DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS-ENGLISH

SEMESTER –II

19TH CENTURY STUDIES III

ELECTIVE-204

BLOCK-2

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.

19TH CENTURY STUDIES III

BLOCK 1

BLOCK 2

BLOCK-2 19TH CENTURY STUDIES III -

Introduction To Block

This subject helps to understand the various plays as a part of the literary work of John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold. This Block comprises of seven units which comprises of the literary work of John Ruskin and Mathew Arnold like Pathetic Fallacy and Sweetness and Light respectively.

Unit 8 comprises of Introduction of the Hero as a poet along with its summary and also defines the characters of the play to understand the play. It helps to interpret the Hero as a poet. It gives the critical insight into the Importance of Being Earnest.

Unit 9 introduce to the life of John Ruskin. It gives the insight of the early days of him along with personal life.It shows how his career moved from early age to later part of his age.

Unit 10 represents the legacy of John Ruskin .It gives the interpretation and analysis of literary work of John Ruskin. It represents various phases of his literary art.

Unit 11 helps to interpret the "of Pathetic Fallacy". It gives the critical insight into the "of Pathetic Fallacy" . It helps to understand and interpret in critical aspect.

Unit 12 introduce to the life of Matthew Arnold. It gives the insight of the early days of him along with personal life.

Unit 13 represents various phases of his literary work. It shows the various critical and import works represented in history by Matthew Arnold.

Unit 14 discuss analysis and interpretation of the play Sweetness and the light. It also provides the critical analysis of the same.

UNIT 8: THOMAS CARLYLE: THE HERO OF POEMS

STRUCTURE

8.0 OBJECTIVE

The objective of the poem is to study the Poem by Thomas Carlyle's "Hero as a Poet".

It gives the analysis and interpretation of the poem : "Hero as a poet".

This unit helps to fulfill the following objective:

- Provide summary of the Poem " Hero as a poet"
- Provide analysis of the poem
- Give the essence of affection in the poem
- How the Carlyle's work.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Thomas Carlyle (4 December 1795 – 5 February 1881) was a Scottish satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher during the Victorian era. He called economics "the dismal science", wrote articles for the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, and became a controversial social commentator.

Coming from a strict Calvinist family, Carlyle was expected by his parents to become a preacher, but while at the University of Edinburgh, he lost his Christian faith. Calvinist values, however, remained with him throughout his life. This combination of a religious temperament with loss of faith in traditional Christianity made Carlyle's work appealing to many Victorians who were grappling with scientific and political changes that threatened the traditional social order.

8.2 FAMOUS POEMS

- (1829) Signs of the Times The Victorian Web
- (1831) Sartor Resartus Project Gutenberg
- (1837) The French Revolution: A History Project Gutenberg
- (1840) Chartism Google Books
- (1841) On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History Project Gutenberg
- (1843) Past and Present Project Gutenberg
- (1845) Oliver Cromwell's letters and speeches, with elucidations, ed. Thomas Carlyle, 3 vol. (1845, often reprinted). online version another online version

- Morrill, John. "Textualizing and Contextualizing Cromwell." Historical Journal 1990 33(3): 629-639. ISSN 0018-246X Fulltext online at Jstor. Examines the Abbott and Carlyle edit
- (1849) "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question", Fraser's Magazine (anonymous), webpage: Online text
- (1849) Reminiscences of my Irish Journey in 1849 Online text
- (1850) Latter-Day Pamphlets Project Gutenberg
- (1851) The Life Of John Sterling Project Gutenberg
- (1858) History of Friedrich II of Prussia Index to Project Gutenberg texts
- (1867) Shooting Niagara: and After Online Text
- (1875)The Early kings of Norway

8.3 WHY THOMAS CARLYLE KNOWN AS HERO AS A POET?

Thomas Carlyle was an extremely long-lived Victorian author. He was also highly controversial, variously regarded as sage and impious, a moral leader, a moral desperado, a radical, a conservative, a Christian. Contradictions were rampant in the works of early biographers, and in the later twentieth century he is still far from being understood by a generation of critics awakening to his pivotal place in nineteenth-century Britain. His major works, long out of print and never properly edited, are soon to appear in new editions, thanks to the Essential Carlyle project (University of California Press), under the general editorship of Murray Baumgarten. The staggering correspondence he and his wife conducted with each other and with their formidable circle of friends and

acquaintances (a circle which touched Victorian Britain at every point) will further enhance his reputation when the long process of editing and publishing it reaches an end. By 1985 twelve volumes of the Duke-Edinburgh edition of The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle (Duke University Press), edited by Charles Richard Sanders and others, had appeared. Volumes thirteen through fifteen are expected in 1987, and a total of forty volumes is planned. Carlyle is emerging from neglect and obscurity, from the dubious reputation of early fascist (which damned him for many in the 1930s and 1940s) or reactionary, windbag, and sham. Instead he is coming to be seen as innovator and survivor, a man born in the eighteenth century who lived through most of the nineteenth, whose early work predated Victoria's accession, and whose longevity almost matched his monarch's. Alive, he was an enigma; dead, he remains a problematic figure for the literary historian as well as for the critic.

Carlyle was definitely a Scot. Ecclefechan, his birthplace in rural southwest Scotland, was a farming village remote from the cities but on the main routes to the universities of Scotland, and to the burgeoning industrial center of England. Thomas Carlyle was the eldest son of a large family. His intensely pious parents, James Carlyle, a stonemason of extraordinary strength of character, and Margaret Aitken Carlyle, quieter but still intense, intended Thomas Carlyle for the Church, but his personal belief soon outgrew the limitations of their desire. He inherited their verbal gifts, their intense energy, and their will to succeed; he left behind their piety and rural values, passing through high school and Edinburgh University with a precocious interest in literature, in science, and in Scotland, which was enduring the tribulations of the Napoleonic

Wars and their aftermath. Carlyle was a voracious reader. He treated Edinburgh University distantly, reading on his own when he could, flinging himself into scientific and mathematical studies (which were his early ambition), restlessly trying out careers and rejecting teaching, the law, the Church, and free-lance translation and reviewing.

Early signs of lifelong dyspepsia date from these years, indicating long nights of reading and writing, a poor diet, and stress. An early affair with Margaret Gordon (Blumine in Carlyle's Sartor Resartus) shook his self-confidence, and his social links in Edinburgh became increasingly uneasy, particularly after he broke with his parents' Christian values. Though he never lost the broad outlines of the hierarchical, duty-dominated Calvinist world-picture of his youth, he found it sat uneasily with the new freedom of university reading and friendships, till in the early 1820s he discovered "a new Heaven and a new Earth" in German literature, in Schiller, and in Goethe. The result was electric: a clever but essentially sterile mathematical and scientific curiosity was transformed into the agency of a blazingly original synthesis of Carlyle's remaining Calvinist belief and his half-understood metaphysic and Romantic aspiration. The process of transformation, essentially, is the plot of the philosophical satire Sartor Resartus (1836): Carlyle's philosopher Diogenes Teufelsdröckh reflects his creator in his suffering and in the resolution of his life's crisis; happily, he speaks not only for Carlyle but for those many in the nineteenth century who found identification with orthodoxy in society and religion impossible and who were equally dissatisfied with quiescence. Teufelsdröckh's reaction is protest that saturates Sartor Resartus with an energy that is now seen as the book's most brilliant sustained achievement.

The similarities between Carlyle and his philosopher-hero are remarkable, despite Carlyle's later denials that Sartor Resartus was autobiographical. While recognition of the work's universality came slowly (Fraser's Magazine, where Sartor Resartus appeared first, in serial form, was the object of some reader hostility and the book had very few initial comments or reviews), it did eventually surface. In London, in 1831-1832 and after 1834, Carlyle had a circle in which he functioned as spokesman for an intelligent, articulate group with members as diverse as Harriet Martineau and John Stuart Mill—and Ralph Waldo Emerson, as is well known, thought little of crossing the Atlantic to find the author of Sartor Resartus. The combination of energy, allusive style, and symbolic layers of manipulation make Carlyle's early message at once seemingly precise and elastic enough to permit a wealth of personal identification; like Tennyson's In Memoriam, Sartor Resartus allows a good deal of reader latitude in identifying precise meaning and recognizing personal allusion. The early 1830s were a time for steady, puzzled growth in Carlyle's artistic reputation. His wife, Jane, saw in Sartor Resartus a work of genius from the start; slowly, the nineteenth century came to share her opinion.

Carlyle the man found steady resolutions to the crises of early manhood. While he was adjusting his faith in the 1820s, the crisis of loneliness and rejection was steadily lessened by his growing literary success as a translator and then as essayist and by the personal satisfaction of meeting Jane Welsh, whom he assiduously courted through four difficult years of conversation and correspondence. They married on 17 October 1826 and settled in an Edinburgh still enjoying the éclat of the Age of Scott.

Finding it stimulating but too expensive, they moved to their celebrated fastness of Craigenputtoch, an isolated hill-farm in Dumfriesshire where they spent six years which saw the genesis of the essays eventually collected in Carlyle's Critical and Miscellaneous Essays (1838) and, more important, of Sartor Resartus. He hated the silence, but he found it enabled him to write. Jane Carlyle, a lively and sociable person and brilliant conversationalist and raconteuse, had had quite enough by 1834 when a little affluence enabled them to move to London while Carlyle wrote his first major popular success, The French Revolution (1837), which has become a celebrated piece of historical writing.

In suburban but inexpensive Chelsea (the house still survives as a museum) the Carlyles established a life-style which changed very little over the years. They were never rich, but became increasingly comfortable. They entertained frugally, but their guests included the wits and thinkers, writers and public figures of their age, who flocked to enjoy the salon and above all the company of two of the century's great conversationalists. Dickens, Forster, Browning, Tennyson, Mazzini, Jewsbury, Martineau—all literary London seemed to enjoy a night with the Carlyles, or an account of one from their friends. Carlyle talked stupendously, often overbearingly, but his conversation was always stimulating. An outsider to much that stamped the English gentleman, lacking the background of public school and English university, he gave a view of his times and his society which often shocked his audience by virtue of its originality (as in the analysis of a "mechanical" society in the 1829 piece "Signs of the Times"), but impressed them nonetheless with its cogent, simple (some would say simplified) message.

Much of what we see now as Carlyle's "message" came from those early Scottish years—a Calvinist obsession with order, with duty, with work, with destiny; a fear of anarchy in the home, in the State, in international relations; an obsessive feeling that the times were morally degenerate; a narrow view of international affairs and an anti-intellectual view of the fine arts; a willingness to oversimplify, often knowingly, in order to make a start at reform, rather than allow visible degeneracy to proceed.

The Sage of Chelsea, or as some called him, the Sage of Ecclefechan, dominated a circle of disciples and cast a long shadow over distinguished contemporaries as various as Dickens and Tennyson, Browning and Forster, Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell and George Eliot. Jane Carlyle had her own circle, less famous, still intensely clever and often advanced in particular on the question of woman's rights. In public Jane Carlyle deferred to her famous husband; in private she was a formidable presence, supportive of his creative work, ensuring the domestic order he craved, accepting his increasing eccentricity, and, finally, tolerating with bitterness his indifference to her feelings, his fascination with the aristocracy and particularly with Lady Harriet Ashburton. Jane Carlyle's health weakened steadily in the 1850s and 1860s; with his history of Frederick the Great finally complete in 1865, Carlyle intended to settle back and enjoy domestic retirement with Jane, but by then Jane was exhausted, and in 1866 while Carlyle was absent in Edinburgh, on the occasion of his installation as rector of his alma mater, Jane Carlyle collapsed in London and died.

Jane's death had a remarkable effect on her husband. While he continued his voluminous correspondence and worked in private on a brilliant autobiographical document which was to be published posthumously as

his Reminiscences (1881), Carlyle was a spent force as a public writer. Without Jane he became lonely, embittered, valetudinarian. He was courted by a large circle of admirers and still respected by many despite his political inclinations, which leaned further and further to the right with advancing age and which, with the polemic that stretched from the publication of his Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question (1853) to Shooting Niagara: and After? (1867), finally alienated a whole generation of liberal thinkers including John Stuart Mill. Yet he was there, centrally a figure who had been in the public eye since the late 1820s, an innovator, a publicizer of new ideas, unquestionably an important writer and figurehead. When he died in 1881 there was a distinct sense that an era had ended.

Carlyle's early works, a translation of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship (1824), a biography of Friedrich Schiller (1825), and the four volumes of translations and biographical and critical notices entitled German Romance (1827), introduced to the British public those German writers who had opened new vistas for Carlyle himself. In the Bildungsroman Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship, Carlyle found that Goethe had given shape to what had seemed frighteningly shapeless in Carlyle's own life--the search for a faith, for an understanding of an apparently hostile and shapeless universe, and for a moral imperative to act on knowledge and self-knowledge. As Wilhelm Meister in his Wanderjahre moved away from sterile self-questioning to understanding and to action, and as Schiller resolved his personal problems to act and to produce great art, so Carlyle progressed to the world outside his study, the world of a Great Britain recovering from a major international conflict and grappling with the longer-term conflicts of industrialization,

urban poverty, uncertain public and private faith, and a social system visibly ossified, visibly uncertain, yet fiercely resistant to the scale of change which seemed increasingly necessary to avert violence. In translating and studying German writers Carlyle found that personal problems very different from his own, yet clearly analogous, had solutions: in his early essays, Carlyle transferred that knowledge to analysis of his times and his country.

The 1829 essay "Signs of the Times" can be argued to mark the beginning of the Victorian age, even though Victoria was eight years from taking the throne. An original and clever piece of journalism, "Signs of the Times" ironically surveys the fallacies and weaknesses of a decade, sweetening a serious message which was developed two years later in another Edinburgh Review piece, "Characteristics." Briefly, that message had to do with the spiritual price to be paid for the industrial success and the onward movement of the early-nineteenth century: the reverberations of Carlyle's analysis were to be felt years later in Dickens's Hard Times (1854) and Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell's North and South (1855). "Mechanical" thinking, in Carlyle's description, accompanies and stultifies mechanical success. Man has moved mountains literally and metaphorically, but suddenly and without consideration. Reducing operatives to cyphers and giving up subtle and centuries-old mechanisms of an interdependent society, mankind has achieved miracles but discarded too much en route. Such, in brief, with amusing anecdotal outworks, is the message of Carlyle's early essays, which by the early 1840s were widely available on both sides of the Atlantic in the volumes entitled Critical and Miscellaneous Essays.

Several factors help account for their success. To make his points in these pieces Carlyle drew for illustrative purposes on his knowledge of Germans who wrote creatively (Goethe, Schiller) and philosophically (Kant), as well as on those who combined these functions (Richter, Novalis) to produce work which Carlyle frankly did not understand, but which he did manage to incorporate into his own original ideas (in, for example, "Thoughts on History," an often-reprinted periodical essay) and into the book which increasingly was forcing itself to the surface of his creative processes while he earned a living for Jane and himself with the essays.

Sartor Resartus is in some ways a baffling work. For one thing, its form is daringly experimental, borrowing the layered narrative techniques of Laurence Sterne and (less obviously) Henry Mackenzie and using multiple personae to present a chaotic picture of a chaotic reality. For another, the radicalism of Carlyle's work is cloaked and made oblique by a technique which aims at making impossible direct attribution to Carlyle of the radical premise (that the old clothes are worn out, that new clothes are needed, that violent change is not only desirable but also imminent). For the source of the narrative of Teufelsdröckh's life and career is, presumably, his editor, and the source of the editor's narrative is the conventional cache of papers, in this case some autobiographical, some analytic, some speculative, divided at random among a number of paper bags. From imperfect sources, with imperfect understanding, a fictional editor pieces together the story of the half-understood German mystic Teufelsdröckh, purportedly translating (seriously and frivolously by turns, as the sense dictated) from German originals and presenting the amalgam in an original and forceful exclamatory style.

Small wonder that the publisher's readers (whose puzzled comments Carlyle gleefully included in later editions) found it hard to cope with Sartor Resartus: genuinely original in form and content, it combines biography, autobiography, essay, and political commentary with a layered structure and avoidance of final meaning which makes it seem well in advance of its time. Its narrative thrust is to tell the story of a protagonist whose academic setting suggests that he should be taken seriously, though readers who possess a smattering of German can easily interpret both his name (Devil's Excrement) and his university (Nowhere in Particular) as obvious jokes. Teufelsdröckh follows a familiar path from struggling beginning and self-doubt to awakening sensitivity to a supernaturally alive universe, from the terrible "Everlasting NO" and "centre of indifference" to the explosion of energy and affirmation in the "Everlasting YEA" which marks the turning point of the book.

Typically, Carlyle mixes the serious with the almost farcical. In setting, name, manipulation of German for a largely ignorant readership, and manipulation of persona to hide overstatement, the book is clever tomfoolery. In passionate recollection of a personal descent into Hell reversed by a new, Goethean affirmation, in painfully oblique reminiscence of earlier rejection in love, society, and career, and in the undoubted frankness of a young man's renunciation of what is rotten in his society in favor of a juster and more egalitarian system, Sartor Resartus is unquestionably in deadly earnest. Jane Carlyle, a perceptive voice among early readers, pronounced it "a work of genius," and others took it as such (notably, Emerson) at a time when it was greeted with indifference or hostility. James Munroe of Boston had the honor of publishing Sartor Resartus in book form two years before it was

published in London. The appearance of the three volumes of The French Revolution, in 1837 better acquainted readers with Carlyle's passionate style and his passionate belief in the need for society's rebirth, so that the seriousness of Sartor Resartus was more readily received, and now it is taken for a masterpiece, and rightly. To have conceived it on the Dumfriesshire moors was a major achievement: to have completed it made him ready to mix with his intellectual equals in London.

