he is befriended by his strange half- brother Yevgraf, an ambiguous figure whose relations with Zhivago remain shadowy and symbolic. After the doctor dies of a heart attack, Yevgraf arranges for the publication of a collection of poems, Yury had composed. During the II World War, Yevgraf also discovers Tonya(the daughter of Yury and Lara) and provides for her future.

Let us pass on to the study of some of the important characters in the novel.

4.4 Characterization in *Doctor Zhivago*

Pasternak has shown, psychological depth and a thorough grasp of human nature in delineating his men and women. Two characters who linger in the reader's minds even after the novel is laid aside are, of course, Yury and Lara. Both are life- like, full of flesh and blood, humane and round characters.

a) Yury Zhivago

Yury is the titular hero of Pasternak's masterpiece *Doctor Zhivago*. The novel spans his life from a ten year old boy till his death due to heart attack as a middle aged man. As a boy, Yury appeals to us as tender child, who misses his mother, suffers alienation and a sense of isolation; but he is highly poetical and imaginative. He has strong ideas on God, religion and morality. In fact, he is a Puritan at heart.

During his student years. Yury reveals an almost Dostoveskian gift of innocence, which he never loses, and which makes him vulnerable in the end; two forces beyond his power to order or control. This trait is part of the greater enveloping mystique which, in the novel, throws over much that is brutal and sordid- a radiance of goodness and truth. Yury discovers his vocation as a poet, but instead chooses a career in medicine, because he believes that art is not a vocation, any more than melancholy or cheerfulness is a profession. For him, most choices are as simple as that.

The above-mentioned trait can be seen in Yury's marriage too. On her death bed, Tonya's mother proclaims that Yury and Tonya are meant for each other. Though as he had lived in the same household for years, it is only now that Yury sees Tonya as a woman and he marries her. He loves her, respects her, cherishes her. But at the war-front, where he is serving in a hospital unit, he meets Nurse Lara Antipova who nurses him when he is wounded. She becomes the great love of his life. Yury now finds himself married to a wife whom he sincerely respects and loves, but at the same time pulled towards Lara by a tide of passion which sweeps him along into the unsettled years ahead.

Yury feels guilty about deceiving his wife and suffers from self-torment, but the precarious conditions of the war, the cruelty of the revolution fill him with desolation and isolation so that he is not able to control his impulses. It would be unfair to judge him as the chip of the old block. For while the older Zhivago is a profligate who had abandoned his wife and son, Yuryis separated from his family because of the revolution. When he escapes from the Red partisans he does try to contact his family. Thus in a sense Yury is a character of circumstances.

The Yury-Lara relationship is one of the most beautiful bonds for it beings the best out of the two. She is able to give him the necessary mental calm and relaxation, so that he even takes to composing poetry. In spite of his deep love for her, Yury insists on

sending her to safety under the care of Komarovsky. The scene of Yury's funeral which Lara attends, the way she kisses his body, sheds profuse silent tears and suffers his death mutely speaks volumes to their unding bond.

Yury Zhivago is an intellectual, a tender, emotional, good human being, who unfortunately cannot bear the barbarity of the revolution and war. His life depicts the gradual disintegration of an idealist intellectual, who had welcomed the Revolution, but soon became disillusioned by the chaotic tribulations of the Civil War period. In the final analysis, he will certainly remain as a lovable person, a victim of situations beyond his powers of endurance or control, a character more sinned against than sinning.

b) Lara

It is difficult to think of Lara out of connection with the titular hero of Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*. She is the sort of a girl who is exposed to the harsh sordid realities of life much before childhood's joys have been experienced. Losing her father early in life and having a most immature mother and an irresponsible brother, Lara realizes that she has to stand only on her own feet. Her destruction by the shady lawyer Komarovsky remains a permanent blot on her life. The sordid experience has tarnished her concept of pure ideal love. It is one factor which breaks off her marriage to Pasha, who leaves her to join the revolutionary movement.

However, it remains a fact that Lara is capable of strong passion and sincere love as evidenced by her relationship with Yuri(Refer above topic for details). She is a capable of suffering a lot, she has great tenacity and powers of endurance. She is like some of the characters of Dostoesvsky great a warrior of life. She is very helpful and during the Civil War, she helps quite a lot of people to escape. If Yury's wife Tonya does not like her, she is justified. However Lara is a memorable character with a number of striking qualities.

Let us consider *Doctor Zhivago* as a revolutionary novel.

4.5 Doctor Zhivago as a Novel of the Revolution

Read the section dealing with the background of the novel in Unit-1

Like Charles Dicken's *A Tale Of Two Cities*, *Doctor Zhivago* also depicts the horrible effects of war, revolution and civil war on the lives of ordinary people. Whole chapters are devoted to the description of these aspects. Many intellectuals and scholars are attracted by the call of the revolution. Pasha leaves home and his wife. His father Antipov, Tiverzin a railway worker and a score of others join the movement. Normal family life is disrupted. The revolutionaries cannot see their families. They, live on acts of utter cruelty and barbaric violence. Any one suspected is mutilated and killed without mercy. A horrible scene is the shooting of a number of youngsters who tried to plot against the Red Partisan leader.

The revolution paralyses normal life. Things become scarsce prices shoot up. There us a scene in which Tonya barters a fine almirah for a few handfuls of logs. Even Yury steals a few logs. Families are separated sometimes forever. The Moscow to which Yury returns after the October Revolution is a city ravaged by riots and disaster. Ordinary civilians are conscripted by the revolutionaries. Doctor Zhivago is seized by the Red partisans during a campaign of guerilla warfare, and forced into service as their doctor. He is exposed to the worst scences of barbarity and gruesome killing and senseless cruelty during the two years he spends with them. His disillusionment only increases as days go by. The revolutionaries who care nothing about massacre and slaughter of thousands suddenly become anxious for the safety of their family. An outstanding instance is the hard-core revolutionary Play who, in order spare them slow tortune and death at the hands of the enemies, kills his wife and three children with his axe! Another great scene of the novel is that in which Zhivago encounters Pasha for the last time, now called Strnlnikov (The Shooter); he has been a feared and hated in flight from Red authorities who have denounced him like the others. His suicide after a night of wild accusations and object confession points

eloquently to the revolutionary madness of the period.

[You may read the previous Units and fill out the details]

Let us conclude with an overall estimate of the novel.

4.6 An Overall Estimate of Pasternak and *Doctor Zhivago*

Much against his ordinary background and his peace loving nature, Boris Pasternak was forced to appear on the front page news, thanks to the explosive reaction and furor caused by his masterpiece *Doctor Zhivago.* The Russian bureaucracy attacked the novel as it was an indictment of the totalitarian state. The fact is that Pasternak was a poet-novelist, not a political pamphleteer.

Doctor Zhivago is a novel powerfully imagined, deeply concerned with the moral issues of human conduct and set against the background of a world falling apart, and through loneliness and cruelty and fear, involving a whole society in the common destruction. It is superb, however, as a statement of human dignity and of man's capacity for integrity, faith, courage and endurance; and it is a work in the great moral tradition of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky that the novel has to be judged.

The opening chapters of the novel give an impression of complexity and spaciousness; but the early promise ot Tolstoyan richness and profusion in character and scene is never fulfilled, for with the outbreak of the war, the tempo of events quickens abruptly. Whatever may be said against its narrative disjointedness, use of coincidences or uneven development of character, the novel contains too many deeply moving scenes, conversations and reflections on life, too many extraordinarily

Evocative descriptions of the Russian landscape to be taken as anything but a work of major interest.

Good as the novel is in its great sense of life, and in tracing through the particular incidents of particular lives the special terror which is history's contribution to our century it gains added vigour fron its deep roots in the Christian tradition. The purity of Pasternak's religious feeling, uncomplicated by sect or dogma, is without the self-consciousness that most Western writers display in dealing with matter of religion. The crucifixion and Resurrection are in his view part of an ever-rene wing miracle. All scientific discoveries and creations in art are spiritual, based on the two ideas of modern man-those of freedom of spirit and sacrifice.

To conclude, *Doctor Zhivago* is a novel of honesty and passion, not a work of abstraction, set within a frame of historical reference. At the same time, it is not a fiction of profound psychological depth, not a massive fable or epic. Its meaning and relevance are of a different order. Boris pasternak has looked at the history of his own time with what Henry James called "the imagination of disaster". Out of the poetic apprehension and the knowledge so gained, he has spoken to the conscience of the world. And the world has listened to his testimony, concerning the moral condition of modern man in the sweep of history. That is the important thing.

Please read the study materials given in all the four Units. You may utilise them properly to write essays. Do not mistake the study material for prepared essay.

4.7 Questions Based on Doctor Zhivago

1. "Doctor Zhivago is deeply concerned with the moral issue of human conduct and is set against the background of a world falling apart."
2. Explain the validity of the statement.

   (Hints: The Revolution-its aims-atrocites and impact on life of individual-Yury's predicament-attitude to Revolution – disillusionment –torn between Tonya and Lara-his torment-death and resurrection-freedom of spirit-triumph of love and man's integrity)
3. "Boris Pasternak affirms in Russia's greatest novel since the Revolution that not even communism can destroy his peoples' hopes and Humanity".-Discuss.

   (Hints: Refer to portions on the Revolution in all the four Units-inhuman, cruel, life-sapping-yet characters like Yury and Lara manage to retain humanity compassion, faith and integrity to the end- explain)
4. The role of Lara in Doctor Zhivago.

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UNIT XII

ZORBA THE GREEK

1. Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

(i) become familiar with modern Greek fictional literature:

(ii) have an idea of Nikos Kazantzakis: and

(iii) appreciate his novel *Zorba the Greek.*

Let us begin with a brief survey of modern Greek fiction.

1.1 Modern Greek literature (fiction) – a brief introduction

The literature of modern Greece consists almost entirely of poetry. There is no major prose writer. To an educated Greek, poetry is a natural response to experience. However a few novelists adorn modern Greek literature; one of them is Nikos Kazantzakis Let us study something about him.

1.2 Nikos Kazantzakis: Life and Achievements

Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957) was a Greek novelist, poet, dramatist and traveller. He was born at Herakleion in Crete. He was educated there and in Naxos. Later he studied at Athens (1902-06) and Paris (1907-09). He grew up amidst the bloody uprisings of the Cretans against Ottoman rule and for a time, his family moved to the island of Naxos where he attended a French school run by Catholic friars. He later studied law at Athens. His first writings included numerous philosophical and literary essays, and translations of foreign works, mostly French and German. He wrote plays,travel books, poems and several novels. A restless man with an insatiable curiosity and avidity for experience, he traveled widely and incessantly in Europe, Asia and the Far East. His travel books, characterised by a romantic and intuitive grasp of people and landscapes, are notable. The philosophers BERGSON and NIETZSCHE were early influences, and religious problems always held a fascination for him. His intellectual explorations were equally wide: besides Bergson and Nietzsche they include Darwin, Dante (whose *Divine Comedy* he translated very sensitively into Greek), Cervantes, Homer, Karl Marx, Lenin, Christianity, Buddhism etc.

Though he has claims to be treated primarily as a poet, it is in his prose that Kazantzakis might live, for a while yet. His work is undoubtedly 'magnificent', but he meant it to be so; his grandiose vitiates it. It is not his confusion between Bergsonian vitalism and Neitzschean despair that causes suspicion, for that is a familiar enough conflict in our century; but it is his restless pretensions to a greatness that his writings never earn. His monumental epic "The Odyssey (tr. 1959) consisting of 33,333 lines takes up the story, though transferring it to modern times, where Homer left off. Unfortunately, Kazantzakis misjudged his age, and tried to achieve a sort of greatness that it could not accommodate. But he was a noble minded man, who moved excitedly from influence to influence absorbing the nature of virtually every major teaching the world has known.

Kazantzakis's major novels, written after the II world War, and later in life, attained international fame. They are marked by a flamboyance in the treatment of heroes and situations and a great but uncontrolled energy. They have been widely translated and successful too. He is of course famous for the crude, near Kitsch (pretentious, vulgar) but vital and evocative novels of his later life: *Zorba The Greek* (1946, tr. 1952) which was turned into a popular film *Christ Recrucified* (1954), *The Life and Manners of Alexis Zorbas, The Last Temptation* and so on. *Anafora Ston Greco* was a posthumous autobiographical novel.

Kazantzakis spent the last decade of his life in Antibes. He died in Germany on the way back from a journey to China of leukemia, a month after he lost the Nobel Prize to Albert Camus by one vote. He was a fierce fighter all his life for the demotic (colloquial, vulgar) and his undoubtedly profound vulgarity is to some extent compensated by his vigour. Kazantzakis is a writer who must be taken or left. He could not offer anything substantial to explain his tragic optimism and was in reality a second rate thinker. He has no depth; the central ideology of all his work, that matter must be transformed continuously into spirit is meaningless in the face of the sheer physical gusto of his novels. (*Martin Seymour Smith*).

Let us pass on to a critical summary of the novel.

1.3 Critical Summary of Zorba The Greek

Zorba the Greek is set in *Crete,* a Greek island on the Mediterranean, in the present times. The main characters who people the novel are as follows:

(i) ZORBA : a Greek miner, a man of great physical vigour and lusty appetites.

(ii) THE NARRATOR : Called *Boss Zorba's* employer and friend.

(iii) MADAME HORTENSE : an ageing courtesan.

(iv) STAVRIDAKI : the narrator's close friend.

The story of *Zorba the Greeks* is that of life against death. The central figure is Zorba, a miner of about sixty who refuses to let age and approaching death keep him from the celebration of being alive. Zorba is employed by a man who is an intellectual in spite of himself, a man bound to the contemplation of books and landscapes, and cut off from the traditional snares of wine, women and song. *Zorba The Greek* is about the conversion of this man; it is the story of the passion for life raised by the old man in the spirit of the younger. These are the circumstances of the narrative: The Narrator whose entire life has been bound up with the rather sterile worship of ideas, decides to go into business on the island of Crete. To this purpose, he rents a strip of land, assembles equipment, and forms a mining company. To supervise the miners, the brings with him Zorba, a man of immense physical presence and corresponding physical appetites. The Narrator is reserved, intellectual, introspective. Zorba is barbarous (uncivilized) and noisy, a lover of wine and a chaser of women. Their encounters and misadventures on the island of Crete form the substance of the book.

Upon their arrival on Crete, the two men find an ageing woman cast ashore by whatever fates determine the careers of broken down courtesans. She is a woman who has known a great ideal of pleasure, even something of love. In her youth she had been the mistress of admirals and princes and a good many other rich men besides. She is about to invest her old age in the repentant contemplation of her past when Zorba arrives to bring her back to life. He proves that even though they are at the end of their colourful life-spans, there is a great deal of life left in both of them. Zorba and Madame Hortense set up a *ménage a deux* (an artificial household) and the narrator to whose age such a attachments are more natural, becomes the amused witness of their late passion.

As for the narrator himself, he is deeply stirred, but not by love. The idea of love has the power to move him, as does the sight of birds, the memory of lines of Dante, the thoughts of this platonic attachment to a departed friend. But he shrinks from real physical attachment; it is only with an effort that he brings himself to understand why Zorba delights in eating and drinking too much. He sings the praises of Dante on the island of Crete, surely a case of doing the right thing at the wrong time. For, the island of Crete is a fertile island in the symbolic relation of Kazantzakis. The island is a place where vines grow in abundance. Wines flow easily, it is likened to blood, and drinking wine is compared to a feast of cannibals, (savages). The island is a place of olives and grain, growing lushly (very well) out of the earth under hot Libyan winds. And it is pre-eminently a place of passion whose rulers are

the young woman of the countryside. All of these, the Narrator tries desperately to avoid until he undergoes a ceremonial baptism in all of them.

He is first awakened to life by the musings of Madame Hortense who revels in her immoral but fascinating stories about the motives that make men both sinful and magnificent. Her rhapsodies (enthusiastic accounts) over her past lovers seem at first merely amusing – she goes on forever over their curly, silky, dark perfumed beards – until the narrator becomes aware of the power of life behind her experiences. He realises that what has kept her, life alive, indeed what has redeemed the nature of her life is her capacity to take the deepest pleasure from the memory of love. And he sees this same capacity operating in Zorba who refuses to let his age stand between him and life. It is the great failing of Zorba, and perhaps his strength, as he admits, that the older he grows the less he is able to control his desires.

Gradually, the story of Zorba's life comes out. He has been married and he has been free. He has been at times a father and a lover, a man of property and a beggar. Yet he is perhaps, by definition, a man who is completely free. When he likes something, he stays with it; when he grows tired, he moves on to some other experience. He does so not out of a decadent sense of pleasure but because he is convinced hat this is the way of all living things. Zorba, in short is an animal and he is astute (clever) enough to recognize this fact and not to wish he were something else. He lives without ordinary morals, because that is his nature. Gradually, the narrator comes to realize that his simple and primitive existence hold the key to a real truth for whenever he attempts to argue with Zorba the issue is reduced to realities and he loses. Hunger, Zorba shows him, can only be appeased (satisfied) by eating, even if the food belongs to someone else. Women, Zorba explains, can only be understood by their use and their desires, even if they are married to somebody else. The cardinal sin, in fact is to disappoint a woman who is ready for love, for this denies the whole purpose of her creation.

This theology may be too primitive for the mainland but it is appropriate to Crete. The Gods have abandoned Crete, and their representatives, the monks in the monastery nearby, encourage no faith in their beliefs. When the narrator approaches them to confront the earthiness of Zorba with disinterested wisdom, he finds that they too have their fierce appetites, their depravities, and their moral ugliness. Zorba, he begins to see, is more true to the forces that really rule this savage island. They are the forces of fertility, and Zorba is one of the last of Greek demigods of nature. He is a passionate dancer, and player on the stringed *santuri*, and when he finds language inexpressive, which is often he simply leaps to his feet and dances until he reaches a state of frenzy and exhaustion. In all of his excesses, he is like some natural force. Kazantzakis is evidently comparing him to the magnificent Nature – gods of Greek mythology. The fact that he is old and approaching death is significant, for the author intimates that he is last of such gods.

In this long and lyrical book, there is not a great deal of action to accompany the reflections of the narrator what there is, however makes up in intensity what it lacks in volume. The narrator finally succumbs to the nature-worship of Zorba, and however reluctantly, he arrives at the bed of the woman for whom he is destined. Crete, however, is not the kind of place to let matters end in so rational a way. In a terrible scene ushered in by a celebration and dancing, she is cornered by an angry mob of jealous women. They incite their men to attack her. In the presence of Zorba and his friend, she is pinioned in a re-enactment of some ancient sacrifice and beheaded. With a special touch of irony, her head is thrown on to the steps of the Church!

It is the advent of death that brings another kind of enlightment to the narrator. He realises that he is in the midst of a kind of life that is nowhere described in books, not even in Dante. He has accepted the orgiastic celebration of life and now this ritual medium brings him to understand the omnipresence of death. It is this which completes his vision of death. Yet *Zorba The Greek* does not end

here; for it is in the nature of Zorba scarcely to end at all. He leaves the island, and as the narrator later hears, travels through the countries of the Balkans leaving behind him a swath or collection of empty bottles and rejoicing women. Finally in his seventies, he marries a magnificent young Serbian woman, fathers her child and dies even while protesting his sickness.

Throughout *Zorba The Greek,* Kazantzais concentrates on the language of abundance. He describes the things of the earth-wine, oil, and bodies of beautiful women – with a passion and an accuracy that is all to often lacking in the denatured realism of the present. He deals with ideas, but only as they become concrete and specific in action. His accomplishment is to have to made *Zorba The Greek* a fitting structure for the symbolic weight it carries.

1.4 Zorba the Greek: An Overall Estimate

Zorba The Greek is a different type of novel. It is an illustration of *Art for Art's sake.* The moral code of the titular character is rather unconventional. He does anything and everything that is conducive to his personal joy. He is little concerned about others. His attitude to food wine and women is the same-they are all meant to be consumed. Zorba symbolies the Epicurean philosophy: *"Eat drink and be merry today, for tomorrow we die".* The philosophy seems to work well with him, for to the end, he drinks life to the lees (last drops). His motto is *Carpe Diem* that is, "seize the day". That is the secret of his vitality and lust for life.

Zorba is portrayed in better light by being contrasted with the narrator on the one had and the monks on the other. The former dares not taste life; he does not know the meaning of love or sex or a fast life till he is initiated by Zorba. The monks lead a life of moral depravity, hardly encouraging to the narrator who approaches them for counsel and consolation. What the novelist tries to show is that it is not easy for man to control his appetite-physical or sexual. He implies that it is better to be an open animal-like character as Zorba, than be a hypocrite like the monks who are veritably immoral fellows in priestly robe.

The novel is a poetic mosaic. Written in rich poetic prose, of it is an effusion of sentiments and the rich play imagination. The language is highly metaphoric. Symbols and motifs add to the richness of the language. The characters are types, Zorba reminds one of Browning's dramatic monologue *Fra Lippo Lippi.* In conclusion in its own way, the novel is an affirmation of life.

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UNIT XIII

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1.0 Objectives

At the end of this *Unit,* you should be able to:

Attempt *Objective Type Questions,* successfully

1.1 Introduction

Before you go through this *Unit,* please read all the other *Units,* and become familiar with the authors, the novels the plots and characters pertaining to each and so on. Then you will able to answer the *Objective Type Questions* easily.

1.2 Don Quixote: Cervantes

1. Full name of Cervantes is ——— (*Miguel de Cenvantes Saavedra*)
2. The country to which Cenvantes belonged —— (*Spain*)

3. The village to which Don Quxote belonged ——— [*La Mancha*]
4. What was one of the strangest fancies that entered the head of Don Quixote? [*To become a knight – errant*]
5. The imaginary lady whom Don Quixote was in love with ——— [*Dulcinea del Toboso*]
6. Name of Quixote's horse ——— [*Rozinante*]
7. Don Quixote's squire —— — [*Sancho Panza*]
8. What did Quixote imagine to be monstrous giants and started attacking?——— [30 or 40 *windmills*]
9. Who is Freston?——— [*An enchanger-sage*]
10. Who has sworn an oath of vengeance concerning Mambrino's helmet?—— [*Marquis of Mantua*]
11. Name of Sancho Panza's ass —— [*Dapple*]
12. Original name of Don Quixote —— — [*Alonzo Quixano*]
13. The types of books Don Quixote read in plenty – [*Romances of Chivalry*]
14. Name of the priest in Quixote's village —— — [*Pedro Perez*]
15. Name of the barber in Quixote's village —— — [*Nicholas*]
16. What did Sancho Panza hope to become —— — [*Governor of an isle*]
17. The place where Quixote encountered the windmills —— — [*Montiel*]
18. What did Quixote mistake for Mambrino's golden helmet? [*the poor barber's bowl*]
19. What did the puppeteer *(Don Quixote)* have ? [*A divining ape*]
20. How long did Sancho govern his isle? [*A week*]
21. The knight who challenged Don Quixote to a combat at Barcelona? [*The knight of The White Moon]*
22. The bachelor knight who defeated Don Quixote —— [*Samson Carrasco*]
23. Don Quixote is a ——— novel [*Picaresaque*]
24. Who burnt Don Quixotes books/library? [*His housekeeper*]
25. ——— is the rustic companion of Don Quixote who is described as "long-legged" [*Sancho Panza*]

1.3 Madame Bovary: Gustave Flaubert

1. The country to which Flaubert belonged —— — [*France*]
2. Charles Bovary was called to attend to M. Raoult's ——— [*Broken leg*]
3. Where did Emma have her early education? [*In a French convent*]
4. Charles Bovary's first wife —— — [*Heloise*]
5. Charles Bovary had married Heloise for her – [*fortune*]
6. Emma's child was born in ——— [*Yonville*]
7. The law clerk who was initially attracted to Emma – [*Leon Dupuis*]
8. The town chemist at Yonville —— — [*Monsieur Homais*]
9. A stranger who soon became Emma's passion ——— [*Rodolphe Boulanger*]
10. What poison did Emma consume? [*Arsenic*]

11. The legacy left by Charles Bovary for his orphaned daughter ———[*Twelve francs*]
12. What did Charles Bovary reply when the teacher asked him his name? —— [*Charbovary*]
13. Charles Bovary studied ——— [*Medicine*]
14. Farmer Raoult (Emmas' father) lived in —— — [*Les Bertaux*]
15. The dry goods merchant who lent large sums of money to Emma – [*Lheureux*]
16. Where was Charles Bovary living, and practicing as a doctor before they left for Yonville? —— [*Tostes*]
17. Name of Emma's daughter ——— [*Berthe*]
18. The boy whose clubfoot Charless Bovary tried to set right unsuccessfully —— [*Hippolyte*]
19. Who amputated Hippolyte's leg? ——— [*Monsieur Canivet, M.D.*]
20. Hippolyte developed – after the operation on his clubfoot — [*Gangrene*]
21. The errand boy at Monsieur Homais' pharmacy ——— [*Justin*]
22. The place in Homais's pharmacy where the deadly poison Arsenic was kept —— [*Chaphanaum*]
23. The paper in which Monseiur Homais gave Emma's obituary —— [*Rouen Beacon*]
24. The title/honour that Monseiur Homais won following Charles Bovary's death — [*Legion of Honour*]
25. Subtitle of the novel Madame Bovary —— — [*Provincial Morals*]
26. The two lovers of Emma Bovary — [*Leon Dupuis and Rodolphe*]
27. Title for *Madame Bovary* suggested by the Prosecution —— [*History of the Adulteries of A Provincial wife*]
28. The 3 defendants in the Trial of *Madame Bovary* —[*Flaubert*, the author of the book; *Pichat*, who accepted it, *Pillet*, who *printed it*]

1.4 Nana: Emile Zola

1. The country to which Emile Zola belonged ——— [*France*]
2. Nana is one of Emile Zola's —— series of novels. [*Rougam Macquart*]
3. The reign of —— forms the background of Nana. [*Napoleon III*]
4. The play in which Nana makes her debut ——— [*The Blonde Venus*]
5. The crooked but very rich banker who is one of Nana's lovers —— [*Steiner*]
6. Name of the theatre where Nana makes her debut —— [*Variety Theatre*]
7. The Blonde Venus is a vulgar travesty of —— [*The Olympian Gods*]
8. —— exclaimed on seeing Nana, "She is Stunning", [*George*]
9. Nana's son —— [*Louis*]
10. Nana' son Louis suffers from —— — [*Scrofula*]
11. The country place that Steiner buys for Nana ——— [*La Mignotte*]
12. Home of Madam Hugon, George and Philippe —— — [*Les Fondettes*]
13. The scurrilous (cheap) article written about Nana by Fauchery —— [*The Golden Fly*]
14. The actor with whom Nana lived for some time —— [*Fontan*]
15. Count Muffat's wife ——— [*Countess Sabine*]

16. Daughter of Count Muffat and Sabine —— — [*Estelle*]
17. The most persistent of Nana's lovers —— — [*Count Muffat*]
18. The Count who burnt himself to death in his stable following heavy loss through betting — [*Count de Vaneuveres*]
19. Count Muffat's father-in-law —— — [*Marquis de Chouard*]
20. Philippe Hugon was imprisoned for —— — [*stealing army funds*]
21. The French battery with which the novel Nana ends —— [*"The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 has begun"*]
22. The journalist referred to as Nana's sweetheart —— — [*Daguenet*]
23. The theatrical reviewer of a Paris paper, who is attracted to Countess Sabine —— [*Monsieur Fauchery*]
24. Nana's maid —— — [*Zoe*]
25. Nana's aunt who looks after her son Louis —— [*Madame Lerat*]
26. Daguenet noticed the same mark on the left cheeks of —— and —— [*Countess Sabine, Nana*]
27. Philippe Hugon was a ——— in the army —— [*lieutenant*]
28. About whom did Daguenet remark to Fauchery, "A pretty broom stick to shove into a fellow's arms"-? —— [*Estelle*]
29. Daguent married Estelle for her ——— [*Dowry*]
30. The proprietor of 'The Blonde Venus' troop — [*Bordenave*]
31. Nana's pet name for George Hugon —— — [*Zizi*]
32. The paper in which the article The golden Fly appeared — [*Figaro*]
33. The slut (cheap, immoral woman) with whom Nana associated from time to time – [*Satin*]
34. The role Nana insisted on playing in the ply "Little Duchess"—— [*The grand Duchess Helene*]
35. Where did Nana die? [*At the Grand Hotel*]

1.5 Anna Karenina: Leo Tolstoy

1. Complete name of Tolstoy —— — [*Count Leo Nikoleyewich Tolstoy*]
2. The country to which Tolstoy belonged —— — [*Russia*]
3. Son of Anna and Karenin —— — [*Seryosha (Sergi)*]
4. Anna's lover ——— [*Vronsky*]
5. Daughter of Anna and Vronsky —— — [*Anny*]
6. Anna's brother —— — [*StepanOblonsky*]
7. Kitty is Dolly's —— [*Younger sister*]
8. Anna Karenina's house was in —— — [*St. Petersbury*]
9. The central theme of Anna Karenina —— — [*Adultery*]
10. The happy couple in Anna Karenina ——— [*Kitty-Levin*]
11. The unhappy couple in Anna Karenina — —— [*Anna-Alexi*]

12. Son of Kitty —— Levin ——— Dmitri (*Mitya*)
13. Anna died by ——— [*jumping in front of a running train*]
14. Vronsky's mother's place was ——— [*Nijni*]
15. Konstantine Levin belonged to an old ——— family [*Muscovite*]
16. The character in Anna Karenina who may be regarded as Tolstoy's mouthpiece —— [*Konstantine Levin*]
17. Anna first met Count Vronsky in ——— [*Moscow*]
18. Though Kitty and Levin loved each it was their —— which kept them apart. [*Pride*]
19. Fearing public scandal, Karenin refused to give his wife a ——— [*divorce*]
20. Anna went with Vronsky and their baby to ——— [*Italy*]
21. After Anna's death, Vronsky joined the ——— [*army*]
22. Full name of Karenin ——— [*Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin*]
23. Alexei is a ——— [*bureaucrat in the Czarist government*]
24. Stepan Oblonsky is commonly called ——— [*Stiva*]
25. After the accident at the race-course, Vronsky's mare had to be ——— [*shot*]
26. Vronsky's mother wanted him to marry ——— [*Princess Sarokine*]
27. The two men whose lives Anna ruined ——— [*Alexei Karenin, Vronsky*]

1.6 Brother Karamazov : Dostoevsky

1. The country to which Dostoevsky belonged ——— [*Russina*]
2. The names of the Karamazov brothers —— [*Ivan, Dmitri, (Mitya) Alyosha (Alexei) (and Smerdyakov,* their step brother)]
3. The young woman loved by Fyodor and Dmitri ——— [*Grushenka*]
4. Milieu (*background)* of the novel Brothers Karamazov ——— [*Skotoprigonyevski*]
5. The saintly old priest in '*Brothers Karamazov*' —— [*Father Zossima*]
6. The loyal servant in the Fyodor household —— [*Grigory*]
7. The young girl who attracts both Dmitri and Ivan ——— [*Katerina Ivanovna*]
8. The murderer/parricide of Fyodor ——— [*Smerdyakov*]
9. Place to which Dmitri is exiled for 20 years' hard labour ——— [*Siberia*]
10. Alyosha in *Brothers Karamazov* is also called ——— [*Alexei*]
11. The instrument used by Dmitri to hurt Grigory ——— [*Pestle*]
12. Amount stolen by Smerdyakov ——— [*3000 roubles*]
13. The allegory in *Brothers Karamazov* ——— [*The Grand Inquisitor*]
14. The germinal idea / central idea of *Brothers Karamazov* ——— [*parricide*]
15. Character called "wailer" by Fyodor ——— [*Sofia Ivanovna*]
16. Dmitri's mother in the novel *Brothers Karamazov* ——— [*Mitya*]
17. The character in *Brothers Karamazov* referred to as 'Stinky'——— [*Smerdyakov*]
18. Grigory's wife in *Brothers Karamazov* ——— [*Marfa*]
19. The character in "*Brothers Karamazov*" referred to as 'man eater' —— [*Grushenka*]

20. The lady from whom Dmitri misapropriated 3000 roubles —— — [*Katerina*]
21. First wife of Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov ——— [*Adelaida Ivanovna Miusov*]
22. Smerdyakov is the illegitimate son of Fyodor Karamazov by ——— [*Lizaveta*]
23. Katerina in *Brothers Karamazov* calls Grushenka a ——— [*tigress*]
24. The character in *Brothers Karamazov* who symbolizes Holy Russia of Orthodox Christianity —— — *Alexei (Alyosha)*
25. Mother of Alexei (Alyosha) and second wife of Fyodor —— — [*Sofia Ivanovna*]
26. Type of plot of 'Brothers Karamazov ——— [*Impressionistic realism*]

1.7 The Trial : Franz Kafka

1. —— —is the lawyer in *The Trial* [*Huld*]
2. Joseph K. worked in a ——— [*bank*]
3. The executor of Kafka's will ——— [*Brod*]
4. The protagonist of *'The Trial'*—— [*Joseph K.*]
5. Kafka belonged to —— — [*Prague,* the part of the Austro – Hungarian Empire]
6. Kafka wrote in —— language ——— [*German*]
7. Joseph K's landlady —— — [*Frau Grubach*]
8. Nurse and house keeper of Huld the lawyer —— — [*Leni*]
9. The court pointer who offers to help Joseph K —— [*Titro velli*]
10. Fraulein Burstner is a niece of —— — [*Frau Grubach*]
11. Fraulein Burstner works as a —— [*typist*]
12. 3 possibilities of Joseph K's trial —— [*A definite acquittal, a provisional acquittal; an indefinite postponement*]
13. The last chapter of *"The Trial"* is set on the eve of ——— [*Joseph K's 31st birthday*]
14. How does Joseph K die? [*He is stabbed in the heart/executed by two men.*]
15. Joseph K dies like a ——— [*dog*]
16. In 'The Trial', the Inspector uses —— room. [*Fraulein Burstner's*]
17. The type of plot of 'The Trial' ——— [*fantasy*]
18. Joseph K was arrested on —— — [*his 30th birthday*]
19. Joseph K apologized to Fraulein Burstner for ——— [using her room]
20. Joseph K was a —— in a bank. [junior manager]
21. Joseph K hired an advocate, upon his ——'s advice. [*uncle's*]
22. The address of the place of interrogation of Joseph K's trial —— [*A large ware house*]