Settled in London, Carlyle found his environment changed and, with it, the process by which he wrote. Instead of the isolation of the Dumfriesshire hills, he had the stimulus of a major capital, its libraries (much as Carlyle execrated them as places to work), its personalities, its excitement. His thin nerves were no match for the noise and the pollution overtaking Chelsea even in 1834, but as an author he needed London. The French Revolution (1837) was the outcome of the first contact with the city and its riches. The libraries gave him resources for his scrupulous research. John Stuart Mill and his set gave him many ideas, either in serious discussion or in the verbal jousting they engaged in. The stream of visitors to Chelsea also gave Carlyle an audience. The loneliness of the creative process (Carlyle wrote with difficulty, revising endlessly) gave him a focus for the chaotic input of his very full life.

While writing The French Revolution, Carlyle suffered a severe setback--the loss of the handwritten draft for volume one. Though the episode is among the most famous in Victorian history, exactly what happened is not clear. It is known that the manuscript, messy and much rewritten in the course of Carlyle's hesitant creative process, was borrowed by Mill

and that somehow it was mistaken for wastepaper and burned. Speculation as to how, when, and why the accident happened is impossible to corroborate: what is interesting is that, though Carlyle claimed to have kept no notes and to have rewritten volume one completely, fragments which survived the destruction tally very closely with the final published version. Although he may have kept some notes, the energy and courage Carlyle required to overcome his loss should not be underestimated. Perhaps it was inevitable that the warmest review of The French Revolution should have come from Mill. Others shared his enthusiasm: passionate, immediate, persuasive, The French Revolution touched events in the memories of many readers, and immediate in the history of many more. Fame and financial security followed this first major success, though not immediately.

While historians today have discredited much of the emphasis and interpretation Carlyle gave history in the volumes on France (and in the later works on Oliver Cromwell and Frederick the Great), few deny the power of Carlyle's view of the revolution. The historical research and annotation bespeak careful preparation, and the artistic impulse behind the finished work orders and selects, to orchestrate a pattern clearly of the author's choosing and to highlight his message of the inevitability of revolution in a France rotten with abused social privilege, skeptical freethinking, and human exploitation.

The French Revolution clearly articulates basic Carlylian principles: the king must rule, and the nobles effectively manage their estates; failing this, these orders of society must be put down. That a society based on bankrupt, mechanical, repetitive values will inevitably fail is taken for

granted, and the magnificently described scenes of carnage and horror are presented not as aberration but as inevitable, tragic harvest after years of bad government. The Feast of Pikes, when blood ran in the streets of Paris, the storming of the Bastille, long enjoyed in isolation as bonbons of Victorian prose, should be seen in context as parts of Carlyle's argument that the French Revolution was history in action, the climax of a long and tragic plot, the letting-loose of the hounds of anarchy and popular revolution which could have been contained by strong and wise government, spiritual values, and good planning. Carlyle brought the conflict vividly to life for an audience who, in 1837, could remember uncomfortably the anarchy of Napoleonic war or Reform disturbance. The power of Carlyle as historian was not just to recreate the past but also to use his historical works to disturb the present.

Affluence came slowly. To eke out his early royalties, Carlyle had to give annual lectures, a process he detested and feared, yet which he seemed to perform with great public success, his normally impressive conversational and monologuing skills sharpened by nervousness and by the sense of occasion. His lectures on heroes, given in May 1840, were excellent. Published in 1841 as On Heroes, Hero-Worship & the Heroic in History , they pick up some of the main concerns of the volumes on the French Revolution.

The lectures, as Carlyle's title makes clear, are about heroes. Carlyle considered his own father a hero who had bred in him the view that heroes were necessary for both the individual and society as figures of support and guidance in morally difficult times. In On Heroes, Carlyle goes through history to select different great men in literature and in religion, in war and in peace, in the far past and in the recent past, but

not--significantly--in Victorian Britain, which held few heroes for a man like Carlyle. He asks what each hero did for his age, and in every case he gives it shape, form, direction, values, coherence: often destructive, Carlyle's heroes prevented bloodshed, prevented anarchy, which even in the 1830s was a nightmare to many thinkers. Carlyle himself was becoming a hero to many. The ideas in On Heroes, Hero-Worship & the Heroic in History became some of his most widespread and influential. The lectures were republished many times, excerpted and made available to the new millions of literate poor. Their message was simple, clear, undemanding. Find your hero, give him your loyalty and your obedience. The times are dangerous, but follow your hero and fulfill your obligation to your creator. Christian and skeptic alike found in this clear and simple message a resonant faith, and Carlyle became more and more widely discussed.

Carlyle's 1839 work, Chartism, is about the Chartist movement seeking worker representation and rights for the industrious (and often starving) poor. Past and Present, published in 1843, is about the same contemporary problem, but Carlyle contrasts the nineteenth-century situation with that of the medieval monastery of St. Edmundsbury, in whose ordered community Carlyle found much to offer his age as a formula for improvement and reform.

In Chartism and Past and Present there is no spectacle of distinction comparable to that of the villainous aristocrats in The French Revolution. Instead the specter of anarchy and collapse is always in the wings, overtaking society not openly (as the phoenix is consumed at the end of Sartor Resartus), but implicitly, should the aristocracy not take their duties of government seriously, should social planners not wake up to the

enormity of current problems, should the managerial class not buckle down to the duties of true management, should all society not redirect its social and ethical concerns to the whole complex framework of industrial Britain, its impoverished Irish and its impoverished urban and rural poor, its growing pollution, its increasing population, its emptying churches, its shaky educational ideals. The past of St. Edmundsbury was not pastoral idyll. In fact, the monastery had been revealed in historical records (the publication of which by the Camden Society in 1840 had spurred Carlyle) as corrupt and weakly governed, needing a new leader, who is found in Abbot Samson, to put things right sternly, inflexibly, unpityingly, heroically. Such a man, clearly, is needed for the Britain described in Chartism, and the need is pressingly conveyed by Carlyle's insistent rhetoric that makes use of repetition, questions, unusual syntax, and coinages to convince, to hector, to wheedle. Carlyle often annoyed his readers, but he was hard to ignore. He believed, overwhelmingly, in the wrongness of his society and rightness of his message. While people might dispute his message--they did in the 1830s, and many more did by the 1860s--they found it difficult to ignore the problems he cited. Something plainly was wrong when Chartist protest was necessary. Mrs. Gaskell's Mary Barton (1848) explores the problem from ground level in working-class Manchester: Chartism takes the aerial view, dizzying, the details blurred, the excitement unmistakable. And Carlyle the historian warns that the problem is not new, and the result has been terribly visible in recent European history.

By the early 1840s Carlyle's works were selling well, and each new book conveyed an original mind at the peak of its powers. Oliver Cromwell's

Letters and Speeches--two volumes (1845) and a supplement (1846)--is a case in point. The civil war fascinated Carlyle for decades, and the personality of its great hero (and he certainly saw the Protector in this light, as the strong leader who saved the country from collapsing into anarchy) gave him the focus for a historical work which blends narrative with letters and documents of the period and intersperses all with the author's addresses to the figures he treats, especially Cromwell. It is an extraordinary history, almost a dialogue with a dead hero. It was provocative, original, fiercely contested at the time of its publication and more so when Carlyle was deceived by patent forgeries of Cromwellian letters--the celebrated "Squire Letters"--offered him after he had completed the basic writing of his history. Carlyle accepted the letters uncritically and stubbornly clung to his belief in their authenticity after they had been revealed to the reasonable as forgeries. Just such a weakness makes it easy to criticize Carlyle's method and his conclusions: his method was intuitive, and his admiration for character (often on apparently inconsequential grounds) overrode many critical mechanisms which could have ensured greater objectivity. Carlyle's primary aim was to present a point of view, an analysis of past events, which could be read and understood by his contemporaries and applied to his own time mutatis mutandis. Cromwell's methods were direct and crude; they violated human rights--but they saved a country which was tearing itself apart in civil war. Carlyle's unambiguous stand on this issue (which hardened throughout the remainder of his life) shaped his following, steadily alienated liberal thinkers, sparked public argument, and made many politicians and thinkers uneasy.

In private life, paradoxical Carlyle could monologue for hours about the virtues of Cromwell and benign force, of the need for radical disciplined reform, yet reconcile these views with the delightful sense of humor and self-deprecatory ridicule which made him magnificent company. The public persona he put forth in his writing hardened in this period into that of a largely inflexible analyst of his times. He did, however, produce the whimsical, affectionate, autobiographically revealing The Life of John Sterling in 1851. Sterling was an essayist and poet who shared an intense friendship with Carlyle despite his anguished attempts to get Carlyle to state his religious position clearly and without pretense. (This Carlyle would not--perhaps by this time could not--do, being at the same time a great symbol of public Christian faith and conformity, and a private nonchurchgoer and at best a partial believer.) Carlyle's tribute to Sterling is one of the most approachable of his works, rich in interesting reminiscences, including Carlyle's recollection of Coleridge of Highgate Hill, which tells much about Coleridge in his old age, but even more about Carlyle in his early years.

The Latter-Day Pamphlets (1850), Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question (1853), and Shooting Niagara: and After?? (1867) are late Carlyle, and they share a set of ideas which had developed over the years and which, for many, colored the character of the sage of Chelsea. To be sure, they are the work of a man well into his maturity, in his sixties and seventies increasingly set in his ways and impressed by the accelerating chaos he perceived around him. They represent bitter, unyielding opposition to liberal views on human rights (particularly for Negroes), on individual liberty, on prison reform, and on international relations,

particularly with less-developed nations. The eight Latter-Day Pamphlets systematically survey the public institutions of the time and lambaste them for their lazy inefficiency, their dangerous, soft-bellied liberalism, and their lack of relevance to the crying needs of the time. The Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question is addressed to the emancipated slaves of the West Indies sugar plantations and questions their right to strike or demand better conditions when there is sugar to be grown. Shooting Niagara: and After? apocalyptically sees the weaknesses of home and abroad, foreigners and British alike, combining to push British society over the brink of an unguessable future which threatens the collapse of Western civilization. This is not empty overstatement; Carlyle believed that collapse was a real, imminent possibility, but his readers polarized. Increasing numbers gave up their sage as an embittered and authoritarian old man; others believed him right, on balance, or altogether.

In the early 1850s Carlyle began working in earnest on his monumental history of Frederick the Great of Prussia. He, like Cromwell, was a ruler who earned Carlyle's approval for a job well done. Like Cromwell, too, he violated most of the civilized rules of freedom and justice to keep the machine of society running. The end, for Carlyle as for Frederick, clearly justified the means.

Researching and writing the six huge volumes of the history of Frederick almost killed Carlyle and did much to kill Jane. The work grew as he learned more about Frederick's time and about the complexity of the Prussian politics that trapped Frederick and to which he tried to respond.

Carlyle grimly traced Frederick's life, decade by decade, as Frederick, grimly, kept his view of life and society and did his job by his own lights. Carlyle, locked in his attic study in Chelsea. increasingly saw Frederick's way as one which might work for his own times. Perhaps when Carlyle emerged, exhausted, from his labor in 1865 he had lost sight of how much the age was changing, had changed. But there are two sides to this coin: Carlyle was now in his late sixties, and he was not the sardonic and witty writer of "Signs of the Times." He had achieved an immense oeuvre, thirty volumes in the Centenary Edition of 1896-1899, many more volumes of miscellanea, and thousands and thousands of letters. He had seen Queen Victoria ascend the throne and reign for thirty years over an age which changed each half-decade almost beyond recognition. The history of Frederick is an older man's impatience and an older man's certainty.

It is the product, too, of years which had seen Jane Carlyle's health go from valetudinarianism to downright collapse (a collapse often little heeded by her husband, wrapped up in the task of Frederick), and years in which Carlyle had alienated public opinion by his unyielding conservatism, while he alienated friends and (especially) wounded his wife by his intense fascination with the Ashburton set of brilliant and titled aristocrats. The Ashburtons' Bath House came to represent for Jane Carlyle the graveyard of her marriage--even if Carlyle almost certainly had no more than a platonic and naive fascination with a world he had never known--and the bitterness of these years is visible even in the relatively few surviving letters and tantalizing scraps of Jane Carlyle's diary. Had Jane's confidential letters to Geraldine Jewsbury survived we

might know more: but they were destroyed by prior arrangement, and we can judge only by the violence of Carlyle's remorse at Jane's death.

Certainly the period from the early 1850s to the mid 1860s was a period of crisis, of deteriorating health and marital security, of the "Valley of the Shadow of Frederick," of gradually polarizing opinion among admirers and former admirers. An interesting touchstone was the controversy provoked by Governor Edward Eyre in 1865: Carlyle, with little firsthand knowledge but a strong overall sense of the importance of strong government at a time of crisis, applauded a brutal over-reaction to a Jamaican rebellion as consistently as he came to admire Frederick the Great's unconstitutional but effective martial law. Once committed, he was unshakable: and he was supported by Dickens, Tennyson, Charles Kingsley, Ruskin, and Tyndall. Those outraged by Eyre's actions included Charles Darwin, T. H. Huxley, Charles Lyell, Herbert Spencer, Frederick Harrison, and Leslie Stephen. Clearly, by 1865, the author of the history of Frederick could no longer command liberal and youthfully radical support from the whole sweep of British intellectual life. Yet the list of names supporting Eyre, and supporting Carlyle's very public defense of Eyre, was a very strong one.

Carlyle's book on Frederick marked the end of an era. After Jane's death, Carlyle simply ceased to write effectively for public consumption, his hand shaky, his spirits shakier, dictation useless, and his wish to communicate (beyond occasional letters to the Times and generally ineffective later works on Scandinavian and Scottish history) dulled. The work of these lonely years is still remarkable in literary terms, in the correspondence he still conducted on a large scale, in the collecting and

editing of his wife's letters and papers, and in the very private Reminiscences (1887) which, apart from an early chapter on his father composed in 1832, is the intense product of the first year or so of loneliness after Jane Carlyle's death. Driven almost beyond endurance by loneliness and hypochondria, he solaced himself by reliving the happier years of his youth. In so doing he revealed a photographic memory and an ability to organize and juxtapose that brought incidents from his life vividly into focus. Probably he never fully thought out the fate of these Reminiscences, which were meant to keep his mind occupied while he grew to live with the idea of life without Jane. Their posthumous publication reveals a new Carlyle, one far removed from the wooden repetitions and feeble arguments of The Early Kings of Norway or An Essay on the Portraits of John Knox, two works published together in a single volume in 1875. In these two late volumes Carlyle strives to revive a public persona which is effectively dead. From the mid 1860s to his death in 1881 Carlyle was Grand Old Man to many who knew perhaps only On Heroes, Hero-Worship & the Heroic in History and Sartor Resartus, who knew something about the old man's political vagaries or who knew them well but perhaps overlooked them in admiration for his achievement. While the procession of the famous and the young aspirants continued to Chelsea, the old man grew bored, lonely, feeble. All Britain held its breath as he lay dying in Chelsea; the newspapers recorded the end as a major national loss, and it was.

Several works published after Carlyle's death had a profound effect on his reputation. His confidant and executor was James Anthony Froude, a young historian and longtime admirer of Carlyle to whom his literary

remains and papers were entrusted. Froude took his position seriously and was hard at work on biographical materials long before Carlyle's death. Hence the Reminiscences appeared soon after Carlyle's death, followed by four magnificent but badly flawed volumes of biography by Froude (1882, 1884) and Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle (1883), which had been partly annotated by Carlyle in the 1860s and 1870s.

The effect of Froude's work in the years following Carlyle's death was extraordinary. Almost overnight, it seemed, Carlyle plunged from his position as Sage of Chelsea and Grand Old Victorian to the object of puzzled dislike, or even of revulsion. The Reminiscences had been published, warts and all, by an editor who thought his duty to give them to the public rather than to polish away the irritations, the thin-skinned sarcasms against contemporaries (many of whom had died recently or had living relatives), the asides of a man recently bereaved but possessed still of such verbal gifts that a passing remark could make a very visible mark. The Reminiscences gain much of their effect from the immediacy of the emotion which produced them. In 1881, however, they seemed harsh, intolerant, bitter, unjustified often: to a readership that wanted the Olympian reminiscences of a Great Man of Letters, they offered instead evidence that Carlyle was an ordinary human being with sensitive nerves and a gift of speech which made his utterances memorable, even those his admirers might prefer to forget.

This process of Carlyle's decline was merely accelerated by the Letters and Memorials (with Carlyle's extensive and passionate annotations) and by Froude's Thomas Carlyle, A History of the First Forty Years of His Life, 1795-1835 (1882) and the subsequent Thomas Carlyle, A History

of his Life in London, 1834-1881 (1884). Carlyle was revealed as a man of temper and tantrum, of bitter exaggeration in speech and in letter (though not as the man of self-deprecation and humor who emerges from so many other accounts). Froude plainly worshipped Jane Carlyle, and found Carlyle's attitude to her insufficiently respectful and neglectful in the decades of her poor health. Froude's writing, though vivid, is clearly flawed and biased, and his manipulation of evidence and documents high-handed. The family reacted with outrage: Charles Eliot Norton's 1887 edition of the Reminiscences is a new book, an attempt to rescue Carlyle's memoirs by proper editing (and delicate censorship) from notoriety. The volumes of letters and papers edited by Norton and by Carlyle's new champion, his nephew Alexander Carlyle, in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries attempted to right the balance. To some, Carlyle had been revealed as a wife-beater, a reactionary, a pig-headed, narrow, sharp-tongued man of double standards who advocated high morals and lived by low ones. To others, this portrait was an impossible travesty and in the arguments back and forth about who said what, who edited which manuscript with how much fidelity, and even over whether Carlyle ever beat his wife (or indeed consummated his marriage, for the argument gained grotesque momentum once it had started), Carlyle's work, his positive contributions to his age, became blurred and almost forgotten. And time moved on: what had been revolutionary in 1829 faded in the 1880s and 1890s.

The 1930s saw some revival of Carlyle's fortunes thanks to new biography (above all the completion of David Alec Wilson's six-volume life) and solid scholarly attention on both sides of the Atlantic, but the

subject of fascism in the 1930s and 1940s again drove Carlyle out of fashion, despite the very dubious links people made between his later work and the National Socialism of Hitler, who may have enjoyed reading Carlyle's history of Frederick the Great, but who hardly lived up to the demands Carlyle made of a real hero. No matter: Carlyle remained a neglected writer till the mid 1950s; since then critical awareness of his work and its importance has risen steadily. With the publication of scholarly editions of his works, and above all of his letters, the reader stands a better chance than ever before of making an accurate and fair estimation of his importance.

Any critical estimation of Carlyle must take into account the sheer scale of his work, not only in quantity but also in range. It is hard not to credit Carlyle's industry. He was adept at several different kinds of writing, he changed his ideas over decades, he had the courage to innovate when he could have repeated formulae of previous successes. He responded freshly and memorably to the Victorian industrial urban scene when he first settled in London in the 1830s; by the 1860s he was part of the Victorian urban scene, even if he still thought as an outsider, an observer. Much as he deprecated the greater part of public life and most public figures in his time, he was part of that time, and an important man who enjoyed the attention he received, while paradoxically requiring much peace, privacy, and freedom to walk the streets alone at night, like Dickens seeking inspiration and strength from the power of slumbering London. He advocated a universe of hard work and dedication to ideals, and certainly he practiced what he preached.

CHECK IN PROGRESS I:

1. Write a note on Thomas Carlyle referred as a Hero Of the Poems?

   Answer……

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2. Name few poems of the Carlyle?

Answer……

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8.4 WHAT EXACTLY DID CARLYLE PRACTICE?

First, Carlyle practiced an incisive, satirical, perceptive journalism. He had the power to see weakness and to give it grotesque shape--in the color of the complexion of the famous "sea-green Robespierre" (an indicator of character); as the fatuous "Morrison's Pill," in Past and Present, promising a patent wonder cure for an ailment too deep-seated and complex to be cured ever (by extension a rejection of political panaceas of every kind); in the Hebrew "Old Clothes," conflating the Jewish moneylenders and parasites of society which Carlyle personally execrated with the central image in Sartor Resartus of the tattered and outworn intellectual garments of a society that desperately needed a new set; and finally, in purely invented characters, such as "Sir Jabesh

Windbag" of Past and Present, empty political orators offering endless iteration instead of incisive analysis, or better still action. By skillful and repetitive use of essentially deflationary tactics, Carlyle alerted his readers to much that was degenerate. He taught them distrust of the facile and the glib; indeed, he taught them to distrust leaders of almost every hue, even while striving to inculcate hero worship. Samuel Butler's bitter gibe that "Carlyle led us into the wilderness, and left us there" has a good basis in fact, for Carlyle's reductive political analysis was seductive in that it did much to sweep aside sham (a favorite term in his vocabulary), but it also undermined confidence in all public figures. Lacking heroes in his own time, Carlyle satisfied himself with revering heroes of the past and puncturing would-be heroes of the present. It was a dangerous, but, for many decades, a successful political stance.

Second, Carlyle practiced a form of history in which carefully documented past events were to reveal a hidden construct, a deeper truth, a movement of the inevitable and the supernormal. He visited battlefields, always seeking the truth and the flavor of historical experience. The past became real to Carlyle in the privacy of his attic study, after he had tramped the Prussian battlefields, the villages that figured in the history of Cromwellian England. In his study he surrounded himself with likenesses (as he thought--often very questionably) of the people he was studying, with pictures of their homes and of the places where they fought, with firsthand accounts of battles and of everyday reality. In the study Carlyle tried to re-create reality as it was for his subjects and attempted to see life vividly through their eyes. For him, his was reality. Further, there was another deeper reality, a

Garment which he had glimpsed through his reading of German Romanticism, a mystery neither understood nor controlled by clumsy humanity, but visible in glimpses to the patient historian who could interpret the mystery to the reader. Carlyle took this responsibility seriously. There was an enormous amount of chaff to be sifted and winnowed for the essential aspects of such history to be glimpsed, and the convolutions with which Carlyle wrote, revised, and proofread his work (he drove printers to despair with his proof changes) are an index of the extent to which he worked at his history and perfected the art of looking at the past from the present, somehow bending the shaft of that regard back toward the present. He lived in troubled and reforming times and, in highlighting the weaknesses and the bloodshed of the past, he tried to contribute a sense of order and structure to a process still going on, and imperfectly under control.

Third, Carlyle perfected a style which had a notable effect on his times. "Carlylese" became fashionable and was frequently (and grotesquely) imitated by lesser writers. Its constituents are various. He drew on his early study of German for syntax and some verbal items. An early admiration of Elizabethan and Puritan authors was, by his own admission, a powerful stimulus to his style. His peasant Scottish ancestors he also credited with a strong formative power, and it is notable that family friends spoke of the Carlyle facility for coining nicknames, which Thomas Carlyle used to devastating effect in such works as Latter-Day Pamphlets. Carlyle was, openly, a hectoring author. The suavity of earlier works such as "Signs of the Times" was replaced by infectious energy in such scenes as the storming of the Bastille in The

French Revolution: the overwhelming desire to make vivid, to capture the imagination and visualizing power of the reader sweep through the pages and command attention, captivate, and compel.

Carlyle's vividness operated powerfully to command assent, both assent to long-vanished history and assent to a new vision of the present (the dingy slums surrounding the Model Prisons of the Latter-Day Pamphlets, the Irish needlewoman of Past and Present). Carlyle's creation was spurred by a single item of reported news, by a single artifact (a jawbone from a Cromwellian battlefield), by a single picture. His imaginative involvement was such that it demanded a like effort from the reader, and his style is very much involved in eliciting that response.

8.5 AFFECTION OF CARLYLE'S WORK

If the mind's eye is affected by the power of Carlyle's descriptive writing, so is the ear. Carlyle's verbal manipulations are those of elaboration, but the actual sentences and repetitions are such as to assault the senses. Rhetorical punctuation, repetition, orchestrated effects of imagery and symbolism suggest pictures and elicit assent more through the effect of a "mighty line" than through philosophical or logical progression; it was easy, many felt too easy, to be swept away by such passages as that describing the fall of the Bastille in The French Revolution, to mistake style for sense.

A related point was sharply made by Anthony Trollope in his celebrated satirical portrait of "Dr Pessimist Anticant" in The Warden (1855). There Carlyle, thinly disguised, is welcomed as a Teufelsdröckh-figure

satirizing things in general: but when he becomes specific, Trollope remarks, the "charm is spoiled"--and in life this was so. Carlyle's Past and Present is a case in point. Clearly, he advocates moral improvement, mental bracing, order, duty, hero worship: these are not easy doctrines to translate to practice, and Carlyle lost many adherents when they found that the general prescriptions which had seemed compelling when presented with all Carlyle's skill, seemed unworkable in the less ordered and more ambiguous light of everyday. This difficulty was sensitively treated in Mrs. Gaskell's North and South: Carlylian ideas obviously inform every part of this novel, yet the characters who try to implement Carlylian ideas in their unrefined form (Thornton, Margaret) find that some flexibility and some modification are required. Those who were able to adapt and adjust Carlylian principles continued to revere him as a potent influence on their thinking. Those who could not, distrusted his writing and his ideas.

What, finally, are these ideas? First, order is a central theme. Carlyle grew up in a home dominated by a system which stressed order and submission. He survived adolescent identity crisis by imposing order on his own life, and he went on to produce a critique of his times based on an awareness that disorder was threatening to overtake and destroy the advances of the Victorian age and the industrial successes it had achieved. In his adult life Carlyle lost no chance to show his particular brand of order in action (Cromwell, Frederick, Abbot Samson) and the chaos that followed loss of order. Trapped between a warm personality (he gave, generously, to various objects of charity) and an urgently, overwhelmingly pressing view of order, Carlyle found himself torn in his private life and, increasingly, in his public writing--torn between a vision

of a freer humanity (in his early works) and a vision of collapsing anarchy in society (in all his later ones). Only order could stand between his society and that anarchy. Second, the energy which Carlyle saw in the world around him, whether as a result of his early scientific studies in physics or of his fascination with the German Romantics and their sense of life's Mystery, was an abiding concern. In "Signs of the Times" he saw that energy in the machines which were taking over his world; by Chartism and Past and Present the worth of those machines had become ambiguous indeed, and the dystopian vision of a world where people surrendered moral autonomy to their machines was a real nightmare for him. Only such a surrender of oneself, he argued, could lead to the asinine lack of priorities he set about revealing in the Latter-Day Pamphlets, the general breakdown he saw around him. His rallying call to "Work and despair not," from Sartor Resartus onward, seeks to give shape to a vision of directed energy, directed to production in an ordered society, guided by a yet higher energy that is not seen and not understood, yet that is clearly there in Carlyle's world pattern. As God or as Creator, that energy pulses through Carlyle's world, and man responds by working. The problem, always, is to channel and to understand energy, to keep control without stifling creativity.

Third, Carlyle gave his age a vision of structure. His own religious position, carefully vague in its exposition, allowed readers to find in it a workable position for themselves. Injunctions to work, to obey, to reverence heroes, to fear God found echoes in many people who wished to believe, and who were captivated by the style with which Carlyle delivered these injunctions. That they were not specifically Christian did not prevent Christians from accepting them sincerely; like Tennyson,

Carlyle found the artistic means to project a message in a carefully unfocused state which suited the diverse needs of his readership. Behind his public stance lay a private world of doubt, rarely communicated, only occasionally hinted at in stray remarks that have been preserved by those who heard Carlyle make revealing comments in conversation. The overall structure of his view of the world held firm: God at the head, planning and controlling; mankind at ground level, understanding little and requiring to understand still less, but owing reverence and obedience in the long run to a creator and in the short run to hero figures sent by that creator to give impulse to the unfocused energies of the age. In private and in public, Carlyle remained deeply skeptical of his age's achieving such a structure as he longed for, which does much to explain his growing preoccupation with forcible guidance of an apparently wayward society. Carlyle would not have put into practice the fiercely intolerant measures he proposed for recalcitrant Negro workers in the West Indies. Faced with the reality of human suffering, he always responded with human warmth; only in the privacy of his study did abstract ideas work him into righteous frenzy, and his style made that mood the memorable one. In private life in Chelsea, he kept a much more secure balance, but this is not the side of Carlyle that survives in the public eye.

Thus, the Carlyle we have seen is a mass of contradictions, and his self-doubts in old age, and his growing impatience with his era, must be linked to the fact that he was not one single individual with a clear, unchanging "message." Carlyle was a complex, continually evolving, highly intelligent and original thinker who witnessed many decades of change, developed formidable powers of self-expression which helped

mold these decades, and lived into an era in which many regarded his work as inflexible, out of date, often irrelevant. He did, however, retain a following; even in old age, he was still to many a figure of hope. In Sartor Resartus and in On Heroes, Hero-Worship & the Heroic in History, his two most popular works, he showed his readers that it was possible for a man to be assaulted with the doubts and self-doubts common to the century and to find a workable philosophy to overcome them. Teufelsdröckh, in the peroration to Sartor Resartus, and the author-figure apostrophizing the worker-heroes both give hope to the common Victorian that a workable solution is within reach. That intellectuals should find Carlyle's solution oversimplified or crude and that the long-term appeal of his actual prescriptions has been at best patchy does little to detract from his real achievement--his original and abrasive critique of Victorian society, his emphasis on the importance of spiritual values in history and in the present, his inspiration of his contemporaries toward a world view in which the individual has a place, and with that place duties and the possibility of dignity in a fulfilled existence.

From the perspective of the late-twentieth century Carlyle can be seen without the outrage that greeted his originality. His ideas are undoubtedly oversimplified, his tolerance levels for others' ideas far too low. His vivid style can be abused, particularly in indiscriminate attack. His stubborn iteration of one point can be dangerous when that point is a weak or indefensible one.

CHECK IN PROGRESS II:

1. Give a brief on what Carlyle’s Practice?

   Answer……

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2. Discuss use of affection in Carlyle's work?

Answer……

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8.6 LET'S SUM UP

Carlyle has survived the scrutiny of the years as an original critic of his time and as a skillful, though uneven, writer/stylist who understood the needs of a generation. After his death his reputation suffered a remarkable eclipse. Happily, he has been rehabilitated as an important representative Victorian, and, as the discovery of his work and above all his correspondence continues, so too does the rehabilitation of his reputation. We have passed beyond the need to venerate him as sage, of Chelsea or of Ecclefechan. Rather we see him as an emblem of the complexity, contradiction, and sometimes absurdity of the era. As the Victorian Age was untidy and contradictory, so were the original minds which responded to its needs and shaped their writing to its complex demands. In his contradictions Carlyle challenges us to a new formulation by which to judge his success, and he leaves behind an achievement sufficiently large and sufficiently diverse, as to ensure that the process of evaluation will be a long and critically challenging one.

8.7 KEYWORDS

- **Exaggeration** : a statement that represents something as better or worse than it really is.
- **Oeuvre:** the body of work of a painter, composer, or author.
- **Grimlyin**: a very serious, gloomy, or depressing manner.
- A**pocalyptically**: affording a revelation or prophecy

8.8 QUESTION TO REVIEW

1. Does Carlyle assume that all would agree with him about the identity of the two most important poets?
2. Is Carlyle's account of Dante's biography accurate? How does his version fit into his narrative pattern?
3. Which episode from the *Divine Comedy* does Carlyle most admire? Was this a common Victorian taste? What does Carlyle see as Shakespeare's relation to his age? Would this be consistent with many of the strands of recent Shakespeare criticism?
4. Why do you think he fails to discuss individual works? What does Carlyle see as Shakespeare's importance to the British nation?

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8.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check in Progress I

Answer 1. Check section 8.4

Answer 2. Check section 8.3

Check in Progress II

Answer 1. Check section 8.5

Answer 2. Check section 8.6

UNIT 9: JOHN RUSKIN'S

STRUCTURE

9.0 OBJECTIVE

In this Unit, you will get to know the depth of John Ruskin's life history and later days.

Also you will get to know how he started working and inspired others to work.

It helps to understand various phases of the life of John Ruskin.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Who was John Ruskin?

<u>One of the great visionaries of the 19th century...</u>

Artist, Critic, Pundit on Aesthetics & Ethics, Thinker, Seer, this social revolutionary challenged the moral foundations of Victorian Britain. He despised Capitalism & the barbarians who know the price of everything & the value of nothing.

Ruskin believed in the power of art to transform the lives of people oppressed more by visual illiteracy than by poor material conditions. His passionate desire was to open people's eyes to the free beauties surrounding them – sunsets, tender dawn light, iridescent feathers, spectacular natural crystals, green leaves against blue sky, clouds, the vitality of Gothic architecture and ornament. His creed was: 'There is no wealth but life.'

A pioneering conservationist, who foresaw the 'green-house effect' more than a century ago, Ruskin inspired the establishment of The National Trust, and the founders of the National Parks movement.

He was one of the first to see a twig as a miniature tree, a rock crystal as a miniature mountain – ideas now embodied in the 'fractal geometry' of Chaos Theory.

Ruskin was a true polymath. His interests were far-ranging, from his enquiries into the geological structure of the Alps to his observation of the malignant effects of the Industrial Revolution on the atmosphere and the pollution of the environment and men's souls,

from his advocacy of the genius of Turner to his realisation that the art and architecture of a place is a reflection of its social and moral condition at a particular moment in time.

He viewed art as an expression of morality, identifying 'good' art with mediaeval – specifically Gothic – architecture, when the best work was

produced by craftsmen who were honoured and responsible members of a community itself not slave to corrupt and materialistic values. This was symbolised by St George's epic fight with the Dragon [of Capitalism]. Art was no mere pastime for Ruskin. His art was always purposeful, integral to his thinking on all subjects. He visualised his ideas. He thought visually. He worked out his ideas through drawing. He hated the growing trend towards specialisation and refused to separate one area of interest and involvement from others. For Ruskin, speculation about principles depended upon observation of particularities.