1.8 Siddartha : Herman Hesse

1. The country to which Hermann Hesse belonged —— [*Germany*]
2. The wandering ascetics are called ——— [*Samanas*]
3. The character in Siddhartha referred to as "The Illustrious One"—— [*Gotama or The Buddha*]
4. —— robbed Siddhartha of his friend Govinda ——— [*The Buddha*]

5. After parting from Siddartha, Govinda decided to become —— [*a Buddhist monk*]
6. The woman/courtesan who taught Siddhartha the art of love making —— [*Kamala*]
7. ——— is called a game for children is Siddhartha. [*Samsara*]
8. "Om" means ——— [*"The Perfect One " or Perfection*]
9. Name of the ferryman who takes Siddhartha across the river ——— [*Vasudeva*]
10. Kamala dies of ——— [*a snake-bite*]
11. The merchant for whom Siddhartha worked —— — [*Kamaswami*]
12. Siddhartha learnt most from —— and ——— [*The river and Vasudeva*]
13. The person who taught Siddhartha the art of making money ———[*Kamaswami*]
14. The town where Gotama was well known ——— [*Savathi*]
15. The garden where the Illustrious One so journed or stayed —— [*Anathapindika in Jetavana*]
16. The father of Kamala's son ——— [*Siddhartha*]
17. 3 things Siddhartha told Kamala that he could do —— [*I can think, I can wait, I can fast*]
18. When Siddhartha first approached Kamala, he was a —— — [*Samana*]
19. Kamala described —— as "the best lover that I have had" [*Siddhartha*]
20. The central metaphor in Siddhartha —— — [*River*]
21. Siddhartha regarded Gotama as a great man in —— and —— [*his deeds and life*]
22. The successor of Vasudeva as ferryman —— — [*Siddharthal*]
23. Siddhartha remembered lines from the —— — Upanishad [*Chandogya*]
24. Because of Vasudeva and the river, —— comes to Siddhartha at last [*Self-realization*]
25. Siddhartha learnt that wisdom was not ——— [*communicable*]

1.9 The Magic Mountain : Thomas Mann

1. The country to which Thomas Mann belonged ——— [*Germany*]
2. Name of the sanatorium in *the Magic Mountain* —— *[International Sanatorium Berghofhigh.]*
3. In the Magic Mountain, the name of the Jew who is a converted Jesuit —— [*Naphtha*]
4. International Sanatorium Berghofhigh is in ——— [*Davos, Switzerland]*
5. Hans Castorp is suffering from the disease —— — [*Tuberculosis, (T.B.)*]
6. The Russian lady who rejects Hans Castorp's love ——— [*Clavdia Cauchat.*]
7. In *The Magic Mountain,* —— is a hedonistic planter from Java, and is a Dutchman. [*Mynheer Peeperkorn*]
8. Naphtha dies by —— — [*shooting himself in the duel with Mynheer Peeperkorn*]
9. Hans Castorp's best friend at Davos ——— [*Settembrini*]
10. Period of time Hans Castorp intended to stay at Davos —— — [*3 weeks*]
11. Period of time Hans Castorp actually stayed at Davos ——— [*3 fairy tale years*]
12. The German composer who influenced Mann's novel *The Magic Mountain* —— [*Wagner*]
13. Hans Castorp's cousin at Davos ——— [*Joachin Ziemessen*]
14. The club of the T.B. patients Davos ——— [*the Half Lung Club*]

15. Name given by Settembrini for the patients at Davos ——— [*Horizontallers*]
16. The magic number which crops up repeatedly in The Magic Mountain —— [*Seven*]
17. The world below the magic mountain is called ——— [*Flatland*]
18. The first chapter of *The Magic Mountain* is called —— — [*Arrival*]
19. The magic mountain symbolises —— — [*the sick world of Europe*]
20. By profession, Joachin Ziemessen is a ——— [*soldier*]
21. The psychoanalyst at Davos sanatorium is ——— [*Dr. Krowkowski*]
22. By profession, Hans Castorp is —— — [*an engineer*]
23. In the chapter entitled 'Snow', Hans Castorp dreams of ——— [*humanity*]
24. The chapter in which Hans Castorp prepares to declare his passion for Clavdia Cauchat —— [*Walpurgis Night*]

1.10 Zorba The Greek: Nikos Kazantzakis

1. The country to which Kazantzakis belongs —— — [*Greece*]
2. Locate (setting) of *Zorba The Greek* [*Crete, an island in the Mediteranean*]
3. —— is the narrator of *Zorba The Greek* . ['*Boss' Zorba's employer and friend*]
4. The ageing courtesan in *Zorba The Greek* ——— [*Madame Hortense*]
5. Musical instrument played by Zorba —— — [*santuri*]
6. In his seventies, Zorba marries ——— [*A young Serbian lady*]
7. —— is the close friend of the narrator of *Zorba The Greek.* [*Stavridaki*]
8. By profession Zorba is a —— [*miner*]
9. The narrator of *Zorba The Greek* forms a —— on the island of Crete. [*mining company*]
10. Age of Zorba when the novel opens —— — [*About sixty years*]
11. A poet whose praises the Narrator of *Zorba The Greek* keeps singing on the island of Crete —— [*Dante*]
12. —— grow in abundance on the island of Crete [*Vines*]
13. The central theme of *Zorba The Greek* — [*Celebration of the victory of life over old age and death*]
14. Kazantzakis portrays Zorba as one of the last —— of Nature [*demigods*]
15. The woman for whom the Narrator of *Zorba The Greek* is destined is at last —— [*beheaded*]
16. In *Zorba The Greek,* the beheaded woman's head is ——— [*thrown onto the steps of the church*]
17. The ritual murder of the woman makes the Narrator of *Zorba The Greek* understand —— —— [*the omnipresence of death*]
18. After leaving Crete, Zorba travels through the countries of the —— — [*Balkans*]
19. How does Zorba die? [*He dies while protesting his sickness; dies suddenly and naturally*]
20. The language of *Zorba The Greek* may be described as the language of —— [*Abundance; plenty; richness*]

1.11 Growth of the Soil: Knut Hamson

1. The deformity of Inger —— — [*A hare-lip*]
2. Inger's rich uncle — —— [*Uncle Sivert*]

3. Name of Inger's cow ——— [*Goldenhorns*]
4. Goldenhorns originally belonged to ——— [*Oline's son*]
5. The medicine given by Isak to Inger when she was pregnant —— — [*Naphtha*]
6. Name suggested by Inger for Goldenhorn's calf ——— [*Silverhorns*]
7. A distant female relation of Inger who occasionally came across the hills to visit Isak and Inger —— [*Oline's son*]
8. The first man to become a settler on the no-man's land and till the soil ——— [*Isak*]
9. Isak's characteristic exclamation —— — [*Eyah, Herregud*]
10. The eldest son of Isak and Inger ——— [*Eleseus*]
11. What did the Lapp Os-Anders show Inger a little before she delivered her daughter? [*A hare*]
12. Inger blindly believed that she had been born with a hare-lip because —— [*her mother had seen a hare before the delivery*]
13. The sheriff's officer in charge of a small district in Norway is called —— [*Lensmand*]
14. The Lensmand who is a strange friend of Isak and Inger ——— [*Giessler*]
15. Lensmand Giessler's assistant —— — [*Brede Olsen*]
16. The name of Iska's land —— — [*Sellanraa*]
17. The name Sellanraa for Iska's land was suggested by —— [*Lensmand Giessler*]
18. In Norway, Amtmand means ——— [*Governor of a country*]
19. Giessler's successor as Lensmand ——— [*Heyerdahl*]
20. Inger was sent to prison because ——— [*She killed her new-born daughter/of infanticide*]
21. The mysterious and powerful friend of Isak and Inger is —— [*Lensmand Giessler*]
22. Nils is ——— a son of [*Oline*]
23. Inger was sentenced to prison for —— years. [*Eight*]
24. Due to Giessler's intervention, Inger's prison term was reduced to —— years. [*Five*]
25. Name of Inger's daughter born in prison ——— [*Leopoldine*]
26. Name of Brede Olden's land ——— [*Breidablik*]
27. The governor's gift to Inger, upon her release from the prison ——— [*A prayer book*]
28. The place from where Inger had acquired all her knowledge and artistic skills —— [*Trondhjem*]
29. Two characters in *Growth of The Soil* who are charged with infanticide —— [*Inger, Barbo*]
30. The metal whose ore was found in plenty in Isak's land ——— [*Copper*]
31. Eleseus left for —— and never came back [*America*]
32. The servant girl in the Sellanraa household ——— [*Jensine*]
33. The young workman with whom Inger was passionately in love —— [*Gustaf, the Swede*]

1.12 The Stranger- Albert Camus

1. The country to which Albert Camus belonged ——— [*Algeria*]
2. The philosophy associated with Camus ——— [*Existentialism, Absurd, Atheism*]

3. Camus wrote his novels in the ——— language [*French*]
4. The central character and narrator of *The Stranger* [*Meursault*]
5. By profession, Meursault is ——— [*an ordinary, low-paid clerk*]
6. Meursault's mistress is —— [*Maria Cardona*]
7. The owner of the restaurant where Meursault usually has his food from —— [*Celeste*]
8. The pimp in *The Stranger*, who paves the way for Meursault's destruction—— [*Raymond*]
9. The inmate of the home for the aged who fell in love with Meursault's mother —— [*Perez.*]
10. Salamano own a ——— having skin disease [*dog*]
11. In *The Outsider* ——— kills the Arab. [*Meursault*]
12. Meursault's mother died in —— [*the Home for Aged Persons at Marengo*]
13. Meursault astonishes the porter at the Home for Aged Persons by saying that —— [*he does not want to see his mother's body*]
14. The motiveless crime that Meursaults commits ——— [*He kills the Arab*]
15. The character in *The Outsider* addressed as Anti Christ ——— [*Meursault*]
16. The punishment given to Meursault for killing the Arab ——— [*He was to be decapitated (beheaded) in some public place*]
17. Maria was not allowed to see Meursault in prison because ——— [*She was not his wife*]
18. 2 English titles of Albert Camus's novel L'Etranger ——— [*The Outsider, The Stranger*]

1.13 Doctor Zhivago: Boris Pasternak

1. The country to which Boris Pasternak belonged ——— [*Russia*]
2. The older Zhivago died by ——— [*leaping from a moving train*]
3. The unscrupulous lawyer in Doctor Zhivago ——— [*Viktor Komarovsky*]
4. Seducer or betrayer of Lara —— — [*Komarovsky*]
5. The career chosen by Yuri Zhivago ——— [*Medicine*]
6. Yuri Zhivago's first wife ——— [*Tonia*]
7. Yuri Zhivago's strongest passion ——— [*Lara*]
8. The young girl Yuri Zhivago marries later in life ——— [*Marina*]
9. Comrade Pasha Antipov dies by ——— [*committing suicide*]
10. The character in Doctor Zhivago known as 'Strelnikov' or 'The Shooter' —— [*Pasha Antipov*]
11. Yuri Zhivago's half-brother ——— [*Yevgraf*]
12. Number of poems appended to Doctor Zhivago ——— [24]
13. The closing poem of Doctor Zhivago ——— [*Garden of Gethsemane*]
14. The cause of Doctor Zhivago's death ——— [*Heart attack*]
15. Tonia's father Gromeko is a professor of ——— [*Agronomy*]
16. Helen's pet name for her husband Mikulitsin ——— [*Civvy*]
17. Two favourite writers of Doctor Zhivago —— — [*Chekhov, Pushkin*]

CUP/5026/1000/SDE — 17

18. Which member of Forest Brotherhood was nicknamed "hetman's ear" (Captain's spy)? [*Sivobluy.*]
19. In *Doctor Zhivago, 'bezprizornnaya'* means —— [*a waif, or a child of unknown parents*]
20. The 'laundry-girl' in Doctor Zhivago whom Yevgraf looks after ——— [*Tanya*]
21. Daughter of Yuri and Lara ——— [*Tanya*]
22. Tanya's barbarous nickname ——— [*Tanya out of the turn*]
23. The young school boy who betrayed Strelnikov ——— [*Terenty*]
24. The revolutionary in *Doctor Zhivago* who axed his wife and three children to prevent their future suffering in the event of his death ——— [*Pamphil Palykh*]
25. The young man on the drum whom Palykh killed for a joke —— [*A young White Commissiar*]
26. Nickname of Strelnikov (Pasha) ——— [*Rastrelnikov (The Executioner*]
27. The strange deaf and mute traveler Yuri Zhivago met on the train —— [*Pogorevshikh*]
28. The present given by Pogorevshikh toYuri Zhivago while parting after their train journey —— [*A fat duck*]
29. The chief liaison officer of Comrade Liberius who arrested Doctor Zhivago and conscripted him —— [*Kammenodvorsky*]
30. The enemy white soldier whom Doctor Zhivago and his assistant Angelar nursed back to health —— [*Seryosha*]
31. ——— spied on Terenty and the young boys who had conspired against Liberius's life, and caused them to be shot [*Sivobluy*]

1.14 The Joke: Milan Kundera

1. The country to which Milan Kundera belonged ——— [*Prague, (zechoslovakia*]
2. The method of narration on employed in *The Joke* ——— [*A series of monologues*]
3. The female barber who attended on Ludvik Jahn/to whom Kostka took Ludvik —— [*Lucie Sebetka*]
4. The daughter of Helene and Pavel Zemanek ——— [Zdena]
5. Pavel Zemanek's most treasured possession — [*A locket with the picture of Kremlin on it*]
6. The 19 year old sound technician who was dangerously in love with the ageing Helene —— [*Jindra*]
7. Ludvik's home town ——— [*Moravia*]
8. "Let sadness never be linked with my name" ——— Whose name? [*Fucik*]
9. The fatal joke (sentence) Ludvik wrote to Marketa —— [*"Optimism is the opium of the people"*]
10. On what grounds was Ludvik expelled from the Party? [*Intellectualism and cynicism*]
11. The soldier at the Ostrava unit whom Ludvik liked best ——— [*Honza*]
12. The person Ludivik considered his worst enemy and wanted to take revenge upon —— [*Zemanek*]
13. Ludvik hated Zemanek bitterly because [*after giving false hopes, Zemanek denounced Ludvik and got him expelled from the Party*]
14. ——— is the author of Peace Manifesto [*Bedrich*]

15. The Soviet film referred to by Marketa to Ludvik ——— [*Court of Honour*]
16. Lucie Sebetka's home-town ——— [*Bohemia*]
17. The type of films Lucie likes to watch ——— [*war –films*]
18. Whose book of poems did Ludvik read? [*Frantisek Halas*]
19. The soldier at the Ostrava unit who did a lot of murals ——— [*Cenek*]
20. Ludvik's best friend at the Ostrava unit ——— [*Honza*]
21. Zemanek's young sweetheart ——— [*Miss Broz*]
22. A female character in *The Joke* who loves hitchhiking (asking for free rides) —— [*Miss Broz*]
23. Jaroslav's favourite instrument ——— [*Harmonium*]
24. Jaroslav used to call ——— the Pied Piper. [*Ludvik*]
25. —— is the most popular drink in Moravia. [*Rye*]
26. Helene's favourite adjective ——— [*Marvellous*]
27. Koztka used to consider ——— his chief adversary or rival [*Ludvik*]
28. The female character in *The Joke* nicknamed as "the little grave robber"——— [*Lucie Sebetka*]
29. Lucie stole ———from the cemetery [*flowers*]
30. After leaving the farm Kostka became a ——— [*construction worker*]
31. Ludvik was returning to his hometown after —— years [*fifteen*]
32. Age of Ludvik when the novel opens – [*37 years*]
33. The word very often repeated in Jaroslay's monologue ——— [*Fatigue*]
34. Helene dies due to ——— [*Desperation at being rejected by Ludvik*]
35. The tablets swallowed by Helene were actually —— [*laxatives*]
36. Jaroslav's passion —— [*Moravian folk songs*]
37. Son of Jaroslav and Vlasta ——— [*Vladmir*]
38. Jindra kept his laxative tablets in a bottle labeled —— [*Algena*]
39. The woman who passionately desired Ludvik —— [*Helena*]

1.15 The Tin Drum: Gunter Grass

1. The country to which Gunter Grass belongs —— — [*Germany*]
2. Narrator of *The Tin Drum* ——— [*Oskar Matzerath*]
3. Oskar's mother's lover ——— [*Jan Bronski*]
4. Oskar's third birthday-gift ——— [*A tin drum*]
5. On this third birthday Oskar decides —— [*to stop growing by a sheer act of will*]
6. Oskar shatters ——— with his voice [*glass*]
7. In the novel *the Tin Drum,* the most celebrated (famous) somnambulist in all Italy —— [*Roswitha Raguna*]
8. Oskar Matzerath is accused of killing ——— [*Sister Dorothea*]
9. The person whose testimony leads to Oskar Matzerath's arrest ——— [*Vittlar*]

10. When the novel opens, Oskar Matzerath is an inmate of ——— [*a mental hospital*]
11. The keeper of Oskar at the mental hospital ——— [*Bruno Munsterberg*]
12. Ann Bronski hides the fugitive Koljaiczek ——— [*under her wide skirts*]
13. Oskar asks Bruno to get him —— [*A ream of virgin paper / five hundred sheets of writing paper*]
14. The treasure that Oskar guards ——— [*His photograph album*]
15. ——— was the child with the glass-shattering voice [*Oskar Matzerath*]
16. Oskar pulverised Miss Spollenhauer's spectacle-lenses because —— [she struck his 'darling', drum with her cane]
17. The theatre whose lobby windows Oskar shattered with his singing —— [*Stadt – Theater*]
18. The gnome/midget whom Oskar met at the circus and who became his mentor — [*Bebra*]
19. ——— was popularly known as "the Green Kitten" [*Niobe*]
20. "He's lying in Saspe" —— About whom did Oskar Matzerath make this remark? [*Jan Bronski*]
21. A card game repeatedly mentioned in *The Tin Drum*——— [*Skat*]
22. The character in *The Tin Drum* described as "The Sandwich Eater" or whom Oskar associated with the Black Witch —— [*Lucy Rennwand*]
23. The name of the jazz band found with Klepp the flutist. Scholle the guitarist and Oskar the percussion man —— [*The Rhine River Three*]
24. — apparently killed Sister Dorothea. [*Sister Beata*]
25. Oskar Matzerath believed that he was ———'s father [*Kurt*]

The above list of questions is certainly not exhaustive. You may prepare similar questions and answers on your own by becoming familiar with the texts.

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UNIT XIV

EUROPEAN FICTION – AN OVERALL SURVEY

1.0 Objectives

This *Unit* is intended to give you an overall survey of the trend of European fiction in present times. Supplementary material on some of the prescribed novels, as well as questions with sufficient hints also have been included. Important critical terms in fiction have been explained.

1.1 Introduction

The novel, a recent entrant in the realm of literature, is a work of prose fiction of considerable length, and is made up of certain elements: PLOT, CHARACTER, DIALOGUE, SETTING, SYMBOLS etc. You may refer to any standard text book and understand more about these terms. The prescribed novels were written in the 19th or 20th centuries. Let us take a brief look at the tendencies in the European Novel of this period *with special reference to the prescribed novels.*

1.2 Modern Trends in European Fiction

Romanticism which had prevailed in the 18th century gradually paved the way to *Realism and Naturalism.* The novels of *Balzac* set out to give an exact picture of contemporary manners. The romantic elements in Flaubert's novels were punctured with realistic irony. On one level, his *Madame Bovary* may be taken as a kind of parable of the punishment that fate metes out to the romantic dreamer, and it is the more telling because Flaubert recognized a strong romantic vein in himself. Realism has been a continuing impulse in the 20th century novel. Flaubert succeeded in fusing the romantic and the realistic. He, like Balzac and Stendhal, portrayed the physical environment of life as the determining factor in character, and from his work derives the modern novel as a conscious art form.

The *naturalistic novel* is a development out of realism, and it is again, in France, that its first leading practitioners are to be found, with Emile Zola leading. It is difficult to separate the two categories, but *naturalism* seems characterised not only by a pessimistic determinism, but also by a more throughgoing attention to the physical and biological aspects of human existence. Man is more a product of natural forces, as well, as genetic and social influences. Other novelists include *Hardy, Conrad, Knut Hamson, James Joyce,* etc. The naturalistic novelists had to struggle against prejudice and often censorship mainly of the charge of obscenity) before their literary candour could prevail. The 20th century takes the naturalistic approach for granted, but is more concerned with the technique of presentation.

The German novelists Thomas Mann and Hermann Hesse, moving from the realist tradition sought the lightness and clarity of a more elliptical style and were proclaimed *Impressionists.* This sort of literature of revolt (against extremes realism) existed before the Nazi regime. *Expressionism* was a German movement, in which the artist's aim was to express or convey the essence of a particular theme, to the exclusion of such secondary considerations as fidelity to real life. Expressionistic techniques were adopted by *Gunter Grass* in his novel *The Tin Drum.* But the Austrian *Franz Kafka,* the greatest of the Expressionist novelists sought to convey what may crudely be termed man's alienation from his world in terms that admit of no political interpretation. Joseph k, the hero of Kafka's novel *The Tri l* (1925) is accused of a nameless crime, he seeks to arm himself with the apparatus of a defense, and he is finally executed – stabbed with the utmost courtesy by two men in a lonely place. The hallucinatory atmosphere of that novel as also of Kafka's novel *The Castle* (1926), is appropriate to nightmare, and indeed Kafka's work has been taken by many as an imaginative forecast of the nightmare through which Europe was compelled to live during the Hitler regime. But its significance is more subtle and universal; one of the elements is original sin and another filial guilt

Indeed Kafka's influence has been considerable.

The 20th century European novel is distinguished by variety and experiment. The Russian revolution and the two major world wars triggered off a horde of revolutionary novels. Soviet novelists are circumscribed in their activities by the repressive political outlook of the regime. *Tolstoy's War and peace* is the great triumphant example of the panoramic study of a whole society living in a period of cataclysmic change. In the 20th century another Russian Boris Pasternak in his *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) expressed –though on a less than Tolstoyan scale-the personal immediacies of life during the Russian Revolution. *The Joke* (1967) by the Czech novelist Milan Kundera likewise deals with the effect of Stalin's social realism on the individual intellectual. All these novels are documents of oppression wrought out of bitter experience.

Throughout the 20th century, European Fiction has continued to diversify, reflecting the sporadic changes in society. These changes are evident not only in the choice of themes but also in the mode of narration the use of myths and symbol the probing into the human psyche, the debate over the existence of God etc. Major novels stressing human loneliness and nightmare, and using to the full the bleak techniques of the short novel were written by Albert Camus besides Kafka. The sickness of the Germany that produced Hitler undergoes fictional diagnosis in Gunter Grass's *The Tin Drum.*, and is a reflection of the nature of the period, the Zeitgeist. To Sum up, European fiction is a developing and diversifying genre (literary form).

In the next section some extra material on certain prescribed novels is given. You may use them along with what is given in other *Units as supplementary* points, while preparing your essays.

1.5 The Magic Mountain: Thomas Mann

The Magic Mountain is a philosophical chronicle concerned with perspectives of history and philosophy in our time. In it the modern age has become the International Sanatorium Berghofhigh in the Swiss Alps, and to the institution gravitate various and conflicting currents of thought and activity in the person of a group of invalids exiled by disease to a pinnacle of the "magic mountain". The magic it exercises in their lives is to cut them off from calendar time. Time flows through their days and years with quiet nothingness and perceptions of reality stretch into eternity. Modern ideologies and beliefs are represented by characters like the Italian humanist, the absolutist Jewish, Jesuit, a German Doctor, a Polish scientist and the hedonistic Mynheer Peeperkorn. The magic mountain is the sick world of Europe and its people are various aspects of the modern consciousness. The book tells us how the personal horizon of the hero Hans Castorp is widened and how he undergoes physical moral, intellectual' and spiritual development entirely as a result of his human encounters and personal reactions during the *seven* year's in the rarefied atmosphere of the Swiss Alps.

The *narrative pattern* is formed by a clever interweaving of multiple strands of thought and experience. Castorp may stand as a sort of "Mr Everyman", and the book's wider implication becomes apparent as his story enfolds. Many people have pointed out that the book may be read on several levels – as a *distinctive novel* in its own right; as a *dialectic* (full of argument) work or as a microcosm of Europe and the incisively drawn characters carry the reader on.

Thomas Mann is regarded as a *master of irony* and *The Magic Mountain* as has been shown, provides him with plenty of scope for the indulgence of this gift. Yet he himself was a prey to ironic influences when committing this masterpiece to paper. He has confessed that in his first conception he envisaged little more than a light humorous book touching an a few themes including the fascination of death. But somehow, the creation ran away with the creator and it grew and developed into an epic study of a civilisation in decay. Mann found himself depicting with earnest Teutonic thoroughness a comprehensive picture of the contemporary world scene. Mann's irony brings into question the very possibility of art.

The Magic Mountain is a great novel of the epoch in nothing so much as in its preoccupation with Time. Mann was a contemporary of Einstein Both Einstein's Relativity and The Magic Mountain are

connected with a concept of time rendered problematical by the absence of a valid standard of measurement, the absence of an Absolute.

Though a powerful stylist with a great gift of expression Mann's work in general and this masterpiece in particular has bred a whole group of would be interpreters, all of whom have striven according to their lights to unravel the complex strands of the story. Certain critics have traced evidence of Schopenhauer's influence in specific passages. Mann in his tendency towards mysticism allows himself free range in *The Magic Mountain.* He was known to have been superstitious where numbers are concerned. In the final estimate, the wide sweep of this great book sets before the ordinary reader an impressive feast of reading. First it tells an unusual absorbing story, with some memorable characters and stimulating dialogue. The magic in fact lies just as much in the author's powerful pen as in the mountain of the tale.

1.6 The Brothers Karamazov: Doestoevsky

Of the four greatest Russian literary giants Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy and Doestoevsky, it is the last named one – *Doestoevsky* who is the greatest affirmer of life. Gogol laughs to hide his tears. Turgenev sadly contemplates the beauty of transitory existence, and Tolstoy is preoccupied with the question what point there is in eating, drinking and loving, when all living things sooner or later fall to dust. But Dostoevsky, despite his own harrowing experiences, never doubled that life is its own justification, and that to love, to feel compassion, to have memories, even to suffer are better in all circumstances than non-existence. A passionate interest in life, and in the heights and depths of human experience fill his novels and make them major works of art crammed with fascinating characters, teeming with ideas on religion nationality and politics full of violent action, while behind all lurks a tragic sense that men are the victims of their own passions driven by force which they cannot control; towards a fate they cannot foresee.

The Brother Karamazov is considered by some critics to be Dostoevsky's masterpiece. It is certainly the most involved, full of interludes. The anguish caused by *the dual nature of man* recurs in great chords throughout this powerful novel. The Psychologist novelist chose as the theme for this the story of a father and his three sons, the effect of sensuality and inherited sensuality or a family and on all with whom the family came into contact. The earthy barbarism of Tsarist Russia can be seen beneath the veneer of western culture which covers Dostoevsky's society. In another sense the theme of the novel is *faith versus atheism,* a spiritual as contrasted with a materialistic view of life, a contrast which is worked out in the characters, very subtly portrayed. Of the three brothers., Alyosha represents the pure flame of spiritual awareness, while Dimitri is the most involved character in the book and vies for central place with Alyosha. Brimming with the Karamazov's lust for life, but neglected by his father in childhood, *Dimitri* grows up with a burning conviction that the world owes him happiness, and he is determined to win it in the shape os Grushenka, despite all obstacles, degradations, and even crimes. He does possess a yearning for what he dimly thinks of as a virtuous life, but virtue and decency must be put on ice until he has gained his heart's desire. Meanwhile he believes they are unattainable, for he sees himself as the victim of circumstances, a nice fellow at heart who has never had a chance. So for Dimitri, life is not a continuous process from which men must learn in good days and bad, but a lottery in which all must be staked on the winning ticket. His conviction at the end of the book of a murder he never committed stands as Dostoevsky's solemn warning to those who hold such immature and dangerous views.

If Dimitri is the reckless, perpetual adolescent, Ivan is the haughty austere, and would be self-sufficient young intellectual also with dim strivings towards the good life, but whose brains gets in the way of his heart. He has spiritual faith of a kind but his intellect refuses to concur and he is another example of a *split personality* which is a danger to itself and others. He is in short a rather colourless character. In contrast to his brothers, with *Alyosha,* the youngest brother, religion is the perpetual climate of his mind.

He figures as a physically robust young man of wide tolerance and love of humanity, spiritually unshakeable and intelligent. He is convinced of the immortality of the soul and suvears to live for the future. He plays no active part in the main plot beyond helping his brothers to know their better selves, but it is through him and Father Zossima that some of Dostoevsky's profound beliefs are brought to the reader.

Dostoevsky is not a propagandist, and much less a dogmatist. He is a genuine philosopher, for he really inquired, questioned, and sought the truth painstakingly. In his view, we cannot have heaven without hell. Through Father Zossima, he taught that we had to learn to accept our condition as creatures. This called for love at the heart of human existence. The psychological and the metaphysical make up the concrete reality of Dostoevsky's human world. Thus the meaning of human destiny which Dostoevsky reveals is this: a life not built on love is not human, and a world without God is a world in which a triumphant cannibal frees the mass from the burden of their freedom in exchange for happiness.

1.7 Anna Karenia: Leo Tolstoy

Anna Karenina, one of Tolstoy's masterpieces, is distinguished by its realism. The novel contains two plots: the tragedy of Madame Karenina in love with a man who is not her husband, and the story of Konstantine Levin, a sensitive man whose personal philosophy is Tolstoy's reason for writing about him. The story of Anna is an absorbing one and true, the person of Levin reflects Tolstoy's own ideas about the Russian society in which he lived. Thus the book is a closely knit plot of a woman bound in the fetters of the Russian social system, and a philosophy of life which attempts to untangle the maze of incongruities present in this society. The novel has to be taken not merely as a work of art but as a piece of life. Tolstoy had always been a writer with a message. To quote him: "A writer's aim is not to settle a question once and for all but to compel the reader to see life in all its forms, which are endless. This aptly sums up his attitude to Anna's character. Like Zola he does not condemn any one or anything he leaves it to the reader to decide for himself after analyzing the situation and the characters. The foundations of *Anna Karenina* are grounded on the opposition of the ethos of family life and the pathos of unlawful love. Here we have a novel of modern life without hopes for a better future or longings after a better past. The reader is confronted with two dramas, the one public, the after private. Socially "*Anna Karenina* is *a tragedy of manners*" or as Dostoevsky would say, a drawing room tragedy" But morally it is a *tragedy of the bedroom* the worst of all tragedies. In the authors view, Tolstoy projected Anna's drama as absurdity of the Christian injunction to love the sinner and to hate his sin. He wanted the reader to be merciful not merciless as was society, which punished Anna not for sinning but for confessing her passion before the world. Anna was to be pitied, but not absolved, nor was her guilt to be forgiven. [*Renato Poggioli*]

In all literature, there is no writer equal to Tolstoy in depicting the human body. He is accurate, simple and as short as possible selecting only the few small unnoticed facial or personal features and producing them not all at once but gradually and one by one distributing them over the whole course of the story weaving them into the living web of the action. Plenty of instances can be quoted from *Anna Karenina.* This gift of insight *into the body* at times leads Tolstoy into excess. The language of gesture, if less varied than words, is more direct, expressive and suggestive. With inimitable art he uses the convertible connection between the external, and the internal. [*Dmitri Merezhkovsky]*

Autobiographical elements permeate the works of Tolstoy. Even though Vronsky and Anna are not related to his own life and to his problems of life, the figures of Levin and Kitty are flesh of his flesh and spirit of his spirit. It is also known that he depicted his own marriage and in part its early history in this couple. By means of the Levin-plot Tolstoy built his own life into the Anna Karenina novel and here again an autobiographical impulse works towards the open form, which was seen as the artistic precipitate of the urge to portray natural life

in its true colours. In *Anna Karenina* the structural principle of open form, that is natural to Tolstoy operates in a modified way. The naturalism of Tolstoy's *style and diction* is nothing more than another expression of his striving for veracity. There seems to be no artistic impulse at work in this style. Every picturesque, musical or otherwise aesthetically designed effect is avoided. The aim of the narrative is to approach the being of things as adequately and accurately as possible. [*Kate Hamburger*]

There is perhaps no other modern author in whose works the "totally of objects" is so rich, so complete as in Tolstoy. Emile Zola too possessed this trait. We cannot fail to see how different Tolstoy's pictures are from those painted by modern realists and how similar to those we find in the old epics. Such a manner of presenting the totality of objects is a pre-condition for depicting truly typical characters. For instance in *Anna Karenina* the genius with which Tolstoy creates such pictures as Levin's moving of a field letting them grow out of the problematic nature of Levin's relationship with his peasants and his sentimental attitude to physical labour is truly admirable.