The serial is Ruskin's strongest thought process. He revelled in stringing together a potentially endless series of associations on an 'imaginary' thread and took great

'delight in the embroidery, intricacy of involution, - the labyrinthine wanderings of the clue, continually lost, continually recovered . . .'

'He was a character of great fascination and complexity . . . made up of contradictions:

intelligence and silliness; puritanism and a refined sensuality; selfishness and extreme generosity . . . The central drama of his life, that of the pampered aesthete who gradually becomes aware of social injustice and as a result sacrifices his reputation, his wealth and ultimately his sanity, is as moving as anything in fiction . . . We should read Ruskin for the very quality of his mind . . . his refusal to consider any human faculty in isolation.'

9.2 EARLY LIFE (1819- 1846)

Genealogy

Ruskin was the only child of first cousins. His father, John James Ruskin, (1785–1864), was a sherry and wine importer, founding partner and de facto business manager of Ruskin, Telford and Domecq (see Allied Domecq). John James was born and brought up in Edinburgh, Scotland, to a mother from Glenluce and a father originally from Hertfordshire. His wife, Margaret Cock (1781–1871), was the daughter of a publican in Croydon. She had joined the Ruskin household when she became companion to John James's mother, Catherine.

John James had hoped to practice law, and was articled as a clerk in London. His father, John Thomas Ruskin, described as a grocer (but apparently an ambitious wholesale merchant), was an incompetent businessman. To save the family from bankruptcy, John James, whose prudence and success were in stark contrast to his father, took on all debts, settling the last of them in 1832. John James and Margaret were engaged in 1809, but opposition to the union from John Thomas, and the problem of his debts, delayed the couple's wedding. They finally married, without celebration, in 1818. John James died on 3 March 1864 and is buried in the churchyard of St John the Evangelist, Shirley, Croydon.

Childhood and Educaiton

Ruskin was born on 8 February 1819 at 54 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, London (demolished 1969), south of St Pancras railway station. His childhood was shaped by the contrasting influences of his father and mother, both of whom were fiercely ambitious for him. John James

Ruskin helped to develop his son's Romanticism. They shared a passion for the works of Byron, Shakespeare and especially Walter Scott. They visited Scott's home, Abbotsford, in 1838, but Ruskin was disappointed by its appearance. Margaret Ruskin, an evangelical Christian, more cautious and restrained than her husband, taught young John to read the Bible from beginning to end, and then to start all over again, committing large portions to memory. Its language, imagery and parables had a profound and lasting effect on his writing. He later wrote:

> She read alternate verses with me, watching at first, every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly *and energetically.*
>
> — Praeterita, XXXV, 40

Ruskin's childhood was spent from 1823 at 28 Herne Hill (demolished c. 1912), near the village of Camberwell in South London. He had few friends of his own age, but it was not the friendless and toyless experience he later claimed it was in his autobiography, Praeterita (1885–89). He was educated at home by his parents and private tutors, and from 1834 to 1835 he attended the school in Peckham run by the progressive evangelical, Thomas Dale (1797–1870). Ruskin heard Dale lecture in 1836 at King's College, London, where Dale was the first Professor of English Literature. Ruskin went on to enroll and complete his studies at King's College, where he prepared for Oxford under Dale's tutelage.

Travel

Ruskin was greatly influenced by the extensive and privileged travels he enjoyed in his childhood. It helped to establish his taste and augmented his education. He sometimes accompanied his father on visits to business clients at their country houses, exposing him to English landscapes, architecture and paintings. Family tours took them to the Lake District (his first long poem, Iteriad, was an account of his tour in 1830) and to relatives in Perth, Scotland. As early as 1825, the family visited France and Belgium. Their continental tours became increasingly ambitious in scope, so that in 1833 they visited Strasbourg, Schaffhausen, Milan, Genoa and Turin, places to which Ruskin frequently returned. He developed his lifelong love of the Alps, and in 1835 he first visited Venice, that 'Paradise of cities' that provided the subject and symbolism of much of his later work.

The tours provided Ruskin with the opportunity to observe and to record his impressions of nature. He composed elegant if largely conventional poetry, some of which was published in Friendship's Offering. His early notebooks and sketchbooks are full of visually sophisticated and technically accomplished drawings of maps, landscapes and buildings, remarkable for a boy of his age. He was profoundly affected by Samuel Rogers's poem, Italy (1830), a copy of which was given to him as a 13th birthday present. In particular, he admired deeply the accompanying illustrations by J. M. W. Turner, and much of Ruskin's art in the 1830s was in imitation of Turner, and Samuel Proutwhose Sketches Made in Flanders and Germany (1833) he also admired. His artistic skills were refined under the tutelage of Charles Runciman, Copley Fielding and J. D. Harding.

First publications

Ruskin's journeys also provided inspiration for writing. His first publication was the poem "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water" (originally entitled "Lines written at the Lakes in Cumberland: Derwentwater" and published in the Spiritual Times) (August 1829). In 1834, three short articles for Loudon's Magazine of Natural History were published. They show early signs of his skill as a close "scientific" observer of nature, especially its geology.

From September 1837 to December 1838, Ruskin's The Poetry of Architecture was serialised in Loudon's Architectural Magazine, under the pen name "Kata Phusin" (Greek for "According to Nature"). It was a study of cottages, villas, and other dwellings centred on a Wordsworthian argument that buildings should be sympathetic to their immediate environment and use local materials. It anticipated key themes in his later writings. In 1839, Ruskin's 'Remarks on the Present State of Meteorological Science' was published in Transactions of the Meteorological Society.

Oxford

In Michaelmas 1836, Ruskin matriculated at the University of Oxford, taking up residence at Christ Church in January of the following year. Enrolled as a gentleman-commoner, he enjoyed equal status with his aristocratic peers. Ruskin was generally uninspired by Oxford and suffered bouts of illness. Perhaps the keenest advantage of his time in residence was found in the few, close friendships he made. His tutor, the Rev Walter Lucas Brown, was always encouraging, as were a young

senior tutor, Henry Liddell (later the father of Alice Liddell) and a private tutor, the Rev Osborne Gordon. He became close to the geologist and natural theologian, William Buckland. Among Ruskin's fellow undergraduates, the most important friends were Charles Thomas Newton and Henry Acland.

His biggest success came in 1839 when at the third attempt he won the prestigious Newdigate Prize for poetry (Arthur Hugh Clough came second). He met William Wordsworth, who was receiving an honorary degree, at the ceremony.

Ruskin never achieved independence at Oxford. His mother lodged on High Street and his father joined them at weekends. His health was poor and he was devastated to hear that his first love, Adèle Domecq, second daughter of his father's business partner, was engaged to a French nobleman. In the midst of exam revision, in April 1840, Ruskin coughed blood, raising fears of consumption, and leading to a long break from Oxford.

Before he returned, Ruskin answered a challenge set down by Effie Gray, whom he later married. The twelve-year-old Effie had asked him to write a fairy story. During a six-week break at Leamington Spa to undergo Dr Jephson's (1798–1878) celebrated salt-water cure, Ruskin wrote his only work of fiction, the fable, The King of the Golden River (not published until December 1850 (but imprinted 1851) with illustrations by Richard Doyle). A work of Christian sacrificial morality and charity, it is set in the Alpine landscape Ruskin loved and knew so well. It remains the most translated of all his works. Back at Oxford, in

1842 Ruskin sat for a pass degree, and was awarded an uncommon honorary double fourth-class degree in recognition of his achievements.

Modern Painters I (1843)

For much of the period from late 1840 to autumn 1842, Ruskin was abroad with his parents, mainly in Italy. His studies of Italian art were chiefly guided by George Richmond, to whom the Ruskins were introduced by Joseph Severn, a friend of Keats (whose son, Arthur Severn, later married Ruskin's cousin, Joan). He was galvanised into writing a defence of J. M. W. Turner when he read an attack on several of Turner's pictures exhibited at the Royal Academy. It recalled an attack by the critic Rev John Eagles in Blackwood's Magazine in 1836, which had prompted Ruskin to write a long essay. John James had sent the piece to Turner who did not wish it to be published. It finally appeared in 1903.

Before Ruskin began Modern Painters, John James Ruskin had begun collecting watercolours, including works by Samuel Prout and Turner. Both painters were among occasional guests of the Ruskins at Herne Hill, and 163 Denmark Hill (demolished 1947) to which the family moved in 1842.

What became the first volume of Modern Painters (1843), published by Smith, Elder & Co. under the anonymous authority of "A Graduate of Oxford," was Ruskin's answer to Turner's critics. Ruskin controversially argued that modern landscape painters—and in particular Turner—were superior to the so-called "Old Masters" of the post-Renaissance period. Ruskin maintained that, unlike Turner, Old Masters such as Gaspard Dughet (Gaspar Poussin), Claude, and Salvator Rosa favoured pictorial

convention, and not "truth to nature". He explained that he meant "moral as well as material truth". The job of the artist is to observe the reality of nature and not to invent it in a studio—to render imaginatively on canvas what he has seen and understood, free of any rules of composition. For Ruskin, modern landscapists demonstrated superior understanding of the "truths" of water, air, clouds, stones, and vegetation, a profound appreciation of which Ruskin demonstrated in his own prose. He described works he had seen at the National Gallery and Dulwich Picture Gallery with extraordinary verbal felicity.

Although critics were slow to react and the reviews were mixed, many notable literary and artistic figures were impressed with the young man's work, including Charlotte Brontë and Elizabeth Gaskell. Suddenly Ruskin had found his métier, and in one leap helped redefine the genre of art criticism, mixing a discourse of polemic with aesthetics, scientific observation and ethics. It cemented Ruskin's relationship with Turner. After the artist died in 1851, Ruskin catalogued nearly 20,000 sketches that Turner gave to the British nation.

1845 tour and Modern Painters II (1846)

Ruskin toured the continent with his parents again in 1844, visiting Chamonix and Paris, studying the geology of the Alps and the paintings of Titian, Veronese and Perugino among others at the Louvre. In 1845, at the age of 26, he undertook to travel without his parents for the first time. It provided him with an opportunity to study medieval art and architecture in France, Switzerland and especially Italy. In Lucca he saw the Tomb of Ilaria del Carretto by Jacopo dellaQuercia, which Ruskin

considered the exemplar of Christian sculpture (he later associated it with the then object of his love, Rose La Touche). He drew inspiration from what he saw at the Campo Santo in Pisa, and in Florence. In Venice, he was particularly impressed by the works of Fra Angelico and Giotto in St Mark's Cathedral, and Tintoretto in the Scuola di San Rocco, but he was alarmed by the combined effects of decay and modernisation on the city: "Venice is lost to me," he wrote. It finally convinced him that architectural restoration was destruction, and that the only true and faithful action was preservation and conservation.

Drawing on his travels, he wrote the second volume of Modern Painters (published April 1846). The volume concentrated on Renaissance and pre-Renaissance artists rather than on Turner. It was a more theoretical work than its predecessor. Ruskin explicitly linked the aesthetic and the divine, arguing that truth, beauty and religion are inextricably bound together: "the Beautiful as a gift of God". In defining categories of beauty and imagination, Ruskin argued that all great artists must perceive beauty and, with their imagination, communicate it creatively by means of symbolic representation. Generally, critics gave this second volume a warmer reception although many found the attack on the aesthetic orthodoxy associated with Sir Joshua Reynolds difficult to accept. In the summer, Ruskin was abroad again with his father, who still hoped his son might become a poet, even poet laureate, just one among many factors increasing the tension between them.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I

1. Discuss the early life of Juskin in brief.

Answer

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2. Write a short note on the Travelling of Juskin.

Answer

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9.3 MIDDLE LIFE (1847–1869)

Marriage to Effie Gray

During 1847, Ruskin became closer to Effie Gray, the daughter of family friends. It was for Effie that Ruskin had written The King of the Golden River. The couple were engaged in October. They married on 10 April 1848 at her home, Bowerswell, in Perth, once the residence of the Ruskin family. It was the site of the suicide of John Thomas Ruskin (Ruskin's grandfather). Owing to this association and other complications, Ruskin's parents did not attend. The European Revolutions of 1848 meant that the newlyweds' earliest travels together were restricted, but they were able to visit Normandy, where Ruskin admired the Gothic architecture.

Their early life together was spent at 31 Park Street, Mayfair secured for them by Ruskin's father (later addresses included nearby 6 Charles Street, and 30 Herne Hill). Effie was too unwell to undertake the

European tour of 1849, so Ruskin visited the Alps with his parents, gathering material for the third and fourth volumes of Modern Painters. He was struck by the contrast between the Alpine beauty and the poverty of Alpine peasants, stirring his increasingly sensitive social conscience.

The marriage was unhappy, with John's reportedly cruel and distrustful behaviour towards Effie the cause. The marriage was never consummated and was annulled in 1854

ARCHITECTURE

Ruskin's developing interest in architecture, and particularly in the Gothic, led to the first work to bear his name, The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849). It contained 14 plates etched by the author. The title refers to seven moral categories that Ruskin considered vital to and inseparable from all architecture: sacrifice, truth, power, beauty, life, memory and obedience. All would provide recurring themes in his work. Seven Lamps promoted the virtues of a secular and Protestant form of Gothic. It was a challenge to the Catholic influence of A. W. N. Pugin

The Stones of Venice

In November 1849, Effie and John Ruskin visited Venice, staying at the Hotel Danieli. Their different personalities are thrown into sharp relief by their contrasting priorities. For Effie, Venice provided an opportunity to socialise, while Ruskin was engaged in solitary studies. In particular, he made a point of drawing the Ca' d'Oro and the Doge's Palace, or Palazzo Ducale, because he feared that they would be destroyed by the occupying Austrian troops. One of these troops, Lieutenant Charles

Paulizza, became friendly with Effie, apparently with Ruskin's consent. Her brother, among others, later claimed that Ruskin was deliberately encouraging the friendship to compromise her, as an excuse to separate.

Meanwhile, Ruskin was making the extensive sketches and notes that he used for his three-volume work, The Stones of Venice (1851–53). Developing from a technical history of Venetian architecture from the Romanesque to the Renaissance, into a broad cultural history, Stones reflected Ruskin's view of contemporary England. It served as a warning about the moral and spiritual health of society. Ruskin argued that Venice had slowly degenerated. Its cultural achievements had been compromised, and its society corrupted, by the decline of true Christian faith. Instead of revering the divine, Renaissance artists honoured themselves, arrogantly celebrating human sensuousness.

The chapter, "The Nature of Gothic" appeared in the second volume of Stones. Praising Gothic ornament, Ruskin argued that it was an expression of the artisan's joy in free, creative work. The worker must be allowed to think and to express his own personality and ideas, ideally using his own hands, rather than machinery.

> *We want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers and miserable workers. Now it is only by labour that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought*

> *that labour can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity.*
>
> — John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice vol. II: Cook and Wedderburn 10.201.

This was both an aesthetic attack on, and a social critique of, the division of labour in particular, and industrial capitalism in general. This chapter had a profound impact, and was reprinted both by the Christian socialist founders of the Working Men's College and later by the Arts and Crafts pioneer and socialist, William Morris.

Pre-Raphaelites

John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti had established the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. The Pre-Raphaelite commitment to 'naturalism' – "paint[ing] from nature only", depicting nature in fine detail, had been influenced by Ruskin.

Ruskin came into contact with Millais after the artists made an approach to Ruskin through their mutual friend Coventry Patmore. Initially, Ruskin had not been impressed by Millais's Christ in the House of His Parents (1849–50), a painting that was considered blasphemous at the time, but Ruskin wrote letters defending the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to The Times in May 1851. Providing Millais with artistic patronage and encouragement, in the summer of 1853 the artist (and his brother) travelled to Scotland with Ruskin and Effie where, at Glenfinlas, he painted the closely observed landscape background of gneiss rock to which, as had always been intended, he later added Ruskin's portrait.

Millais had painted Effie for The Order of Release, 1746, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1852. Suffering increasingly from physical illness and acute mental anxiety, Effie was arguing fiercely with her husband and his intense and overly protective parents, and sought solace with her own parents in Scotland. The Ruskin marriage was already fatally undermined as she and Millais fell in love, and Effie left Ruskin, causing a public scandal.

In April 1854, Effie filed her suit of nullity, on grounds of "non-consummation" owing to his "incurable impotency," a charge Ruskin later disputed. Ruskin wrote, "I can prove my virility at once." The annulment was granted in July. Ruskin did not even mention it in his diary. Effie married Millais the following year. The complex reasons for the non-consummation and ultimate failure of the Ruskin marriage are a matter of enduring speculation and debate.

Ruskin continued to support Hunt and Rossetti. He also provided an annuity of £150 in 1855–57 to Elizabeth Siddal, Rossetti's wife, to encourage her art (and paid for the services of Henry Acland for her medical care). Other artists influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites also received both critical and financial support from Ruskin, including John Brett, John William Inchbold, and Edward Burne-Jones, who became a good friend (he called him "Brother Ned"). His father's disapproval of such friends was a further cause of considerable tension between them.

During this period Ruskin wrote regular reviews of the annual exhibitions at the Royal Academy under the title Academy Notes (1855–

59, 1875). They were highly influential, capable of making or breaking reputations. The satirical magazine Punch published the lines (24 May 1856), "I paints and paints,/hears no complaints/And sells before I'm dry,/Till savage Ruskin/He sticks his tusk in/Then nobody will buy."