In *Anna Karenina* Tolstoy created superb type, of the upper classes under nascent Russian capitalism. In *Oblonski* he painted a wonderfully rich and subtly modeled picture of the Liberal tendencies at work within that social group; here, we find the type of the modern aristocrat in the person of *Vronski* who gives up his military career and develops into a capitalist landowner. To round off the picture there is a third character the type of the already completely bureaucratized reactionary obscurantist (one who opposes increase of knowledge) hypocrital and empty administrative official in the person of *Karenin*, Capitalist division of labour increasingly permeates all human relationships, it becomes the way of life. Tolstoy depicts with an increasingly bitter irony how in this world of divided labour, human beings are transformed into parts of inhuman machine. Tolstoy hates it precisely because division of labour is a most suitable instrument for the oppression and exploitation of the working masses. But as the great and universal genius that he is, Tolstoy presents this whole process at it affects all classes of the population [*George Lukacs*]

The moral reality of *Anna Karenia* lies in the appearances that indicate as they conceal, sexual involvements, which the narrative is constantly analyzing. Sex is the cause and effect of brightness or darkness, harmony or discord and Levin's soul searching is shown as depending on his real search for a harmonious fruitful marriage with Kitty. Sex is a point at which body meets spirit. Deeply needing reality, Anna finds Karenin most intolerable because he is a sham. Anna's tragic flaw is a kind of impatience with the subjecting appearances of the moment, as well as an obscure desire for a life only precariously whole. All her actions bear the truth of this fact. Levin is a spiritual barometer, like Anna. [*Albert Cook*]

1.8 The Trial: Kafka

Franz Kafka's nightmare world of the imagination has always haunted readers, but few grasp the full meaning of his eerie symbolic writings. He is primarily a writer of novels and stories though he is known as a religious thinker or a critic of religion. The whole experience recorded in his works like *The Trial* whether spiritual, mental, emotional or physical is absolutely continuous and there are no distinctions between the religious social and individual levels. "The whole art of Kafka consists in forcing the reader to re-read" says Albert Camus in his essay on the writer. Kafka's reputation as a writer has been controversial; it has been largely due to the fantastic strangeness of his imagination. The mixture of realism and allegory which to Kafka's peculiar invention is perhaps the most economical and effective means that could have been found for expressing his vision of life his world which is a sort of underground world in which life becomes denser; it is an image of what the actual world might be, if it were subjected to some process of condensation by means of which the invisible agencies that environ man, hopes and fears, devils and angels are forced to contract and solidify, peopling a scene which earlier man thought he had to himself. This probably explains the peculiarly charged and overcrowded atmosphere that fills *The Castle and The Trial.*

The Trial is the story of a war of attrition (gradual wearing down) conducted by a secret court against a man's demand for justice. Josef K searches continually for some clue to the guilt of which the secret court accuses him. He is executed, still in ignorance. There is a sense of guilt everywhere, though it is never clear to what the guilt refers; there is a sense of futility, sometimes even of vindictiveness throughout. And it is this which enhances the horror of Kafka more than the aesthetic trill which is in Edgar Allan Poe. The root of Kafka's dilemma is that not to see the world as good is to realize his guilt acutely, while to pretending to see it as good is to be guilty of hubris. And he could not escape this dilemma. By nature, upbringing and environment Kafka was distrustful, isolated, prone to see the worst. Hence the neurotic element in his work is not trivial. There was no certainty in his world.

In Kafka, we have before us the modern mind seemingly self sufficient, intelligent, skeptical, ironical, splendidly trained for the great act of pretending that the world it comprehends in sterilized sobriety is the only and ultimate reality there is – yet a mind living in sin. Thus he knows two things at once, and both with equal assurance: that there is no God, and that there *must* be God. It is the perspective of the curse: the intellect dreaming its dream of absolute freedom, and the soul knowing its terrible bondage.

Kafka is a metaphysical poet in symbolist narrative. *The Trial* and *The Castle* are composed very largely of dialogues, especially dialectic-dialogues. The characteristic excitement of these novels lies in the wit and intellectual suspense of the dialogue. Kafka's world is neither the world of the average sensual man, not yet fantasy. In *The Trial*, the whole sequence is so improbable as to suggest some kind of pervasive allegory, but at no point does one encounter downright impossibility. It is his narrative method to write from within the mind of the hero. The introspective hero, through whose eyes we have glimpses of other persons, is man *alone*, man hunted and haunted, man eager to do right but perpetually baffled and confused as to what it is to do right, the man in search of salvation.

The Trial is one of the most effective and most discussed works to come out of Central Europe between wars. To most readers, it is a highly engaging comedy, filled with buffoonery and fantasy. More serious students of literature see in it, however, a vast symbolism and a first rate psychological study of a system whose leaders are convinced of their own righteousness. To some the court is a symbol of the Church as an imperfect bridge between the individual and God. To others, the symbolism represents rather the search of a sensitive Jew for a homeland that is always denied him. At any rate, *The Trial* is a powerful and provocative book.

1.9 The Outsider: Albert Camus

Several themes are interwoven into the structure of *The Outsider*. On the *metaphysical level*, Mersault's story is an example of that opposition between man and the external universe that Camus terms the 'absurd'. Mersault is a man who wants to be happy who wants to continue living, who would have liked when he was a student, to plan a useful life for himself. He comes up against a universe, however, that will not allow these desires to be fulfilled. He releases at the end of his story, which is a series of monotonous repetitions, that death is the common fate of all men and that death renders any attempt to plan for the *future meaningless.*

Another theme of *L'Etranger* is the lack of meaning in the social roles that most people play and believe to be significant. The main target of this *satire* are those middle-class citizens who are normally considered the pillars of society, who are supposed to lead upright lives, who believe in the virtues of the established government and the established church. The novel is also a satire on some social institutions like the press, the legal system, and particularly the state's use of capital punishment. Mersault's criticism of the Christian religion is largely directed towards the extent to which belief in God keeps men from devoting their energies to this life, which, from his perspective, is the only certainty we have. All these themes are treated in a paradoxical and often humorous manner. *The Stranger* is thus not a novel with a simple message, but rather an expression

of sensibility that Camus can look at with sympathy and chronic detachment. It reflects the crisis of European culture, it also reflects what has often been termed the "Crisis of the novel". The reader knows only as much as that character Camus uses the first – person narration in this novel.

L'Etranger is carefully and formally organized. The two parts of the novel are of equal length. A central motif is death. The two-part structure of the novel is reinforced by the tone which suddenly rises towards the end of each part. The calmness of the opening of each part of the novel contrasts with the emotion in the murder scene and in Mersualt's outbursts against the chaplain. Part I covers eighteen days, while in contrast Part II covers a period of eleven months. The treatment of time in the two part structure shows the difference between how a free man responds to immediate events, and how a prisoners sees life as primarily a repetition in which time no longer has any meaning. The narrator Mersault has lost the key to his own secret: he has become a stranger to his own life; to himself and to others. He has a homeland: *sensation*.

Camus belongs to generation which history forced to live in a climate of violent death. Raised on Marx and Netzshe, it witnessed both the caricature of Nietzshe's ideas in the Hitlerian state and the falsification of Marxism in the Stalinist dictatorship. *L'Etranger* makes that curious impression on the reader. It is a book without hope, or rather against hope, it ends on a promise. The Mersault who seems to us from the very beginning inhumanly stripped of illusions, who tries only to put the world in the wrong by bringing its hatred and disapproval down on himself, extracts from defeat a grim acceptance of life. It is not an explanatory book, nor does it prove anything, for the absured man does not explain; he describes.

L'ESTranger has often been considered one of the best novels written in French during the 20th century. The critical judgment is based on how appropriate the form and style of the novel are to the content: how skillfully Camus has constructed the plot to show his themes, how well the way in which Mersault tells his story, expresses his personal vision of life. As an unheroic exempler (typical example) of the sensibility of an era, Mersault has an enduring place among the characters of world fiction.

1.10 Siddhartha: Herman Hesse

Siddhartha is a novel containing many *autobiographical* hints. It describes a young man's revolt against the orthodox religious views of his father, who is a missionary, and his growing interest in Indian mysticism. Incidentally Hesse married, but left his wife and three children in 1911, to make a protracted (long) tour of India. To a large extent, he was a rolling stone like Siddhartha, and above all, he was the prophet of individualism. Hesse gives a key to the understanding of *Siddhartha* in his diary: "I have once tried to put down my beliefs in a book. This book is *Siddhartha*. I have experienced religion in two forms, as a child and grandson of pious and righteous Protestants, and as a reader of Indian manifestations of which I give preference to the Upanishads, the Bhagvat Gita and the teachings of Buddha. "One sees the typical German 'Faustian' conflict a feeling of "two souls in a breast" which originates from his dissatisfaction with life. The moods of melancholy and loneliness, despair and helplessness form the background of his work which has a strong autobiographical trend.

River : The central metaphor of the novel is the river. After leaving the entangling world of Sansara, Siddhartha comes to the river which he had crossed earlier to enter the town of Kamala. He now realises that his self is transitory. He decides to stay by the river, stay with the ferryman Vasudeva who had taken him in his boat across the river. He feels that the river had some message for him. He feels a new love for flowing water. In the image of water, he sees both transitoriness and eternity at the same time. "He saw that the water continually flowed and flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new". Siddhartha learned from the river, "how to listen, to listen with a still heart, with a waiting, open soul, without passion, without desire, without

judgement, without opinions." The river was to him "not just water but the voice of life, the voice of Being, of perpetual Becoming." At their first meeting the ferryman had told Siddhartha that he had learned from the river that "everything comes back." "The idea of the river as an eternal and a transitory thing at the same time is not entirely new. It is Greek: But Hesse borrows it from Vedanta's idea of *Pravahika nityata* [*Shridhar B. Shrotri*].

Hesse expresses his experiences and convictions through Siddhartha. Hesse's "Search for India" was born out of his "Flight from Europe". Likewise when he learned to listen to the river, Siddhartha's Self merged into unity; and then onwards he ceased to fight his own destiny. In their final meeting, the two split souls Govinda and Siddhartha once more unite. There is no more conflict in his mind. He tells Gotana that "wisdom is not communicable" and that *"Time is not real"*. In this work of Hesse like his other works, there runs the trend of German humanism. For Hesse, *love* was the most important thing in the world. After his son's flight, Siddhartha feels a sort of a brotherhood with ordinary people with their life's urges and desires. Hesse's thoughts are curiously akin to Goethe's. He regards Gotama as a great man "in his deeds and life". This is Hesse's *Siddhartha*. Hesse preaches whatever doctrines he has through this Indian work.

The importance of Hesse's *Siddhartha* lies in the fact that the author succeeds in creating the necessary Indian atmosphere. For that his deep study of the *Upanishads* and *Bhagvat Gita* came to his help. He follows the style of the dialogues in the Upanishads. He uses the third person for the first person, double negatives (not unscanty pilgrims), inversions (Spoke Govinda), well-known Indian similies and metaphors. His style is lyrical and makes a lasting impact on the reader.

Siddhartha is a rich and colourful novel about the search for self knowledge. Through this work, Hermann Hesse tried to remind man of inherent dangers in his personality, but at the same time he tried to bring home to him the real meaning of Self-experience for his spiritual lie. Fort his he employs the metaphor of the *river*, whose unique sound signals the true beginning of Siddhartha's life, or the life of any sincere seeker – the beginning of suffering, rejection, peace and finally wisdom. Hesse sees the reflection of his search of this Self-experience in the life of Gotama Buddha. His masterpiece *Siddhartha* may be considered a dedication to that search.

Important questions on Siddhartha

1. *Bring out the moral allegory of Siddhartha*

   [Hints: Siddhartha, an everyman – in search of true self-wisdom incommunicable – has to be attained through one's own experience – much suffering involved.]

2. *"Siddhartha got salvation through existential suffering"- Discuss*

   [Refer (1)]

3. "Siddhartha is the story of a man who sought and found himself"- Elucidate.

   [Refer (1)]

Important Critical terms

It is advisable to have, at your disposal, a standard glossary of critical terms such as by *M.H. Abrams*. Various Critical terms pertaining to European Fiction have been explained in the several *Units*. Check your knowledge for the following in particular:-

*a) **Movements*** : Realism, Naturalism, expressionism, Impressionism Decadence, Arts for Art's sake, Surrealism, Dada, Futurism, Absurd

*b) **Modes of Narration***: Epic, epistolary, Documentary, Picaresque,Autobiographical, Stream-of Consciousness, Monologue.

*c) **Types of Fiction:*** Psychological, Sociological, Revolutionary, Fantasy, Propagandist, Domestic, Historical, Novel with a purpose.

*d) **Miscellaneous:*** Round and flat characters, Leitmotif, Metphor.

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UNIT XV

GUNTER GRASS: AN INTRODUCTION

1.0. Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

(i) form a general idea of German fictional literature of modern times: and

(ii) understand about the life personality of Gunter Grass.

1.1 Introduction

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about his age, since however conventional or individualistic he may be, he nevertheless belongs to his age, and is a product of his society. So let us begin this *Unit* with a brief note on German fictional literature of the modern times, which has produced such gems as *Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, Franz Kafka* and *Gunter Grass.*

1.2 German Fictional Literature of Modern Times

German literature holds less than its deserved status in world literature, in part because the lyrical qualities of its poetry and the nuances of its prose all ill-served by translation. Even the most sublime of figures in German literary history such as *Goethe* and *Schiller* are doomed to remain known to the world largely by reputation. In the 20th century perhaps four German poets and writers have won a permanent niche in world literature – *Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Rainer Maria Rilke* and *Bertolt Brecht,* all of whose works date from the early decades. Of German novelists since the war, only two have been published in translation abroad – *Heinrich Boll* and *Gunter Grass;* among the playwrights, apart from *Brecht* and *Carl Zuckmayer,* whose major plays extend from the 1920s to the mid 1950s, the works of *Siegfriend Lenz* and *Peter Weiss* have been well received abroad.

In *Thomas Mann,* we find the *Zeitgeist* (Time Spirit), in all its violence, concentrated within the stolid limits of a phenomenally intelligent conservative. He has been posited as a realistic bourgeois writer who clearly saw that time for his class had run out. Mann was a bleak pessimist trapped in the Germanism he so vigorously resisted. *Expressionism,* the literary movement of approximately 1910-25- was the first, and the most violent and explicit, manifestation of modernism. The German reaction to the disintegration of the old culture and to the impending catastrophe of the war, to the growing notion that man was alone in a hostile universe, was the most anguished and contorted (twisted) of all; frequently it took violent or gruesome forms. Apart from its intensity the most notable feature of German expressionism is the hostility of the younger towards the elder generation, often manifesting itself as hatred of the father or father figure. Like *Thomas Mann,* the Czech *Franz Kafka* also was an expressionist. Kafka was not interested in character, he is a writer of fables which evoke the bewildered, humiliated or defensive states of mind of a single protagonist. Another notable German *Hermann Hesse* (1877-1962) was a critic, poet, short-story writer and above all, novelist. As a writer, he has been more heeded in the East than in the West, with his overriding desire to reconcile such opposites as death and life with the war, Hesse turned pacifist. In *Siddhartha* (1922 tr 1957) the increasingly antinomian (Ref Section 1.4) Hesse drew on his Indian experiences. The hero son of a Brahmin is first an ascetic, then a sensual materialist, but does not learn anything until he becomes the assistant of a ferryman-mage (a magician) who plies between the two worlds of spirit and flesh.

The movement known as *Dada* and *Surrealism,* related to expressionism prevailed in German literature in the twenties. Nothing

illustrates the nature of the German genius more clearly than the *German novel.* Before the first World War, German literature experienced comparative calm. The main influences were *Naturalism* and its opposite *"art for art's sake".* The *Impressionistic Novel* derived from the naturalists laid a greater emphasis on character. Outstanding among the impressionistic novelists are *Hermann Hesse,* who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1946 and *Thomas Mann.* Towards the end of the first World War weariness and despair, accentuated in Germany by the revolution (1918) led to several *war novels* being written by younger writers. *Johannes* BECHER in his works violently opposed war, and the chaotic state life was expressed generally in literature by EXPRESSIONISM, a movement borrowed from painting in a spirit of almost ecstatic mysticism. The Expressionistic writers were often socialists, and their work also revealed a changed attitude towards women, the relationship between men and women being intellectual rather than emotional. In 1922 Expressionism subsided. Immediate post-war novels were chiefly concerned with the attempt to explain the rise and fall of Nazi Germany. The late 1950s and early 1960s produced few great writers, with the exception of perhaps *Gunter Grass,* who won recognition and acclaim only much later.

Let us study something about the life and achievements of *Gunter Grass* now.

1.3 Life and achievements of Gunter Grass

Withelm Gunter Grass (1927-) who was born of German Polish parents in the Free City of *Danzig* (now Gdansk) has achieved the greatest success of all post-war German writers. Trained as a scuptor and draughtsman, he began writing about 1956, had articles and poems published in *avant-garde* magazines and stage pieces produced at experimental theatres in Hamburg and elsewhere but made little impact. He fought in the army towards the end of the war and was captured by the Americans. Thus Grass began like so many German writers as an artist, a sculptor. He had become known both for his art and for his art and for his radio plays. By the mid-fifties; his plays were grotesque and in the manner of Samuel *Beckett.* His poems (with his own illustrations) which were" at once amusing, horrifying and strangely life-enhancing....expose the false indemnities of modern man, the fragmentation of his world, his puzzlement, his littleness and his curious paradoxical courage in recognizing absurdity and facing it" [*Times Literary Supplement]* Reminiscent of Beckett's, *Poems in English,* their elements of the 'Absurd' recur in the novel that has made Grass internationally famous: DIE BLECHTROMMEL (1959 tr. THE TIN DRUM 1961). He was awarded the *Gruppe* 47 award for this, even before publication. Since then Grass has written more novels, a full scale stage play, poetry and several essays and speeches. *Dog Years* and *Cat and Mouse* are two of his novels. Committed to the establishment of socialism in West Germany, Grass campaigned for the Social Democrats in 1965 and 1969 (when they were just successful); and in 1972, when they did well.

Grass is a linguistically exuberant, ingenious and highly in-ventive writer, whose work is a unique combination of vitality and grotesquerie. He is a genuinely *neo-baroque* novelist. He is old enough to have taken part in Nazi activities and the war (he was a member of the Hitler youth when Germany seized Danzig) without being responsible. This makes him eager to probe in the immediate past an activitiy that puzzles those who are too young to have experienced Nazidom, but annoys those who once accepted it. Grass insists that the artist however committed he may be in life, should be a clown in art; there is much pained irony in this pronouncement. But Grass, an intelligent and sensible as well as a clever and amusing man, has made good sense of the division between his art (which is skeptical about human happiness) and his life (unequivocal political activity for a party of which he is critical); he calls himself a revisionist, that is one who departs from a Marxist doctrine. Despite everything, Grass remains extraordinarily relaxed, a remarkable feat for a really gifted German writer. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, 1999.

Grass is a charming, most often playful or satirical minor poet. His Absurd plays did not work well on the stage. A brilliant, tightly

controlled novella, *Cat and Mouse* (1961) demonstrated Grass's ability to direct his satire with complete accuracy at the world of Nazi heroics. *Dog Years* is another vast novel with a wider political range than *The Tin Drum*, in which the world of political reality is ironically unmarked and seen from the perspective of a dog's fate. As usual in Grass's works, the mixture is of scurrility, humour, tragedy, satire and marvelously inventive imagery. Deeply committed politically, Grass left the immediacy of the pre-1945 era in 1969, and presented a more contemporary German intellectualizing of the past and present.

The Tin Drum is a historically meticulous examination of the period 1925-55, narrated by an impossible midget (dwarf) *Oscar Matzerath* who willed himself to stop growing at the age of three, a device which enables the author to hover between fantasy and realism and achieve a detachment to make the scenes and characters of German life before and during the Nazi regime stand out with extraordinary clarity and humour. One of the most outstanding post war German novels, it has been translated into many languages. In this novel fantasy of the specifically German sort is brilliantly counter-pointed with historical detail. The scenes which helped to make it a success are only incidental to its epic "autobiographical" sweep, from German – Polish origins in Danzing through the Nazi period and the war to the, night-clubs of the West. Its power lies in its 'style', the fantastic vision of its hero; a dwarf in an asylum, whose drum the toy of his retarded childhood beats through the illusions and forgetfullness of the adult world, to expose its follies and fears with a sensationally detached sophistication, purporting (intending) to be naïve. We can understand that Oskar's childhood need for tin drums, his glass-shattering screams, if denied them is not merely fanciful. Similar techniques and themes, with grotesque satire of Nazi-violence, the war and its end, and post war Germany are employed in *Dog years* and *Cat and Mouse.*

You should have an idea of certain critical terms, if you are to appreciate The Tim Drum fully. Let us make a brief note of them.

1.4 Some Critical Terms

1. ***Expressionism:*** A German movement in literature and other arts (especially the visual arts) which was at its height between 1910 and 1925, that is, the period just before, during, and after the First World War. Its chief precursors (beginners) were artists and writers who had in various ways departed from realistic depictions of life and the world by expressing in their art visionary or powerfully emotional states of mind. Prominent among the literary movement are the Russian novelist *Dostoevsky*, the German philosopher *Friedrich Nietzsche, Franz Kafka* and *Gunter Grass.* Its central feature is a revolt against the artistic and literary tradition of realism, both in subject matter and style. The expressionistic writer undertakes to express a personal vision-usually a troubled or tensely emotional vision-of human life and society; he does it through exaggeration and distortion of the objective features of the outer world, and by embodying violent extremes of mood and feeling. The expressionists were radical in their politics. The movement was finally suppressed in Germany by the Nazis in the early 1930s. We recognize its effects direct or indirect, on the theatre of the *absurd.*

2. ***Surrealism:*** An artistic movement launched in France in the 1920s. The expressed aim was a revolt against all restraints on free creativity; the restraints included logical reason, standard morality, social and artistic conventions and norms, and any other control over the artistic process by fore thought and intention. To ensure the unhampered (free) operation of the "deep mind" which they regarded as the only source of valid knowledge as well as art, surrealists turned to *automatic writing* (writing delivered over entirely to the promptings of the unconscious mind) and to exploiting the material of dreams, of states of mind between sleep and waking and of natural or artificially induced hallucinations. Surrealistic writing is characterized by broken syntax, non-logical and non-chronological order, free association dream like and nightmarish sequences and the juxtaposition of bizarre (strange) shocking and seemingly unrelated images.

3. The Literature of the Absurd: The term is applied to a number of works in drama and prose-fiction which have in common the sense that the human condition is essentially and ineradicably absurd, and that this condition can be adequately represented only in works of literature that are themselves absurd. The current movement emerged in France after the horrors of the II World War, as a rebellion against essential beliefs and values, both of traditional culture and traditional literature. Absurd literature is characterized by naïve, inept characters in a fantastic or nightmarish modern world, and events which are often simultaneously comic, horrifying, and absurd. Examples in prose-fiction are the novels of *Kafka (The Trial), Sartre, Camus and Gunter Grass (The Tin Drum)*

4. Baroque: The term refers to a style of art and architecture prevailing in Europe during the 17th and first half of the 18th centuries that was characterized by elaborate and grotesque forms and ornamentation.

5. Antinomian: A person who (like Herman Hesse) maintains that Christians are freed from the moral law by virtue of grace as set forth in the Gospel.

6. Dadaism/Dada: The term refers to the style and technique of a group of artists, writers etc, of the early 20th century who exploited accidental and incongruous effects in their work and pro-grammatically challenged established cannons of art, thought, morality etc.

Let us summarise the novel *The Tin Drum* in the succeeding Units.

UNIT 2

THE TIN DRUM: A SUMMARY OF PART ONE

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a general idea of the plot of Gunter Grass's novel *The Tin Drum:* and

(ii) form your initial impressions about the characters and the mode of narration

2.1 Introduction

The best way to enjoy a novel of course is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation something of the original flavour and flair is bound to be lost. A chapter-wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about the characters, mode of narration and so on. But if you can lay your hands on a good translation, do it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Grass's masterpiece. Anyway, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first part of the novel comprising the whole of *Book One* and seven characters of *Book Two*

2.2 BOOK ONE

2.2.1 The wide Skirt

Oscar Matzerath, the narrator of the novel is an inmate of a mental hospital. He seems to enjoy his quiet, lonely existence there. Upon his request, his keeper *Bruns Munsteberg* gets him five hundred sheets of writing paper ("a ream of virgin paper" as Oskar calls it). Oscar begins to write the story of his grandmother Anna Bronski who was once sitting in her skirts at the edge of potato field, late one October afternoon in the year 1899 in the heart (center) of Kashubia. Oskar's grandmother wore four wide skirts one over the other! She saw three men darting between the telegraph poles. After some time she hid one of them (Short and Wide) inside her skirts! His name was Kiljaiczek, and the other two men, who were rural constables were chasing him. They searched every where around the woman, disturbing her heaps of potatoes and were disappointed not to find any sign of the fugitive. Oskar's grandmother sat there rooted to her spot and sighing at intervals. It was evening when the two constables decided to look for Koljaiczek in Bissau.

Oskar's grandmother saw them vanishing; only then did she rise, "slowly and painfully as though she had struck root and now, drawing earth and fibres along with her, were trearing herself out of the ground"! She gave some hot potatoes to him, then with her basket, potatoes etc, she started off in the direction of Bissau Quarry. Joseph Koljaiczek, unable to tear himself away from her skirts, followed Oskar's grandmother there.

Critical Comments: The novel opens in a dramatic manner. The central character, an inmate of lunatic asylum recounts the meeting of his grandmother Anna Bronski with the fugitive Joseph Koljazek. She wears four wide skirts one over the other, her hiding the short and stocky Koljaiczek under her skirts with subtle sexual inneudos (sly remarks) are rather fantastic, bizarre and ludicrous.

2.2.2 Under the Raft

That afternoon Anna Bronski conceived Oskar's mother Agnes! The same night his grandmother changed her name to Anna Koljaiczek and followed Jospeh, who found work as a raftman in the povincial capital on the river Mottalu. Joseph remained in hiding for three weeks, assuming the name and role of a raftsman *Joseph Wranka*, a harmless fellow and good husband. He was not a tyrant. His daughter seemed to take after him hiding herself under the bed, or in the clothes cupboard. The essential thing for little 'Agnes was to remain hidden. It give her a sense of security.

The trouble began in 1913m, when as in every summer, Koljaiczek was to help man the big raft from Kiev to Vistula. Twelve raftsman in all, they boarded the tugboat *Radaume*. The new manager of the sawmill introduced himself as *Dukerhoff*. Both Koljaiczek and Dukerhoff were afraid and full of doubts suspicions and hesitation- like two enemy brothers Dukerhoff doubted whether Wranka was Koljaiczek, the fire-bug who had worked in the mill at Schwetz, the one that burned down. Oskar's grandmother Anna was able to produce papers and documents to disprove any allegation of arson Fire captain Hect, a Prson similarly supported Joseph. Evidence was gathered in a number of saw mills, matters became very bad and at last when Koljaiczek saw the blue uniforms, he jumped into the water. Oskar's gand father's body was never found; he had met with his death under the raft. However there were a number of cock and bull stories as to how he had been miraculously rescued. Oskar did not believe them.

Critical Comments

This chapter begins with the staring bizarre manner of Anna Bronski conceiving Oskar"s mother Agnes while the short and stocky Koljaiczek was hiding under her wide skirts! It ends with the death of the grandfather.

2.2.3 Moth and Light Bulb

The rumour about Oskar's grandfather was that he was a man who had left everything behind him, crossed the great water and become rich. Oskar felt that was enough about his grandfather regardless of whether he was called Holjaczek (Polish), Kaoljaiczek (Kashubian) or Joe Calchic (American). Bruno remarked that it was beautiful death. Oskar's frend Klepp made an ill-humoured refusal to decide between life and death. But his other friend Vittlar's answer was sardonic and offensive; he advised him to go to America after his acquittal and traced his grandfather.

Oskar continued to touch very briefly on the life up to the hour of his birth, of the little group of mourners his grandfather had left behind him in Europe. When Koljaiczek disappeared uner the raft, Oskar's grandmother, her daughter Agnes, her brother Vincent Bronski and his seventeen year-old son *Jan Bronski* were filled with anguish. Joseph's brother Gregor Koljaiczek said he hardly knew anything about him. At last he married Oskar's grandmother who was determined to stick by the Koljaiczeks. Gregor drank heavily. Oskar's mother Agnes, then a plumb little girl of fifteen helped in her mother's store. Only when Gregor died of influenza in 1917 did the profits of the shop increase a little. But not much; for what was there to sell in 1917?

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Oskar's mother fell in love with her cousin Jan, a sickly young man of twenty who worked in a post office and had a large stamp collection. In 1918, Agnes, who was working as an auxiliary nurse met *Alfred Matzerath*, a wounded cook and soon he captivated Sister Agnes. Jan Bronski opted to be transferred to the Polish post office The gesture seemed spontaneous and was generally interpreted as reaction to Oskar's mother's infidelity. It was only after Jan married his *Hedwig.*, a Kashubian girl that relations between him and Agnes improved. In 1923, Alfred Matzerath married Agnes, and the two looked after the store quite well, complementing each other wonderfully.

Oskar was born in the bedroom. He himself says, "I was one of those clarirudient infants whose mental development is completed at birth and after that merely need a certain amount of filling in". Oskar listned carefully to the first words that slipped from his parents beneath the light bulbs. Matzerath commented that the boy would take over the store when he grew up. His mother said, *"When little Oskar is three, he will have a toy drum"* Oskar made up his mind to reject his father's project but to give his mother's plan favourable consideration, when his third birthday arrived. He quickly realized that his parents were not equipped to understand or respect his decisions. Lonely and misunderstood, he knew that he had to go one living till the end. It was only the prospect of the drum that prevented him from expressing more forcefully his desire to return to the womb.

Critical Comments

This chapter tells us about Oskar's birth, his being a clairaudient infant, his inherent sense of loneliness and insecurity and his desire to return to the womb. One is reminded of the characters of Samuel Beckett who suffer from similar problems. The promise of the tin-drum as Oskar's third birthday gift also is expressed here.

2.2.4 The Photograph Album

Oskar guarded his photograph album like a treasure. He described it as his "family cemetery". He went through it commenting or the snaps, which he and Klepp had taken long back. Oskar then had been gloomy and depressed for no solid reason. He observes that true gloom is by nature goundless. Their gloom attained a pitch of intensity that would yield to nothing. If there was any way of making friends with their gloom., it was through the photos, because they found an image of themselves in them; the photos gave them a kind of freedom in their dealings with themselves. Occasionally they gave a photo away. Oskar never gave any pictures to the waitress. In the photographs taken shortly before the First World War, and even during the war years, those who posed continued to smile. After the war the faces changed. The men looked rather de-mobilised; melancholy was becoming to the women of the twenties , who made no attempt to conceal an undertone of studied sorrow. Oskar paid special attention to one particular photos in which his mother was sitting, and Jan and Matzerath standing behind her, and smiling too- the three protagonists of Oskar's early years forming a triangle, "those three who brought me into the world though they wanted for (lacked) nothing."

Oskar observed that he was a handsome child. His first photograph was taken on Pentecost, 1925. He was eight months, old, two months younger than Stephan Bronski. There were several photos of his taken when he was aged between one and three years including the full-length portrait they had taken of him in honour of this third birthday. His tin drum was hanging in front of his tummy, brand-new with its serrated red and white fields. It was in that picture that Oskar first arrived at an unalterable decision, and determined that he would never under any circumstances be politician, much less a grocer, that he would remain as he was- and so he did, for many years. Oskar not only stayed the same size, but clung to the same attire. He remained the three year-old, the gnome, the Tom-Thumb, the pigmy, the Liliputian, the midget, whom no one could persuade to grow. To quote Oskar: " I remained the precocious three-year-old towered over by grown-ups but superior to all grown-ups, who refused to measure his shadow with theirs, who was complete both inside and outside, while they, to the very

brink of the grave, were condemned to worry their heads about development". However something did grow, ultimately taking on Messianic proportions but no grown-up in his day had eyes and ears for Oskar, the eternal three-year-old drummer.

Critical Comments

It is in this chapter that we come to know of Oskar's decision taken on his third birthday, that he would stop growing. It is his way of rebelling, protesting against society and man-made conventions and institutions.

2.2.5 Smash a Little Windowpane

From the very beginning it was plain to Oskar that grown ups would not understand him. On his third birthday, while everyone was busy, Oskar went down the trap dor leading to the cellar and tried to climb up with a tray of ras berry syrup bottles, he landed head first on the cement floor of the cellar. His fall created a big sensation. His mother was upset, blamed Matzerath for keeping the trap-door open, and called him and called him a murderer. Unihentionally, Oskar transformed the harmless, good-natured Matzerath into a guilty Matzerath. Oskar's falls brought him four weeks in the hospital. After this incident he created the general impression that he just would not grow any more after that fall down the cellar stairs. And Oskar, began to drum. The ability to drum the necessary distance between grown-ups and Oskar developed shortly after his fall, almost, simultaneously with the ability to sing-scream so piercingly that no one dared to take away the drum that was destroying his eardrum. *Oskar had the gift of shattering glass with his singing* , his screams and singing made window-panes crumble. Soon his talents became well-known. To his irritation, every window-pane broken in the entire neighborhood by rowdies big or little was blamed on Oskar and his voice.

A month after his third birthday, Oskar's parents tried to take his old drum away, because they feared that he would cut himself on the sharp edges. When Matzerath tried to pull it Oskar screamed so strongly that the glass covering of the clock was shattered. Hence forth Oskar made this a practice. Jan Bronski bought him a new protest. He relinguished the relic and devoted himself with both hands to the new instrument. He observed that not all the grown ups around him proved as understanding as Jan Bronski.

Once, shortly after his fifth birthday, Oskar's mother took him to Dr. Hollatz, who tried to take his drum away. For the first time Oskar tried his voice on a whole set of carefully sealed glasses, destroying the greater part of his collection of snakes, toads and embryos! The success was unique and overwhelming for all present. Then lending his scream greater relief and throwing economy to the winds Oskar shattered one test tube after another. The tubes popped like firecrackers. Dr. Hollatz turned the loss of his collection to his advantage by publishing an article about Oskar M, the child with the glass-shattering voice in a medical journal. His already keen skepticism led Oskar to judge the doctor's Opusculum (Composition) as a long-winded skillfully formulated display of irrelevancies.

Today he lies in his mental hospital unable to damage even his toothbrush glass with his singing, Oskar likes to think back on the archaic period of his voice. In those early days he shattered glass only when necessary, but later on in the heyday and decadence of his art exercised it even when not impelled by outward circumstances. *He employed glass as a medium of self expression and grew older in the process.*

Critical Comments

This chapter connects two of Oskar's particular gifts or characteristics- his habit of drumming and his ability to shatter glass by singing-both equally irritating and troublesome to the others. Well, it is his way of expressing his protest against the world which cannot understand him.

2.2.6 The Schedule

In this chapter, Oskar speaks about the schedules Klepp kept drawing up and then goes on to recount his first day at school-the Pestalozzi School. There were several boys of Oskar's age in the I A Class. Their mothers pressed against the walls. After some time

Miss Spollenhauer came in. Upon her suggestion the class started singing, or rather howling. Oskar started drumming emphatically. The teacher gave him a nod of encouragement. For a moment, he felt that Miss Spollenhauer had become a not unpleasant old maid, but had become human, that is, childlike, curious complex and immoral. Soon trouble began when she tried to coax him to put his drum in the locker and have it back when school was over. Oskar gave her a warning scratch on the lens of her right eye- glass, probably with his voice. The teacher looked reproachfully at mother and son and called the boy wicked. Following that she handed out the schedule (timetable) and started reading out. Oskar started drumming, much to the irritation of the teacher. She tried to seize the drum when the boy let out his glass-demolishing scream. She then tried to whip him. When Oskar would not hold out his hand to be whipped she struck his drum, his "darling" ! It was too much for Oskar who composed a double cry which literally pulversied both lenses of Miss Spollenhauer spectacles, and caused slight bleeding at the eyebrows. As an offended mother escorted the son out of the classroom, a photographer placed Oskar gainst a blackboard on which was written: My First School Day, and took a snap!

Critical Comments

Oskar's protest against routine and timetables, very characteristic of him, is described here with a mixture of realism and fantasy.

2.2.7 Rasputin and Alphabet

At the Pestalozzi School, Oskar had not drummed in mere revolutionary protest; he lacked the most elementary school learning. It was just unfortunate that Miss Spollenhauer's methods of inculcating knowledge did not appeal to Oskar. His parents did not care much about his education. Several times a day he tramped up and down the steps opf the four-story apartment house. He sometimes accompanied Mr. Meyn the trumpet player on his drum. The green grover Greff hardly understood him. To a very small extent, Oskar envied other school children, but that was only a temporary feeling. Then *Gretchen Scheffler* who lived behind the bakery took his education inhand. This lady had little enough to offferhim; for she hardly read. From her small collection of books, Oskar picked out first Rasputin and then Goethe. Gretchen complained to Oskar's mother that the boy learnt nothing. But actually Oskar tore'off pages after pages from the two books combined them differently and read them! He ate a lot of cakes in those years and grew just fat and lumpy. He was compelled to try on little frocks and bonnets Gretchen made.

Critical Comments

This is a rather funny but thought provoking chapter which recounts how Oskar learnt his alphabets. Once again, Oskar's protest against conventional methods of education, coupled with in competent teacher is brought out.

2.2.8 The Stock turn. Long-Distance Song Effect

The lady doctor who attended on Oskar observed that he suffered from isolation in his childhood, that he did not play enough with other children. One day some of the children forced Oskar to drink some disgusting, nauseating soup and he screamed and sang banking on long-distance glass-shattering effects. Each time he needed a new drum. Which was very often his mother took him into the city to shop. Often she would leave Oskar in Markus's shop to go and spend three quarters of an hour with Jan in hotel. On one such occasion Oskar strolled, crossed the Kohlenmarket and stood facing the Stockturn a very tall East German brick gothic lower. He climbed the lower and screamed even though his drum was not even remotely threatened. He was very hapy to note that window panes in the end window of the lobby of Stadt theatre was shattered. Markus mentioned his to Oskar's mother. Today, in his hopspital bed, Oskar looks for the land of the Poles that is lost to the "Poles".

Critical Comments

This chapter describes the expansion of extension of Oskar's glass shattering skills to long distance effects. It also hints at his

mother's clandestine relations with his Uncle Jan.

2.2.9 The Rostrum

Oskar's mother took him and his cousins to see the Christmas play at the Stadt-Theatre. The play was Tom Thumb. Oskar and his mother were touched particularly by the end of the play. It was not until the summer of '33 that he visited the theatre again to watch the Zoppot Opera-in-the Woods. In '34 he went there for the third time to watch a circus. There he met *Bebra* who was about four inches taller than Oskar. They got introduced. Oskar was then nine and a half. Babra who claimed royal lineage said he was about fifty three years old. Bebra was impressed by Oskar's glass-shattering ability and wanted to hire him on the spot. Even today Oskar is occasionally sorry that he declined. Bebra kissed him on the forehead. He said that little people like them could always find a place on the most crowded rostrum. The political events of the ensuing (following) years bore him out. Oskar was usually able to find a place among the leaders of the women's associations. By the summer of 34, Oskar began to be disillusioned with the party.

Critical Comments

This chapter open with Oskar's visits to the theatre on different occasions, his meeting with Bebra, his initial fascination with rostrums and his gradual disillusionment with the party. The novel takes on a political tinge. As an undercurrent, the love triangle involving Agnas, Matzerath and Jan Bronski is perceived by the precocious child.

2.2..10. Shopwindows

For several years till '38 Oskar and his drum spent much time huddling under rostrums observing demonstrations, breaking up rallies, driving orators to distraction and so on. Looking back Oskar feels that though he cannot be called a *Resistance Fighter* , he had drummed for the people. His work was destructive, what he did not defeat with his drum, he killed with is voice, gradually he developed another strange temptation – to turn ordinary, well meaning persons into thieves. He would produce a neat hole in a show case, shop-window, jewellery or watch case, so that a victim standing close by would invariably be tempted to put his or her hand through it and steal that object. Through his mother suspected his hand or rather his voice in the sudden increase in the crime, she said or reported nothing. Once Oskar tempted Jan to steal to ruby necklace which he presented to Oskar's mother. Agnes, who unsuspected the source, wore it only when Matzerath was absent. Soon, after the war, Oskar exchanged it on the black market for twelve cartons of Lucky strikes and a leather briefcase. Oskar was aware that all that he was doing was evil.

Critical Comments

This is very dramatic chapter which recounts how Oskar turns ordinary people into thieves. The strange thins is that he knows what he is doing is wrong, yet he persists.

2.2.11. No Wonder

Today as he lay in his mental hospital, Oskar often regretted the power he had in those days to project his voice to cut holes in shop-windows and show thieves the way. How he suffered from the loss of that power during the year before his commitment to hospital! He usually abhorred (hated) violence. Oskar records sarcastically that his mother who led "an adulterous woman's life" by meeting Jan Bronski regularly on Thursdays became religious in her son's case and out a stop to his singing outside of shop windows. She started taking him every Saturday to Church, for Confession. Oskar could not help noticing an embarrassing resemblance between Christ the Saviour and his godfather, uncle and presumptive father Jan Bronski.

Since his mother felt that need to confess before Easter should reach its climax she took Oskar by the hand on the afternoon of Passioon Monday to the church. It was late when they arrives. As his mother confessed, Oskar wandered. He hung the drum on Jesus and thrust the drumsticks into Jesus's hands. Oskar hoped that by a small miracle Jesus would start drumming but nothing happened. Oskar realized that it was a mistake to try to teach Jesus anything. He took the sticks but left the drum. He then out

back the sticks. He actually drummed to show the "little pseudo-Jesus" how to do it. Hearing the din Father Wihnke, the Vicar, Oskar's mother, all came there. The priest snatched the drum: Oskar kicked him, much to his mother's shame. Oskar screamed, but he failed to execute his glass-shattering miracle. He sank down and wept bitterly because Jesus had failed. Only his mother understood his tears, though she could not help feeling glad that there had been no broken glass. His mother than picked up Oskar in her arms and they left. Oskar regretted that Jesus with the Sacred Heart was false. He would go down into the grave on Good Friday, while Oskar would keep on drumming and drumming, but never again experience any desire for a miracle.

Critical Comments

In this chapter Oskar tries to see a resemblance between himself and Christ as men of miracle. We note how for the first time his glass-shattering voice fails him. Is Oskar trying to show that religion or God cannot tolerate destructive tendencies?

2.2.12. Good Friday Fare

Oskar's feelings during the period between Passion Monday and Good Friday were *paradoxical*. He was glad his drum was his own, though he was irritated that Jesus had not drummed. Though he had failed in his glass-shattering in the Church, he was glad that the vestige of Catholic faith was preserved. The triumph of his voice over profane targets made him painfully aware of his failures in the sacred sector. The cleavage was lasting; Oscar had never been able to heal it. Now he was at home neither in the sacred not the profane, but dwelt on the fringes, in a mental hospital.

On Good Friday, after breakfast, Oskar his parents and Jan Bronski started for Brosen. There Agnes witnessed a revolting scene of eels being extracted from the head of a dead horse submerged in water. She perversely forced a diet of the eels upon herself. Upon their return the elders began to argue about the Good Friday dinner. As usual Agnes reminded Matzerath of Oskar's famous fall, and Bronski tried to pacify them. Oskar hid himself in the clothes cupboard and tried to dream of Sister Inge. He was disturbed by their screaming, arguing and his mother's whimpering. It was only after Easter that Oskar's Passion began.

Critical Comments

This is one of the several outlandish experiences that fill the later part of Oskar's recorded existence.

2.2.13 Tapered at the Foot End

Oskar's mother's Passion too was going to begin. Her sufferings began soon. Quite of her own accord, possessed by some mysterious demon. She began, exactly two weeks after Easter, to devour fish in terrible quantities again. Everyone including Matzerath and Grandma Koljaiczek were exasperated. She was taken to hospital. She was found to be pregnant; her face was devastated by pain and nausea. She could not forget the horse. On the fourth day she died Oskar could not weep. He felt it was his mother's way of breaking up the triangle that would leave Matzerath, whom perhaps she hated, with the guilt and enable Jan Bronski to feel that she did it for him. Agnes and Jan could be easily identified with Romeo and Juliet.

Oskar suppressed a passionated desire to climb up on his mother's coffin, sit there and drum. With his very knuckles, he would have wished to drum and go down into the grave with his mother and the foetus, if it had only been possible and allowed. Markus who came for the condolence was shown the gate. At last Oskar slept in his grandmother's skirts.

Critical Comments

This is rather touching chapter, recounting the strange manner of Oskar's mother's death following her unnatural consumption of fish. Oskar's desire to return to his mother is reminiscent of the Beckettian dilemma of the return to the womb.

2.2.14 Herbert Truczinski's Back

Soon after his mother's funeral, Oskar started missing her terribly. He was almost fourteen; he loved solitude and his drum went with him, though he used it sparingly. One day in '37 or '38, he met Bebra who introduced him to the midgest Roswitha

Raguna, the most celebrated somnambulist in all italy. The Neopolitan (Italian) somnambulist was an old lady of eighty or ninety. She admonished Oskar to forgive his fathers; to accustom himself to his own existence so that his heart might find peace, but it was all in vain. Inspite of everything Oskar felt badly let down byhis mother. In his acute loneliness, he had only his drum to turn to. Oskar experienced guilt when his grandmother remarked that her daughter Agnes had died because she could not stand the drumming any more.

Oskar would occasionally go to Madame Truczinski's house. Her son Herbert was his friend. Herbert worked in a Sweden Bar an international spot; the job was not without its perils for Herbert would come home in an ambulance once or twice a month. Oskar was fascinated by the scars on his massive back; they were caused by the knives of the drunk customers. Herbert would explain the history of each scar as Oskar pointed to it.

Critical Comments

One feels sorry for poor Oskar, for he really misses his dead mother. His fascination with Herbert's scars is a diversion.

2.2.15 Niobe

In'38, the Customs duties were raised and the borders between Poland and the free City were temporarily closed. Herbert was unemployed. During that period Oskar and Herbert together committed two medium sized burglaries. They gave up the burglar's trade not so much due to the misplaced feelings of guilt as the increasing difficulty of disposing the goods. Mother Truczinski insisted that Hetrbert should look for a decent job. Herbert managed to get the job of a maritime museum assistant. The pride of the museum collection was a ship's wooden figurehead called Niobe- a luxuriant wooden woman green and naked with sunken amber eyes gazing out over resolute, forward-looking breasts. This female figure head was believed to be a bringer of disaster. Niobe, popularly known as the "the Green Kitten" was responsible in the short space of fourteen years for the death of three directors, the violent ends of students graduates etc- all apparently cases of tragic suicides. Niobe was seriously suspected of having dispatched men and boys from life to death.

Herbert took Oskar along on child's admission ticket and they went inside. At first Herbert declared that he was not at all affected by Niobe. He worked there for weeks. Then one day he took up his post alone, for Oskar was not allowed inside by the cashier. Oskar accompanied him to the museum and sat on a place across the streeet. That afternoon, Oskar managed to slip in with the emergency squad into the museum. In a frenzy of lust, Herbert, who was bare to the waist and whose trousers were open, had torn a double-edged ship's ax (axe) from its safety chain; in the course of his frantic assault, he was impaled (fixed) to her-forever. Thus Herbert Truczunski died of a wound in the chest inflicted by a wooden woman!

Critical Comments

The killing power of lust is dramatically and fascinatingly brought out in this chapter, not without a tinge of sardonic humour. The attempted love affair between Herbert and Niobe is the ludicrous equation between flesh and wood, and is naturally foredoomed to disaster.

2.2.16 Faith, Hope, Love

There was once a musician named Meyn: a toy merchant named Markus and a drummer named Oskar. Meyn Killed his four cats with a fire poker. Markus took all the toys with him out of this world. They took away Oskar's toy-merchant.

Critical Comments

This chapter contains a lot of repetitions. Oskar is dejected and wonders if there is any meaning in the Biblical words: *Faith ,Hope and love*

With this, we come to the end of Book One. Let us move on to *Book Two.*

2.3. Book Two

2.31 Scrap Metal

Oskar piles up all his battered tin drums in the potato cellar, with a note on each drum's career. He had a passion for order which Herbert's sister Maria cannot

understand. The fear of a shortage or prohibition of drums following his generous mother's death must have been art the root of his collector's passion. He had little realized that the relatively serene and playful days of his childhood had ended with Markus's death. Now Oskar was very careful with his drums; he drummed seldom and only in cases of absolute necessity. Even since his mother's death, Oskar's father thought of nothing but Hitler and his Party occupations. Oskar hated to think about the collection Sundays. Once he took Matzerath's tin can in which he collected for Winter Aid. After his unsuccessful attempt to use it as a drum he realized that nothing could amply substitute a tin drum. Oskar realized how things had changed after his mother's death while Jan worked for the Polish Post Office. Matzerath stood for the German Reich and the relations between them were not the same as before, in the present political situation.

Once in August '39, Oskar waited for Jan outside the Polish settlement. They were going to the Polish Post Office to see Janitor Kobyella who would repair Oskar's drum. Oskar noticed as they drive that his presumptive father was sweating profusely. As an official Jan was expected to help defend the Polish Post Office. Some of his colleagues distrusted him, some felt that Postal Secretary Bronski was going to shrik his duties. Jan had difficulty in clearing himself. A someone came and gave Jan instructions. Oskar lay down in one of the mail baskets and fell asleep.

Critical Comments

This is introductory chapter to Book Two. Oskar's fear complex regarding his drums and his approaching Jan Bronski for getting his drum repaired, as well as the increasing political tension are all broadly hinted.

2.3.2. The Polish Post Office

The machine gun fire increased, there followed the first antitank shell burst against The Polish Post Office, Oskar, still obsessed with the desire to have his drum repaired, thought of Kobyella and looked for Jan. Oskar compared the damage with the window panes that had collapsed in quiet deep breathing times of peace under the influence of his diamond voice. After a long search Oskar found Jan and Kobyella in the nursery of the flat of Chief Postal Secretary Naczalnik. They carried Kobyella out, he had lost much blood. Oskar took a drum belonging to Naczalnik's son.

Critical Comments

This chapter gives an account of the shell burst at Polish Post Office and Oskar's experience at tracing his uncle and Kobyella.

2.3.3 The Card House

They went to the emergency hospital where the wounds of Jan and Kobyella were treated. They played cards and tried to lighten the atmosphere. Suddenly SS Home Guards came and led them to the courtyard where thirty others like them had been captured and were being photographed for the news reel. Oskar was separated from the thirty defenders by the wall. They picked him up and handed him into an official car belonging to the SS Home Guards. Oskar could see Jan, smiling stupidly and blissfully into the air; perhaps he waved with his upraised hand to Oskar, his departing son.

Critical Comments

This is a continuation of the sequel of the previous chapter

2.3.4 He lies in Saspe

As soon as the Home Guards had ordered them to come out, Oskar concerned for his comfort and safety made up to two Home Guards who struck him as good-natured uncle-like souls, put on an initation of pathetic sniveling and pointed to Jan, his father with accusing gestures which transformed the poor man into a villain who had dragged off an innocent child to the Polish Post Office to use him, with typically Polish inhumanity, as a buffer for enemy bullets. As a result Jan was battered though Oskar was left with both the drums. Even today Oskar is filled with shame at this disgusting behaviour of his especially since, on that afternoon he had felt absolutely certain that Jan Bronski was his real father. The date September 1,1939 marked the inception of his second burden of guilt; It was Oskar the drummer who had dispatched

first his mother, then Jan Bronski, his uncle and father to their graves.

Oskar the sly ignoramus, an innocent victim of Polish barbarism, was teken to the City hospital with brain fever. Matzerath was notified. Oskar came to know that after imprisonment, Jan and the other thirty men were thrown into the porous sand behind the wall of the run-down abandoned old cemetery in Saspe. Hedwig Poronski was officially informed that Jan had been sentenced to death by the Seminarist Leo Schugger, Oskar visited the Saspe cemetery. A few days later, throwing caution to the wind, Oskar whispered into his grandmother's ear. "He's lying in Saspe"

Critical Comments

This is a powerful, thought provoking chapter. It describes Oskar's treachery born out a desire for self preservation, personal security, and perhaps cowardice too. Itsn't it a universal predicament?

2.3.5 Maria

Oskar drummed furiously to destroy the last witness of his shameful conduct with the Home Guards, namely Neczalnik Janitor's drum. The tin grew thin and fragile. He felt confident that for Christmas he should receive a new and guiltless drum. But he was disappointed, for he got no drum. Matzerath employed Maria Trunzinski to work in his store. Maria was Oskar's first love. She undressed him, washed him helped him into his pyjamas, prayed with him and put him to bed at night- all very pleasantly. But Maria was not all self-conscious about undressing in Oskar's presence. One day Matzerath sent Oskar and Maria to the beach, keeping the child's health in mind. Oskar made a ludicrous attempt at making love to Maria.

Critical Comments

Oskar is not able to forget his guilt over Jan Bronski's murder and his feelings are naturally transferred to his drum. His ludicrous attempt to make love to Maria illustrates that though physically he is a midget, Oskar's sexual instincts are normally developed.

2.3.6 Fizz Power.

In this chapter, we have a continuation of the previous one. Oskar is attracted towards Maria. Since Matzerath goes out to play Skat with his Party friends twice a week it is arranged that Oskar will share Maria's bed. He waits expectantly, but nothing happens.

2.37 Special Communiques

Maria came to visit Oskar at the hospital. There was a special communiqué regarding Stalin's death. Maria spoke about her son Kurt, who was twelve years old. Oskar traveled down memory lane. He was certain that Kurt was his son; he had impregnated the sleeping Maria in the bed of her brother Herbert. He had found Matzerath lying on top of her. The people in the neighbourhood though otherwise: they thought that Matzerath had knocked up (impregnated) Maria and so he was marrying her though she was only seventeen years old and he was going on forty five. Moreover she was real mother and not a mere stepmother to Oskar. The whole idea was revolting to Oskar. On Gretchen Schedffler's advice, Matzerath married Oskar's sweethezart. Oskar remembers distinctly how he had seduced Maria: he lay motionless on Maria who was crying with pain while Oskar cried from hate and love, which turned to a leaden helplessness but could not die.

Critical Comments

We get a glimpse into Oskar the man who wished to be acknowledged as a proud father though no one would believe him if he were to say that he was Kurt's father. His search for true love and his disappointment in sex produced by the preposterous seduction of Maria are described here.

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the story so far. Also note down your observations of Oskar's character, his bizare experiences and the role played by his tin drum. We shall study the latter part of the novel in the next unit.

UNIT 3

THE TIN DRUM : A SUMMARY OF PART TWO

3.0 Objectives

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

(i) have a complete idea of the story of The Tin Drum: and

(ii) understand the symbolic and expressionistic aspects of the drum.

3.1 Introduction

The novel *The Tin Drum* is made up of three books, *In Unit 2* we summarized the whole of Book one and seven chapters of Book Two. In this *Unit* we shall summarise the rest of the novel that is eleven chapters of Book Two and the whole of Book Three

3.2 Book Two (Contd.)

3.2.1.How Oskar took his helpless to Mrs. Greff

Oskar begins the chapter by speaking of green grocer Gress whom he never liked. Greff's wife Lina was a sloven. Gress liked young boys a lot. But Oskar was not his type. Greff was one witness to themarriage of Matzerath and Maria who was then in her third month. The stouter his sweetheart became the more Oskar's hate mounted. The idea that the fruit byhim engendered should one day bear thename of Matzerath deprived him of all pleasure in his anticipated son and heir. He made two unsuccessful attempts at abortions. Maria handled thesituation tactfully. As a means of diversion she bought him a new drum and shifted him to Madame Truczinski's where he grew calmer or more resigned. Oskar s son Kurt was born on June 12.

Jan Bronsk's window had married a Baltic German the local peasant leader Ehlers. Seventeen years old Stephan had volunteered for fighting. The old folks including Oskar's grandmother had been turned into germans. They were poles no longer and spoke Kashibian only in their-dreams. They were now called German Nationals, groups 3. Oskar would soon be of military age, but was reduced to waiting behind his drum, until there should be an opening for a three year old drummer in the Army or Navy, or even in the Air Corps.

Kurt was baptized in August. All the relatives had come. Oskar refused to join them in the church. Later during luwch, when Vanilla pudding was served it was more than Oskar could bear. There was nothing so joyous and so sad as the vanilla scent which spread round about, enveloping him more and more in Maria, to be point that he could not bear to look at her, root and source of all vanilla, who sat beside Matzerath, holding his hand in hers. Oskar slipped off his baby chair, clung to the skirts of Lina Greff and lay at her feet, breathing in the efflurium (unpleasant-outflow) peculiar to Lina which instantly killed the Vanila. Oskar clung to the new perfume until all recollections connected with Vanilla seemed to be dulled. Slowly, he should carry his helplessness to Lina Greff.

Critical Comments

This chapter describes the agony of Oskar deprived of what he believes to be *legitimate* fatherhood. In a sense he is getting back from Kurt what he gave to Matzerath whom he never acknowledged to be his real father. The olfactory (smell) effect towards the end of the chapter is highly effective. You will recollect in the chapter Maria it is the smell of vanilla that Oskar associates with his sweet hear.

3.3.2 165 Ibs

Oscar contined to frequent Lina Greff's place. He would slip-in with her under her father bed. The woman was bed ridden. Greff had sadly changed. The open-hearted, convivial (cheerful) friend of the young had been transformed into a lonely, eccentric

rather unkempt old man. One day he had received indirectly the news that his favourite Horst Donath, than lieutenant in the army had fallen to the Donets. From that day Greff began to age. His shop looked pitiful; instead of vegetables, he filled it with all sorts of silly noisy machines. One day there was a huge commotion. Mrs. Greff was screaming wildly. She would not allow anyone to enter the house before the ambulance men arrived. It was soon revealed that Greff had hanged himself against 165 lbs (pounds) of potatoes.

Critical Comments

This is yet another ludicrous chapter, tinged with sorrow. Greff's manner of death is comic inspite of is tragic end.

3.2.3. Bebra's Theatre at the front.

Oskar looking forward to his son's second birthday in June'43; for from there it would be only a brief year before he too would start drumming. But it so happened that on that day he was not present to take part in the celebrations. He met Bebra and Signora Roswitha Raguna and joined their theatre group. In a performance Oskar shattered a beer bottle; he rated it only as a child's play, hardly anything in the international class. However long applause came- long and thunderous, mingled with the sounds of a major air raid on the capital. It made the men forget the front and they laughed heartily. God old indestructible Berbra spoke up, played the clown in the darkness, wrung vollayes of laugher from the mob buried overhead. Timelessly and timelessly fearful, Roswitha offered herself to Oskar.

Critical Comments

The war scenario is intense and air-raids have become the order of the day. Oskar who has declined Bebra's earlier offers, has at last joined him and this entails moving out, leaving his sons.

3.24 Inspection of Concrete, or Barbaric,Nystical, Boared

For three weeks, Oskar, Bebra and Raguna played every night in the venerable casemates of *Metz* a city of garrisons and once a roman outpost. Oskar enjoyed Roswith's company. They spent the whole winter in Paris. Though he had not forgotten his dear ones at home Kurt, Maria, Matzerath, Grandma etc, he missed none of them.

It was June '44. Bebra's troupe had been giving several performances. One night, after the programme. Oskar and Roswitha slipped quietly away and went to bed. It had been trying day. They dropped off quickly an slept until 5 A.M when the invasion woke them up. Cannadians landed in their sector. Roswitha was hit by a shell form a naval gun and she died. Bebra later on regretted; "We dwarfs and fools had no business dancing on concrete made for giants. If only we had stayed under the rostrums where no one suspected out presence. "In Berlin Oskar parted from Bebra. He made a present of the five remaining drums to Oskar and sent Kitty and Felix at Danzing with official travel orders to keep him company. So it was that armed with six drums and his "book" Oskar returned on June 11, 1944, the day before his son's third birthday to his native city which was still intact.

Critical Comments

This chapter finishes Oskar's experience as an artist in Bebra's theatre group during the invasion, the death of Roswitha and his return to his native place.

3.2.5 The limitation of Christ

Oskar's homecoming was like that of the Prodigal Son; for Matzerath opened the door and welcomed him like a true, not as presumptive father. From that day on Oskar called himself Oskar Matzeth as well. Maria's reception of Oskar was less emotional but not unfriendly. There was quite a lot of bother. A man came from the Ministry of Public Health; but upon Matzerath's insistence Oskar was not sent to an institution.

It was Kurt's birthday the next day. Oskar picked out a gleaming brand-new instrument resolved to offer his son the same opportunity as his mother had offered him on his third birthday. He was consumed by one desire: to see a drummer son beside a drummer father, two diminutive drummers looking on at the doings of the grown up world; to establish a dynasty of drummers. Oskar imagined how father and son, the two, would have drummed away. Brushing away his fantasises, Oskar presented Kurt with a

drum. In no time the boy battered it and made it ready for the scrap heap.

Shortly Oskar received the shocking news of the death of his step-brother Stephen Bronski on the Arctic Front. Then followed the bad news of the death of Maria's brother Sergeant Truczinski in the Centre Sector. His death made Maria religious. Not being satisfied with Protestant faith, she turned to Catholic religion. Oskar felt sorry for her. He noticed that nothing had changed in the church of the Sacred Heart, Jesus for not being able to drum. As he was leaving he felt that a pleasant but imperious voice touched his shoulder "Dost thou love me Oskar"? The irritating voice came thrice, upon which Oskar replied looking him full in the voice; "You bastard, I hate you and all your hocus-pocus". Inspite of Oskar's hostility, the voice said that Oskar was rock, and on that rock he would build his church. Oskar was full of indignation.

On reaching home, Oskar went to the attic and sang a number of bulbs to pieces. Upon one bulb his voice inscribed JESUS, then pulversied both bulb and inscription. Oskar still had his voice.

Critical Comments

This chapter open with the homecoming of Oskar like the prodigal Son, his son Kurt's third birthday and ends with his hatred and disbelief in religions; this last aspect is important, for in the political scenario of the world war, religion cannot actually render much concrete help and Oskar is quick to perceive the inefficacy of Church, religion etc in such an inhuman situation.

3.2.6. The Dusters

Oskar was not cut out to be a follower of Christ. However Christ's "follow thou me" found its way indirectly, to his heart and he became his follower, though he did not believe in him. After that he went to the Chruch several times, with Maria; but he never heard either his drum or Jesus's voice again. From that period Oskar developed a sorry habit: whenever he visted a Chruch. He would begin to cough. Oskar knew that the whole world had forsaken him. It was dur to his poor mother's influence that Matzerath refused to send him to the institution. In this matter Oskar did not trust Maria not to hand him over to the doctors. Fortunately he had his drum and his voice, the latter being a greater proof of his existence. Every time he left the Church of the Sacred Heart at a late hour, he sang something to pieces. Wishing to walk off his fury, Oskar picked a particularly circuitous way home and rented his rage on an almost empty streetcar: his rage lost some of its intensity. He had to squeeze between the planks of a fence in order to escape from his pursuers. They were gang of youngsters with names like Ripper, Forestaller. Putty, Lionheart,Storebeker and so on. They caught Oskar, interrogated him. Oskar told them that his name was Jesus. Firestealer seized Oskar, dug his knuckles into his arm just above the elbow, and gouged, producing a hot painful sensation that was what they called dusting. Storekeepr asked him about his trick regarding the street lights and window panes. Oskar demonstrated his glass shattering skill so impressively that Storekeeper gave him his watch and invited him to join their gang- the Dusters. Oskar returned the watch. Shifting his drum to a confortable position for the homeward Oskar said: "Jesus will lead you. Follow Him"

Critical Comments

This chapter opens with the desolation and frustration of Oskar who feels forsaken. Then we see him impressing the Dusters with his glass-shattering skill. Oskar vents his resentment by walking off and shouting off all his pent up emotions.

3.2.7 The Christmas Play

Oskar became the leader of the gang of Dusters comprising thirty to forty members. Like Storekeeper whose unstinting respect Oskar had won, *Moorkahne*, the 16 year old leader of the Neufathrwasser outfit recognized him as Jesus, first in command of the Dusters: In keeping with his nature' Oskar remained in the background during operations. He let stortebeker or Moorkhane do the actual organizing. After nightfall, he never stirred from Mother Truczinski's apartment. He would stand at his bedroom window, and send out his voice, farther than ever before, to demolish windows of several Party Headquartes etc- that was his secret

weapon. While Oskar slept, the Dusters, in Jesus's name were looting Party Tresuriers, stealing food cards, rubber stamps, printed forms, or a membership list of the Hitler Youth Patrol Service, the gang's main enemy. Oskar says that their gang was accused of several conspiracies, but all that was pure legend. Stortebeker made it very clear at the trial that Dusters were not interested in politics. They were choir boys and were getting ready for a Christmas Play.

Several Sundays running Oskar attended ten o'clock Mass with Maria. The Dusters too, at his behest, had become regular churchgoers. Finally on the night of September 18, they broke into the Chruch of the Sacred Heart, taking whole sets of tools with them. They toppled off the statue of John the Baptist; next they severd off the boy Jesus from Virgin Mary's lap. Oskar was then lifted up and put there. Oskar sat naturally in Jesus's place, all ready to be worshipped. They boys enacted a true Mass, which went on like clock work, making the boys experience a spiritual liberation. The band of Dusters were confirmed in the faith in Oskar's and Jesus's name.

Soon the police arrived. Upon Oskar's instruction the boys remained as they were. Oskar offered no resistance, but stepped automatically into the role of a sniveling three years old who had been led astray by gangsters. All he wanted was to be conformed and protect. Father Winchenke picked Oskar up in his arms. The police led the boys away. As he was led away between two inspectors. Stortebeker turned his blood-smeared face towards Oskar and Lucy who was carrying Oskar and the basket of sandwiches. Oskar looked past him. He recognized the gangster no longer. Oskar however was carried away to a trial that he still called the second trial of Jesus, a trial that ended with the acquittal of Oskar, hence also of Jesus.

Critical Comments

This is the second time we find Oskar betraying his fellows. Earlier he had struck the same pose at the Polish Post Office so that it had led to the execution of Jan Bronski. Is Oskar a modern Judas? In his self preservative instinct justifiable? Is he blemishing the sacred name of Jesus Christ by assuming that holy name and behaving like Judas?

3.2.8. The Ant Trial

The Dusters were forced to jump into a waterless pool from the thirty-foot down every rung in the ladder. Diving down into the waterless swimming pool was the desperate punishment the Dusters got at the trial. After this incident, a court official advised Matzerath to keep Oskar off the street. The child was so helpless and gullible, that he was always ready to be taken in by disreputable elements, Oskar was never able to dispel the habit of looking about in streets and public places for a skinny teenage girl, neither pretty not ugly, but always biting men. Even in his bed in the mental hospital his nightmare is that *Lucy Rennwand* would turn up in the shape of a wicked witch and for the last time rid him to plunge.

On the eleventh day, after prolonged pondering Matzerath signed the letter regarding Oskar and sent it to the Ministry of Public Health. The city was already under artillery fire and like everyone else, they started living in the cellar. Mother Trucinski died during that period. Oskar went to Hinderburg Allee where he saw clusters of youngsters strung up in uniforms, and several times he thought he recognized Strotebeker. Now that they had hanged Strotebeker, Oskar wondered whether they had strung up Lucy Rennwand too. The vision, clear in every detail, of a dangling Lucy was still with Oskar.