Ruskin was an art-philanthropist: in March 1861 he gave 48 Turner drawings to the Ashmolean in Oxford, and a further 25 to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge in May. Ruskin's own work was very distinctive, and he occasionally exhibited his watercolours: in the United States in 1857–58 and 1879, for example; and in England, at the Fine Art Society in 1878, and at the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolour (of which he was an honorary member) in 1879. He created many careful studies of natural forms, based on his detailed botanical, geological and architectural observations. Examples of his work include a painted, floral pilaster decoration in the central room of Wallington Hall in Northumberland, home of his friend Pauline Trevelyan. The stained glass window in the Little Church of St Francis Funtley, Fareham, Hampshire is reputed to have been designed by him. Originally placed in the St. Peter's Church Duntisbourne Abbots near Cirencester, the window depicts the Ascension and the Nativity.

Ruskin's theories also inspired some architects to adapt the Gothic style. Such buildings created what has been called a distinctive "Ruskinian Gothic". Through his friendship with Sir Henry Acland, Ruskin supported attempts to establish what became the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (designed by Benjamin Woodward)—which is the closest thing to a model of this style, but still failed to satisfy

Ruskin completely. The many twists and turns in the Museum's development, not least its increasing cost, and the University authorities' less than enthusiastic attitude towards it, proved increasingly frustrating for Ruskin.

Ruskin and education

The Museum was part of a wider plan to improve science provision at Oxford, something the University initially resisted. Ruskin's first formal teaching role came about in the mid-1850s, when he taught drawing classes (assisted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti) at the Working Men's College, established by the Christian socialists, Frederick James Furnivall and Frederick Denison Maurice. Although Ruskin did not share the founders' politics, he strongly supported the idea that through education workers could achieve a crucially important sense of (self-)fulfilment. One result of this involvement was Ruskin's Elements of Drawing (1857). He had taught several women drawing, by means of correspondence, and his book represented both a response and a challenge to contemporary drawing manuals. The WMC was also a useful recruiting ground for assistants, on some of whom Ruskin would later come to rely, such as his future publisher, George Allen.

From 1859 until 1868, Ruskin was involved with the progressive school for girls at Winnington Hall in Cheshire. A frequent visitor, letter-writer, and donor of pictures and geological specimens to the school, Ruskin approved of the mixture of sports, handicrafts, music and dancing encouraged by its principal, Miss Bell. The association led to Ruskin's sub-Socratic work, The Ethics of the Dust (1866), an imagined

conversation with Winnington's girls in which he cast himself as the "Old Lecturer". On the surface a discourse on crystallography, it is a metaphorical exploration of social and political ideals. In the 1880s, Ruskin became involved with another educational institution, Whitelands College, a training college for teachers, where he instituted a May Queen festival that endures today. (It was also replicated in the 19th century at the Cork High School for Girls.) Ruskin also bestowed books and gemstones upon Somerville College, one of Oxford's first two women's colleges, which he visited regularly, and was similarly generous to other educational institutions for women.

Modern Painters III and IV

Both volumes III and IV of Modern Painters were published in 1856. In MP III Ruskin argued that all great art is "the expression of the spirits of great men". Only the morally and spiritually healthy are capable of admiring the noble and the beautiful, and transforming them into great art by imaginatively penetrating their essence. MP IV presents the geology of the Alps in terms of landscape painting, and their moral and spiritual influence on those living nearby. The contrasting final chapters, "The Mountain Glory" and "The Mountain Gloom" provide an early example of Ruskin's social analysis, highlighting the poverty of the peasants living in the lower Alps.

Public lecturer

In addition to leading more formal teaching classes, from the 1850s Ruskin became an increasingly popular public lecturer. His first public lectures were given in Edinburgh, in November 1853, on architecture and

painting. His lectures at the Art Treasures Exhibition, Manchester in 1857, were collected as The Political Economy of Art and later under Keats's phrase, A Joy For Ever. In these lectures, Ruskin spoke about how to acquire art, and how to use it, arguing that England had forgotten that true wealth is virtue, and that art is an index of a nation's well-being. Individuals have a responsibility to consume wisely, stimulating beneficent demand. The increasingly critical tone and political nature of Ruskin's interventions outraged his father and the "Manchester School" of economists, as represented by a hostile review in the Manchester Examiner and Times. As the Ruskin scholar Helen Gill Viljoen noted, Ruskin was increasingly critical of his father, especially in letters written by Ruskin directly to him, many of them still unpublished.

Ruskin gave the inaugural address at the Cambridge School of Art in 1858, an institution from which the modern-day Anglia Ruskin University has grown. In The Two Paths (1859), five lectures given in London, Manchester, Bradford and Tunbridge Wells, Ruskin argued that a 'vital law' underpins art and architecture, drawing on the labour theory of value. The year 1859 also marked his last tour of Europe with his ageing parents, during which they visited Germany and Switzerland.

Turner Bequest

Ruskin had been in Venice when he heard about Turner's death in 1851. Being named an executor to Turner's will was an honour that Ruskin respectfully declined, but later took up. Ruskin's book in celebration of the sea, The Harbours of England, revolving around Turner's drawings, was published in 1856. In January 1857, Ruskin's Notes on the Turner

Gallery at Marlborough House, 1856 was published. He persuaded the National Gallery to allow him to work on the Turner Bequest of nearly 20,000 individual artworks left to the nation by the artist. This involved Ruskin in an enormous amount of work, completed in May 1858, and involved cataloguing, framing and conserving. 400 watercolours were displayed in cabinets of Ruskin's own design. Recent scholarship has argued that Ruskin did not, as previously thought, collude in the destruction of Turner's erotic drawings, but his work on the Bequest did modify his attitude towards Turner.

Religious "unconversion"

In 1858, Ruskin was again travelling in Europe. The tour took him from Switzerland to Turin where he saw Paolo Veronese's Presentation of the Queen of Sheba. He would later claim (in April 1877) that the discovery of this painting, contrasting starkly with a particularly dull sermon, led to his "unconversion" from Evangelical Christianity.[86] He had, however, doubted his Evangelical Christian faith for some time, shaken by Biblical and geological scholarship that had undermined the literal truth and absolute authority of the Bible: "those dreadful hammers!" he wrote to Henry Acland, "I hear the chink of them at the end of every cadence of the Bible verses." This "loss of faith" precipitated a considerable personal crisis. His confidence undermined, he believed that much of his writing to date had been founded on a bed of lies and half-truths. He later returned to Christianity.

Social critic and reformer: Unto This Last

Whenever I look or travel in England or abroad, I see that men, wherever they can reach, destroy all beauty.

John Ruskin, Modern Painters V (1860): Ruskin, Cook and Wedderburn, 7.422–423.

Although in 1877 Ruskin said that in 1860, "I gave up my art work and wrote Unto This Last ... the central work of my life" the break was not so dramatic or final. Following his crisis of faith, and influenced in part by his friend, Thomas Carlyle (whom he had first met in 1850), Ruskin shifted his emphasis in the late 1850s from art towards social issues. Nevertheless, he continued to lecture on and write about a wide range of subjects including art and, among many other things, geology (in June 1863 he lectured on the Alps), art practice and judgement (The Cestus of Aglaia), botany and mythology (Proserpina and The Queen of the Air). He continued to draw and paint in watercolours, and to travel extensively across Europe with servants and friends. In 1868, his tour took him to Abbeville, and in the following year he was in Verona (studying tombs for the Arundel Society) and Venice (where he was joined by William Holman Hunt). Yet increasingly Ruskin concentrated his energies on fiercely attacking industrial capitalism, and the utilitarian theories of political economy underpinning it. He repudiated his sometimes grandiloquent style, writing now in plainer, simpler language, to communicate his message straightforwardly.

There is no wealth but life. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the

greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the function of his own life to the utmost, has always the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others.

Ruskin's social view broadened from concerns about the dignity of labour to consider issues of citizenship and notions of the ideal community. Just as he had questioned aesthetic orthodoxy in his earliest writings, he now dissected the orthodox political economy espoused by John Stuart Mill, based on theories of laissez-faire and competition drawn from the work of Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Thomas Malthus. In his four essays, Unto This Last, Ruskin rejected the division of labour as dehumanising (separating the labourer from the product of his work), and argued that the false "science" of political economy failed to consider the social affections that bind communities together. Ruskin articulated an extended metaphor of household and family, drawing on Plato and Xenophon to demonstrate the communal and sometimes sacrificial nature of true economics. For Ruskin, all economies and societies are ideally founded on a politics of social justice. Ruskin's ideas influenced the concept of the "social economy" characterised by networks of charitable, co-operative and other non-governmental organisations.

The essays were originally published in consecutive monthly instalments of the new Cornhill Magazine between August and November 1860 (and published in a single volume in 1862). However, the Cornhill's editor, William Makepeace Thackeray, was forced to abandon the series by the

outcry of the magazine's largely conservative readership and the fears of a nervous publisher (Smith, Elder & Co.). The reaction of the national press was hostile, and Ruskin was, he claimed, "reprobated in a violent manner". Ruskin's father also strongly disapproved. Others were enthusiastic, including Ruskin's friend, Thomas Carlyle, who wrote, "I have read your paper with exhilaration... such a thing flung suddenly into half a million dull British heads... will do a great deal of good."

Ruskin's political ideas, and Unto This Last in particular, later proved highly influential. The essays were praised and paraphrased in Gujarati by Mohandas Gandhi, a wide range of autodidacts cited their positive impact, the economist John A. Hobson and many of the founders of the British Labour party credited them as an influence.

Ruskin believed in a hierarchical social structure. He wrote "I was, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school." He believed in man's duty to God, and while he sought to improve the conditions of the poor, he opposed attempts to level social differences and sought to resolve social inequalities by abandoning capitalism in favour of a co-operative structure of society based on obedience and benevolent philanthropy, rooted in the agricultural economy.

> *If there be any one point insisted on throughout my works more frequently than another, that one point is the impossibility of Equality. My continual aim has been to show the eternal superiority of some men to others, sometimes even of one man to all others; and to show also the advisability of appointing such*

> *persons or person to guide, to lead, or on occasion even to compel and subdue, their inferiors, according to their own better knowledge and wiser will.*
>
> — John Ruskin, Unto This Last: Cook and Wedderburn 17.34

Ruskin's explorations of nature and aesthetics in the fifth and final volume of Modern Painters focused on Giorgione, Paolo Veronese, Titian and Turner. Ruskin asserted that the components of the greatest artworks are held together, like human communities, in a quasi-organic unity. Competitive struggle is destructive. Uniting Modern Painters V and Unto This Last is Ruskin's "Law of Help":

> *Government and cooperation are in all things and eternally the laws of life. Anarchy and competition, eternally, and in all things, the laws of death*
>
> — John Ruskin, Modern Painters V and Unto This Last: Cook and Wedderburn 7.207 and 17.25.

Ruskin's next work on political economy, redefining some of the basic terms of the discipline, also ended prematurely, when Fraser's Magazine, under the editorship of James Anthony Froude, cut short his Essays on Political Economy (1862–63) (later collected as MuneraPulveris (1872)). Ruskin further explored political themes in Time and Tide (1867), his letters to Thomas Dixon, the cork-cutter in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear who had a well-established interest in literary and artistic matters. In these letters, Ruskin promoted honesty in work and exchange, just relations in employment and the need for co-operation.

Ruskin's sense of politics was not confined to theory. On his father's death in 1864, Ruskin inherited a considerable fortune of between £120,000 and £157,000 (the exact figure is disputed). This considerable fortune inherited from the father he described on his tombstone as "an entirely honest merchant" gave him the means to engage in personal philanthropy and practical schemes of social amelioration. One of his first actions was to support the housing work of Octavia Hill (originally one of his art pupils): he bought property in Marylebone to aid her philanthropic housing scheme. But Ruskin's endeavours extended to the establishment of a shop selling pure tea in any quantity desired at 29 Paddington Street, Paddington (giving employment to two former Ruskin family servants) and crossing-sweepings to keep the area around the British Museum clean and tidy. Modest as these practical schemes were, they represented a symbolic challenge to the existing state of society. Yet his greatest practical experiments would come in his later years.

Lectures in the 1860s

Ruskin lectured widely in the 1860s, giving the Rede lecture at the University of Cambridge in 1867, for example. He spoke at the British Institution on 'Modern Art', the Working Men's Institute, Camberwell on "Work" and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich on 'War'. Ruskin's widely admired lecture, Traffic, on the relation between taste and morality, was delivered in April 1864 at Bradford Town Hall, to which he had been invited because of a local debate about the style of a new Exchange building. "I do not care about this Exchange," Ruskin told his

audience, "because you don't!" These last three lectures were published in The Crown of Wild Olive (1866)

> "*For all books are divisible into two classes: the books of the hour, and the books of all time"* – Sesame and Lilies

The lectures that comprised Sesame and Lilies (published 1865), delivered in December 1864 at the town halls at Rusholme and Manchester, are essentially concerned with education and ideal conduct. "Of Kings' Treasuries" (in support of a library fund) explored issues of reading practice, literature (books of the hour vs. books of all time), cultural value and public education. "Of Queens' Gardens" (supporting a school fund) focused on the role of women, asserting their rights and duties in education, according them responsibility for the household and, by extension, for providing the human compassion that must balance a social order dominated by men. This book proved to be one of Ruskin's most popular books, and was regularly awarded as a Sunday School prize. The book's reception over time, however, has been more mixed, and twentieth-century feminists have taken aim at "Of Queens' Gardens" in particular, as an attempt to "subvert the new heresy" of women's rights by confining women to the domestic sphere. Although indeed subscribing to the Victorian belief in "separate spheres" for men and women, Ruskin was however unusual in arguing for parity of esteem, a case based on his philosophy that a nation's political economy should be modelled on that of the ideal household.

9.4 LATER LIFE (1869-1900)

Oxford's first Slade Professor of Fine Art

Ruskin was unanimously appointed the first Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford University in August 1869, largely through the offices of his friend, Henry Acland. He delivered his inaugural lecture on his 51st birthday in 1870, at the Sheldonian Theatre to a larger-than-expected audience. It was here that he said, "The art of any country is the exponent of its social and political virtues.". It has been claimed that Cecil Rhodes cherished a long-hand copy of the lecture, believing that it supported his own view of the British Empire.

In 1871, John Ruskin founded his own art school at Oxford, The Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. It was originally accommodated within the Ashmolean Museum but now occupies premises on High Street. Ruskin endowed the drawing mastership with £5000 of his own money. He also established a large collection of drawings, watercolours and other materials (over 800 frames) that he used to illustrate his lectures. The School challenged the orthodox, mechanical methodology of the government art schools (the "South Kensington System").

Ruskin's lectures were often so popular that they had to be given twice—once for the students, and again for the public. Most of them were eventually published (see Select Bibliography). He lectured on a wide range of subjects at Oxford, his interpretation of "Art" encompassing almost every conceivable area of study, including wood and metal engraving (Ariadne Florentina), the relation of science to art (The Eagle's Nest) and sculpture (AratraPentelici). His lectures ranged through myth, ornithology, geology, nature-study and literature. "The teaching of

Art...," Ruskin wrote, "is the teaching of all things." Ruskin was never careful about offending his employer. When he criticised Michelangelo in a lecture in June 1871 it was seen as an attack on the large collection of that artist's work in the Ashmolean Museum.

Most controversial, from the point of view of the University authorities, spectators and the national press, was the digging scheme on Ferry Hinksey Road at North Hinksey, near Oxford, instigated by Ruskin in 1874, and continuing into 1875, which involved undergraduates in a road-mending scheme. The scheme was motivated in part by a desire to teach the virtues of wholesome manual labour. Some of the diggers, which included Oscar Wilde, Alfred Milner and Ruskin's future secretary and biographer, W. G. Collingwood, were profoundly influenced by the experience: notably Arnold Toynbee, Leonard Montefiore and Alexander Robertson MacEwen. It helped to foster a public service ethic that was later given expression in the university settlements, and was keenly celebrated by the founders of Ruskin Hall, Oxford.

In 1879, Ruskin resigned from Oxford, but resumed his Professorship in 1883, only to resign again in 1884. He gave his reason as opposition to vivisection, but he had increasingly been in conflict with the University authorities, who refused to expand his Drawing School. He was also suffering increasingly poor health.

ForsClavigera and the Whistler libel case

In January 1871, the month before Ruskin started to lecture the wealthy undergraduates at Oxford University, he began his series of 96 (monthly) "letters to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain" under the title

ForsClavigera (1871–84). (The letters were published irregularly after the 87th instalment in March 1878.) These letters were personal, dealt with every subject in his oeuvre, and were written in a variety of styles, reflecting his mood and circumstances. From 1873, Ruskin had full control over all his publications, having established George Allen as his sole publisher (see Allen & Unwin).