When shells began to land nearby, Matzerath became as be wildered as a child and for the first time expressed doubts about the final victory. On the window Greff's advice he removed his party pin from his lapel, but could not figure what to do with it. Oskar snatched it, not allowing his brat of a son to have if for fear of endangering him. Soon the Russians arrived. One of them carried Oskar who desperately wanted to crush lice. Oskar passed on the party pin to Matzerath. When Matzerath in wild desperation tried to swallow it the enemy soldiers shot and killed him. Oskar observes wholly. "While my presumptive father was

swallowing the party and dying. I, involuntarily squashed between my fingers as louse I had just caught on the Kalmuck (Russian)"

Critical Comments

This is yet another chapter which describes how Oskar is party to the death of someone-this time his presumptive father as he calls Matzerath, what do you think about his reason for passing on the that fatal pin to his father? Is Oskar justified?

3.29 Should I or Shouldn't I ?

A gentleman called *Fajngold* took over the grocery store at once and he employed Maria as sales girl. He helped them to carry Matzerath's Corpse, which had been lying in the cellar for three days. Upstairs: With great difficulty Matzerath was buried. Throughout Oskar was deliberating to himself: "Should I or Shouldn't I ?" He was going to be twenty one. He had never loved Matzerath. Occasionally he liked him. He took care of Oskar but more as a cook than as a father. Oskar admitted to himself that he had killed Matzerath deliberately, because he was sick of dragging a father around with him all his life: for that situation could not go on forever. Maria was still crying authentically and praying Catholically. Finally, Oskar unslung the drum from his neck saying "I must be" and threw the drum where the sand was deep enough to muffle the sound. He tossed in the sticks also. The sand oiled upon his drum, the sand mounted and grew-and *Oskar too began to grew;* the first symptom was a violent nosebleed. Oskar could hear Leo Schugger proclaiming to all the world: "He 's growing he's growing...."

Critical Comments

This is a significant chapter. It finally resolves Oskar's feelings for Matzerath. "Should I Shouldn't I" is reminiscent of the dilemma in the hearts of the Shakespeare's heroes Hamlet and Macbet: "To be or not to be". Once again Oskar feels responsible for the death of parent: and much against his will, he starts growing.

3.2.9. Disinfectant

Bruno measured Oskar and said that he was still four feet one inch tall. It was only when the stone hit him at Matzerath"s funeral in Saspe cemetery that he began to grow. Oskar continued to be a sick child causing Maria much concern. Oskar had a swelling head, his neck grew shorter, his chest grew broader and higher; he heard Maria whisper. "If only he don't get a hump!" Oskar's grandmother visited them. She told them that Ethlers had been hanged by the local farm labourers. Hedwig and Maria were with her helping in the fields.

One day Fajngold proposed to Maria; she was twenty two. She rejected the proposal. Maria left for the Rhneland with Kurt and Oskar. Their train left leaving Fajngold behind. Soon he had ceased to exist altogether.

Critical Comments

This chapter describes the changes coming over Oskar following Matzerath's funeral, and his various theories concerning them. It ends with Maria, Oskar and Kurt leaving for the Rhineland, after Maria rejects Fajngold's proposal.

3.211.Growth in a Freight Car

Oskar suffered from severe pains and aches. His fingers were swollen and temporarily no good for drumming. He made Bruno record the next sequel of his story. Maria, Kurt and Oskar traveled in a freight-car. Bruno wrote at length about the train journey to Stolp. Later Oskar was admitted to the Dusseldorf City Hospital, where he lay from August 1945 to May 1946. At last he was charged so that he might embark on a new and adult life.

With this we come to the end of *Book Two*, which marks the end of the II World War period. No we shall move on to *Book Three* which deals with Oskar's account of his life in the post war period.

3.3 Book Three

3.3.1. Firestones and Tombstones

After being discharged from hospital, Oskar, went to the house of Maria's sister Guste Truczinski. He found Maria and Kurt busily engaged in black marketing. Kurt who was just six years old had the look of a very busy self-made man. Guste noticed Oskar's

hump with curiosity. Maria did not tolerate any interference on Oskar's part in their black marketing. Oskar was shamefaced for he himself enjoyed the luxuries provided by his son illegally. Now he realizes that deeds and misdeeds which only yesterday were fresh and alone and real, are reduced to history and explained as such. Two years had not passed since, at Matzerath's grave, Oskar had resolved to grow, and already he had lost interest in grown –up life. In spite of his hump, Oskar was attractive, and the hospital nurses liked him. He met an artisan who made tombstones; his name was Korneff. The stonecutter took Oskar on as his helper for a small sum But Oskar was not strong enough for the heavy job.

3.3.1. Fortuna North

For more than a year, Oskar had been a stonecutter's assistant, and had been able to enjoy a brief giving spree. They celebrated Kurt's seventh birthday in '47. When he had supported the family for months, Oskar took Maria out for a movie and then to a restaurant. She was dreadfully worried because her black marketing business was falling off and because Oskar, weakling, so she put it, that he was had been supporting the family for several months. He comforted her, told her that Oskar was glad to be doing what he could, that he liked nothing better than to bear a heavy responsibility: finally he proposed to her. After weeks of evasion and silence, Maria nicely declined to marry Oskar, making him feel like a fool like Hamlet.

3.3.3 Madonna 49

The currency reform came too soon, it made a fool of Oskar, compelling him to reform his own currency. He was obliged to capitalize, or at least to make a living from his hump. If Maria had accepted his proposal, he should have been a business man, a family man, a respected member of society; as a husband and family man, he should have participated in the reconstruction of Germany. Since that was not to be, he remembered his hump and fell a victim to it. Before Korneff could dismiss him, he walked out. He gradually wore out his tailor-made suit and began to neglect his appearance. He frequented parks sitting on benches for hours on end. At last he met two emaciated young men and a girl in glasses who introduced themselves as painters in search of model. Oskar was just what they were looking for. Oskar agreed to prose as a model, motivated by the lure of both art and money. They carried Oskar to the partially demolished Academy of Art.

After examining Oskar,Professor Kuchen declared: " Art is accusation, expression, passion". He told his disciples that what he wanted was expression, pitch black and desperate. Oskar, he maintained was the shattered image of man, an accusation, a challenge timeless yet expressing the madness of our century. In conclusion, he thundered: "I don't want you to sketch this cripple this freak of nature, I want you to slaughter him, crucify him to nail him to your paper with charcoal". In a few weeks time the disciples produced a number of pleasant little sketches, all in the name of artistic expression; Oskar made good money and was treated with respect for six hours a day.

Professor Maruhn, a friend of Professor Kuchen asked if Oskar would pose in the nude for sculpturing and he agreed. After several weeks his students managed to turn out a few passable sculptures, first in clay then in plaster and imitation marble. They were shown at the End of Term Exhibition. Thus Oskar made a good living on art. Later the Academy turned out a painting entitled *"Madonna 49"* Ulla a dress-maker posed as Madonna and Oskar sitting on her milk-white, naked thing, a crippled child, posed for Jesus. The painting was shown at a number of exhibitions. It was purchased by a Rhenish indiustrialist for a large sum Ulla and Oskar were in high demand. Under duress Oskar posed with his drum and he was painted as Jesus the drummer boy sitting on the nude left thing of the Madona 49. It was thus that Maria saw him on a poster advertising an art show. She who was now holding a well paid job was no longer a black marketing refuge from the East. Thus it was with a certain conviction that she was able to call him a pimp, a degenerate. She made it clear that she did not want the filthy money he made with his filthy occupation. After

that Oskar decided to stop living with her. Maria, who had no objection to his moving, persuaded him to look for a room, not too far away from herself and Kurt, in any case in Dusseldorf.

Critical Comments

This chapter describes how handicaps and deformities can prove lucrative in the name of art. Note the total absence of feeling in such endeavors. What do you think of Maria's attitude to Oskar's poster? Do you, think she is justified in criticizing him as a degenerate. Or is she being unduly harsh? Note also the sardonic tone of the author.

3.3.4 The Hedgehog

After a long search Oskar got a room belonging to one Zeidler, who had a hedgehogs appearance and was very severe about maintaining order. Oskar was told that the next room was occupied by a trained nurse who rarely came, except perhaps to sleep. Oskar was overwhelmed by the mystery of the nurse. His feeling for nurses was a kind of sickness. All that he knew of her was that her name was Sister Dorothea.

3.3.5 In the Clothes Cupboard

Oskar had his professional occupations. He had to give up cutting inscriptions, when the summer semester at the Academy began. He and Muse Ulla received good money for sitting still for art students, especially for those from the studies of Kuchen and Maruhn, not to mention the prize students Ziege and Ranskolnikov. The Abduction of Europe'; came after Madonna 49. Upon Oskar's suggestion, Raskolninkov next painted 'Fool Heals Nurse', picturing Oskar as guilt, and Ulla dressed as a nurse representing atonement.

One day unable to resist his temptation he tried Sister Dorothea's door knob which turned surprisingly. He made a visit of the entire apartment, found it cold and uninspiring. At last he drummed a little on the rear of the clothes cupboard and left after checking for neatness and order. He took a few strands of the woman's hair from her comb.

3.3.6, Klepp

What obsessed Oskar and filled him with jealousy was that Dr.Werner might be a rival for Sister Dorothea's hand! But he could find no trace or evidence in the room to confirm his doubt. One day he intercepted a letter written by Dr. Werner to Nurse Dorothea and read it; it was a passionate love letter. He then slipped the letter intact under her door. Oskar made the acquaintance of one Munzer who insisted on being called Klepp. He drummed and related his story right from the beginning. At last Klepp suggested that they should start a jazz band together. Oskar had already made up his mind to give up his modeling and stone-cutting a activities and become percussion man in a jazz band. However he asked Klepp for time to think it orer.

3.3.7. On the Fiber Rung

It was Oskar who had resurrected Klepp and forced him out of his bed to begin life with renewed vigour. And yet today now that it is Oskar who is privileged to lie in bed, he feels that Klepp is trying to get even with him, for he is trying to throw Oskar out of his bed in the mental hospital. Once a week Oskar has to put up with his visits ad listen to his tirades about jazz and his music-Communist manifestoes. Caution, his heavy, glistening flesh, and a sense of humour that lives on applause, enabled him to devise a sly system, combining the teachings of Mark with the myth of jazz. He sends petition after petition, asking Oskar to be acquitted, set free; he wants them to turn Oskar out of his hospital, just because he envies him his bed.

It worried Klepp to see Oskar so half-immersed in his thoughts. Oskar rarely went to the Academy. And so he gave himself up entirely to his friend Klepp. He did not go to see Maria and little Kurt, for their apartment offered him no peace. *Mr. Stenzel,* her lost and married lover, was always there. One day Klepp and Oskar helped Hedgehog Zeidler to spread a narrow coconut fiber rug in the hallway. It was on this fiber runner that Oskar, on the next night, met Sister Dorothea for the first time.

The night Oskar who was only half dressed since his pyjamas had not come form washing, could not sleep. At three he heard a couple of doors open. He ran to the toilet; he collided with Sister Dorothea who was seated there. Then followed a pathetic scene

where Oskars desperately proposed to her. The nurse said nothing, just cried and got up. Evidently she was packing up and leaving the apartment. Oskar felt miserable after this humiliating episode. Zeidler and wife were quite angry. At last Klepp the flutist came accompanied by Scholle the long sought guitarist. They pacified Zeidler, bent down over Oskar asked no questions, picked him up; Klepp rubbed him warm. Together he and Scholle dressed him up and dried his tears. The next morning Klepp the flutist, Scholle the guitarist and Oskar the percussion man agreed to call their newborn band The *Rhime River Three* and went to breakfast.

Critical Comments

Oskar does not seem destined to receive the love of a woman. His disappointment in not being able to secure Maria put him to a lot of mental tension jealousy and frustration. Let us see how this humiliating episode involving Sister Dorothea will turn out.

3.3.8 In the Onion Cellar

The jazz and practice scared away the sparrows. As a remedy *Ferdinand Schmuh* the restaurant and night spot owner, who loved to shoot sparrows, gave them his Onion Cellar for playing for fourteen and a half marks an evening apiece. As soon as the Onion Cellar had filled up, Schmuh asked the ladies and gentlemen to help themselves to the onions. Oskar had a vision of floodgates opening. Once the customers had finished crying and unburdening themselves, Oskar's band which had been sitting under the companion way or staircase, took up their instruments and provided a musical transition to normal everyday conversation. They made it easy for the guests to leave the Onion Cellar and made room for more guests.

Scholle had no ground for sorrow; tears made Klepp laugh. But Oskar had plenty of ground for tears: Sister Dorothea, Maria, his son Kurt who called Maria's husband 'Papa Stenzel', all those who lay in the Saspe cemetery, his poor mother the foolish and lovable Jan Bronski, Matzerath etc. All of them needed to be wept for. But Oskar was one of the fortunate people who could still weep without onions. His drum helped him. Just a few very special measures were all that it took to make Oskar melt into tears.

Once Madame Schmuh turned up with Woode the music critic. She cut up an onion and laid her husband bare, told horrible stories about him. Schmuh was very upset. The situation soon became tensed up. Klepp and Scholle considered the whole thing a joke. At last Oskar became a three year old drummer and played with his heart. He drummed up with world as a three years old saw it. And the first thing he did to those post-war humans incapable of a real orgy was to put a harness on them. *"Where's the Witch black as pitch?"* He drummed and scared them out of their wits, so that they all wet their pants! Forgetful of home, they continued for some time to make childish mischief, until at last the police helped them to remember their age, social position and telephone number. As for Oskar, he giggled and caressed his drum as he went back to the Onion Cellar.

Critical Comments

This chapter brings out the ingenuity of Oskar to bounce back and earn his living. His capacity as a drummer is still intact.

3.3.9. On the Atlantic Wall, or Concrete Eternal

Oskar had only been trying to help him; but Schmuch, owner and guiding spirit of the Onion Cellar could not forgive him for his drum solo which had transformed his well – paying guests into babbling, riotously merry children who wet their pants and cried because they had wet their pants, all without the benefit of onions. Oskar understood that Schmuh feared competition from Oskar. Schmuh fired the whole *Rhine River Three.* But he was forced to compromise as many of his guests threatened to leave. The band played thrice a weak, having demanded and obtained a raise. Oskar started a savings account and rejoiced as the interest accrued.

Shortly after that Schmuh died in a car accident. He was accorded a decent burial. Klepp was in hospital with four broken ribs. Soon Oskar was approached by a gentleman who introduced himself as Dr. Dosch. He ran a concert bureau. He had been a frequent

CUP/5026/1000/SDE — 19

guest at the Onion Cellar. He had been authorized to offer Oskar a terrific contract: In return for enormous sums of money. Oskar the drummer had to give sole performances in large theatres before audiences numbering two to three thousand. Oskars said that he needed some time to think it over; may be he would take a little trip somewhere. However, though he signed no contract at the cemetery, Oskar's financial situation impelled him to accept an advance from Dr.Dosch

Oskar did take the trip, with Muse Ulla's fiancé Lankes as his traveling companion. Theirs destination was Normandy. They came across a few nuns. One Sister Agneta, a novice went towards the sea causing her superior much concern. Lankes the typical painter quipped that there was scope for a fine painting "*Nuns at High Tide*". If the nun drowned, they would call it "*Nums Drowning* and if the nun were to come back and fling herself at Lankes's feet, he would call the painting "*Fallen Nun!*

With Lankes, it was always either – or, head or tail, drowned or fallen. He did whole series of nuns, exhibited and sold several. Some of the critics even saw it fit to compare Lankes with Picasso. It was Lankes' success that persuaded Oskar to dig up the visiting card of Dr. Dosch, the concert manager for Lankes' art was not alone in clamouring for bread. The time had come to translate the *prewar and wartime* experience of Oskar, the three-year old drummer, into the pure resounding gold of the *postwar* period.

Critical Comments

Like the previous chapter, this too brings out, Oskar's never-say-die' attitude to life. After all, life is a long series of alternatives, particularly in a world of mediocrity. Can you blame Oskar, or for that matter even Lankes?

3.3.10 The Ring Finger

After weighing the various pros and cons, Oskars contacted Dr. Bosch who welcomed him most cordially and introduced him to his boss. Oskar was shocked when he saw the boss on a wheelchair, for it was his friend and master Bebra, paralysed living only with his eyes and fingertips. He was on the verge of tears: The wall behind Bebra's wheelchair had a life-size bust of Roswitha Raguna. Bebra observed regretfully that Oskar had altered his proportions immoderately and not at all to his advantage. Roswitha had worshipped him. But one day Oskar was disinclined to bring her a cup of coffee. She herself went for it and lost her life. Secondly Oskar had handed over his presumptive father Jan Bronski over to the centurions (commanders) who shot him. Oskar hand drummed his poor mother into her grave. Next Oskar confessed that he had murdered second presumptive father Matzerath because he wanted to be rid of him and told the judge how he had made him choke to death. Indeed Bebra who had set himself up as his judge played the role to perfection.

Bebra then made Oskar sign a contract for his professional services. To say the least Oskar was a stunning success. Those who flocked to hear him were the middle-aged, the elderly, and the doddering. Oskars message was addressed most particularly to the aged, and they responded. His biggest triumphs were with numbers evoking stages of infancy and childhood. Oskar drummed "The Wicked Black Witch", upon which fifteen hundred miners, who had lived through cave-ins, explosions, strikes and unemployment, let out the most blood curdling screams he had ever heard. Their screams demolished several windows, indirectly Oskar had recovered his glass-killing voice. However he made little use of it; he did not want to ruin his business.

His second meeting with Bebra the master was a pleasant one. The newspapers were building Oskar up into a cult, Oskar and his drum had becomes healers of the body and soul. And what they cured best of all was loss of memory. *The word Oskarism* made its appearance in the papers. Bebra was pleased. Oskar felt embarrassed. With his immense wealth Oskar bought Maria a modern, up-and-coming delicatessen store, on condition that she give up Stenzel. Maria prospered well.

Meanwhile Bebra died. Oskar had not been informed as Bebra had not wished that his illness should interfere with Oskar's tour. Bebra had left a small fortune and Roswitha's

photo in his will for Oskar. Bebra death was a severe blow to Oskar and he did not recover soon. He bought a dog called Lux. One day Lux brought from the field a lady's ring finger to Oskar. As he was returning home, Vittlar who had been observing Oskar and the dog, addressed him.

Critical Comments

This is a rather packed chapter full of information and a preparation for winding up the long saga of Oskar's life. The role of the drum as well as the drummer seems to assume even more significance in the post-war period.

3.3.11 The Last Streetcar, or Adoration of a Preserving Jar

This is a long chapter which contains the testimony given by Vittlar against Oskar. Vittlar testified that the ring finger which Oskar had got from Vittlar's mother's field and which he preserved in a jar of alcohol belonged to the murdered woman Sister Dorothea. As both Oskar and Vittlar traveled they found two men hounding poor old Victor of the Polish Post Office; the two were eneutioners. Oskar drummed the message the Poland was still alive and managed to save Vittar. When Vittlar congratulated him on his success, Oskar replied: " I have had too many triumphs, too much success in my life. What I would like is to be unsuccessful for once. But that is very difficult and calls for a great deal of work". This reply struck Vittlar as arrogant. He had never had the least success in life; and how he wished that his name would appear in the papers and make him famous. Then Oskar coolly suggested that all that he had to do was to take the jar containing the ring finger drive to the Police Headquarters and report Oskar; the next day he would see his name in all the papers. And that in what Vittlar did! Meanwhile leaving his drum Oskar embarked, laughing, upon his flight.

Critical Comments

This is a thought-provoking chapter. In the name of jealousy and ill-will people like Vittlar do not mind bearing false testimony against people whom they call their friend. And what do you make of Oskar? He is so indifferent and vain that he literally invites danger. Do you thing he is insane?

3.3.12 Thirty

Oskar started running at the age of twenty eight and now he is thirty. His flight was mainly motivated by a desire to enhance the value of Vittlar's case. Oskar's lawyer came and announced that Sister Dorothea had apparently been killed by Sister Beata, owing to jealousy, as Dr. Werner loved Dorothea and not Beata. Oskar dreaded the prospect of acquittal for it would imply being thrown into the cold street. Finally he submits to being judged insame, obsessed with the Black Witch and thus arrives in the mental hospital.

Critical Comments

At the end of the novel, we find Oscar Matzerath atoning for guilt not strictly his own, even though, he is finally, to his own sense guilty by implication, an emblem of the modern world even in his isolation from it. The number 'Thirty' implies or brings to mind Judas who betrayed Christ for *thirty* pieces of silver. Who is the Judas here? Vittlar? Or is it Oskar himself? Is his conscience free of guilt? Or does he feel responsible for the deaths of his mother, his two fathers, Roswitha and so on? So is it a fitting Nemesis?

We have come to the end of this thought-provoking novel. Read the study material carefully and understand the entire story in the next *Unit*, we shall study the various aspects of the novel *The Tin Drum*.

UNIT 4

THE TIN DRUM – A CRITICAL STUDY

4.0 Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

i) understand various aspects of Gunter Grass's novel *The Tin Drum: and*

ii) make an overall estimate of the novel and its author.

4.1 Introduction

Before you began to read this *Unit*, it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous *Unit*. If you do so, you will be able to form your own impressions of the novel its plot, the characters, the narrative techniques and so on. Then when you read this *Unit*, you will be able to appreciate the several aspects of *The Tin Drum*.

Let us study them one by one.

4.2 Critical Summary of The Tin Drum.

Critique:

The Tin Drum, a panoramic, satiric novel in which the anguished and the amused mingle, and in which the history of modern Germany is viewed through the eyes of a self-willed dwarf, marked the beginning of Gunter Grass's career as a novelist. In its way, the book is a milestone in the history of German letters some what reminiscent of the appearance of *Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks* (1901). But to say that Grass's book is about as auspicious a novelistic beginning as *Buddenbrooks* is to suggest little more similarity with Mann than that of length and quality, for *The Tin Drum* though it shows some signs of being a curiously gnarled hybrid variety of the German family chronicle, though in fact one can trace its lineage back to a multitude of traditions, is a novel which cannot fit neatly into any fixed category, which is a category in itself.

Story:

The narrator of the story is OSKAR MATZERATH who tells his story from the lunatic asylum, in which he is being held for a murder he did not commit. The question of Oskar's sanity is a little pointless. In the light of the mad world around him his violent, bizarre (strange) outlook is the only vision imaginable. Oskar's story begins in 1899 when his Kashubian grandmother sitting in a potato field, conceals under her wide skirts, from the view of the pursuing constables the fugitive JOSEPH KOLJICHEK, and thereby conceives Oskar's mother. The incident in its wild humour and eroticism as also the suggestion of political chaos is endemic of (indicates) what is to come. In 1923, in the free city of *Danzing*, AGNES KOLJAICHEK marries ALFRED MATZERATH, a citizen of the German Reich and introduces him to her Polish Cousins and lover JAN BRONSKI, with whom he becomes fast friends. Thereafter the amazing Oskar is born, an infant whose mental development is complete at birth.

Oskar is promised a drum for his third birthday, the drum which in its many atavistic (remote) recurrences will allow him mutely to voice his protest against the meaninglessness of a world which formulates its destructive nonsense in empty language and to recreate the history of his consciousness, to recall in the varied music of the drum to rhythms of the mind's apprehensions, earlier accompanied by the drum. It is also on his third birthday, that Oskar decides to stop growing by a sheer act of the will to remain with his three year old body and his totally conscious mind for the rest of his life. As he boasts, he remains from then on a precocious three year old in a world of adults who tower over him, but superior to them because he is complete both inside and out, free from all necessity to grow, to develop, to change as time passes and they move toward old age and the grave.

Oskar's refusal to grow, to measure his shadow by that of older persons, or to compete for the things they desire is the

assertion of his individuality against a world, which, misconstruing (misunderstanding) him, would force him into an alien pattern. He is pleased when he discovers his ability to shatter glass with his voice, a talent which becomes not only a means of destruction, the venting of his hostility and outrage, but also an art whereby he can cut in the window of a jewellery shop, a neat hole through which Bronski upon whom he heaps the filial affection he does not feel for his more mundane father can snatch an expensive necklace for his beloved Agnes.

The later period of Oskar's recorded existence is crammed with outlandish events. His mother witnesses a revolting scene of eels being extracted from the head of a dead horse submerged in water, perversely forces a diet of fish upon herself and dies. Oskar becomes fascinated with the hieroglyphic scars on the massive back of Herbert Truczinski, his friend; but Herbert, who works as a maritime museum attendant grows enamoured of a ship's wooden figurehead called Niobe, and in an attempt to make love to her is instead impaled to her by a double edged ship's axe. Jan Bronski is executed after a Secret service raid on the Polish Post Office, where he has gone with Oskar; and Oskar is overwhelmed with guilt for the death of his mother and the man who was probably his father. In one of the most preposterous (strange) seduction scenes in literature, Oskar becomes the lover of Herbert's youngest sister Maria, and fathers her child. Maria then marries Alfred Matzerath, and Oskar turns to the ampler conforts of *Lina Greff* whose latent homosexual husband, shortly upon receiving a summons to appear in court on a morals charge, commits a fantastically elaborate and grotesque suicide. Oskar is prodigious sexually as he is diminutive physically.

Oskar then goes on to join Bebra's troupe of entertainers, and becomes the lover of the timeless *Roswitha Raguna*. When the Russians invade Dancing, Matzerath, to conceal his affiliations, swallows the Nazi party pin which Oskar has shoved into his hand, and dies. Once again Oscar feels responsible for the death of a parent. Before long, against his will he begins to grow, and to develop a hump. His postwar life takes him to West Germany, where he is, at various times, a black marketer a model and a nightclub entertainer; and eventually at Duseldorf, where a destiny not his own catches up with him in the guise of the accusation that he has killed Sister Dorothea, the woman in the room next to his. The testimony of *Vittlar* which has earlier thought him guilty, ironically, damns him, and Oskar submits to being judged insane, and atones for a guilt not strictly his own, even though he is finally to his own sense, guilty by implication, an emblem the modern world, even in his isolation from it.

Let us move on to the different levels at which the novel may be read.

4.3 Themes and Interpretations

The Tin Drum can be read on two levels, one *realistic,* the other *symbolic.* As seen in the previous section, ostensibly, it is the life story of the dwarf Oskar, who recounts his exploits in the *prewar, war-time, and post-war* periods. Oskar is born as a precocious child, who would rather not have been born at all; but the prospect of the drum prevented him from returning to the womb. With the rise of National Socialism Oskar finds himself more and more isolated, and he laments his plight. Left with his drum as his one comfort and *raison d'etre* (reason for existence) he concentrates more and more intently on it, even though the political climate is against him and replacements become increasingly difficult to find as the Nazi threat grows. Driven by the need to repair his drum Oskar makes his way to the Polish post office and fortuitously (by chance) becomes involved in its defence at the time of the German invasion of Poland in September 1939. His dream is to establish "a dynasty of drummers", however his son *Kurt* has different ideas. Jan Bronski's execution, Matzerath;s death, his mother's death – all these mark decisive stages in Oskar's life. His father's funeral coincides with the German capitulation. At the cemetery Oskar decides to externalize his coming of age by resuming growth and burying his drum. But attempts to become a "good citizen" are thwarted by the widowed Maria's refusal to marry him. After a long period of deprivation, Oscar returns to his drum, this time as a highly successful jazz

drummer. He becomes a celebrity, but loneliness and fear of life haunt him more relentlessly than ever. He has himself locked up in a mental asylum by fabricating a criminal charge at the end of the novel. At the age of thirty, he faces his discharge into a hostile world, where the Black Witch, the omnipresent personification of his own insecurity threatens his existence.

b) Symbolic Interpretation

The first question on a symbolic level concerns Oskar's *stature*. As he himself informs us he decided to interrupt his growth and remain a crippled dwarf in order to keep adults at a distance. As a precocious infant he has already seen through the moral bankruptcy of his parents, so that his stature represents a *deliberate act of protest*, an act based on a refusal to adapt to his surroundings, even physically. In the pre-war years, up to the German capitulation, Oskar's gnome-like appearance is to be considered as an asset: While the adults blindly prepare their own destruction, Oscar is retreating behind the guise of a three – year old, offering – within his limitations – some measurement of resistance to National Socialism. During the Nazi period, Oskar's withdrawal into infancy was the only way to play the part of the critical observer, and yet survive; after 1945, the time had come for him to leave his hide away and to participate openly in the reconstruction of West Germany; hence he resumes growth, with partial success; his height increases, but he develops a hunchback.

Oskar's symbolic role has changed. During the war, he represents the sane element in a crippled society. After the war, disguises have become superfluous and Oskar's resumed growth possibly symbolizes Germany's coming of age. Oskar's diseased back on the other hand, may signal the resurgence of tendencies opposed to a genuine German liberation. Grass implies that the affluent society is a mere façade. In reality, a promising post-war Germany has developed into a hunchbacked cripple. But Grass does not leave the readers on a pessimistic note. Though the hunch backed Oskar represents the Germany of the "economic miracle" of the 1950s, the author intimates that the disease may be cured, since the hunch back is anything but self-willed.

Themes

Three main themes are inter-woven into the texture of the novel; politics, religion and love. Oskar's protest is most conspicuous in the realm of politics, a secularized vision of hope. Although, far from being a heroic resistance fighter, he does his best to embarrass the Nazis. His elaborate refutation of involvement becomes a proof of the depth of his religion. All types of dogmatic thinking are suspect to Grass, whether he is dealing with Catholicism, National Socialism or Communism, He finds all "isms" equally objectionable, for where blind faith replaces doubt man abdicates (gives up) responsibility. Oskar objects just as violently to the dangers of blindly accepted religious beliefs. Only criticism can save Oskar from the fascination that Catholicism holds for him. On the other hand, he feels that the Church, above all other places, ought to be the rightful home for his drum, for both drum and Church have pledged themselves to fight for the highest ideals of mankind, for *Faith, Hope and Love*. Oskar is thunderstruck by his, resemblance to the stature of young Jesus. By not drumming, Jesus fails him, and Oskar deduces from this disappointment that the role of the protestor is reserved for him alone. God may still exist, but his Son's refusal to drum confirms his powerlessness in the face of war and persecution. The third and final sphere in which Oskar protests is the realm of love, where the drum plays as full a part as in politics and religion. The purest form of love taught in the New Testament is compassion for the suffering. In Oskar's case, this love expresses itself most vividly in his relationship to Markus, the Jewish toy merchant and the source of his drums. A close link is therefore established between Oskar, the protester against National Socialism, and Markus, its victim. The Jewish survivor Fajngold, too, belongs to the realm of love. The characters' attitude to the drum reveals their political and moral tendencies. "When a whole society fails Oskar finds his responsibility" [Ann Woods]. Faced with a changed historical situation, Oskar has to adjust to a potentially new German society. Many critics interpret his return to the drum

as a return to irresponsibility. According to *Idris Parry*, Oskar's drum is "the source and symbol of his aristocratic nature"

In another sense, *The Tin Drum* exists on two other levels: the universal and the *political*. In this novel Oskar's external defences have their internal counter part in his refusal to grow, a gesture symbolizing outright rejection of society. But Oskar adapts his decision to changing circumstances for, after the German capitulation he considers a future within society and resumes growth. He undergoes three distinct stages in his moral development each representing an advance on the previous one! He knowingly steps outside society; he chooses to be an outsider. His deformation is self-inflicted. His disguise as a three year old is deliberate camouflage (mask). Oskar fights his society by opposing it with his own brand of morality. He laments the debasement of Christian values in the chapter "*Faith, Hope, Love*". His aloofness seems to verge on opportunism, but is in fact its very opposite. Oskar's lament is mainly centred on man's willful misrepresentation of the notions of the Epistle to the Corinthians; his protest is thus directed against vast areas of human behaviour. The novel is thus replete with antiwar innuendos (hints).

Let us examine some of the stylistic aspects of the novel.

4.4. Imagery, Structure and Style in the Tin Drum

All Grass's prose revolves around one or two central images, which denote reality on the one hand, and a certain response to reality on the other. The very titles of the books reveal where the emphasis lies. In *The Tin Drum*, it is the challenge to reality that is emphasized, a challenge through art. Oskar's drumming denounces reality, his art is an art of protest. Reality is symbolized by the Black Witch, so that the drum and the Black Witch are diametrically opposed to each other. But the drumming, however moral in its intention, is merely a signpost to morality not morality itself; it remains a quest. As it takes into account complexities of man and society, refusing to reduce them to concepts, it adds depth to the symbol.

The drum also has a structural significance for it encompasses all realms of human experience dealt with in the novel; art love, politics and religion. It functions as an upholder of integrity exposing in each case the corruptions against which it protests. With his drumming, Oskar attacks all dogmas, demanding movement and life, a life that even includes destruction, out of which new life emerges. In *The Tin Drum* this creed is postulated in a passage about a *partisan*, who like every true artist "undermines what he has just set up, because he consistently rejects what he has just created.

Dialectical thinking (logical argumentation) constitutes the most striking structural element in Grass's compositions. In The Tin Drum, it extends to the individual images as well as to their overall patters. The drum has its dialectical opposite in the Black Witch. Oskar's drumming is an attempt to synthesis the two extremes of morality and amorality of construction and destruction. This general duality also governs the details of the novel down to its smallest episodes. The drum itself is made up of contradictions, for it can be put to both good and bad purposes, radiate love all well as hatred, even if its primary function is positive. The negative aspects of Oskar's gifts the purely destructive impulses are symbolized by his glass-shattering voice. Such polarity between light and dark is followed throughout, in juxtaposing (placing side by side) Goethe and Rasputin, Apollo and Dionysus, Jesus and Satan and is further evoked in the colour symbolism of white and black.

If the drum symbol is multi-dimensional and dialectical (logical), it is also a dynamic symbol with its inherent energy manifesting itself through musical properties. Quite independently of its owner the drum generate a moral force. It propels both plot and character. Oskar is as it were, subservient to the drum, defining his identity either in alliance with, or in opposition to it. This means that the alliance in *The Tin Drum* is on art, not the artist who is totally subsumed by it. Thus in the final analys, the symbol of *the drum as a fusion of art and protest*, grows with the novel, as an organic image of creativity against the background of a

fragmented universe, inhabited by a disintegrating Oscar.