In the July 1877 letter of ForsClavigera, Ruskin launched a scathing attack on paintings by James McNeill Whistler exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery. He found particular fault with Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket, and accused Whistler of "ask[ing] two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face". Whistler filed a libel suit against Ruskin. Whistler won the case, which went to trial in Ruskin's absence in 1878 (he was ill), but the jury awarded damages of only one farthing to the artist. Court costs were split between the two parties. Ruskin's were paid by public subscription, but Whistler was bankrupt within six months. The episode tarnished Ruskin's reputation, however, and may have accelerated his mental decline. It did nothing to mitigate Ruskin's exaggerated sense of failure in persuading his readers to share in his own keenly felt priorities.

Guild of St George

Ruskin founded his utopian society, the Guild of St George, in 1871 (although originally it was called St George's Fund, and then St George's Company, before becoming the Guild in 1878). Its aims and objectives were articulated in ForsClavigera. A communitarian protest against nineteenth-century industrial capitalism, it had a hierarchical structure, with Ruskin as its Master, and dedicated members called "Companions".

Ruskin wished to show that contemporary life could still be enjoyed in the countryside, with land being farmed by traditional means, in harmony with the environment, and with the minimum of mechanical assistance. He also sought to educate and enrich the lives of industrial workers by inspiring them with beautiful objects. As such, with a tithe (or personal donation) of £7,000, Ruskin acquired land and a collection of art treasures.

Ruskin purchased land initially in Totley, near Sheffield, but the agricultural scheme established there by local communists met with only modest success after many difficulties. Donations of land from wealthy and dedicated Companions eventually placed land and property in the Guild's care: in the Wyre Forest, near Bewdley, Worcestershire, called Ruskin Land today;Barmouth, in Gwynedd, north-west Wales; Cloughton, in North Yorkshire;Westmill in Hertfordshire; and Sheepscombe, Gloucestershire.

In principle, Ruskin worked out a scheme for different grades of "Companion", wrote codes of practice, described styles of dress and even designed the Guild's own coins. Ruskin wished to see St George's Schools established, and published various volumes to aid its teaching (his Bibliotheca Pastorum or Shepherd's Library), but the schools themselves were never established. (In the 1880s, in a venture loosely related to the Bibliotheca, he supported Francesca Alexander, publishing some of her tales of peasant life.) In reality, the Guild, which still exists today as a charitable education trust, has only ever operated on a small scale.

Ruskin also wished to see traditional rural handicrafts revived. St. George's Mill was established at Laxey, on the Isle of Man producing

cloth goods. The Guild also encouraged independent, but allied, efforts in spinning and weaving at Langdale, in other parts of the Lake District and elsewhere, producing linen and other goods exhibited by the Home Arts and Industries Association and similar organisations.

The Guild's most conspicuous and enduring achievement was the creation of a remarkable collection of art, minerals, books, medieval manuscripts, architectural casts, coins and other precious and beautiful objects. Housed in a cottage museum high on the hill in the Sheffield district of Walkley, it opened in 1875, and was curated by Henry and Emily Swan. Ruskin had written in Modern Painters III (1856) that, "the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and to tell what it saw in a plain way." Through the Museum, Ruskin aimed to bring to the eyes of the working man many of the sights and experiences otherwise reserved for the wealthy who could afford to travel across Europe. The original Museum has been digitally recreated online. In 1890, the Museum relocated to Meersbrook Park. The collection is now on display at Sheffield's Millennium Gallery.

Rose La Touche

Ruskin had been introduced to the wealthy Irish La Touche family by Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford. Maria La Touche, a minor Irish poet and novelist, asked Ruskin to teach her daughters drawing and painting in 1858. Rose La Touche was ten, Ruskin nearly 39. Ruskin gradually fell in love with her. Their first meeting came at a time when Ruskin's own religious faith was under strain. This always caused difficulties for the staunchly Protestant La Touche family who at various times prevented the two from meeting. Ruskin's love for Rose was a cause

alternately of great joy and deep depression for him, and always a source of anxiety. Ruskin proposed to her on or near her eighteenth birthday in 1867, but she asked him to wait three years for an answer, until she was 21. A chance meeting at the Royal Academy in 1869 was one of the few occasions they came into personal contact thereafter. She finally rejected him in 1872, but they still occasionally met, for the final time on 15 February 1875. After a long illness, she died on 25 May 1875, at the age of 27. These events plunged Ruskin into despair and led to increasingly severe bouts of mental illness involving a number of breakdowns and delirious visions. The first of these had occurred in 1871 at Matlock, Derbyshire, a town and a county that he knew from his boyhood travels, whose flora, fauna, and minerals helped to form and reinforce his appreciation and understanding of natu

Ruskin turned to spiritualism. He attended seances at Broadlands, which he believed gave him the ability to communicate with the dead Rose, which, in turns, both comforted and disturbed him. Ruskin's increasing need to believe in a meaningful universe and a life after death, both for himself and his loved ones, helped to revive his Christian faith in the 1870s.

Travel guides

Ruskin continued to travel, studying the landscapes, buildings and art of Europe. In May 1870 and June 1872 he admired Carpaccio's St Ursula in Venice, a vision of which, associated with Rose La Touche would haunt him, described in the pages of Fors. In 1874, on his tour of Italy, Ruskin visited Sicily, the furthest he ever travelled.

Ruskin embraced the emerging literary forms, the travel guide (and gallery guide), writing new works, and adapting old ones "to give," he said, "what guidance I may to travallers..." The Stones of Venice was revised, edited and issued in a new "Travellers' Edition" in 1879. Ruskin directed his readers, the would-be traveller, to look with his cultural gaze at the landscapes, buildings and art of France and Italy: Mornings in Florence (1875–77), The Bible of Amiens (1880–85) (a close study of its sculpture and a wider history), St Mark's Rest (1877–84) and A Guide to the Principal Pictures in ... Venice (1877).

Final writings

In the 1880s, Ruskin returned to some literature and themes that had been among his favourites since childhood. He wrote about Walter Scott, Byron and Wordsworth in Fiction, Fair and Foul (1880) and returned to meteorological observations in his lectures, The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth-Century (1884), describing the apparent effects of industrialisation on weather patterns. Ruskin's Storm-Cloud has been seen as foreshadowing environmentalism and related concerns in the 20th and 21st centuries. Ruskin's prophetic writings were also tied to his emotions, and his more general (ethical) dissatisfaction with the modern world with which he now felt almost completely out of sympathy.

His last great work was his autobiography, Praeterita (1885–89) (meaning, 'Of Past Things'), a highly personalised, selective, eloquent but incomplete account of aspects of his life, the preface of which was written in his childhood nursery at Herne Hill.

The period from the late 1880s was one of steady and inexorable decline. Gradually it became too difficult for him to travel to Europe. He suffered a complete mental collapse on his final tour, which included Beauvais, Sallanches and Venice, in 1888. The emergence and dominance of the Aesthetic movement and Impressionism distanced Ruskin from the modern art world, his ideas on the social utility of art contrasting with the doctrine of "l'art pour l'art" or "art for art's sake" that was beginning to dominate. His later writings were increasingly seen as irrelevant, especially as he seemed to be more interested in book illustrators such as Kate Greenaway than in modern art. He also attacked aspects of Darwinian theory with increasing violence, although he knew and respected Darwin personally.

Brantwood and final years

In August 1871, Ruskin purchased, from W. J. Linton, the then somewhat dilapidated Brantwood house, on the shores of Coniston Water, in the English Lake District, paying £1500 for it. Brantwood was Ruskin's main home from 1872 until his death. His estate provided a site for more of his practical schemes and experiments: he had an ice house built, and the gardens comprehensively rearranged. He oversaw the construction of a larger harbour (from where he rowed his boat, the Jumping Jenny), and he altered the house (adding a dining room, a turret to his bedroom to give him a panoramic view of the lake, and he later extended the property to accommodate his relatives). He built a reservoir, and redirected the waterfall down the hills, adding a slate seat that faced the tumbling stream and craggy rocks rather than the lake, so that he could closely observe the fauna and flora of the hillside.

Although Ruskin's 80th birthday was widely celebrated in 1899 (various Ruskin societies presenting him with an elaborately illuminated congratulatory address), Ruskin was scarcely aware of it.[153] He died at Brantwood from influenza on 20 January 1900 at the age of 80. He was buried five days later in the churchyard at Coniston, according to his wishes. As he had grown weaker, suffering prolonged bouts of mental illness, he had been looked after by his second cousin, Joan(na) Severn (formerly "companion" to Ruskin's mother) and she and her family inherited his estate. Joanna's Care was the eloquent final chapter of Ruskin's memoir, which he dedicated to her as a fitting tribute.

Joan Severn, together with Ruskin's secretary, W. G. Collingwood, and his eminent American friend, Charles Eliot Norton, were executors to his Will. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn edited the monumental 39-volume Library Edition of Ruskin's Works, the last volume of which, an index, attempts to demonstrate the complex interconnectedness of Ruskin's thought. They all acted together to guard, and even control, Ruskin's public and personal reputation.

The centenary of Ruskin's birth was keenly celebrated in 1919, but his reputation was already in decline and sank further in the fifty years that followed. The contents of Ruskin's home were dispersed in a series of sales at auction, and Brantwood itself was bought in 1932 by the educationist and Ruskin enthusiast, collector and memorialist, John Howard Whitehouse.

Brantwood was opened in 1934 as a memorial to Ruskin and remains open to the public today. The Guild of St George continues to thrive as an educational charity, and enjoys an international membership. The Ruskin Society organises events throughout the year. A series of public celebrations of Ruskin's multiple legacies took place in 2000, on the centenary of his death, and events are planned throughout 2019, to mark the bicentenary of his birth

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1. What is role of Juskin as Public Lecturer.

   Answer

   ……

   ……

   ……..

2. Write a short note on later life of Juskin.

   Answer

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   ……..

9.5 LET'S SUM UP

John Ruskin (8 February 1819 – 20 January 1900) was the leading English art critic of the Victorian era, as well as an art patron, draughtsman, watercolourist, a prominent social thinker and

philanthropist. He wrote on subjects as varied as geology, architecture, myth, ornithology, literature, education, botany and political economy.

His writing styles and literary forms were equally varied. He penned essays and treatises, poetry and lectures, travel guides and manuals, letters and even a fairy tale. He also made detailed sketches and paintings of rocks, plants, birds, landscapes, and architectural structures and ornamentation.

The elaborate style that characterised his earliest writing on art gave way in time to plainer language designed to communicate his ideas more effectively. In all of his writing, he emphasised the connections between nature, art and society.

He was hugely influential in the latter half of the 19th century and up to the First World War. After a period of relative decline, his reputation has steadily improved since the 1960s with the publication of numerous academic studies of his work. Today, his ideas and concerns are widely recognised as having anticipated interest in environmentalism, sustainability and craft.

Ruskin first came to widespread attention with the first volume of Modern Painters (1843), an extended essay in defence of the work of J. M. W. Turner in which he argued that the principal role of the artist is "truth to nature." From the 1850s, he championed the Pre-Raphaelites, who were influenced by his ideas. His work increasingly focused on social and political issues. Unto This Last (1860, 1862) marked the shift in emphasis. In 1869, Ruskin became the first Slade Professor of Fine Art at the University of Oxford, where he established the Ruskin School of Drawing. In 1871, he began his monthly "letters to the workmen and

labourers of Great Britain", published under the title ForsClavigera (1871–1884). In the course of this complex and deeply personal work, he developed the principles underlying his ideal society. As a result, he founded the Guild of St George, an organisation that endures today.

9.6 KEYWORDS

Genealogy :a line of descent traced continuously from an ancestor.

Pre-Raphaelites :a member of a group of English 19th-century artists, including Holman Hunt, Millais, and D. G. Rossetti, who consciously sought to emulate the simplicity and sincerity of the work of Italian artists from before the time of Raphael.

Unconversion :not having changed one's beliefs, opinions, etc.

Communist :a person who supports or believes in the principles of communism.

9.7 QUESTIONS TO REVIEW

1. What is role of John Ruskin in Modern Painting?
2. With whom he had established Pre-Raphaelites?
3. For whom Ruskin’s had written “The king of golden river”?

9.8 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- W. G. Collingwood (1893) The Life and Work of John Ruskin 1–2. Methuen. (The Life of John Ruskin, sixth edition (1905).) – Note that the title was slightly changed for the 1900 2nd edition and later editions.
- E. T. Cook (1911) The Life of John Ruskin 1–2. George Allen. (The Life of John Ruskin, vol. 1 of the second edition (1912); The Life of John Ruskin, vol. 2 of the second edition (1912))
- Derrick Leon (1949) Ruskin: The Great Victorian (Routledge & Kegan Paul)
- Tim Hilton (1985) John Ruskin: The Early Years (Yale University Press)
- Tim Hilton (2000) John Ruskin: The Later Years (Yale University Press)

9.9 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check in Progress I

Answer 1 . Check section 9.3

Answer 2 . Check section 9.3

Check in Progress II

Answer 1 . Check section 9.4

Answer 2 . Check section 9.5

UNIT 10: JOHN RUSKIN'S - WORK

STRUCTURE

10.0 OBJECTIVE

In this Unit, you will get to know the depth of John Ruskin's legacy and criticism he faced.

Also you will get to know theme of his work and understanding of color he had.

This unit helps to fulfill following objectives:

- **Legacy of the Ruskin**
- **Ruskin on Color**
- **Theme in the works' of Ruskin**
- **Works of Ruskin**

10.1 INTRODUCTION

John Ruskin was the truly Victorian art critic, social reformer and humanitarian. He was born on 8th February 1809 and died on 20th January 1900, Lancashire. He was well celebrated critic of his time but later his status declined due the harsh criticism of 20thcentury critics. After formal education he was prepared to enter in ministry but his ardent interest in studying nature and painting led him to be a poet. In 1839 he won the esteemed prize for poetry. He wrote on various subject including political economy, literature and architecture etc. his first work "modern painter" published in 1843. Within Victorian period there are two other literary movements as "The pre- Raphaelite 1814-1860 and "Aesthetic and decadence movement 1880-1900. Ruskin as a critic first defended pre- Raphaelite movement in 1851. In 1870 he became professor of art in England. He delivered many lectures and all were attended. Work is taken from his collection of lectures "The crown of wild olive" 1866; the Three Lectures on Work, Traffic, and War.

10.2 RUSKIN'S LEGACY

International

Ruskin's influence reached across the world. Tolstoy described him as "one of the most remarkable men not only of England and of our generation, but of all countries and times" and quoted extensively from him, rendering his thoughts into Russian. Proust not only admired Ruskin but helped translate his works into French. Gandhi wrote of the "magic spell" cast on him by Unto This Last and paraphrased the work in

Gujarati, calling it Sarvodaya, "The Advancement of All". In Japan, RyuzoMikimoto actively collaborated in Ruskin's translation. He commissioned sculptures and sundry commemorative items, and incorporated Ruskinian rose motifs in the jewellery produced by his cultured pearl empire. He established the Ruskin Society of Tokyo and his children built a dedicated library to house his Ruskin collection.

Cannery operation in the Ruskin Cooperative, 1896

A number of utopian socialist Ruskin Colonies attempted to put his political ideals into practice. These communities included Ruskin, Florida, Ruskin, British Columbia and the Ruskin Commonwealth Association, a colony in Dickson County, Tennessee in existence from 1894 to 1899.

Ruskin's work has been translated into numerous languages including, in addition to those already mentioned (Russian, French, Japanese): German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, Czech, Chinese, Welsh, several Indian dialects, and even Esperanto and Gikuyu.

Art, architecture and literature

Theorists and practitioners in a broad range of disciplines acknowledged their debt to Ruskin. Architects including Le Corbusier, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and Walter Gropius incorporated Ruskin's ideas in their work. Writers as diverse as Oscar Wilde, G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats and Ezra Pound felt Ruskin's influence. The American poet Marianne Moore was an enthusiastic Ruskin reader. Art historians and critics, among them Herbert Read,

Roger Fry and Wilhelm Worringer knew Ruskin's work well. Admirers ranged from the British-born American watercolourist and engraver, John William Hill to the sculptor-designer, printmaker and utopianist, Eric Gill. Aside from E. T. Cook, Ruskin's editor and biographer, other leading British journalists influenced by Ruskin include J. A. Spender, and the war correspondent, H. W. Nevinson.

> *No true disciple of mine will ever be a "Ruskinian"! – he will follow, not me, but the instincts of his own soul, and the guidance of its Creator.*
>
> Cook and Wedderburn, 24.357.

Craft and conservation

William Morris and C. R. Ashbee (of the Guild of Handicraft) were keen disciples, and through them Ruskin's legacy can be traced in the arts and crafts movement. Ruskin's ideas on the preservation of open spaces and the conservation of historic buildings and places inspired his friends, Octavia Hill and Hardwicke Rawnsley, to help found the National Trust.[173]

Society, education and sport

Pioneers of town planning, such as Thomas CoglanHorsfall and Patrick Geddes called Ruskin an inspiration and invoked his ideas in justification of their own social interventions. The same is true for the founders of the garden city movement, Ebenezer Howard and Raymond Unwin.

Edward Carpenter's community in Millthorpe, Derbyshire was partly inspired by Ruskin, and John Kenworthy's colony at Purleigh, Essex,

which was briefly a refuge for the Doukhobors, combined Ruskin's ideas and Tolstoy's.

The most prolific collector of Ruskiniana was John Howard Whitehouse, who saved Ruskin's home, Brantwood, and opened it as a permanent Ruskin memorial. Inspired by Ruskin's educational ideals, Whitehouse established Bembridge School, on the Isle of Wight, and ran it along Ruskinian lines. Educationists from William Jolly to Michael Ernest Sadler wrote about and appreciated Ruskin's ideas. Ruskin College, an educational establishment in Oxford originally intended for working men, was named after him by its American founders, Walter Vrooman and Charles A. Beard.

Ruskin's innovative publishing experiment, conducted by his one-time Working Men's College pupil, George Allen, whose business was eventually merged to become Allen & Unwin, anticipated the establishment of the Net Book Agreement.

Ruskin's Drawing Collection, a collection of 1470 works of art he gathered as learning aids for the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, which he founded at Oxford, is at the Ashmolean Museum. The Museum has promoted Ruskin's art teaching, utilising the collection for in-person and online drawing courses.

Pierre de Coubertin, the innovator of the modern Olympic Games, cited Ruskin's principles of beautification, asserting that the games should be "Ruskinized" to create an aesthetic identity that transcended mere championship competitions.

Politics and economics

Ruskin was an inspiration for many Christian socialists, and his ideas informed the work of economists such as William Smart and J. A. Hobson, and the positivist, Frederic Harrison. Ruskin was discussed in university extension classes, and in reading circles and societies formed in his name. He helped to inspire the settlement movement in Britain and the United States. Resident workers at Toynbee Hall such as the future civil servants Hubert Llewellyn Smith and William Beveridge (author of the Report ... on Social Insurance and Allied Services), and the future Prime Minister Clement Attlee acknowledged their debt to Ruskin as they helped to found the British welfare state. More of the British Labour Party's earliest MPs acknowledged Ruskin's influence than mentioned Karl Marx or the Bible. More recently, Ruskin's works have also influenced Phillip Blond and the Red Tory movement.

Ruskin in the 21st century

In 2019, Ruskin200 was inaugurated as a year-long celebration marking the bicentenary of Ruskin's birth.

Admirers and scholars of Ruskin can visit the Ruskin Library at Lancaster University, also Ruskin's home, Brantwood, and the Ruskin Museum, both in Coniston in the English Lake District. All three mount regular exhibitions open to the public all the year round. Barony House in Edinburgh is home to a descendant of John Ruskin. She has designed and hand painted various friezes in honour of her ancestor and it is open to the public. Ruskin's Guild of St George continues his work today, in the fields of education, the arts, crafts, and the rural economy.

Many streets, buildings, organisations and institutions bear his name: The Priory Ruskin Academy in Grantham, Lincolnshire; John Ruskin College, South Croydon; and Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford and Cambridge, which traces its origins to the Cambridge School of Art,

at the foundation of which Ruskin spoke in 1858. Also, the Ruskin Literary and Debating Society, (founded in 1900 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada), the oldest surviving club of its type, and still promoting the development of literary knowledge and public speaking today; and the Ruskin Art Club in Los Angeles, which still exists. In addition, there is the Ruskin Pottery, Ruskin House, Croydon and Ruskin Hall at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ruskin, Florida, United States—site of one of the short-lived American Ruskin Colleges—is named after John Ruskin. There is a mural of Ruskin titled, "Head, Heart And Hands" on a building across from the Ruskin Post Office.

Since 2000, scholarly research has focused on aspects of Ruskin's legacy, including his impact on the sciences; John Lubbock and Oliver Lodge admired him. Two major academic projects have looked at Ruskin and cultural tourism (investigating, for example, Ruskin's links with Thomas Cook); the other focuses on Ruskin and the theatre. The sociologist and media theorist, David Gauntlett, argues that Ruskin's notions of craft can be felt today in online communities such as YouTube and throughout Web 2.0. Similarly, architectural theorist Lars Spuybroek has argued that Ruskin's understanding of the Gothic as a combination of two types of variation, rough savageness and smooth changefulness, opens up a new way of thinking leading to digital and so-called parametric design.

Notable Ruskin enthusiasts include the writers Geoffrey Hill and Charles Tomlinson, and the politicians, Patrick Cormack, Frank Judd, Frank

Field and Tony Benn. In 2006, Chris Smith, Baron Smith of Finsbury, Raficq Abdulla, Jonathon Porritt and Nicholas Wright were among those to contribute to the symposium, There is no wealth but life: Ruskin in the 21st Century. Jonathan Glancey at The Guardian and Andrew Hill at the Financial Times have both written about Ruskin, as has the broadcaster Melvyn Bragg.

Theory and criticism

Ruskin wrote over 250 works, initially art criticism and history, but expanding to cover topics ranging over science, geology, ornithology, literary criticism, the environmental effects of pollution, mythology, travel, political economy and social reform. After his death Ruskin's works were collected in the 39-volume "Library Edition", completed in 1912 by his friends Edward Tyas Cook and Alexander Wedderburn. The range and quantity of Ruskin's writing, and its complex, allusive and associative method of expression, causes certain difficulties. In 1898, John A. Hobson observed that in attempting to summarise Ruskin's thought, and by extracting passages from across his work, "the spell of his eloquence is broken". Clive Wilmer has written, further, that, "The anthologizing of short purple passages, removed from their intended contexts..." is "...something which Ruskin himself detested and which has bedevilled his reputation from the start." Nevertheless, some aspects of Ruskin's theory and criticism require further consideration.

Art and design criticism

Ruskin's early work defended the reputation of J. M. W. Turner. He believed that all great art should communicate an understanding and appreciation of nature. Accordingly, inherited artistic conventions should

be rejected. Only by means of direct observation can an artist, through form and colour, represent nature in art. He advised artists in Modern Painters I to: "go to Nature in all singleness of heart... rejecting nothing, selecting nothing and scorning nothing." By the 1850s. Ruskin was celebrating the Pre-Raphaelites whose members, he said, had formed "a new and noble school" of art that would provide a basis for a thoroughgoing reform of the art world. For Ruskin, art should communicate truth above all things. However, this could not be revealed by mere display of skill, and must be an expression of the artist's whole moral outlook. Ruskin rejected the work of Whistler because he considered it to epitomise a reductive mechanisation of art.

Ruskin's strong rejection of Classical tradition in The Stones of Venice typifies the inextricable mix of aesthetics and morality in his thought: "Pagan in its origin, proud and unholy in its revival, paralysed in its old age... an architecture invented, as it seems, to make plagiarists of its architects, slaves of its workmen, and sybarites of its inhabitants; an architecture in which intellect is idle, invention impossible, but in which all luxury is gratified and all insolence fortified." Rejection of mechanisation and standardisation informed Ruskin's theories of architecture, and his emphasis on the importance of the Medieval Gothic style. He praised the Gothic for what he saw as its reverence for nature and natural forms; the free, unfettered expression of artisans constructing and decorating buildings; and for the organic relationship he perceived between worker and guild, worker and community, worker and natural environment, and between worker and God. Attempts in the 19th century, to reproduce Gothic forms (such as pointed arches), attempts he

had helped inspire, were not enough to make these buildings expressions of what Ruskin saw as true Gothic feeling, faith, and organicism.

For Ruskin, the Gothic style in architecture embodied the same moral truths he sought to promote in the visual arts. It expressed the 'meaning' of architecture—as a combination of the values of strength, solidity and aspiration—all written, as it were, in stone. For Ruskin, creating true Gothic architecture involved the whole community, and expressed the full range of human emotions, from the sublime effects of soaring spires to the comically ridiculous carved grotesques and gargoyles. Even its crude and "savage" aspects were proof of "the liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure." Classical architecture, in contrast, expressed a morally vacuous and repressive standardisation. Ruskin associated Classical values with modern developments, in particular with the demoralising consequences of the industrial revolution, resulting in buildings such as The Crystal Palace, which he criticised. Although Ruskin wrote about architecture in many works over the course of his career, his much-anthologised essay "The Nature of Gothic" from the second volume of The Stones of Venice (1853) is widely considered to be one of his most important and evocative discussions of his central argument.

Ruskin's theories indirectly encouraged a revival of Gothic styles, but Ruskin himself was often dissatisfied with the results. He objected that forms of mass-produced faux Gothic did not exemplify his principles, but showed disregard for the true meaning of the style. Even the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, a building designed with

Ruskin's collaboration, met with his disapproval. The O'Shea brothers, freehand stone carvers chosen to revive the creative "freedom of thought" of Gothic craftsmen, disappointed him by their lack of reverence for the task.

Ruskin's distaste for oppressive standardisation led to later works in which he attacked Laissez-faire capitalism, which he thought was at the root of it. His ideas provided inspiration for the Arts and Crafts Movement, the founders of the National Trust, the National Art Collections Fund, and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

John Ruskin's Study of Gneiss Rock, Glenfinlas, 1853. Pen and ink and wash with Chinese ink on paper, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England.

Ruskin's views on art, wrote Kenneth Clark, "cannot be made to form a logical system, and perhaps owe to this fact a part of their value." Ruskin's accounts of art are descriptions of a superior type that conjure images vividly in the mind's eye.

Clark neatly summarises the key features of Ruskin's writing on art and architecture:

1. Art is not a matter of taste, but involves the whole man. Whether in making or perceiving a work of art, we bring to bear on it feeling, intellect, morals, knowledge, memory, and every other human capacity, all focused in a flash on a single point. Aesthetic man is a concept as false and dehumanising as economic man.
2. Even the most superior mind and the most powerful imagination must found itself on facts, which must be recognised for what they are. The imagination will often reshape them in a way which the

prosaic mind cannot understand; but this recreation will be based on facts, not on formulas or illusions.

3. These facts must be perceived by the senses, or felt; not learnt.
4. The greatest artists and schools of art have believed it their duty to impart vital truths, not only about the facts of vision, but about religion and the conduct of life.
5. Beauty of form is revealed in organisms which have developed perfectly according to their laws of growth, and so give, in his own words, 'the appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function.'
6. This fulfilment of function depends on all parts of an organism cohering and co-operating. This was what he called the 'Law of Help,' one of Ruskin's fundamental beliefs, extending from nature and art to society.
7. Good art is done with enjoyment. The artist must feel that, within certain reasonable limits, he is free, that he is wanted by society, and that the ideas he is asked to express are true and important.
8. Great art is the expression of epochs where people are united by a common faith and a common purpose, accept their laws, believe in their leaders, and take a serious view of human destiny.

Historic preservation

Ruskin's belief in preservation of ancient buildings had a significant influence on later thinking about the distinction between conservation and restoration. Ruskin was a strong proponent of the former, while his contemporary, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, promoted the latter. In The Seven Lamps of Architecture, (1849) Ruskin wrote:

> *Neither by the public, nor by those who have the care of public monuments, is the true meaning of the word restoration understood. It means the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed. Do not let us deceive ourselves in this important matter; it is impossible, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture.*
>
> — Seven Lamps ("The Lamp of Memory") c. 6; Cook and Wedderburn 8.242.

This abhorrence of restoration is in marked contrast to Viollet-le-Duc, who wrote that restoration is a "means to reestablish [a building] to a finished state, which may in fact never have actually existed at any given time."

For Ruskin, the "age" of a building was crucially significant as an aspect in its preservation: "For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, not in its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity."

Social theory

Ruskin attacked orthodox, 19th-century political economy principally on the grounds that it failed to acknowledge complexities of human desires

and motivations (broadly, "social affections"). He began to express such ideas in The Stones of Venice, and increasingly in works of the later 1850s, such as The Political Economy of Art (A Joy For Ever), but he gave them full expression in the influential essays, Unto This Last.

> *Nay, but I choose my physician and my clergyman, thus indicating my sense of the quality of their work. By all means, also, choose your bricklayer; that is the proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labour is, that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum.*
>
> --Cook and Wedderburn, 17.V.34 (1860).

At the root of his theory, was Ruskin's dissatisfaction with the role and position of the worker, and especially the artisan or craftsman, in modern industrial capitalist society. Ruskin believed that the economic theories of Adam Smith, expressed in The Wealth of Nations had led, through the division of labour to the alienation of the worker not merely from the process of work itself, but from his fellow workmen and other classes, causing increasing resentment. (See section, "Stones of Venice", above.)

He argued that one remedy would be to pay work at a fixed rate of wages, because human need is consistent and a given quantity of work

justly demands a certain return. The best workmen would remain in employment because of the quality of their work (a focus on quality growing out of his writings on art and architecture). The best workmen could not, in a fixed-wage economy, be undercut by an inferior worker or product.

In the preface to Unto This Last (1862), Ruskin recommended that the state should underwrite standards of service and production to guarantee social justice. This included the recommendation of government youth-training schools promoting employment, health, and 'gentleness and justice'; government manufactories and workshops; government schools for the employment at fixed wages of the unemployed, with idlers compelled to toil; and pensions provided for the elderly and the destitute, as a matter of right, received honourably and not in shame. Many of these ideas were later incorporated into the welfare state.

10.3 RUSKIN ON COLOUR

Ruskin said of himself: 'It is true that I see colour better than most people, and know a thing or two about rocks and clouds. I am very glad I do.'

Ruskin had the most imaginative and subtle understanding of colour in nature & in painting: no other writer so clearly makes the point that much beautiful colour is not only difficult to analyse but is truly indescribable.

The German Dada-ist and Creator of 'Merz', Kurt Schwitters, thought Ruskin to be the best writer on colour – better than Goethe. Schwitters, a

refugee from Nazi Germany living in Ambleside, and his companion, Edith Thomas, made pilgrimages to The Ruskin Museum to admire Ruskin's mastery of colour.

'No colour harmony is of high order unless it involves indescribable tints. It is the best possible sign of a colour when nobody who sees it knows what to call it, or how to give an idea of it to anyone else. Even among simple hues the most valuable are those which cannot be defined: the most precious purples will look brown beside pure purple and purple beside pure brown; and the most precious green will be called blue if seen beside pure green, and green if seen beside pure blue.'

'The influence of lines on each other is restricted within narrow limits, while the sequences of colour are like those of sound, & susceptible of all the complexity & passion of the most accomplished music.'

'Give some mud off a city crossing, some ochre out of a gravel pit, a whitening, and some coal-dust,

and I will paint you a luminous picture, if you give me time to gradate my mud, and subdue my dust: but though you had the red of the ruby, the blue of the gentian, snow for the light, and amber for the gold, you cannot paint a luminous picture, if you keep the masses of those colours unbroken in purity, and unvarying in depth.'

[The Elements of Drawing]

'The first necessity of beauty in colour is gradation, as the first necessity of beauty in line is curvature . . . the second necessity in colour is mystery or subtlety, as the second necessity in line is softness. Colour ungradated is wholly valueless; colour unmysterious is wholly barbarous. Unless it loses itself & melts away towards other lines, colour has no proper existence, in the noble sense of the word.'

[The Two Paths]

On purple and grey in nature, Ruskin writes:

'. . . among mountains . . . large unbroken spaces of pure violet and purple are introduced in their distances; and even near, by films of cloud passing over the darkness of ravines or forests, blues are produced of the most subtle tenderness; these azures and purples passing into rose-colour of otherwise wholly unattainable delicacy among the upper summits, the blue of the sky being at the same time purer and deeper than in the plains.'

[Modern Painters]

'Look much at the morning and evening sky, and much at simple flowers – dog-roses,wood-hyacinths, violets, poppies, thistles, heather, and such like – as Nature arranges them in the woods and fields. If ever any scientific person tells you that two colours are "discordant", make a note of the two colours, and put them together whenever you can. I have actually heard people say that blue and green were discordant; the two colours which Nature seems to intend never to be separated, and never to be felt, either of them, in its full beauty without the other ! – a peacock's neck, or a blue sky through green leaves, or a blue wave with green lights through it, being precisely the loveliest things, next to clouds at sunrise, in this coloured world of ours.'

[The Elements of Drawing]

'. . . the white [is] precious . . . when white is well managed, it ought to be strangely delicious – tender as well as bright – like inlaid mother of

pearl, or white roses washed in milk. The eye ought to see it for rest, brilliant though it may be; and to feel it as a space of strange, heavenly paleness

in the midst of the flushing of the colours.'

[The Elements of Drawing]

For Ruskin, mountains were 'the beginning and the end of all natural scenery'. Amongst mountains, Ruskin noted 'pre-eminence in mass of colour', 'azures and purples passing into rose-colour,' as well as superb detail, 'the finished inlaying and enamel-work of the colour jewellery on every stone.'

Ruskin's minerals were intended to teach the 'Truths of the Earth: how the land was formed, the structure of a pebble, the aspects of useful metals and building materials as they occur in nature.'

Ruskin also used stones for social teaching. In Ethics of the Dust crystals are shown to have a 'stern code of morals'. In Modern Painters V, slime [in which the elements 'are at helpless war with each other'] is the 'absolute type of impurity,' whereas the sapphire, diamond and opal, in which the atoms are in 'the closest relations possible', represent the exact opposite. Ruskin constructs from this an allegory of 'political economy of competition', [slime and the dragon], opposing 'political economy of co-operation', [diamond and St George]. Pure carbon becomes the exemplar : coal-dust and soot can be transmuted through 'co-operation' into pure diamond.