Let us wind up this *Unit* with an overall estimate of the novel.

4.5 Gunter Grass's The Tin Drum : An Overall Estimate

The Tin Drum is a *surreal picaresque.* [Refer Unit I for explanation] a mock-epic chronicle of West Europe's (and by extension, the world's) twentieth century madness; a sardonic, shocking hilarious reflection of a world in upheaval, a world in which values become inverted and undistinguishable, in which the tragic is at the same time the comic, and the agonizing the ludicrous. The novel violates all modes of decorum; its chaos is the outward appearance and inner principle of the world it seeks to capture; but the imaginative vitality of its creation is somehow its own decorum, and is, of itself, an affirmation in the face dissolution it postulates.

Grass's exemplary use of imagery and characters deepens his analysis of National Socialism and its consequences for Germany. The tin drum ends with a forceful reminder of *everybody's individual* guilt, a guilt coupled with an equally obsessive fear. A large question mark hangs over the future. There is a suggestion that Hitler's role was not an inexplicable accident, but rather the result of totalitarian modes of thinking prevalent in German philosophy. Only by exposing the roots that nurture totalitarian regimes, can their growth be prevented. This requires not only knowledge of the intellectual climate we live in, but also profound self-knowledge of the intellectual climate we live in. In fact, each successive novel in the *Danzig trilogy* [*The Tin Drum, Cat and Mouse, Dog Years*] represents an intensification of political awareness, a process evinced by Grass's use of narrative perspective, metaphors and treatment of themes.

The one common denominator that characterized the immediate critical response in Germany to *The Tin Drum* was admiration for *the originality and the sheer super-power of the work.* Three schools of thought emerged: (a) those who saw in Oskar the personification of immorality; (b) those who exempted him from moral criteria altogether; (c) those who considered Oskar's drumming a moral activity. *Gunter Blocker* was the most violent in his condemnation of *The Tin Drum* as a monument of immorality. However Grass had supporters in plenty. The majority of English critics settled for the 'amoral', the apolitical interpretation for instance, R.C. *Andrews,* Times Literary Supplement reviewer, saw the "moral neutrality" of the novel. To conclude with the observations of *Idris Parry:* "Grass is outraged by what he finds; social injustice, hidden Nazis.....murderers living respectable lives. His feelings are admirable-for a politician. For an artist, they are disastrous. *He sacrifices art to morality".*

4.6 Important Topics

(i) Discuss the novel *The Tin Drum* as a surreal picaresque. [Hints: Explain the terms 'surreal' and 'picareque' – a plot narrating various adventures of the protagonist-elaborate – events, a blend of realism and fantasy: tin drum, glass-shattering-give examples-central idea of novel: portrayal of 20th century madness]

(ii) The use of the drum symbol

[Hints: symbolic interpretation of *The Tin Drum* – drum Oskar's symbol of protest-examples: at school, in church, mother's death-later as means of livelihood in Onion Cellar-Oskar the solo drummer-drumming and glass shattering related-how?]

(iii) Significance of the title of the novel The Tin Drum

Refer Answer (ii)

(iv) The satirical elements in *The Tin Drum*

[Hints: a satire on modern madness in Europe before during and after war – politics and religion satirized – Oskar's way of protesting]

Study all the four *Units;* then you will be able to prepare your own essays.

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UNIT XVI

MILAN KUNDERA : AN INTRODUCTION

1.0 Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

i) form a general idea of Czechoslovakian literature, particularly fiction, of the modern times: and

ii) understand about the life and personality of *Milan Kundera* (1929 -)

1.1 Introduction

Before you embark on the study of any author, it is advisable to know something about his age, since however conventional or individualistic he may be, he nevertheless belongs to his age, and is a product of his society. So let us begin this *Unit* with a brief note on the Czechoslovakian literature of the modern times.

1.2 Czechoslovakian Literature (fiction) of Modern Times

Czech is a west Slavonic language spoken in the western part of Czechoslovakia, in Bohemia, Moravia etc. It has a Latin script. The literature of Czechoslovakia consists of works written in Czech and those written in Slovak, a west Slavonic language spoken in the eastern part of Czechoslovakia. Literature has occupied an important position in Czechoslovak cultural life, since the late 18th century, when the development of an urban middle class created a public for it. The modern Republic of Czechoslovakia came into being in autumn 1918. However literary Czech was fully developed in 1348, when Prague University was founded. (Czech literature flourished in all genres. (literary forms). Compared to the Slovaks, the Czechs have dominated the modern period.

Czechoslovakian literary development parallels that of Europe. Romanticism flourished in the early 19th century. The reaction to Romanticism came in the 1840's with the *Realist* writings of the *Czech novelist Bozena Nemcova* and others. *Liberalism* and *nationalism* were followed in the nineties by *skepticism* which existed side by side with the *Decadence*, a movement common to every country.

After the Great War, (I World War) Czech literature was virtually taken over by writers of the Left who produced almost all the literature of any lasting value in the 1920s 1930s. Among such writers were *Vancura, Nezval*, and bohemian *Jaroslav Seifert*. After the establishment of the Communist regime in 1948, *Socialist Realism* became dominant stylistically and interest in literature declined. In the 1940s and early 1950s, Czech literature endured a period of grim state-enforced stagnation. But even after the demise of Stalinism, although literary activity was feverish few writers of any merit emerged. The period of the "thaw" brought a number of writing critical of the events of Stalin's era, the first success among which was that of *The Taste of Power* by *Ladislav Mnacko*.

One of the most intelligent of Czechoslovakian writers was *Karel Capek* (1890-1938). He threw himself heart and soul into the affairs of his country but his real attitude to life is expressed in his dictum. *"A short life is better for mankind, for a long life would deprive man of his optimism"!* Capeak's novels, written in a clear language, try to educate his countrymen into democracy and vigilance against fascist aggression by means of Wellsean fantasy.

Most important of the writers who helped to shape the intellectual atmosphere leading to the Dubcek experiment in 1968 were *Hrabal, Holub*, the underrated *Ludvik Vaculik* (1926 -), the over rated MILAN KUNDERA (1929 -) the novelist of conscience *Jaroslav Putik* (1923 -) and *Vladimir Paral* (1932 -). [*The Dubecek Experiment* refers to the abortive

reform movement of 1968-69 presided over by Alexander Dubceck (1921-92) who was Czechoslovak party leader from 1967 to 1969.] After Dubcek's fall in 1969, followed by his expulsion from the Communist Party, Czech literary production was reduced to a minimum, but from 1973 onwards writers began to come to terms with the new regime. Of the writers of the 1970s the most highly esteemed is *Jiri Medek* (1950 -)

Thus we see that Czechoslovakian literature has fluctuated in theme and quality according to the political upheavals. The end of the 17th and 18th centuries witnessed the virtual death of national literature; not till the latter half of the 18th century were systematic attempts begun to revive Czech as a literary literature. The failure of the Revolution of 1848 brought an end to the movement for independence, and to the first wave of romanticism. After 1860s, the national cause was once again dominant, but now found a more practical expression through the creation of popular institutions, including a national theatre. Writers were concerned with social problems; democracy, the emancipation of women, the correction of economic injustice, as well as with the longing for national independence. The early 1920s brought a wave of so-called *proletarian literature* expressing a warm but naïve sympathy for the Soviet experiment. The late 1920s saw a sudden and violent shift to *"poetism"*, a school of pure poetry which had its roots in *Dadaism*, *Futurism* and *Vitalism*, [Please refer to the Glossary for explanation]. The early 1930s saw the sudden collapse of poetism as a movement, and a switching over to *Surrealism* and a more personal literature of sensual imagery. The II World War and the subsequent communist coup virtually destroyed the older literary tradition. Several writers were silenced, imprisoned or repressed. In the springs of 1956, demands for greater freedom began to be heard and several influential writers sharply criticized the restrictions imposed on literature. It is against all this varied background, that Milan Kundera and his novel are to be studied.

Let us move on to a brief sketch of the author.

1.3 Milan Kundera : An Introduction

Milan Kundera was born in Brno in Czechoslovakia in 1929. He was the first of the younger Czechs novelists to react sharply against the dreary social realism of the Stalinist years. He was a novelist, dramatist and a writer of short stories. He was the first Czech author to emphasise in his writings the private emotional and erotic spheres of the individual in contrast to the writers of the Stalinist period, who saw man merely as a unit in the socialist collective. His novel Zert (1966) which describes with wry humour the emotional and moral decline of a young man deformed by pseudo-socialist society gives a documentary picture of a single generation in Czechoslovakia. Kundera's chief novel is *The Joke* (1967), a proper English translation of which – replacing an inaccurate one – appeared in 1974. This novel is at once a satire on the fake communism of the Stalinists, on the opportunists who thrived under it, and on the Czechs character itself. *Life is Elsewhere* (1979) was published by Skvorecky on his émigré press – it first appeared in a French version in 1973 – long after kundera had left Czechoslovakia (1975), since he was not allowed to publish there. *The Farewell Party* (tr. 1976) seems frivolous by the side of this study of a poet who sells out to Stalinism, but *The Joke* remains Kundera's best novel. The ideas and the tone of the novel can be identified in his plays like *Majitele Klichu* (1962) and his short stories (*Smesne Lasky* I (1963) ; II (1966)]

1.4 Interior Monologue

A monologue is a long speech in which one person speaks alone: An interior monologue resembles a long speech, but it has to be interpreted to as a speech but as the thoughts, probings and musings of the speaker. It enables the readers to understand the mind and character of the speaker and also see a particular event or person from his point of view. *The Joke* is written in the form of a series of monologues. Each monologue gives us a partial or limited view of the story. It is only by connecting and coordinating the different monologoues that a total picture emerges.

Let us summarise the novel in the succeeding *Units*.

UNIT 2

THE JOKE : A SUMMARY OF PARTS I – IV

2. Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to:

i) have a general idea of the plot of the first part of *Milan Kundera's* novel *The Joke*: and

ii) form your initial impressions about the main characters particularly their state of mind.

2.1 Introduction

The best way to enjoy a novel, of course, is to read it in the original. Even in the most authentic translation, something of the original flavour and flair is bound to be lost. The difficulties are all the more evident in case of a novel like *The Joke* which has been translated five times, since the author himself was not happy with the earlier versions! A chapter-wise summary of this sort is twice removed from the original. It will certainly help you to know the plot of the novel, form ideas about the characters, especially their state of mind, etc. But if you can lay your hands on the translation, do read it. Only then will you be able to understand and enjoy Kundera's masterpiece. Anyway, something is better than nothing. So let us begin to summarise the first section of the novel consisting of *four* parts.

We shall begin with the *Author's* Note.

2.2 Author's Note

Kundera explains the special circumstances that culminated in *the fifth English language version of The Joke*. The first version was published by in London in 1969 by Macdonald, in a translation by David Hamblyn and Oliver Stallybrass. Kundera was amazed when he received the book in Prague, he did not recognize it at all; the novel was entirely reconstructed; divided into a different number of parts with chapters shortened or simply omitted. The irony is that between December 1965 and early 1967, the original Czech manuscript had been kept from publication in Prague by communist censorship; Kundera had rejected all the changes they had wanted to impose on him, and the novel was finally allowed to appear in April 1967, exactly as he had written it.

Living in a country, occupied by the Russian army, deprived of his passport, and so without any possibility of leaving, Kundera found it very difficult to defend himself. He managed to bring about the publication in Britain, of a revised completed version without deletion and with the chapters in their original sequence. But this book (Penguin Books, 1970) gave him only relative satisfaction for the translation was still free. The Penguin version was actually the *third*. The *second* had been published by Coward. Mc-Cann in New York in 1969, not long after the first British version; in this the entire test was systematically curtailed, and the American publisher did not seem very sympathetic towards the protests of the censored author.

A dozen years after the first three mutilated versions Kundera's new editor AARON ASHER at Harper and Row proposed that *The Joke* should appear in a faithful as well as unabridged English-language version; so he approached Michel Henry Heim, a young American professor of Slavic studies, who had translated Kundera's novel *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1080). At Aaron's request, the author wrote a preface for that new fourth edition of *The Joke*. There he recounted the novel's eventful history in Czechoslovakia and in France, evoked the sad tale of its three earlier English-language versions, and added two paragraphs to convey *his exacting concept of the novel*:

Goethe never trusted his secretary to read proof for him, while dealing with poetry. In Goethe's time, prose could not make the

aesthetic claims of poetry; perhaps not until the work of Flaubert, did prose lose the stigma of aesthetic inferiority. Ever since *Madame Bovary*, the art of the novel has been considered equal to the art of poetry, and the novelist endows every word of his prose with the uniqueness of the word in a poem. Once prose makes such a claim, the translation of a novel becomes a true art. A novelist, whose novels are banned in his own country is doubly conscious of the difficulties involved.

The fourth English language version of *The Joke* appeared in 1982. Later in 1900 Aaron proposed the republication of *The Joke* at Harper Collins. Only then did Kundera decide to re-read the translation with care. In the beginning, there was nothing seriously wrong, and *Part Two, "Helena"* was quite good, but from the start of Part III, the author felt that what he read was not his text – words and syntax were changed, there was inaccuracy in the reflective passages, the distinctive voices of the characters – narrators had been altered drastically, and so on. The American professor had clearly resorted to *translation –adaptation* – in keeping with the taste of the time and of the country for which it is intended. The whole thing was unacceptable to Kundera. He regretted having warmly approved of the fourth English version without taking care to read and check the translation earlier.

Finally Kundera and his editor immediately set to work. Kundera worked on both his original and the earlier translations, entering word-for-word translations from the original, and retaining some of the faithful renderings and good formulations in Heim's translation. He sent his work in regular installments to Aaron, who created an English-language version from these disparate elements and sent it to Kundera for final correction and approval. They had begun in the spring of 1991 and working without respite they finished only towards the end of the year. Kundera concludes his *Author's Note* with a promise to the readers, that there will not be a sixth English-language version of *The Joke!*

2.2.1 Critical Comments on Author's Note

From the Author's Note two things become evident. Firstly *The Joke* is not an easy novel to translate, because it is not the conventional sort with its emphasis on a regular plot, and well-drawn but directly delineated characters with clear outlines. Secondly Kundera is a fastidious writer, a perfectionist. He cannot tolerate changes even in his mode of punctuation. Natuarally, the best course is for him to be involved in the translation of his own works.

Let us begin with *Part One* of the novel.

2.3. Summary of Part One

Ludvik

The narrator of this part is LUDVIK. He had returned to his home town after several years. Standing in the main square, he felt no emotion whatsoever. All that he could think was that the flat space looked like a huge parade ground. He told himself that he had grown indifferent to his home-town, for he had been away for *fifteen years*, had almost no friends or acquaintances left there; his mother had been buried among strangers in a grave he had never tended. But he realized that he had been deceiving himself, for what he had called indifference was in fact rancour. (bitter hatred) and it was this journey that had made him conscious of it. The mission that had brought him there could easily have been accomplished in Prague, after all, but he had been tempted to carry it out in his own home town, because it was a cynical and low mission.

Ludvik gave the unsightly (ugly) square a final look and then set off for the hotel where he had booked a room for the night. It was on the third floor. He inspected the room, especially the bed, which sank so much under his weight that it was obviously not only unsatisfactory as a seat but equally unlikely to perform its function as a bed; it was impossible to imagine anyone else in that bed with him. He sat down on the chair and began to think. Just then he could hear two people, a man and a woman, having a conversation about a boy named Peter, who had run away from home, and his Aunt Klara, who was a fool and spoiled the boy, Ludvik could hear every word of their conversation; even the woman's sighs were audible.

He stood up, his decision firm. He did not want to jeoparadise (upset) the success of his long arduous (difficult journey with that unsuitable hotel room. He had no choice but to ask some local acquaintance for the discreet, confidential favour of lending his room. He suddenly remembered a man there, who he had helped to find a job and would probably be only too glad to repay one good turn with another. His name was KOSTKA. He was a strange character, at once scrupulously moral and oddly unsettled and unstable, whose wife had divorced him years before for living any where and everywhere except with her and their son. Ludvik walked fast in the direction of the hospital, where Kostka worked in the Virology department. Luckily he met him and recognized him. Ludvik felt that Kostka was pleasantly surprised, and the spontaneity of his welcome delighted him.

Ludvik told him that he would be in the town for two or three days concerning some unimportant business. They started talking. Kostka told him that after work in the hospital he was leaving town in the evening. He had a fiancee (a girl he was engaged to) in another town fifteen miles away, a school teacher with a two-room flat of her own. He was still on his own and had a one – room flat in a new building near the hospital. He was unlikely to move in with his fiancée eventually because of the problem of finding another job at her place. Ludvik sincerely began to curse the ineptitude (absurdity) of a bureaucracy unable to arrange for a man and woman to live together. But Kostka did not mind. Travelling back and forth did cost time and money, but his solitude remained intact and he was free. Ludvik asked him, "Why is your freedom so important to you?" He countered with the same question. Ludvik answered that he was a skirt-chaser (one who chased/made love to women); he needed the freedom not for the women, but for himself.

Kostka invited Ludvik to his flat. Ludvik noticed with great pleasure a wide comfortable divan in the corner of the room. He asked Kosltra if he could lend him the place for the next afternoon. When he would need a pleasant atmosphere. Kostka understood and deliberately avoided preying into Ludvik's plans. He readily offered his flat, as it was a favour. Before going, Kosltra gave him the keys. During a lifetime of sleeping in various beds, Ludvik had developed a personal cult of keys, and he slipped Kostka's key into his pocket with silent glee.

On their way out Ludvik, in reply to Kostka, said that he hoped Kostka's flat would help Ludvik to achieve a beautiful demolition. He explained that Kostka was a quiet workman on God's eternal construction site, whereas Ludvik was not one of God's brick layers. Instead of walls all he saw was stage sets. And stage sets were made to be demolished. Both had not changed and even after years were as different as ever. It was these differences that endeared Kostka to Ludvik and made him enjoy their arguments. He used them as a touchstone of who he was and what he thought. Kostka replied thus: "How can a sceptic like you be so sure he knows how to tell a stage set from a wall?" The illusions Ludvick ridiculed may not be mere illusions. What if there were genuine values and Ludvik were a demolisher of values? A value debased and an illusion unmasked had the same pitful form: they resembled each other too closely.

Walking with Kostka back through the town to the hospital, Ludvik said that he badly needed a good shave. Kostka took him to a small barber shop. It was a female barber who attended on him. Ludvik mused on how strange and ridiculous it was to be caressed so tenderly by an unknown woman who meant nothing to him and to whom he meant nothing. He imagined that he was a defenseless victim entirely at the mercy of the woman who had sharpened the razor which was waiting on the nearby table there merely to consummate that beautiful independence. Suddenly, he realized that he knew the woman, his tender assassin; it seemed an older sister's face. He had not seen her for fifteen years.

Just then a new customer came in and Ludvik could not speak to her. Even when he paid, she kept her head indifferently turned away from him, avoiding eye-contact and taking the money so briskly and

impersonally that he suddenly felt like a madman fallen prey to his own hallucinations and could not find the courage to say anything to her. He left the barbershop feeling oddly frustrated; all he knew was that he knew nothing and that it was a great callousness to be uncertain of recognizing a face he had once so dearly loved.

2.3.1 Critical Comments on Part One

The character-narrator of this part is Ludvik. What are your initial impressions about him? Kundera has portrayed him as "a thoughtful melancholy intellectual" to quote his own words from the *Author's Notes*. Who is Lucie Sebetka? Why is Ludvik filled with rancour? Nothing is clear at this point. Let us wait and see.

Let us move on to *Part Two*.

2.4 Summary of Part Two

Helena

This part consists of three chapters and they comprise Helena's monologue.

1. Helena was thinking about *Pavel* and her daughter little Zdena. *ZDENA* worshipped PAVEL. He was the first man in her life, he knew how to handle her just as he knew how to handle all women including Helena. He had left for Bratislava that afternoon. This week he was his old self again, stroking Helena's face, and promising to stop off for her in Moravia on his way back from Bratislava. He wanted to talk things over. She wondered why he had to wait until now, now that she had met Ludvik. It was painful, but she would not give in to sadness; she would let sadness never be linked with her name-this was Helena's motto, derived from Fucik's words; even when they tortured him. Even in the shadows of the gallows, Fucik was never sad. Helena liked Ludvik very much because he was very normal, straightforward, cheerful and definite about everything, she did not have to alter her ideals and tastes, and that is what she always loved.

Helena was not ashamed of the way she was. Until she was eighteen, all she knew was the well ordered flat of a well-ordered bourgeois clan and schoolwork, totally isolated from real life. When she arrived in Prague in 1949, it was like a miracle, she was so happy. It was there she met Pavel; he sang tenor, she sang alto, they gave hundreds of concerts and demonstrations, they sang Soviet songs, their own socialist-construction songs and of course folk songs. Helena fell in love with Moravian folk songs, they became the itmotif (recurring theme) of her existence. Even though she did not love Pavel any more, even though he had hurt her, she could not forget him; Pavel was her you.

It was at the anniversary of the Liberation that Helena had fallen in love with Pavel. A big demonstration was going on in Old Town Square. Togliatti the leader of the Italian workers' movement was speaking. Suddenly Pavel screamed out a song trying to get the crowd to hear him and join him. The crowd including Helena responded Pavel and Helena held hands all the way to the end of the demonstration and they fell in love with each other. Seven years later, when little Zdena was five, Pavel told Helena, that they did not marry for love, they married out of Party discipline. Helena felt it was a lie uttered in the heat of an argument; Pavel had married her for love. Helena felt that it was a terrible thing to say.

Life was becoming more and more busy; they did not take time to eat. Helena would wait for Pavel until midnight when he came home from the endless six-hour, eight-hour meetings. He attached much importance to his conferences and political training sessions. She knew how much the success of his political appearances meant to him; he never tired of repeating that the new man differed from the old in so far as he had abolished the distinction between public and private life; years later now, he complained about how back then the comrades never left his left his private life alone.

Helena and Pavel went together thus for nearly two years, and she was naturally getting impatient and discontented, for no woman could ever be content with puppy love. Pavel was perfectly content, he enjoyed the convenient lack of commitment; every man had a selfish streak in him, it was up to the woman to stand up for herself and her mission as a woman unfortunately. Finally Pavel was called before the party committee. Helena thinks they must have been tough on

him; morals were pretty strict in those days, people really overdid it, but may be it was better to overdo morality than immorality, the way we did now. After a long period of absence, almost goading Helena to commit suicide, Pavel returned to her, asked her to fogive him and gave her a locket with the picture of the Kremlin on it, his most treasured possession. Two weeks later they were married and the whole ensemble (Party members) came to the wedding. Helena told Pavel that if they betrayed each other, it would be tantamount to betraying everyone at the wedding, and at the demonstration in old Town square as well as betraying Togliatte. Now it made Helena laugh when she looked back on everything they ultimately did betray.

2. Helena reviews her life. She was getting on in years. A nineteen year old boy JINDRA was strongly attracted to her; that was reassuring, considering the fact that she had not been particularly popular at the radio station. People called her a bitch, a fanatic, a dogmatist, a party blood hound etc., but they would never make her ashamed of loving the Party and sacrificing all her spare time to it. Pavel had other women, she did not even bother to check on them anymore. For ten years now her work had been hopelessly routine: features. Interviews broadcasts about fulfilled plans etc. and the equally hopeless situation at home. It was only the party that had never done her any harm and Helena had never harmed the Party, not even in the days when almost everyone was ready to desert it, in 1956, when there was all that talk about Stalin's crimes, and people went wild and began rejecting everything, saying that their papers were a pack of lies, nationalized stores did not work culture was in decline, farms should never have been colelctivised, the Soviet Union had no freedom, and worst of all, even Communists went around talking like that and at their own meetings, Pavel too, and again all of them applauded pavel as ever. It all began when his mother treated him as a child prodigy taking his picture to bed with her; but he was adult mediocrity, he did not smoke or drink but he could not live without applause. It was his alcohol and nicotine. How thrilled Pavel was at the new chance to pull at people's heart strings.

Luckily the Party gave the squawkers (those who opposed) a good *rap on the knuckles* (warning, punishment) Pavel too calmed down; he did not want to risk his cushy (easy, pleasant) lectureship in Marzism at the university, but a germ of apathy (indifference), mistrust, misgiving did remain behind, Helena clung to the party more tightly then before. The party was almost like a living being. Once, one of her colleagues a married man, was having an affair with a girl, single, irresponsible and cynical, and his wife turned to the party for help. The party intervened and warned both the culprits. Unfortunately words are merely words, they agreed to split up only to keep them quiet, and in fact, they continued to see each other on the sly. At last Helena who found the truth proposed that the man who lied may be expelled from the Party, but her proposal was defeated and the culprits did not suffer much.

The party took it out on her by making her look like a monster; it was a regular smear campaign; they started poking about in her private life, and that was her Achilles' heel (weak point), no man can live without feelings, she wouldn't be a woman if she did, so why deny it? Since Helena did not have love at home she sought it elsewhere. They called her a hypocrite at a public meeting, trying to criticize others for breaking up marriages, when she herself had been unfaithful to her husband at every opportunity behind her back they said that she was a nun in public and a whore in private as if they could not see that the only reason she was so hard on others was that she wished to prevent an unhappy marriage if she could.

Helena mused that she hated lies; she could only act as she felt. She had always believed that man was one and indivisible and that only the petty bourgeois divided them hypocritically into public self and private self, such was her credo. Helena admitted that she hated those young girls so sure of themselves and their youth and so lacking in solidarity with older women. Compared to them she, a married woman,

had a few affairs with other men; the difference was that Helena was always looking for love, and if she had made a mistake, she would turn away in horror, even thought it would have been simpler to cross the border into the realm of that monstrous freedom where shame, inhibitions and morals had ceased to exist, where everything was permitted where deep inside all one needed was to understand the throb of sex. If she had crossed that border, she would stop being herself and she was afraid of that awful transformation. That is why Helena kept desperately looking for love, so that she might remain whole from beginning to end. That is why, she told Ludvik, that she was fascinated when she saw Ludvik.

3. Helena remembers her first meeting with Ludvik how nervous she had been how he had tried to reassure her. He made it clear from the start he was interested in her more as a woman that as a reporter. He was very nice to her, they understood each other; he was not one of the intellectual types she disliked, he had a rich life behind him. The thing that excited her most was that he was from Moravia, he had even played in a cimbalom land; it was like hearing the leitmotiv of her life again, seeing her youth return from the shadows, her heart and soul went out to him.

Ludvik advised Helena to devote more time to the joys of life. She replied that joy had always been part of her credo and what she hated most was the present day fashionable cynicism; Ludvik replied that credos meant nothing and that cynicism; people who shouted joy from the roof tops were often the saddest of all. Soon Helena realized that in spite of knowing she was a married woman, Ludvik was in love with her. She also noticed that he looked sad. The next day he took her out for a drive out into the country and they had a splendid time. Helena was in a real dilemma now. On the one hand Pavel had offered to marry her. She was ready to do anything to save her marriage, but she did not have the strength to say no to Ludvik.

2.4.1 Critical Comments on Chapter Two

The most striking aspect of Helena's monologue is that each paragraph is one long "infinite" sentence in Kundera's original. It reveals the state of mind, life, hopes and disappointments of Helena. We also learn about Pavel, about the hypocrisy of the communists Ludvik also is brought in adding complication to the theme. What are your impressions about Helena?

Let us pass on to the next *part*.

2.6 Summary of Part Three

Ludvik

This *part* consists of *seven* chapters. The narrator is *Ludvik*.

1. He walked along the bridge that spanned the river Morava. He was aware that the ghostly atmosphere of the landscape was merely a metaphor for everything he had tried not to recall after his encounter with Lucie. He seemed to be projecting suppressed memories onto everything that was around him. He understood that there was no escaping the memories which surrounded him.

2. The events leading to Ludvik's first major disaster could be traced to his fatal predilection for silly *jokes* and MARKETA'S fatal inability to understand them. Marketa was the type of woman who took everything seriously; that made her totally at one with the spirit of the era; she was credulous, gifted and full of naïve (simple and innocent) trustfulness. Everyone at the university liked this nineteen year old girl, and poked gentle non malicious fun at her. But the fun went over badly with her, and even worse with the spirit of the age. It was the first year after February 1948. A genuinely new and different life had begun, marked by rigid seriousness; people were expected to rejoice in the victory of the working class, without giving way *individualistically* to inner sorrows.

Ludvik had few inner sorrows at that time, had a considerable sense of fun; but his *Jokes* were not serious enough to keep pace with the joyousness of the era. Contemporary joy was a grave joy that proudly called itself "*the historical optimism of the victorious class*", a solemn and ascetic joy, in short, Joy with a capital 'J'. Ludvik held an important post in

the Students Union and like every communist at the time, he had a number of functions; being a good student, he could expect a positive evaluation in formal evaluation of each member. Ludvik was rated as an individualist with an intellectual smile. Honestly, he felt that he was a man of many faces, which kept multiplying. About a month before summer, when he was finishing his second year, and Marketa her first, Ludvik began to get close to her. Like all twenty year olds, he pretended to be older, assuming an air of detachment. At meetings he was earnest, enthusiastic and committed; among friend, unconstrained and given to teasing with Marketa cynical and fitfully witty; and alone, unsure of himself and as agitated as a schoolboy. All these were real faces Ludvik asserted that he was not a hypocrite, with one real face and several false ones.

The psychological and physiological mechanism of love is so complex that at a certain period in his life, a young man must concentrate all his energy on coming to grips with it, and in this way, he misses the actual content of the love; the woman he loves. It was his actual lack of self-assurance which caused Ludvik's agitation to ease the burden of his embarrassment and awkwardness, he showed off in front of Marketa; disagreeing with her, making fun of her etc. Marketa was a girl of trusting simplicity. She was sent during the summer to a two-week Party training course to fortify her zeal with concrete knowledge of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary moment, based on the principle that *the end justified the means.*

Ludvik was disappointed becaue he had planned to spend the two weeks alone with Marketa in Prague, with an eye to improving their relationship. He reacted with pained jealousy when Marketa did not share his feeling. From the training center in Bohemia, she sent him a letter full of enthusiasm for the effects of the Revolution. Ludvik too believed in the imminence of a revolution in Western Europe. What he could not accept was how she could be so happy when he was missing her so much. So he bought a postcard, and in order to hurt, shock and confuse her, he wrote: "*Optimism is the opium of the people. A healthy atmosphere stinks of stupidity. Long live Trotsky!*".

3. Marketa responded to Ludvik's provocative postcard with a brief and banal note. Her silence overwhelmed him with heavy sadness, when she failed to respond to his mournful infatuation. He could not understand what had happened. When he met her in Prague in August, she claimed that nothing had changed between them. The next day he was informed that Marketa had left Prague. Ludvik was unhappy as only a womanless twenty year old could be, one who had known few encounters with physical love. The days were unbearably long and futile, it was difficult to kill time.

In September when classes resumed, Ludvik received a phone call summoning him to the District Party Secretariat. Three Comrades whom he knew well and had always bantered, suddenly wore serious expressions and started interrogating Ludvik about the provocative postcard he had sent Marketa. Even though he told them that he had written the words as a joke, they refused to believe him. He understood that the comrades had read all his letters to Marketa. They asked him if he was laughing at Marketa for taking seriously things like the Party, optimism, discipline etc. He could have written only what was inside him; he wrote what he felt. Now the Comrades knew that Ludvik had two faces – one for the party, another for everyone else. He had twisted Marx's statement. "Religion is the opium of the people" and Trotsky's belief that" optimism builds socialism". At last, they told him that they were relieving him of his post in the Students Union effective immediately and asked him of hand over the keys of the office. Ludvik gave the keys away.

Later Ludvik remembered that he had a few personal items at the Student Union office. He managed to get the house-key from the porter and went in. Just then the three Comrades came in; they were agitated to see him there. He told them that he had come for the hald-eaten rum-cake baked by his mother, and his socks. However they allowed him to take all his things and told him not to show his face there again. Ludvik felt he was innocent, he had written nothing

CUP/5026/1000/SDE — 20

terrible on the postcard; the best thing would be to talk to someone well acquainted with Marketa. He looked up a fellow student, a Communist, who listened to the whole story and observed that the Secretariat was bigoted and hummourless. He told him to see ZEMANEK, who was going to become Party Chairman at Natural Sciences and knew both Marketa and Ludvik very well.

4. Ludvik felt that Zemanek who had been chosen Party Chairman, would be sympathetic towards him, chiefly because of his Moravian origins, for Zemanek loved singing Moravian folk songs. Ludvik, Marketa and Zemanek had often been together on various occasions during their student days. Once he had fabricated a story atbout some dwarf tribes living in the Czech mountains. Zemanek too had added funny details to endorse his account – all for fooling Marketa. On this black day, Ludvick's hope was that Zemanek knew well both Marketa and Ludvik's style of comedy and would understand that the provocative postcard was only a joke. So when he got the first opportunity, Ludvik told the party chairman the whole story, and the latter said he would see what he could do. In the meantime, Ludvik lived in a state of suspended animation. Marketa continued to avoid him, he was too proud and sensitive to ask for anything. Then one day, she herself stopped him in a corridor and said that she wanted to talk to him.

Ludvick and Marketa went on a walk. She told him how the whole thing had come about. She had been questioned by the Comrades and persuaded to show them all the letters of sentimental effusions in addition to the provocative postcard he had sent her. She had to tell them that she thought him a little odd and that nothing was sacred to him. Marketa told Ludvik that since he was a Party member, they had every right to know who he was and what he thought. Comrade Zemanek had met her recently, praised her for her good performance at the training course and advised her to keep out of Ludvik's company. Through she had kept off Ludvik for months, she felt guilty at trying to break a friendship merely, because the friend had made a mistake and once again she sought permission to meet Ludvick for months, she felt guilty at trying to break a friendship merely because the friend had made a mistake and once again she sought permission to meet Ludvik and talk to him. She told him that he had committed a great crime, he had no right to remain in the Party and that she had decided not to leave him.

Ludvick knew that if agreed to acknowledge his very deep guilt, and satisfy Marketa's Salvationist urge he would achieve the long-cherished goal of her body; but he could not take it at that price. He did not give in to Marketa. He refused her help and lost her. He was shocked at the farcical nature of the whole affair. Ludvik began to feel outraged by his three sentences in the postcard, to fear that something serious did in fact lurk behind their comedy, to know that he never really had been one with the body of the Party, that he had never been a true proletarian revolutionary; a man was either a revolutionary, in which case he completely merged with the movement in one collective entity, or he was not and would always consider himself guilty of not being one.

Looking back on his state of mind at the time he was reminded of the enormous power of Christianity to convince the believer of his fundamental and never-ending guilt. Ludvik gradually became reconciled to the idea that his words, though genuinely intended as a joke, were still a matter of guilt and a self-critical investigation started up in his head. No wonder the Comrades had reproached him for his "traces of individualism" and "intellectual tendencies". He told himself that he had taken to preening himself on his education, his university status, his future as a member of the intelligentsia etc. What he resisted most was the expulsion from the party and the concomitant designation of *enemy*. But at last in spite of his suppliant pleas to various committees, Zemanek recommended in the name of the organization that Ludvik be expelled not only from the Party but from the University too; Zemaek was supported by Ludvik's closest friends and his teachers!

Ludvik was unable to work up courage to tell his mother about his expulsion, for she took great pride in his studies. But on the

day of his arrival home, he was met by JAROSLAV, a school friend who had played in the cimbalom band with him: upon his request Ludvik agreed to be his best man and thus celebrated his down fall with a wedding ceremony; but he was not able to enjoy himself due to his personal crisis.

5. Having lost the right to continue his studies, Ludvik also lost the right to defer military service. He signed up for two long work brigades. He along with a number of conscripts, were turned into soldiers; they were given black insignia as uniform. Hectic drill, political instruction and compulsory singing marked day after day; and for private life, a room with twenty bunks. The depersonalization was overwhelming; and even in the *penumbra of depersonalization* the soldiers began to see the human in human beings. Their main job was to work in mines. They were treated roughly and condemned to the company of men Ludvik considered his sworn enemies. Ludvik refused to accommodate himself of them. He preferred to be alone. He believed he had only one thing to accomplish; flight for his right "not to be an enemy", for his right to get away.

Ludvik repeatedly told the unit's political commissar that he had been expelled from the Party for intellectualism and cynicism, not as an enemy of socialism. After hearing everything and making enquiries he said that he had found out that Ludvik was a known Troskyite! Ludvik realized that it was impossible to free his real self from this falsely imposed image; the non-resemblance was his cross and he really wanted to bear it. Ludvik worked very hard, volunteered for the political pep talks etc but no one took all that as an expression of his political convictions.

Among the noncoms was a mild Slovak utterly devoid of sadism. Once Ludvik asked him how he was such a good shot. The Slovak replied that he thought of the bull's eye as an imperialist, and he got so bad that he never missed. He continued in a serious pensive voice that if there was a war on, Ludvik and the others would be the ones he would be shooting at. Hearing these words from the good hearted fellow, Ludvik realized that the line tying him up to the Parrty and the Comrades had irrevocably slipped through his fingers. He had been thrown off his life's path.

6. Everything meaningful in the course of life had broken off. All he had left was time-sheer empty time. Men with black insignia could be kept on indefinitely. Little by little Ludvick grew used to the idea that his life had lost its continuity and that it only remained for him finally to begin to exist in the reality in which he inescapably found himself. He began to notice the people around him. *Honza and Bedrich* were like him with the rate feeling of inner freedom. All the rest were plagued by fear and despair. It was Honza whom Ludvik liked best. Many of them had been conscripted for petty reasons like getting drunk on May Day, urinating in public, drawing Cubist paintings and so on. The soldiers had their heads shaved clean every two weeks to rid them of all thoughts of self esteem. The only positive aspect of their dreary existence was the two nights free a month when they could spend and make up for the chronic frustration of all the other endless days. One evening Ludvik, Honza Stana and others went out, outwitted the artillery men, drank and enjoyed the company of a nice blonde. Ludvik was disgusted with another ugly woman of monstrous height who was nicknamed *lamp-post*. Suddenly he was gripped by sadness; this type of love life with prostitutes had simply become the fundamental and *customary* condition of his existence; it was an expression not of his freedom, but of his submission his limitation, his *condemnation*. And Ludvik felt fear of that bleak horizon, of that destiny. He felt his soul shriveling; he was frightened by the thought that he could not escape its enrichment.

7. Sadness over their bleak erotic horizons was something nearly all of them went through. In March Stana got two day leave to marry. On that day, Ludvik preferred to be alone. He took a long walk. He reached a building with a CINEMA sign. The film on was *Court of Honour*. Not wanting to see it, Ludvik headed for the alley to the street. It was then he first set his eyes on Lucie, whose appearance was utterly ordinary. Later, it was this very *ordinariness*, and her slowness radiating a resigned consciousness that there was nowhere to hurry to and that it was

useless to reach impatiently toward anything, that touched and fascinated Ludvik.

Ludvik kept following Lucie who did not seem to notice him. He felt that Lucie had revealed herself to him the way *religious truth* revealed itself he grasped the essence of what she was later to become for him-tranquility, simplicity and modesty qualities which he needed badly. Ludvik bought a ticket for the detested film and took the seat next to Lucie. After the film was over he talked to her in a natural manner-not with a joke or a paradox as had been his custom. Lucie told him that she worked in a factory and lived in a dormitory; she liked being alone because she felt sad. Ludvik observed that nothing brought people together more quickly than shared melancholy. They parted after agreeing to meet when Ludvik got his next leave.

8. From that evening, Ludvik was a different inside. To no other woman had he felt such gratitude as Lucie; firstly for relesing him from the pathetically limited erotic horizons that sruuounded them; freeing him from the overall nausea he felt after his bleak erotic adventures. All he needed was to feel Lucie close to him, a life in which there was no room for questions of cosmopolitanism and internationalism, political vigilance and the class struggle, controversies over the definition of the dictatorship pf the proletariat, politics with its strategy and tactics. These were the concerns which had led to his down fall. What had attracted Ludvik to the Communist movement more than anything was the feeling of standing near the *wheel of history*; for in those days, the Communists in the student body ran the Universities almost single handed, making decisions on academic staffing, teaching reform, and the curriculum. They had experienced the intoxication of power there was still an altogether idealistic illusion that they were inaugurating a human era, in which man would be neither outside history nor *under the heel of history*, but would create and direct it. Lucie knew nothing of the *great and contemporary* concerns; she lived for her *small and eternal* concerns she had come to liberate him.

Lucie was nineteen, came from western Bohemia, from an unhappy home, for her parents did not like her. She left for Ostrava; she was serious and liked to go to movies, especially war films. She listened receptively when Ludvik spoke. Ludvik found great solace in the poems of *Frantisek Halas*; he wanted to commune with someone else who had been *excommunicated*. He recited his poems before Lucie, who became so emotional that she held Ludvik round the neck like a child and cried and cried.

9. It pained Ludvik to think that not since reaching maturity had be been able to establish a true relationship with a woman. He could not forget the way he had been expelled. It was hard to live with people willing to sent him to exile or death, to become intimate with them or love them. Nothing was ,more repugnant (hateful) to him than brotherly feelings grounded in the common baseness people saw in each other. Ludvik had no desire for that slimy brotherhood. But now Ludvik was passionately in love with Lucie, desired her and even wanted to marry her one day. In reply to his letters she gave him flowers. Ludvik once took Lucie to a dress shop and made her try out a few dresses. He was bowled over by *the revelation of her body*. He at last managed to make her agree to meet him in her room a month later.

10. Stana messed up his life by beating his wife for disloyalty; he was tried for deserting her; later he lost a leg in an accident and the botched amputation cost him his life. His wife had divorced him and later married a famous Prague actor. Stana's wife was the downfall of all of them. Soon after they had a very strict boy-com-mander. Cenek drew a very vulgar mural showing some men and women in obscene poses and explained the mural in terms of the Red Army. The officer considered it an insult to the Red Army and told Cenek that he would have to face the consequences. When Ludvik told him that he liked it, he retorted that he was not surprised, it was perfect for masturbators.

Once the boy-commander gave Ludvik two day's detention for lying down on the job. Ludvik reflected that the young man, himself incomplete, was play acting the role

of a *fully grown* person, a superman, because he was forced to do it. Ludvik felt that his comrades at the postcard interrogation, wearing the mask of the hard ascetic revolutionary, Marketa, as the female saviour in some movie, Zemanek who was suddenly seized by the sentimental pathos of morality, and perhaps he himself were all mere actors. History was terrible because it so often ended up as a platform for the immature. Thinking of all that, Ludvik's whole set of values went awry, and he felt deep hatred towards youth.

Alexej was the son of a highly placed communist official who had recently been arrested. He confided to Ludvik that come what may, he was determined never to betray the party. Ludvik, thanks to Lucie, no longer suffered this desperate torment.

11. Ludvik was granted an evening pass two days before Lucie's roommates were due back. He went to meet Lucie and make love to her but she resisted so hard that he had to return disappointed.

12. After a taxing racing exercise, the boy commander ordered no leaves for Ludvik's company for two months. Ludvik and Alexej discussed socialism. According to Alexey, the line between socialism and reaction held everywhere. He had been sent to the regiment because his father had been arrested for espionage and it was the Party's duty not to trust him. However, among his companions, the good natured sabotage of the relay race strengthened their feeling of solidarity; they reviewed the possibilities of going absent without leave; a bribery fund was set up for the purpose. But soon the scheme flopped. Honza was court martialed, convicted and got a year in prison. Leave for the entire company was cancelled for another two months. Everyone suspected Alexej and made life miserable for him. Alexej hold him that he commander was saboteur and that and that Alexej had sent a complaint about him to the Party. Alexej repeated that he was a communist and as Communists they were responsible for everything that went on there. Ludvik told him that responsibility was unthinkable without freedom. Cenek felt Alexej was a rat for he had renounced his own father as a spy.

13. Lucie came to the fence almost everyday and met Ludvik. It was the most intensive period of their love. He was loved publicly and demonstratively; it was the love of a woman and it aroused wonder, nostalgia and envy. The longer the soldiers were cut off from the world and women, the more women dominated their talk with their every particular, every detail. The feeling of comradely solidarity that had led Ludvik to paint so detailed a picture of Lucie's nakedness (which he had never seen!) And erotic behaviour had the effect of painfully intensifying his desire for her. He experienced *total desire for a woman* in which everything was involved: body and soul, desire for vulgarity and consolation as well as for eternal possession.

Ludvik fixed a day to sneak out and meet Lucie at an appointed place. On that day the boy commander called Alexej a sneak and forced him to read a letter expelling Alexej from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Later Ludvik reached the house where Lucie was waiting. But once again he was disappointed. Lucie resisted more than ever. The pitiful misery of a failed youth the humiliating eternity of unfulfilled desire everything was too much for Ludvik.

14. The soldiers appeared to have developed a sudden surge of solidarity for Alexej following the commander's cruelty. The next day they discovered that Alexej had committed suicide. The young boy had assumed his mad role blindly and bravely, but had lacked the strength to remain in the ranks, in his *dog's mask*. Ludvik felt that his death concealed a reproach to him as if Alexej had wished to let him know that the moment the Party banishes a man from its ranks, that man has no reason to live. Ludvik felt that he had lost more than Alexej; he began to doubt their solidarity which was based solely on the force of circumstance and an urge for self preservation. He felt he was a desert within a desert.

Ludvik wrote a letter of apology to Lucie but it came back. She had gone away. Ludvik was terror stricken. He sneaked to

find out, more details about Lucie but failed. In two weeks' time he was court martialed and given ten months for desertion. It was when he lost Lucie that the long period of hopelessness and emptiness began. His mother died when he was in jail, and he could not go to her funeral. He spent the next three years mining coal as a civilian.

Ludvik takes no pleasure in remembering his past-the destiny of a man cast out from a movement he had trusted. It was false pride that had made him glorify his outcast destiny. As for fifteen years, he had not set eyes on Lucie.

2.5.1 Critical Comments on Part III

Part III is very long, consisting of fourteen chapters. It tells us about the joke of the postcard which caused the major disaster in Ludvik's life – his expulsion from the Party and his university studies, his disappointments at the hands of Marketa and Lucie and the shattering of his ideals. The chapter contains lots of reflective passages.

Let us pass on to the *fourth part*.

2.6 Summary of Part Four

The character-narrator of *Part Four is Jaroslav*. It consists of ten chapters.

1. Jaroslaw dreamt a fascinating folk lore in which he was king, who was taken to safety by one of his cavalry men who asked him to put a veil on his head. The reached their destination. He wanted to see Vlasta.

2. The only object in Jaroslav's room was a black harmonium. It was a couple of days before Sunday's Ride of the kings. Vlasta came into the room. Jaroslaw attended a meeting in connection with it. In the square he saw Ludvik, who pretended not to see him. The District National Committee had proposed Jaroslav's son *Vladmir*, a fifteen year old boy, to be that year's king, as a reward and honour for the father. The boy admitted that he did not want to be king if it was arranged from above. He did not want to pull strings. Jaroslav was sad.

3,4 Jaroslav wished that his son would try to understand that he was not a mere crackpot folklore addict, but heard in folk art the sap that kept Czech culture from drying up. His love for it dated back to the war when they tried to make them believe that they were only Czech-speaking Germans, who had no right to exist. In the last year of the Nazi occupation the Ride of the Kings was staged in their village, and Jaroslav then fifteen years old was made king. He had been proud. He wished his son could share his feeling.

5. Jaroslav could not forget Ludvik, his oldest friend, Both were half orphans. Ludvick's father, a bricklayer was hauled off to a concentration camp by the Germans when the boy was thirteen. Jaroslav's mother had died in childbirth. Ludvik had to depend on father sister and her husband *Koutecky* and he could not bear them, for she looked down on his poor mother. Though Ludvik was ripe for rebellion, his mother would beg him tearfully to be sensible. Ludvik and Jaroslav were like twins. Jaroslav's father even bought him a cheap clarinet. Towards the end of the war when the Koutecky's daughter got married, Ludvik was displayed as their charity case. Ludvik was so furious that he deserted the festivities. He proclaimed that he hated the bourgeois. He cursed the marriage ceremony and said he spat on the Church and was going to leave it. He broke all ties with them and went to lectures the communists sponsored. In 1947 after school, Ludvik joined the University in Prague, Jaroslav in Brno. He did not see him until the following year.

6. The February Communist coup of 1948 meant a reign of terror. Jaroslav and the other were irritated by Ludvik's certainty. He had the look all Communists had at that time; he associated the fate of their band with the fate of the Communist Party. In his mind Jaroslav called him the Pied Piper. Capitalism had destroyed the old collective life. Jazz not only disappeared from their country but became a symbol of Western capitalism and its decadence. The Communist Party went all out to create a new way of life. It based its efforts on Stalin's famous definition of the new art:socialist content in national form. And national form in music, dance and poetry could come from nowhere but folk art. The Communist Party supported them. In 1949 Jaroslav himself joined the Party.

7. The shadow fell between them at Jaroslav's was always anxious about his

father's health. In the third year he gave it up and came home and became a violin teacher. He could devoted his tune to things he loved. He decided to marry *Vlasta*. Jaroslav's friends from the ensemble staged a real Moravian wedding for him.

8. Ludvik explained that he had been expelled from both the Party and the University; that is why he had not been able to enjoy the wedding. He bade farewell. He had volunteered for a labour brigade and Jaroslav went abroad with the ensemble. Jaroslav was unable to face Ludvik's fall, and equally ashamed of his own success in life. Then one day his father received an obituary announcement signed by the Kouteckys that Ludvik's mother had died. There was no mention of Ludvik. Jaraslov was shocked Ludvik did not come. Only later did Jaraslov come to know that Ludvik had been in prison. The Kouteckys had robbed him of his mother.

9. Ludvik had been through military service, a prison sentence and several years in the mines. He was making arrangement in Prague to resume his studies and had come to the town to take care of a few legal formalities. Jaroslav realized he had changed: Ludvik had a toughness and a solidity about him and he was much calmer. Jaroslav had not been prepared for Ludvik's venom, his ironical hatred. He learnt that it was with great difficulty that Ludvik had got permission to complete his last two years at the University. Being expelled from the Party had branded him for life. Whereever he went he was distrusted. Jaroslav was stunned. He realized that Ludvik had stopped speaking to him because he was afraid of Jaroslav.

10. Ludvik and Jaroslav had never done anything to hurt each other. Jaroslav wondered if, with a little good will, they could be friends again. As it turned out neither their estragement nor their reunion was in his hands. Nine years elapse' Ludvik graduated and found an excellent job as scientist in a field he enjoyed. Jaroslav could never regard Ludvik had seen him that day and turned away.

2.6.1 Critical Comments on Part Four

In this part, we have the relationship between Ludvik and Jaroslav depicted by the latter. Some of the details of Ludvik's life are repeated. It is interesting to compare this with the earlier parts.

Read the study material carefully a number of times and become familiar with the plot so far. Also note down your impressions of the main characters the different points of view, plot development etc.

We shall study the latter parts of the novel in the next *Unit*.

UNIT 3

THE JOKE : A SUMMARY OF PARTS V-VII

3.0 Objectives

At the end of this *Unit*, you should be able to :

i) understand the plot of the novel *The Joke*:

ii) analyse the important characters, particularly their states of mind: and

iii) discuss the main ideas presented in the novel.

3.1 Introduction:

Please read *Unit II* a few times and understand the plot of the novel so far. Only then can you appreciate the whole novel. In this Unit we shall summarise the latter parts of the novel, starting with the *fifth*.

3.2. Summary of Part Five

Ludvik

The character narrator of this part is Ludvik. This part consists of 5 chapters.

1. Ludvik came across *Kovalik*, a schoolmate who was associated with the National Committee. He said that there were two opposing institutions: the Catholic Church with its traditional thousand year old

rites and the civil institutions that must supplant them. The Communist Party persuaded people to mary or have their children christened at civil ceremonies with as much dignity and beauty as at church ceremonies. The national Committee used attendance at their civil ceremonies as a touchstone for evaluating people's sense of citizenship and their attitude towards the State, and in the end people realized that and came. Ludvik observed that in that case, the National Committee was stricter with its believers than the Chruch was with theirs. Ludvik then took leave of his old classmate. He was expecting Helena Zemanek. She got down from the bus and came to the hotel where he, comrade Jahn, met her.

2. Everything that had happened between Ludvik and Helena was part of a precise and deliberate plan. He particularly wanted to meet her because her husband was a man Ludvik hated. Ludvik had been sent by his institute to meet Helena, who worked for the radio, and give her some information about their research. He hated journalists; he had a stronger aversion for radio folks. Ludvik did his best to make things tough for her, he deliberately spoke in complex and confusing sentences. He got out of her facts which identified Zemanek beyond a doubt. Soon he realized in spite of his rancour, that behind the veil of Helena's journalistic playacting, there was a woman capable of functioning as a woman. He tried his best to hide his true intentions and state of mind. Ludvik's rancour was increasing, but his conversation was very lighthearted and amiable, so that Helena became more and more feminine. Soon she bid farewell and left.

Helena rang up Ludvik to ask if she might see him. They met at a café. He saw that he had upset her equilibrium, and that he had begun to dominate her. He succeeded in making her accept his invitation to go to the country with him, though she was a married woman. Ludvik joked about it. He had dreamed this plan up with the power of fifteen years of rancour, he was optimistic of ultimate success. Ludvik took Helena to People's House and ordered rye. Helena's behaviour in general revealed her pride for a special pose – one going back to the years when revolutionary in anything that was common", "plebian", "Ordinary or rustic". In Helena's pose, Ludvik recognized the period of his youth and in Helena's person Zemanek's wife.

Helena remarked that she had always yearned for a man like Ludvik who was simple direct unaffected and straightforward. Ludvik was amazed at the human capacity for transforming reality into a likeness of desires or ideals, but he was quick to accept Helena's interpretation of his personality. He told her bluntly that he desired her, though she was a married woman. It was embarrassing but Ludvik managed to persuade Helena to ender Kostaka's flat.

3. Helena did not seem in the least taken aback. Ludvik realized that she was defenseless and available as he had imagined. Helena was excited all too ready to make love, but Ludvik deliberated. He made her speak about her husband Zemanek, how they had met, the pendant he had given her etc. She further told him that though they were living in the same, house, it was not as man and wife. Succulently Ludvik saw Helena's nudity in a new light; it was nudity *denuded* of the power to excite him any longer. He asked her to dress up and leave, as Kostka would be coming back soon. He longed for her to be gone, he had stolen her body from no one; he had vanquished no one; it was a body abandoned, deserted by its sporse, a body he had intended to use but which had used him and was now insolently enjoying its triumph, exulting, jumping for joy. It was a few minutes before seven when Helena left.

4. Ludvik yearned to forget that ill-starred, afternoon; he longed for Kostka. He looked forward to him telling him about Lucie, who in contrast to Helena was so sweetly incorporeal, abstract, so far removed from conflicts, tensions and dreams, and yet not without influence on Ludvik's life. Now he realized why Lucie had flashed across the sky those past days: it was to reduce his vengeance to nothing to turn everything he had come there for to mist; inexplicable run from him at the last moment, was the goddess of escape, the goddess of vain pursuit, the

goddess of mists; and she still held his head in her hands.

3.2.1 Critical Comments on Part V

This chapter describes Ludvik's intention to wreak vengeance on Zemanek, whom he hated for destroying his life; his hopes are dashed to pieces when he comes to know that Helena whose body he had intended to use, is no longer Zemanek's wife. The tone of the whole Part is one of rancour (bitterness). Ludvik feels that in contrast to Helena. Lucie, whom he had loved so much, was the goddess of vain pursuit. To appreciate this part fully, you should read it alongside Part II: Helena's monologue (Refer Unit II)

Let us move on to Part VI

3.4 Summary of Part Six

Kostka

The character-narrator of this part is Kostka. This part consists of 20 chapters.

1. Kostka and Ludvik had actually met only a few times in their lives. But in his imagination, Kostka met him frequently, and turned to him in his soliloquies as his chief adversary. Each time Kostka was in a helpless situation, it was Ludvik who invariably helped him out of it. Yet beneath that outward alliance lay an abyss of inward disagreement; perhaps Ludvik, who clearly attached greater significance to their outward bond than to their inward difference, was not fully aware of it. Ludvik had been merciless to outward adversaries and tolerant of inward discords. Kostka was the complete opposite. He loved Ludvik, as one loved one's adversaries.

2. Kostka had first met Ludvik in 1947 at one of those turbulent meetings that racked all the institutions of higher learning in those days. The fate of the nation was at stake. Kostka stood with the communist minority. Many Christians, both Catholics and Protestants, held it against him. They considered him a traitor for allying himself with a movement that inscribed godlessness on its shield. Even after fifteen years, he had not changed his position at all. Of course, the Communist movement was godless; but what about the Christians? Kostka could see nothing but pseudo-Christians living exactly like unbelievers. But being a Christian meant giving up private interests, comforts and power, and turning towards the poor, the humiliated and the suffering. But was that what the Churches were doing? Kostka's father was a working man, chronically unemployed, with a humble faith in God; but the Church never turned its face towards the man. And so Kostka's father remained forsaken amidst his neighbours, forsaken within the church, alone with his God until he fell ill and died.

The Churches failed to realize that the working class movement was the movement of the humiliated and oppressed supplicating (praying) for justice. They did not choose to work with and for them to create the kingdom of God on earth. By siding with the oppressors, they deprived the working – class movement of God. And now they reproached it for being godless. There was a drop in Church membership. Schools were bringing the children up in an anti-religious frame of mind. In Kostka's view, true religion did not need the favour of secular poser. Secular disfavour only strengthened faith. He could only lament the tragic error that led socialism away from God. All that he could do was to explain that error, and work to rectify it.

3. Until the February 1948 coup, Kostka's being a Christian suited the Communist quite well. They enjoyed hearing him expound on the social content of the Gospel, inveigh (speak) against the rot of the old world of property and war and argue about the affinity between Christianity and Communism. They tried to win over believers as well. Soon after February however things began to change. As a lecturer at the university, Kostka took the side of several students about to be expelled for their parents' political stance. Suddenly doubts began to be raised about whether a man of such firm Christian convictions was capable of educating socialist youth. It seemed that he would have to fight for his very livelihood. Then he heard that the student Ludvik Jahn had stood up for him at a plenary (of the whole assembly) meeting of the Party. Kostka went to see Ludvik and told him that there was no hope at all of his

CUP/5026/1000/SDE—21

"outgrowing" his faith. They discussed the existence of God, the finite and the infinite, Desecrate's position on religion whether Spinoza was a materialist etc. Ludvik told Kostka that religious faith was his private affair, and that all in it was of no concern to anyone else. Kostka never saw him at the University again. About three months after their talk, Ludvik was expelled from the party and the university, and six months later he too had to leave the university. Through he could have defended himself by making a public statement along theist lines, he did nothing.

4. Kostka experienced a period of soul-searching. On the one hand he was attached to his lectureship. It was relatively comfortable, it left him plenty of time for his own research and it promised a lifetime career as a university teacher. On the personal front he had a wife and their five year old child to support. His wife did everything in her power to make Kostka defend himself and stand up for his position at the university. On the other hand, he was alarmed by seeing large numbers of valuable people, teachers and students, forced to leave the universities; he was alarmed by his attachment to a comfortable life whose calm security distanced him more and more from the turbulent fates of his fellow men. Kostka realized that the voices raised against him at the University were an *appeal*: Someone perhaps God, was calling him, warning him against a comfortable career that would tie down his mind his faith and his conscience. He heard Jesus's words: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." Kosta's enemies thought that he would be tormented with worry but instead he felt an unexpected call; he had just discovered the real meaning of freedom. He realized that man had nothing meant everywhere among men. Kostka accepted the wrong his adversaries inflicted on him as a coded appeal.

5. Communists supposed, in a manner eminently religious, that a man who was guilty in the face of the Party, might gain absolution by doing a stint with the working class in agriculture or industry. During the years after February many intellectuals went off that way to the mines or factories, so that after a mysterious period of purification, they might be allowed to return to offices, schools and political posts. Following his expulsion, Kostka secured a very good position on a state farm in western Bohemia. He was truly happy and felt reborn. He was grateful to be able to earn his bread by useful work.

6. It was 1951. A group of boys from a neighboring village noticed a girl crawl out of stack ; she disappeared before they could run after her. A peasant woman from the same village reported that a twenty year old girl came asking her for a crust of bread. The girl merely said that she had lost her money. Similar stories were added of the mysterious vanishing of food left under a tree and so on. The girl became the children's own pampered fairy and they named her VAGABONDELLA. They allowed her to maintain her invisibility.

7. The fairy-tale was short-lived. One day the director of the farm and the chairman of the district national Committee discovered a drab suitcase in the countryside. Besides the girl's clothes, it contained a bundle of letters; from the letters they learned the name of the recipient: *Lucie Sebekta*. The chairman hid in the tree, while the director went down to the village and sent the local policeman. At dusk the girl returned to her fragrant bower. They let her go in. Let her close the door behind her, waited half a minute, and then went in after her.

8. Both the men who trapped Lucie in the barn were decent fellows. The chairman formerly a poor farmhand, was an honest father of six children. The policeman was coarse naïve, good-natured; neither of them would have hurt a fly. And yet Kostka felt a strange pain when he heard how Lucie was trapped – with a single door blocked by two hefty men. Later, when he learned more about Lucie, he realized to his astonishment that in both those agonizing images the very essence of her fate was directly revealed to him. Those two images represented the *situation of rape*.

9. That night Lucie did not sleep in the barn but on an iron bed in a former shop the police had set up as an office. The next day

she was interrogated by the District National Committee. They learned that she had previously worked and lived in Ostrava, from where she had run away as she could not stand it there anymore. She had not gone to her parents in Cheb, as her father had done nothing but beat her. At last she secured the Chairman's permission to be allowed to stay on and work. The chairman introduced Lucie to Kostka and announced ceremoniously that if she had done anything wrong they forgave her and trusted her. The working class needed honest men and women everywhere; so she was not to let it down, Kostka then took Lucie to the greenhouse and explained her work to her.

10. In Kostka's memory, Lucie overshadowed everything he experienced at the time. Despite that, the figure of the District National Committee Chairman remained clearly outlined. That former farmhand who had hoped to create a paradise for his suffering neighbours, that honest enthusiast speaking about forgiveness, faith, and the working class, was much closer to his heart and mind than Ludvik, who used to declare that socialism grew from the stem of European rationalism and skepticism a stem both non-religious and anti-religious. But Kostka was certain that the lines of European spirit which stemmed from the teaching of Jesus led far more naturally to social equality and socialism. The most passionate Communists like the Chairman who put Lucie in Kostka's care seemed to him much more like religious zealots than Voltairean doubters. The revolutionary era from 1948 to 1956 was an age of collective faith; its sympathizers renounced their ego to their person, private something higher, something supra personal. True the Marxist teachings were purely secular in origin, but the significance assigned to them war similar to the significance of the Gospel and the biblical commandments; their ideas were, in their technology, sacred.

That was a cruel religion. It did not elevate either Kostka or Ludvik; perhaps it injured both of them. Yet the era that had just passed was much closer to his heart than the era that seemed to be approaching then: an era of mockery, skepticism, and corrosion, a petty era with the ironic intellectual in the limelight, and behind him the mob of youth coarse, cynical and nasty, without enthusiasm without ideals, ready to mate, or to kill at sight. The era then passing or already past had something of the spirit of the great religious movements, but remained empty and godless. The era finally betrayed its religious nature, and it had paid dearly for its rationalist heritage. The rationalist skepticism had been corroding Christianity for two millennia, but not destroying it. But communist theory, its own creation, it would destroy, within a few decades, Kostka observed that it had already been killed.

11. People treated Lucie with caution, mistrust and suspicion. Her file from Ostrava arrived at the farm. It said that she had started off at Cheb as an apprentice hairdresser. As the result of a morals charge she had spent a year at the reformatory and had then gone to Ostrava, where she was known as a good worker. Her behaviour in the dormitory was exemplary. Before her flight there had been only one offense an entirely unusual one: she had been caught stealing flowers in a cemetery.

Kostka observed that Lucie was an enigmatic person. She worked silently and with concentration. She was calm in her timidity. Yet there was something in her taciturnity (saying little) that betrayed a life of pain and a wounded soul. She neither believed or disbelieved in God. She did not know anything about Jesus Christ. Kostka talked about him Lucie listened.

12 Kostka coaxed Lucie to give herself to religion which meant to lay aside her past life; to remove it from her soul. Lucie confessed that she had left Ostrava partly because of those flowers she stole from the cemetery. Ostrava was a black town with hardly any nature around it, and beautiful flowers were to be found only in the cemetery. She enjoyed gong there. Once she took a fancy to a grave nearly fresh. She kneeled and dissolved into ineffable bliss. Just then an elderly man and his wife approached the grave. They saw the unfamiliar girl take the beautiful spray of roses which they had earlier placed on the grave, turn and leave. They shouted at the mortified girl that there

was nothing more abominable than robbing the dead. The attendant confirmed that it was not the first flower theft in the cemetery. They called a policeman and she confessed everything.

13 Kostka explained that flowers on the grave belonged to the living. In the beauty of earthly flowers Lucie had found the revelation of the unearthly. She had needed the flowers only for the void in her soul; and they caught and humiliated her. Another reason for wanting to leave Ostrava was that a soldier doing military service whom she did not love, wanted to rape her, ripped off her clothes, but she eluded him and ran, faraway, because he was nasty and brutal like all the others. Kostka asked Lucie whom all she knew before the soldier.

14 Lucie was part of a gang consisting of herself and six boys aged between sixteen and twenty two. They called themselves a pagan set and one day they were talking about initiation. The boys had brought a few bottles of cheap wine. Lucie had lavished all the unrequited daughter's love on these boys. On they day all six of them gang-raped Lucie in spite of her blind trust in their friendship. It happened in that flat of one of the boys while his parents were on night shift. Gang-rape became a habit with them. Finally the police came and took them all way. The boys had some thefts on their conscience and they got varying sentences. Lucie was the shame of all Cheb and at home they beat her black and blue. She was sent to a reformatory where she spent a year-until she was seventeen. She would not have returned home for anything on earth. That is how she came to live in that black city.

15 Kostka was surprised and somewhat taken aback when Ludvik revealed to him a couple of days back that he knew Lucie. When he asked about Lucie again the previous day, he told him everything that Lucie had confided in him. Though everyone on the farm was nice to her, they constantly reminded her of her past. The director spoke of her as "the little grave robber", though in jest. Kostka told Ludvik that Luice needed forgiveness, she needed the mysterious purification that was unfamiliar and incomprehensible to him. Few people, by themselves knew how to forgive. They lacked the power to annihilate a sin that had been committed; that exceeded a man's strength. Divesting a sin of its validity, undoing it, erasing it out of time was a mysterious and supernatural feat. God alone could forgive it. Man can forgive only in so far as he founds himself on God's forgiveness. *Ludvik could not forgive, because he did not believe in God.* He had never forgiven those at the plenary meeting who had raised their hands against him and agreed that his life should be destroyed. Ludvik had not forgiven mankind. From that time on, he had mistrusted it, he felt rancour against it. Kostka could understand Ludvik, but that did not altre the fact that such general rancour against people was terrifying and sinful. It had become his curse. *Because to live in a world in which no one is forgiven, where all are irredeemable, is the same as living in hell.* Ludvik was living in hell and Kostka pitied him.

16 Everything on this earth which belonged to God also belonged to the Devil. Even the motion of lovers in the act of love. For Lucie those had become a province of the odious. She associated them with the bestial adolescent faces of the odious. She associated them with the bestial adolescent faces of the gang and later with the face of the insistent soldier. The planet we inhabit is a borderland between heaven and hell. No act is of itself good or bad. Only its place in the order of things makes it good or bad; Even physical love. Kostka spoke in this manner to Lucie day after day, each time reassuring her that she was forgiven, that she must give herself to god etc. And thus the weeks went by. Lucie improved; she learnt to smile. One day, she laid her hand on Kostka's cheek and said that she loved him. Before reflecting that he had merely done his duty and leaving quickly, he took Lucie in his arms and sank with her into the bower of nature.

17 What should not have happened, Kostka and Lucie contined to live on the same farm. He was aware that he had a wife and son who waited patiently for his rare visits home. He realized that he desired her, he did not want to go on, but he was afraid of breaking off this beginning of intimacies for

fear of woundering Lucie. It seemed to Kostka *that he had been a seducer in priest's robe*, that all his spiritual assistance to Lucie and all his talk of Jesus and God was no more than a veil for the most base carnal desires. In his vain presumption, he even tried to justify his action by reasoning that he was actually helping Lucie.

One day the central authorities fabricated political charges against Kostka's director, claming that Kostka himself was one of the suspicious elements that surrounded him. Kostka's situation was almost helpless. Ludvik would have called it injustice, but Kostka felt the hand of God behind the whole thing. He felt that events for the most part were often disguised instructions from above. So he accepted the developments on the farm with relief. He saw in them a clear instruction; to leave Lucie, before it was too late. He precisely did that after saying good bye to tearfully disconsolate Lucie. Kostka left the farm as a man who himself admitted that he was unfit to carry out work of any significance in the State. And so he became a construction worker.

18. It was an autumn day in 1956 Kostka met Ludvik after five years. Ludvik had just finished his stint in the Ostrava mines and had gone to Prague to resume his studies. Ludvik's eyes revealed sympathy for Kostka, now that he had become a bricklayer, while Ludvik had become a miner. *He was forgiving, but Ludvik was irreconcilable.* Inwardly they were very distant. Kostka spoke of a boy in Geneva who was executed because he had filled a notebook jeering at Jesus Christ and the Gospel. He had done it as a joke. He had very little hatred in him, only mockery and indifference. What Kostka was trying to drive home as that *no great movement designed to chance the world could bear sarcasm or mockery*, because they were a rust that corroded all that it touched. He asked Ludvik to examine his own attitude. Ludvik became bitter to the depths of his soul, convinced of the great injustice done to him. He was sent to a black insignia battalion among the enemies of Communism. He could have accomplished much, but like Jesus, he had no desire to go among the sinners and the sick.

Kostka implied that Ludvik too was a sinner. His faith was weak, so he failed the test that was set to him, because the only reason he turned bitter towards his community was that it placed too-great a burden on his shoulder. Kostka was not on Ludvik's side in his quarrel with the party, because great things on this earth could be created only by a community of infinitely devoted men who humbly gave up their lives to a higher design. Kostka gratefully acknowledged all that Ludvik had done for him. But if Ludvik looked into his soul in depth, he would understand that *the deepest motive for his good deeds was not love, but hatred;* hatred towards those who once hurt him. His soul knew no God, and therefore knew no forgiveness. He longed for retribution. Ludvik was full of hatred even when he helped people. But hatred bred a chain of further hatreds. Kostka repeated that Ludvik was living in hell and he pitied him.

19. Had Ludvik heard Kostka's soliloquy, he would have said that the latter was ungrateful. It was Ludvik who got him his position in the virology department. Several years after Kostka left the farm, Lucie got married and moved with her husband to the city. In the end she prevailed on him to move to the town where Kostka was living, for she wanted to be near him, to see and hear him at Sunday services. Kostka thought happily that Lucie was perhaps the only achievement of his life.

20. Kostka thought that he deluded himself by trying to convince himself that he had taken the right path; and that he paraded the power of his faith before the unbeliever. True, he had brought Lucie to faith in God. But her marriage had not turned out well, for her husband was a brute, who was openly unfaithful to her and mistreated him. Kostka wondered whether the voice he heard each time was the voice of his own cowardice. Though he was not much attached to his wife and son, he could not part from them. He was afraid to love Lucie, fearing the complications it might bring him. He set himself up as the angel of her salvation, but was merely another of her seducers. He had

her happiness in his hand, but he ran away. No one had ever wronged her as he did.

Kostka felt that he invoked supposed divine appeals as mere pretexts to extract himself from his human obligations. He was afraid of woman, their warmth, their constant presence. He was terrified of a life with Lucie just as he was terrified by the thought of moving permanently into the teacher's two-room apartment in the neighboring town. For the same reason he had accepted voluntary resignation from he university fifteen years ago, for he did not love his wife who was six years older than he was. He at last wondered whether he was so wretchedly laughable.

3.4.1 Critical Comments of Part VI

This is a long section and presents the events pertaining to Ludvik and Lucie from Kostka's point of view. The whole story of Lucie is laid bare before us-her unhappy, home, her repeated experiences of gang-rape, her devotion to Kostka as well as her unhappy marriage. Communism and Christianity are compared. Which is better? Isn't each based on absolute faith? Such challenging ideas are presented before us. Do you agree with Kostka that Ludvik is a sinner? Well, it is all a question of the real man versus the ideal man. After all, not everyone can become Christ, who could forgive even his worst enemies.

Let us pass on to the last *part* of the novel.

3.5 Summary of Part VII

Ludvik, jaroslav, Helena

This *Part* consists of *19* chapters. The character-narrator of Chapter 1 is *Ludvik.*

1. Ludvik was full of reminiscences and regrets especially regarding Lucie. The goddess of mists Lucie had first deprived him of herself, then the previous day his carefully calculated revenge-to use Helena and humiliate her husband Zemanek his arch enemy – came to nothing. His grouse was that Kostka had meant more to Lucie, had known more about her, and loved her better; she had confided everything to him, whereas to him she had revealed nothing. Ludvik had made her unhappy, Kostka had known her physically. Ludvik felt a sudden wave of anger against himself, at his age at that time when he had not been able to understand Lucie or her ferocious resistance. *It was all like a bad joke* : he had thought she was a virgin, and she had fought him precisely because she had not been a virgin, and was probably afraid of the moment when Ludvik would discover the truth. Or perhaps, her initial sexual experiences had marked her deeply and had deprived that act of love of the meanings most people gave it. For Lucie the body was something ugly, and love was something incorporeal. Ludvik felt very sad. He was very hungry too. He had almost reached the milk bar. He tried the door, but it was shut. A passer-by told him that everyone had gone to the festival of the Ride of Kings. Ludvik set off in the direction of the Moravian song, cursing. His hunger pangs were leading him to the folklore festival that he had fled like the plague.

2. **Jaroslav is the narrator**

Jaroslav was experiencing fatigue since early morning. His son Vladmir was going to be made King in the 'Ride of the Kings' festival. *Kalasek*, the cultural advisor of the District National Committee appeared with a Prague radio reporter, an elegant looking woman (Helena). The lady wanted to record interviews for a program about the Ride of the Kings. Jaroslav detested playing the fool, but Kalasek insisted that it was his political duty to go and speak on the radio. So in the end he went obediently. Kalasek began that the cultivation of folk-art was an integral part of communist education; that is why the District Committee supported it fully, etc. Jaroslav was fed up of hearing the same old meaningless words over the past fifteen years. For Kalasek, who cared nothing for folk art it was only a means of boosting his prestige. Jaroslav wanted to speak aloud that real folk art was dead, but he merely said the usual, nice things expected of him, regarding the enthusiasm of the organizers and so on. He felt ashamed for talking the way they wanted him to. Was he a coward, or so well-trained he wondered. When he got home at last preparations for the festival were on. Vladmir was dressed as King.

3. **Ludvik is the narrator.**

It took Ludvik barely fifteen minutes to reach the village. He observed signs of the

festival. In trying so stubbornly to avoid such folklore events, he had expected the lack of taste, expected the blend of real folk art and kitsch (vulgar showy art), expected the worst bombast and falsity, but he had not expected that sad, almost moving *forlornness;* it pervaded everything. He remembered that the last year of the war, he himself had ridden as a page at the side of Jaroslav, who had then been the king. However he had no desire to let himself be moved by memories.

4. Helena is the narrator

Helena thanked Ludvik for coming into her life at the right moment. She had known him for just *eight days* and she loved him and trusted him. She had gone to record the summoning of the king when he (Zemanek) suddenly came up to her; he had the coarseness to bring his girl-friend, a girl of twenty two, thirteen years younger than her, along with him. Helena had all along been a fool to believe that her marriage was not yet completely ruined she had sacrificed even Ludvik for that rotten marriage. It was so degrading to lose simply because of being born earlier. She had always been pushed around, had always lost, she had always been humiliated, but now she was fighting back. She felt Ludvik and his love behind her. Zemanek had been angling for a divorce for over two years. She readily agreed observing that she wanted to live with Ludvik Jahn.

5. The narrator is Ludvik

Watching the Ride of the Kings, Ludvik wondered what it meant. It was a mysterious rite. To his astonishment his initial mistrust vanished and all at once, he was completely enthralled by the colourful spectacle. His thoughts flew to Lucie as he looked at the veiled king and he saw Lucie riding ceremoniously and mockingly through his life, Ludvik felt sure that Lucie really loved him; perhaps that is why, she had kept it a secret even from the eccentric Kostka, who combined the obstinacy of reflection with the obstinacy of delusion. Suddenly a man greeted Ludvik. The girl accompanying him introduced herself as *Broz.* The man was Zemanek.

6. The narrator is Jaroslav

Jaroslav was not able to shake off his fatigue. He resented that Ludvik was trying to avoid him. He was happy that his son Vladmir was king. Very few people were watching the show. He observed that drunkards were the most loyal supporters of folk festivals. Jaroslav was talking to an old man *Pechacek.* He was telling him that after the way they had thought that they were about to build a completely new world, and that people would return to folk traditions. A little later old *Koutecky* greeted Jaroslav, who told him that Vladmir was with his grandson *Milos;* the two of them had gone off from their place on his motor cycle.

7. Ludvik is the Narrator

Ludvik had not expected to meet Zemanek and so he found it extremely unpleasant. Miss Borz remarked that the Ride of the Kings did not interest her. *Zemanek observed that times had changed.* From the strained conversation, Ludvik learnt several things. Misss Broz was one of Zemanek's students. Zemanek said that he taught philosophy, by which he meant Marxism a subject which had declined in popularity especially among the young. Ludvik expressed surprise, for Zemanek had actually studied biology. Miss Broz announced that teachers of Marxism had a political pamphlet in their skulls instead of brain; but that Pavel was entirely different. Ludvik learned that Pavel was one of the most popular teachers and the students worshipped him for sticking up for the young against the university authorities who wanted to throw him out for not sticking to the rigid, outdated curriculum, and for trying to introduce the young people to everything going on in modern philosophy.

It was evident to Ludvik that *Zemanek had completely abandoned his former views.* This was horrible, it was what he had least expected; but in a way, it was very common the whole society was under going a gradual metamorphosis. Just as some object that we can love only in the singular, Ludvik agreed that the principle held good for hate also. Man pining for equilibrium, balanced the weight of the evil piled on his back with the weight of his hatred. As it is beyond human capacity to hate mere abstract principles, injustice fanaticism, cruelty, or even mankind, man, if he wished to relieve his anger, concentrated it on a single individual.

The staggering thought suddenly occurred to Ludvik that any minute Zemanek would make use of his metamorphosis to ask forgiveness in its name. That is what seemed so horrible. How would Ludvik explain that Zemanek exbodied all the evils in his life and that Ludvik *needed* to hate him.

8. Jaroslav is the narrator

Jaroslav tried to find out who did the role of the king, but in vain. He could not see who it was behind the veil.

9. Ludvik is the narrator

Miss Broz told Ludvik how she loved *hitchhiking* (to travel by getting free automobile rides and sometime by walking between rides). Ludvik could see at one that he was hearing the *manifesto of her generation.* Submitting to a generation mentality (to this pride of the herd) had always repelled him. He *jokingly* called her a *"dogmatist of the hitch".* She answered sharply that she was neither *dogmatist* nor *revisionist* nor *sectarian* nor *deviationist,* that such words belonged to Ludvik's generation, and that they were completely alien to hers'. Ludvik observed that it seemed terrible to him that the younger generation had noidea of Moscow trial or political trails in Prague; Stalin was just a name to them. Zemanek observed that he admired the younger generation because they loved their bodies, loved travel and adventure. With their messianism, the older generation nearly destroyed it. Perhaps the youngsters with their selfishness would save it.

10. Joroslav is the narrator

Jaroslav was totally upset that he was not able to ascertain whether the veiled figure of the king was his son or not.

11. Ludvik is the narrator

While Zemanek poured out his eulogy (praise) of the younger generation, Ludvik contemplated with envious regret that Miss Broz, a handsome and likable young woman belonged to his enemy and not to him. He was reminded that since Lucie, he had no girl whom he loved and respected. Life had mocked him by sending him a reminder of that failure precisely in the features of the mistress of the man (Zemanek), whom only the previous day he thought he had defeated in a grotesque sexual combat. The more he liked Miss Broz, the more Ludvik realized that she, like her contemporaries would not at all be impressed by the story of his expulsion from the party. However, Ludvik fought tooth and nail against the reconciliation offered by time. Unlike Zemanek, he would not shirk his fate, he would not detach himself from *his thirty seven years* even if they represented so insignificant and fleeting a fragment of time that was already being forgotten. He would certainly refuse, if Zemanek asked for reconciliation.

12. Jaroslav is the narrator

Jaroslav felt fatigued and wanted to say good bye to this world of material things that he did not understand, that deceived him. He knew at once where he ought to go.

13. The narrator is Ludvik

Zemanek and Miss Broz talked and behaved as if they knew everything between Helena and Ludvik and as if they were sympathetic. Ludvik imagined that 'Zemanek's' pose was a bribe for Ludvik to forgive him. Helena came, accompanied by JINDRA, the sound technician who was dangerously in love with her. Ludvik was stifled by humiliation and shame. He wanted nothing more than to disappear, go off by himself, wipe out the whole story, *the stupid joke,* wipe out Helena and Zemanek, and all the days so that not a trace remained. He was stifled by the ridiculous failure of his vengeance; but he did not want to deceive Helena. He blurted out to her that this was their last time together, that he did not love her, and that she must understand that. It was worse than Ludvik had foreseen. Helena went pale, would not believe him or let him go. Ludvik went through a minor martyrdom before he could finally get rid of her and leave.

14. Helena is the narrator

Helena was upset beyond words since Ludvik rejected her love. She asked the insistent Jindra to leave her for a moment. She went over to the District Committee room She had a splitting headache She found bottle of tablets in Jindra's trench coat. She

knew that *Algena* the tablet was poisonous in massive doses. She started taking more and more of it. She felt enthralled that *she was holding her death in her hand.* Even Pavel had not hurt Helena as much as Ludvik in a single minute. She understood Pavel's capricious (changing) and unsteady nature and hence forgave him. But Helena could not understand Ludvik who came to her in a mask to resurrect her, and once resurrected, to destroy her. She cursed him, yet she pined for him to come to her and have mercy. May be Ludvik did not know how much Helena loved him.'

15. Ludvik is the narrator.

Ludvik had to sweep away that bad story, that bad joke, which not content with itself, had gone on monstrously multiplying itself into more and more silly jokes. Yet he wondered what good that would do when the *entire* story of his life was conceived in error, through the bad joke of the postcard, that accident, that nonsense. Ludvik was horrified at the thought that things conceived in error were just as real as things conceived with good reason and of necessity. How glad he would be to revoke the story of his life! Who, in fact, had made the error when the silly joke of his postcard was taken seriously. Ludvik alone was not to be held responsible. Did history play jokes? At last Ludvik realized how powerless he was to revoke his own joke, when throughout his life as a whole he was involved in a joke much more vast and utterly irrevocable. Ludvik saw a placard announcing in red letters that at four o'clock that day, a cimbalom band would be giving a concert in the garden of a certain restaurant. He went inside the restaurant.

16. Helena is the narrator

Helena emptied the bottle of tablets. When Jindra came in she asked him for some writing material she wrote: Ludvik, my dearest, I loved you body and soul and now my body and soul have not reason to live. Farewell, I love you Helena": she sealed it in a cover and wrote. Ludvik Jahn on the front. She asked Jindra to find Ludvik and give it to him. The boy obliged.

17. Ludvik is the narrator

As Ludvik sat in the restaurant he felt that Lucie and Zemanek were past, and Helena was just a stone he had wanted to throw at that past; the whole of those three days had been nothing but a theatre of shadows. His entire life, it seemed to him had always been overpopulated by shadows, and there was little room in it for the present. And then there was the bond with which he wanted to tie himself to the past that hypnotized him, and that was *the bond of vengeance* but vengeance, as those three days had demonstrated was just as futile as his running against the moving walkway of time. Years ago when Zemanek betrayed him, Ludvik should have gone up to him and punched him in the face, then and only then. *When postponed vengeance was transformed into something deceptive into a personal religion,* that moved away day by day, from the people involved, who in reality had become different people. *Toddy another Jahn stood before another Zemanek.* Ludvik had vainly attempted to redress to publish, and to undo,-because what had happened had happened and could never be redressed.

Suddenly Ludvik saw it clearly: most people deceived themselves with a pair of faiths: they believed in *eternal memory* (of people, things, deeds, nations) and in *rederessibility* (of deeds, mistakes, sins, wrongs). Both were false faiths. In reality, the opposite was true: *everything would be forgotten, and nothing would be redressed.* The task of obtaining redress (by vengeance of by forgiveness) would be taken over by *forgetting. No one would redress the wrongs that had been done, but all the wrongs would be forgotten.*

Presently Jindra came there and gave Ludvik Helena's letter. On reading the contents, he dashed to Helena's place, with the boy at his side. After much difficulty they found her seated in the toilet. She spat in his face. Thinking she had poisoned herself. Ludvik thought of calling up the doctor. But the Jindra confessed that the bottle labeled Algena actually contained laxatives. The boy did not want everybody to know that his guts were messed up. Ludvik then understood that what he had taken for a stupid joke was the truth. Jindra had unwittingly spared

Helena's life, and in that moment he loved him. But his relief was short lived. Helena's desperation had settled its account with life at a safe distance from the threshold of death.

18. Jaroslav is the narrator

Jaroslav realized that his wife Vlasta had conspired with their son Vladmir to deceive him. The boy *had* gone off with the grandson of the Kouteckys to the motorcycle races, while all the time the old man had believed that he was playing the king. Vlasta justified her son's attitude and action: Vladmir was modern: he did not want to be a privileged child Jaroslav saw that the boy took after Vlasta's father who was always a great one for progress. In his fury he turned the kitchen upside down by smashing all the plates breaking the legs of the chair, etc. All the time Vlasta stood with her back turned, sobbing softly; she was terribly scared. Her sobs were heart rending and some where deep inside him Ludvik felt a painful regret.

19. As he listened to the Moravian folk songs, Ludvik felt a real pang of nostalgia. He felt *the world of Jaroslav represented a world where love was still love and pain was pain and where values where not yet devastated.* He joined the band by taking the clarinet, much to Jaroslav's joy. Ludvik forgot all else and felt at home in the music. Suddenly he noticed that Jaroslav was ill. He at once approached the second fiddle who was a doctor, who after examining the old man, said he was going to phone the hospital, as Jaroslav had a *heart attack.* Finally the cimbalom fell silent too, and they all stood around Jaroslav who looked at Ludvik and spoke excitedly. The second fiddle told him to be calm. Ludvik was thinking that though Jaroslav would recover, it would be a completely different life in future, a life without passionate devotion, without the strain of playing in the band, a life under the aegis of death; Ludvik suddenly felt that one's destiny was often complete long before death, and that Jaroslav's destiny had come to its end. Overwhelmed with sorrow, he gently stroked the top of his bald head and he realized with a shock that his trip home made in the hope of striking at the hated Zemanek had ended with his holding his stricken friend in his arms. Presently they led the old man into the streets where an ambulance stood waiting, all its lights ablaze.

Read the study material carefully and understand the entire plot. We shall discuss the different aspects of the novel in the next *unit.*

UNIT 4

THE JOKE: A CRITICAL STUDY

4.0 Objectives

At the end of this *unit* you should be able to:

i) understand various aspects of Milan Kundera's *The Joke:* and

ii) make an overall estimate of the novel and its author.

4.1 Introduction

Before you begin to read this *Unit* it is imperative that you read and assimilate the matter given in the previous *unit.* If you do so you will be able to form your own impressions of the novel, its theme, the mode of narration, the characters the various ideas and points of view and so on. Then when you read this *Unit* you will be able to appreciate the different aspects of *The Joke.*

Let us study these aspects one by one. As you would have noticed the entire novel is written in the from of a series of *monologues.* Let us consolidate all of them in order to get a condensed version of the story.

4.2 Critical summary of The Joke

The central character of the novel is *Ludvik Jahn.* Ludvik's father, a bricklayer, ahs been

hauled off to a concentration camp by the Germans, when the boy was thirteen. Ludvik had to depend on his father;s sister and her husband *Koutecky* and he could not bear them, for that woman looked down on his poor mother, Though the boy was ripe for rebellion, his mother would beg him tearfully to be sensible. However Ludvik was a good student and entered the university. He held an important post in the students union. He was rated as an individualist with an intellectual smile. He had few inner sorrows at that time and had a considerable sense of fun; but his jokes were not serious enough to keep pace with the joyousness of the era.

The events leading to Ludvik's first major disaster could be traced to his fatal predilection for silly jokes and *Marketa's* fatal inability to understand them. Marketa a nineteen year old girl at the university was credulous, serious and full of naïve (innocent, childlike) trustfulness. It was the first year after February 1948 a period marked by rigid seriousness and exclusive emphasis in the concerns and interests of the Party which represented the working class. Marketa was sent during the summer to a two – week Party training course. Ludvik missed her. What he could not accept was how she could be happy when he was missing her so much. So he bought a postcard and in order to hurt, shock and confuse her, he wrote : *optimism is the opium of the people. A healthy atmosphere stinks of mediocrity. Long live Trotsky.*

In September when class resumed Ludvik was summoned to the District Party Secretariat. He understood that the comrades had read all his letters to Marketa the provocative postcard in particular. After interrogating and childing him at length they bluntly told him that they were relieving him of his post in the students union. Ludvik approached *Zemanek* for help. But at last in spite of his suppliant pleas to various committees, Zemanek recommended in the name of the organization that Ludvik be expelled not only from the Party but from the university too. In this matter Zemanek was supported by Ludvik's closest friends and his teachers also.

Ludvik could not muster courage to tell his, mother about his expulsion, for she took great pride in his studies. Having lost his right to continue his studies he signed up for two long work brigades. He along with a number of conscripts were turned into soldiers and were give black insignia as uniform. He worked for years in the mines at Ostrava where the process of *depersonalization* was overwhelming. At Ostrava he happened to meet a young lady *Lucie*. Though he liked her a lot, he was never able to establish a good relationship with her, she left the place abruptly. Ludvik sneaked out to find out more details about her, but failed: for this venture he was court-martialed and given ten months in jail on the charge of desertion. Ludvik's mother died when he was in jail and he could not go to her funeral. He spent the next three years mining coal as a civilian. Then with great difficulty, he got permission to complete his last two years at the university. He managed to get a job as a scientist too. But the party had branded him for life.

Helena was the wife of Pavel Zemanek. They had a daughter Zdena who was attached to her father. It was the Party spirit and activities which had brought Helena and Zemanek together. But Helena soon realized that her husband did not really care for her nor did he love her. However they were not divorced. For the sake of his social image, Zemanek apparently lived with Helena off and on under the same roof.

Jaroslav was the childhood friend of Ludvik. The Moravian folk song was his soul his very life. He had played the role of king in the ride of the kinds for years and he hoped eagerly that his son *Vladmir* would follow his footsteps.

Jindra was a young sound technician who loved the middle aged Helena passionately. He used to take laxatives because he had a troubled stomach. He hid his humiliation by keeping the laxative tables in a bottle labeled Algena, a brand of painkillers.

Kostka was an academic with a wife and child. He gave up the comforts of the University life and went to work on the farm as a bricklayers when he was about to be expelled from the University. After experiencing a period of soul-searching he

decided to follow Jesus and felt an unexpected calm. It was during this period that he happened to come across Lucie who had been expelled from Ostrava for stealing flowers. In course of time, Kostka proved to be a real source of solace and compassion for Lucie, so that the girl confessed her story to him. Lucie was an unwanted child. She came from Bohemia. When she was sixteen, she belonged to a gang of six boys who raped her repeatedly. She had developed a mistrust for men. In the guise of a caring counselor Kostka seduced Lucie and felt terribly guilty it. Lucie later on married but it turned out to be an unhappy one. She insisted on returning to the town where Kostka lived so that she could see him often.

This then is the background and situation when the novel opens. Ludvik Jahn has returned to his native town of Moravia after fifteen years on a relatively unimportant task – an interview with a radio reporter. He is thirty seven years old, full of bitterness, rancour and the venom of vengeance. He meets his old friend Kostka who lets him have his flat for one afternoon. Kostka then takes him for a clean shave and to his wonder he notices that the female barber attending on him is Lucie Sebetka., who feigns not to recognize him.

That evening the lady reporter comes. She is Helena Zemanek. Contrary to Ludvik's doubts, Helena is too willing to make love. But when she tells him that there is not much love lost between herself and her husband, Ludvik desires to throw her out. He has come here hoping to wreak vengeance on his arch enemy Zemanek, but his purpose is defeated when he realizes that Helena means nothing to him. But Helena has fallen for Ludvik and sincerely desires to love him, to marry him, When he tells here bluntly that he does not share her feelings, she becomes distraught. She continues a lot of painkillers. She then sends a suicide note to Ludvik through Jindra. Ludvik through Jindra. Ludvik comes, but is not able to save her, for Helena dies of desperation. Jndra is furious and sad.

During this visit Ludvik sees his friend Jaroslav but tries to avoid them. Jaroslav has been cheated by his own son. With his mother's connivance (secret help) Vladmir creates the impression that it is he who is dressed up as king for the ride of the Kings, whereas he is away on a mother cycle. Jaroslav is heart broken. Ludvik who listens to the singing and the jazz band is drawn towards Jaroslav in spite of himself. He finally takes his friend in an ambulance, for Jaroslav has heart problems. Thus the novel ends on a bitter note-Ludvik is not able to have his revenge, Helena dies, Jaroslav has a weak heart, Lucie refuses to recognize Ludvik. In short, Ludvik realises the futility of rancour and revenge especially when prolonged and postponed without immediate execution.

4.3 The Title

The events of the novel which culminate in the final catastrophe of the protagonist Ludvik Jahn are triggered off by an apparently harmless joke by Ludvik himself, when he is a twenty two year old University student. In a mood of despondency or frustration at not being able to enjoy the company of Marketa, whom he loves very much, he sends her a postcard containing three sentences: *"Optimism in the opium of the people. A healthy atmosphere stinks of mediocrity. Long live Trotsky."* In a casual playful mood Ludvik had twisted Marx's statement; "Religion is the opium of the people and Trotsky's belief that "Optimism builds socialism". Viewed objectively and with a smattering of humour, what the youngster has written is only a verbal joke, an innocent fun which all languages afford. But the special nature of the times and the characters involved make Ludvik pay heavily for his joke. It is the first year after February 1948. A genuinely new and different life had begun, marked by rigid seriousness; people are expected to rejoice in the victory of the working class, without giving way individualistically to inner sorrows or personal problems. Contemporary joy is a grave joy that proudly called itself "The historical optimism of the victorious class" naturally Ludvik's statement appears out of place in such an era. Secondly Marketa is an extremely serious girl which makes her totally at one with the spirit of the era. Being credulous and naïve, she shows the provocative postcard to the Comrades who

act promptly so that Ludvik is expelled not only from the Party, but also from the University.

It is this joke that upsets Ludvik's life after that. The long years spent in the miners at Ostrava lead to his depersonalization to an overshelming extent. Lucie is not able to understand his intense love and need for her. Rancour, bitter hatred and the venom of vengeance fill his otherwise cheerful, intelligent self, so that when he returns to his home town after fifteen years, he is a totally changed person – for the worse. The most cruel joke played by fate in Ludvik's life is yet to come: he is soon made to realize the futility of revenge. He is not able to hurt his most bitter Zemanek in any way, Though he gets an excellent chance to 'use' Helena, he is disappointed because, Zemanek has no love for his wife. The same Zemanek who had so seriously and rigidly denounced Ludvik fifteen years ago, is now leading a life of hypocrisy, compromising his Party principles and behaving ingratiatingly with youngsters like Miss Broz because he has realized that such rigid principles and dogmas are possible only on paper. Perhaps, if Ludvik had been Miss Broz's contemporary, his provocative joke would have passed with a mere word of reprimand or a warning at the most. May be hypocrites like Zemanek would even condescend to laugh at it.

In the matter of Lucie Sebetka also, life plays a very cruel joke. Ludvik loves her sincerely but she revolts and rejects him seriously. At the same time she is drawn towards Kostka who even seduces her. Similarly in the case of Helena, life plays the same joke in a reverse manner. Helena loves Ludvik who tries to use her only as a powerful tool of revenge. Ironically, both lose in the bargain. Helena is driven to suicide by desperation; Ludvik fails in his plan of vengeance. Again it is this joke that makes Ludvik distrust even sincere friends like Jaroslav, and when he realises his mistake it is rather late. Jaroslav's son and his wife Vlasta also deceive him by making him believe that it is Vladmir dressed up as king, where as all the while the boy is away riding on a motor cycle.

The title of Milan Kundera's novel *The Joke* is therefore very apt. The plot of the novel is pivoted on the provocative joke. What might be laughed away in a democratic set up suddenly assumes terrible dimensions because of the specific setting. So *Ihe Joke* has to be interpreted as an attack on the rigidity and dogmatism of the early revolutionary times in Czechoslovakia. It is also a satire on the thoughtless cruelty, hypocrisy and opportunism of people like Zemanek; the biggest joke is that it is only such people who thrive.

4.4 Themes and Ideas

The Joke is a highly thought provoking novel. In the first place, it is a *novel of revenge* or rather *the futility of prolonged bitterness.* The opposing ideas are presented to us in the separate monologues of Ludvik and Kostka. Like Exmund Dantes in Duma's novel *The Count of Monte Cristo,* Ludvik returns to his hometown after fifteen years with the solid intention of wreaking vengeance on his arch enemy Zemanek. For the last fifteen years, he has been accumulating rancour, bitter hatred and the most revengeful feelings towards Zemanek. After his vain attempt to hurt him by using his wife Helena Ludvik sees Zemanek in the company of Miss Broz. His fear is what would he say if Zemanek begs him for forgiveness. Ludvik now understands that fifteen years ago when Zemanek had destroyed his life by denouncing him at the Party meeting, Ludvik should have, then and there, taken his revenge by punching Zemanek. Revengeful feelings nurtured over a prolonged period can produce the worst type of bitterness and rancour to the person himself, and poison his like further.

Kostka, on the other hand, has a more religious and forgiving mentality. Faced with a similar predicament, he does a bit of soul searching. He relinquishes the relative comfort of an academic life and embraces Christ's ideals. He realises that Ludvik's bitterness is due to his inability to forget and forgive. Through these two diverse characters Kundera illustrates the futility of rancour and the need to accept the inevitable with calm resignation as the only other alternative. It is not a passive attitude; it is the only wise way out.

The novel is a powerful satire on dogmas and creeds, whether political or religious. Zemanek and Kostka are both satirized. Zemanek is the typical political hypocrite, opportunist and coward he has no qualms whatsoever in having ruined the young. Ludvik's life, for he considers such individuals 'weeds' or unnecessary elements; who have therefore to be eliminated. Kostka rates himself as a seducer in priest's robe. Individualism and intellectualism have no place either in dogmatic political ideology or dogmatic religion. Those who show it are apt to suffer. Another idea is that, in course of time such dogmatic beliefs are likely to lose their vigour and rigour implying that it is not possible to implement such rigorous principles. Kundera tirs to show that what rises above all these is true humanity.

4.5 The Joke : An Overall Estimate

Milan Kundera still remains a less read novelist mainly due to the inaccessibility of his works. He is a fastidious writer, a perfectionist, as evidenced by the immense care he has bestowed in translating his novel for the fifth time. *The Joke* is a well-constructed novel.. The plot revolves around an apparently harmless joke. The events evolving out of it are presented in the form of separate monologues. The 'interior monologue' mode of narration adds to the intimacy of the novel; moreover it affords the readers different perspections on the same theme. The novel is divided into seven parts, each part constituting a separate monologue. The method however shares a defect with the Epistolary method:there are tedious repetitions. Another drawback is regarding the character of Helena. Her suicide due to desperation following Ludvik's rejection is a little unconvincing considering the fact that she has known him only for a few days. The outstanding features of the novel is the fund of ideas it contains – on Christianity, Communism, bitterness, forgiveness and other grave issues. Characterization is quite deep; especially the character of Ludvik John has been sketched with profound psychological insight. The novel is a bitter satire on the hypocritical compromising attitudes of opportunists. Altogether it is a disturbing, thought –provoking novel immersed in rancour and pathos.

4.6 Important Topics

1) Character – Sketches

   Ludvik, Kostka, Helena, Zemanek, Lucie.

2) The aptness of the title of Milan Kundera's *The Joke*

3) The satirical elements in *The Joke*

   [Zemanek – his changed attitudes – hypocrisy, opportunism – his attitude to Ludvik and Miss Broz]

4) The themes treated in *The Joke*

   [The futility of revenge – need to take movements seriously – Christianity and Communism, both absolute ideologies – bitterness and hatred-hypocrisy, opportunism etc.

You can answer the above questions, if you study all the material given in the four Units.

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