Ruskin was attracted simultaneously to both form and pattern in stones and rocks, finding his ‘mind . . . divided between its roundness and its veins . . .’ He noted Leonardo’s liking for ‘variegated agate’, and admired Mantegna’s ‘small stones’, pearl-like and scattered in ‘polished profusion’, but could look into a real piece of moss agate and see ‘a mountain in miniature . . . taking moss for forests, and grains of crystal for crags, the surface of a stone . . . is more interesting than the surface of an ordinary hill’.

Ruskin recommended use of ‘the innocent eye’, denouncing preconceptions and lamenting the fact that ‘we are constantly supposing that we see what experience only has shown us, or can show us, to have existence, constantly missing the sight of what we do not know beforehand to be visible’.

[Modern Painters I].

As Ruskin remarks in The Elements of Drawing, ‘On First Practice’, after unconsciously experimenting with and reaching conclusions, in childhood, with ‘the signification of certain colours, we also suppose that we see only what we know . . . Very few people have any idea that sunlighted grass is yellow.’

‘True taste is forever growing, learning, reading, worshipping, laying its hand upon its mouth because it is astonished . . .’

[Modern Painters, 1846]

Ruskin wished to educate the whole population in the difficult business of looking: he wanted

everyone to see the beauty of nature and art. His ideal museums contained collections of art and natural history: visitors were – and are – encouraged to study copies of the great master-pieces

and examples of natural phenomena, the crystals, leaves, flowers, feathers and shells, from which the best design originates. Ruskin's own drawings and watercolours capture moments of perfection, in freeze-frame, to help 'true taste' in its 'growing, learning, reading, worshipping . . .'

Ruskin's botany is concerned with how plants grow, and the implicit moral & social implications & lessons. In Modern Painters V, Ruskin states the law of deflection : 'each leaf falls back gradually from the uppermost'; the law of succession: leaves follow spiralling, geometric patterns in which size expresses order of growth; and the law of resilience : each leaf 'twists round on its stalk' in order to maintain the proper direction of growth.

Moreover, 'any group of four or five leaves . . . consists of a series of forms . . . not only varied in themselves, but every one of them seen under a different condition of foreshortening.'

Ruskin notes how every branch, each leaf, strives to keep out of the way of the others so none is deprived of air, sun and rain. In the plant, individual sacrifice means common life: the tree is monument to the leaf.

Such fellowship is no longer to be found in England, where competition rules and ‘you find every one scrambling for his neighbour’s place’.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I:

1. Write a note on Ruskin Legacy on the International Level.

   Answer……

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2. Write in brief role of colors in work of Ruskin.

   Answer……

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   ……..

10.4 THEMES IN THE WORKS’OF RUSKIN

Artistry and Honesty of the Hand-Crafted

Ruskin studied the architecture of northern Italy. He observed Verona's San Fermo, its arch being "wrought in fine stone, with a band of inlaid red brick, the whole chiselled and fitted with exquisite precision."* Ruskin noted a sameness in the Gothic palaces of Venice, but it was a sameness with a difference. Unlike today's Cape Cods in Suburbia, architectural details were not manufactured or prefabricated in the medieval town he sketched. Ruskin said:

> "...the forms and mode of decoration of all the features were universally alike; not servilely alike, but fraternally; not with the sameness of coins cast from one mould, but with the likeness of the members of one family." — Section XLVI, Chapter VII Gothic Palaces, The Stones of Venice, Volume II
>
> *Section XXXVI, Chapter VII

Rage Against the Machine

Throughout his life, Ruskin compared the industrialized English landscape with the great Gothic architecture of medieval cities. One can only imagine what Ruskin would say about today's engineered wood or vinyl siding. Ruskin said:

> "It is only good for God to create without toil; that which man can create without toil is worthless: machine ornaments are no ornaments at all." — Appendix 17, The Stones of Venice, Volume I

Dehumanization of Man in an Industrial Age

Who today is encouraged to think? Ruskin acknowledged that a man can be trained to produce perfect, quickly made products, just like a machine can do. But do we want humanity to become mechanical beings? How dangerous is thinking in our own commerce and industry today? Ruskin said:

> "Understand this clearly: You can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with

admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool." — Section XI, Chapter VI - The Nature of Gothic, The Stones of Venice, Volume II

10.5 WHAT RUSKIN'S WORK SAYS?

Ruskin delivered his lecture "Work" before the working men's institute, at Camber well. In this speech he addresses the working people there at the institution of working men. This speech is a socio economic criticism on the contemporary life of England. In the very beginning of his speech he tries to bring forward all the harsh realities and destruction of industrial revolution in the life of working class. He talks about the class distinction caused by this industrial revolution. Ruskin takes up some glaring issues of poor people. He doesn't care for that society in which the poor end up noticeably poorer and the rich wealthier. The upper class enjoy by making poor people work for them and to accommodate them. So far as poor working people concern there is no contrast between male ruler of ancient time and modern aristocratic class. He develops several analogies to differentiate between idle men and working men, upper class and lower class. He tries to make distinction between idle poor and idle rich, busy poor and busy rich. He says that there are many beggars,

they are as lazy as they have ten thousand a years and many there are rich men as busier than their servants. Here he gives few recommendations for healthy society as he says if rich idle people observed and admonished the idle rich people, all would be correct. If the busy deprived people took notice and reprimanded idle poor, all would be ok. But unfortunately these classes only look for the faults of other class. Only the depraved poor consider rich as their enemy and want to sack their houses, divide their wealth. Only the dissolute rich people use disgusting language of the wrong doings and follies of the poor people. Here he criticizes the industrious people and points out the tremendous existing distinction among industrious people; the distinction of low and high, lost and won etc. Ruskin draws distinctions between the two classes in four major respective.

- work and play
- poor and rich
- work by hand and brain
- wise work and foolish work

Here he defines the work and play. He says that play is a physical and mental effort, which has no resolute end, self pleasing. On the other hand work is something which has determined end and to earn benefit. He criticizes some of the famous plays of London as cricket, snooker and calls them a game of money making but useless money. He says that it's like the runs of cricket has no use. He says London is a city of play, very hard and unpleasant play. He places shooting and hunting in the category of game; costly and expensive game. He says that those who earn money

by these games are earning money blindly. They do not know why they earn money and what they will do of it. As hunting is a game for gentlemen's for women we have ladies' game of expensive dressing. He gives the example of a brooch at jeweler's shop ago; cost of 3000 pound. He criticizes the costly dressing of English, French and Russian men and women. While on the other hand poor people have no proper dress to wear. And he says this is the first distinction between upper and lower.

For his second distinction between poor and rich, between upper class money donors(Dives) and lower class money acceptors; beggar (Lazarus), he compares two articles from newspaper to illustrate this distinction. He reads the first article which is about the lavishness of a rich Russian at Paris. He spends fifteen franc only for two peaches. Another article is about the dead man beside a dung heap. The Thames police constable finds a dead body of an aged man beside the heap of dung in Shadwell Gap. The cadaver was of a bone picker. He was extremely poor. The inspector finds some bones and a penny in his pocket. Then he goes on talking about the lawful and unlawful bases of wealth. The lawful basis of wealth is that the working man should be paid the handful value of his work and should be given a complete liberty over his possession. If today he does not spend the day after he will spend it. The lazy people who do not work but stay at home only breaking bread in the end will be doubly poor with nothing in possession. Next Ruskin talks about the false basis of distinction. He says such people who earn money on false basis are poor, uneducated, coward and inferior in intellect. Their only purpose is to make money nothing else. He defines the false basis of wealth as those who prefers money than

their duties. Ruskin says that the primary objectives of a soldier are to fight and win battle. The duty of a clergyman is to baptize and preach as the doctor purpose is to cure patient. If they prefer money than their work this is false basis of accumulation wealth. This is a huge distinction and can be compared the distinction between heaven and hell, between life and death for there are no two masters can be served. He compares the duty the first lord as God and fee the second master as devil. If you prefer first you are servant of God and if fee first you are the devil's servant. The next he says such kind of Satan's servant to be found in every nation, who has making money, is principle objective of their life. They are very mean and stupid people. To explain this stupidity he tells about a biblical reference of Judas Iscariot. He was a money lover and like all money lover he deceived Jesus Christ and did not understand him. In modern time there many Judas's bargainers who are fee-first men. The modern capitalists are violating the rights of working class. They take all the production themselves, except laborer's food and that is modern Judas's way of betraying others. The next he talks about the power of capital and the disadvantages of capital in first priority. He says that when the principle object of life becomes the fee or capital of any nation or man, "it is both got ill and spent ill"; and it does hurt in spending and getting both. When money becomes the principle object of life it becomes a curse for the man and nation.

Next Ruskin talks about the work by hand and work by head. Both types of work are important and necessary for the maintenance of life. Everyone should be honest to his work. Rough work can be done by rough men and gentle work can be done by gentle people. The same men cannot do both work at a time. He tells the working men a grand proverb

of Sancho's that nothing is achieved by empty promises or flattery. Both class of working should respect each other work because a man setting in a room with all facilities does have no idea about the work of a man sitting in front of furnace or a driver driving against the wind. But the problem is that the rough work is real and honest and though generally no useful but the gentle work accompanies deceit and cheating. When both works are equally done with honesty then head's work is honorable than hand's work. All work should be done with orderly manner, lawful way and human way not in the doggish way or disorderly. He criticizes the war and recruitment of war once again. We enlist people for labor that kills. We should enlist people for labor that feed. Then he talks about justice in great detail. He emphasizes on justice between people, between working class in every action of life.

In the fourth section of his speech he talks about the wise work and foolish work. Here tries to differentiate between sensible work and non-sensible work in daily occupation. In bold words he says that wise work is that which is done for and work with God. But on the other hand the work which is against God is foolish work. Work with God means to enforce God's law of order and ensure justice. Order and justice are two great human deeds; there are two deeds against that are devil's inequity and devil's disorder. A sensible human must fight against these two Satan's deeds. So far if a person does not fight against means work for him. All wise works can be described by threefold in character. The very first character of wise work is HONEST. Honesty is very much important aspect of wise work. Ruskin implores to the working men to be honest with their work. He says that without honesty we will not be

able to do anything for you and you yourself will fail also to do anything for yourself. All things are vain without honesty. So you must put your heart together. Put your hand in hand and you will win at all.

The second attribute of wise work is USEFUL. Wise work is useful. There must be something in the end of your hard work if nothing comes this is hardest. If all your bees business turns to spiders; this is the unkind result for the worker. It would be the greatest waste for a worker if he commits the waste of his labor. The next of wise work is CHEERFUL. It is as cheerful as child's work. He says that God's kingdom is not to come outside but it lies inside of our hearts. It is within us. If we want to enter into the kingdom of God or bring it into our life we must adopt the character of children. If we want our work to be cheerful we must adopt child's character. These characters of children we want. The first character of a child is that it is Modest. Modest child does not think that it knows everything, always ask question, and wants to know more. Well like the child the first character of a wise and good workman is that he knows very little ask questions and tries to learn more and more. The second important character of a child and wise workman is to be faithful. A good child always perceives that his father knows better what is best for it. it trust him wholly, and this is the genuine characteristic of good and wise working man in any field. They must be faithful to their captains. The third one character of a good child is to be loving and generous. All these characters of a good child is the characters of good and great workers.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II:

3. What are the themes on which Ruskin's work?

   Answer……

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4. What criticism he faced in his art and design work?

   Answer……

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10.6 LET'S SUM UP

The recent essay Work is one from the speeches of Ruskin's book "Crown of wild olive". He delivers this speech to workingmen in the working institution at Camberwell. The essay is the socio –economic criticism of European industrialization and outcome of the industrialization. This essay shows Ruskin's rage against the machine and it dehumanization in an industrial era. When machines were invented and factories and industries were established there was no value for workers working by hand. This industrialization created a competition among industrial people. Ruskin gives value to product by hand and he says the thing created without toil is worthless and "Machine ornaments are no ornaments at all". The industrialization of Europe created class distinctions among people. Here Ruskin talks about to eliminate this class differences by the justice and honesty with the work.

10.7 KEYWORDS

1. Illth: Used by Ruskin as the antithesis of wealth, which he defined as life itself; broadly, where wealth is 'well-being', illth is "ill-being".

2 ForsClavigera : Ruskin gave this title to a series of letters he wrote "to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain"

3 Theoria: : Ruskin's 'theoretic' faculty – theoretic, as opposed to aesthetic – enables a vision of the beautiful as intimating a reality deeper than the everyday, at least in terms of the kind of transcendence generally seen as immanent in things of this world.

10.8 QUESTIONS TO REVIEW

- Why did Ruskin say about Shakespeare that Shakespeare has only heroines no heroes?
- Why is the truth of color inferior to that of light and shade? Are they not one and the same in nature?
- Does Ruskin here chiefly criticize his contemporaries' shortcomings? Is he calling for better style, skill and technique from modern painters in portraying the world?
- What role does religion play in his writing?

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10.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answers to Check in Progress I

Answer 1. Check section 10.3

Answer 2. Check section 10.4

Answers to Check in Progress II

Answer 1. Check section 10.5

Answer 2. Check section 10.6

UNIT 11: JOHN RUSKIN'S – PATHETIC FALLACY

STRUCTURE

11.0 OBJECTIVE

This unit give the insight of the Pathetic Fallacy by John Ruskin. This unit helps to to interpret and analysis of the same. This unit deals with history of the term.

With the help of this unit following objectives may be achieved:

- To analyze the Pathetic Fallacy
- To understand the history of it
- To interpret the theme of the same

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Ruskin's discussion of the pathetic (or emotional) fallacy directly confronts the problems of basing a theory of art upon emotion. He always tried to demonstrate that an art centered on the feelings was not inevitably solipsistic, and this continuing struggle to protect his notions of painting and poetry from the dangers of subjectivity turns out to be as paradigmatic of his age as was the course of his religious belief.

What is Pathatic Fallacy?

As a literary device, pathetic fallacy refers to giving human emotions and actions to animals, plants, and other parts of nature. Examples of this type of attribution include cats that think devious thoughts, a brook that seems happy, and trees that are worried.

British cultural critic John Ruskin created the definition of pathetic fallacy in the mid-1800s in his book Modern Painters. The term sounds derogative, and indeed Ruskin coined it to denounce the sentimentality that he saw as being overused in poetry in the late 18th century. The two terms “pathetic” and “fallacy” have changed quite a bit since Ruskin first joined them. In his day, “pathetic” meant anything pertaining to emotion, while “fallacy” meant “falseness.” Thus, the original definition of pathetic fallacy was simply emotional falseness.

Pathetic fallacy is a phrase used in science to discourage the attribution of emotions to natural phenomena. Thus, it is still pejorative in this field, while it is not negative when used in literature. Scientists consider pathetic fallacies such as “Nature abhors a vacuum” to be inaccurate and overly vague.

Significance of Pathetic Fallacy in Literature

Authors have used pathetic fallacy for many centuries to add poetic expression to their works of literature. One key reason to use pathetic fallacy is to show the narrator or character's own emotions by assigning them to nature. If a character sees the clouds as menacing, this is probably because the character is worried about some upcoming event. If the character is sad, he or she may instead see clouds as melancholic. John Ruskin, the creator of the term, imagined that only people who feel unhinged by extreme emotions such as grief or anger end up projecting their own emotions onto the natural world. Thus, characters use pathetic fallacy examples most often when experiencing intense emotions. Readers may more clearly understand the mental state in which the character is feeling.

Difference between Pathetic Fallacy and Anthropomorphism

Pathetic fallacy and anthropomorphism are related literary devices. Anthropomorphism is the attribution of human form and characteristics to non-human creatures, especially animals and deities. Anthropomorphism can be seen in many legends and children's stories, where animals can speak and reason. Pathetic fallacy, on the other hand, is the projection of human emotions and actions onto plants and animals to reflect the narrator's own emotional state.

In refer to John Ruskin

The assignment of human feelings to inanimate objects, as coined by the Victorian literary critic John Ruskin. For him, a poet's tendency to

project his or her emotions outward onto the workings of the natural world was a kind of false vision. Today the term is used more neutrally, and the phenomenon is usually accepted as an integral part of the poet's craft. It is related to personification and anthropomorphism, but emphasizes the relationship between the poet's emotional state and what he or she sees in the object or objects. For instance, in William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," the speaker sees a field of daffodils "tossing their heads in a sprightly dance," outdoing the nearby lake's sparkling waves with their "glee." The speaker, in times of solitude and introspection, is heartened by memories of the flowers' joy.

CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE I

1. What do you understand by Pathatic fallacy?

   Answer……

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2. Differenciate between Pathetic Fallacy and Anthropomorphism.

   Answer……

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11.2 CONCEPT OF PATHATIC FALLACY: ANLYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

§ 1. GERMAN dullness, and English affectation, have of late much multiplied among us the use of two of the most objectionable words that were ever coined by the troublesomeness of metaphysicians — namely, 'Objective' and' Subjective'.

No words can be more exquisitely, and in all points, useless; and I merely speak of them that I may, at once and for ever, get them out of my way, and out of my reader's. But to get that done, they must be explained.

The word 'Blue', say certain philosophers, means the sensation of colour which the human eye receives in looking at the open sky, or at a bell gentian.

Now, say they farther, as this sensation can only be felt when the eye is turned to the object, and as, therefore, no such sensation is produced by the object when nobody looks at it, therefore the thing, when it is not looked at, is not blue; and thus (say they) there are many qualities of things which depend as much on something else as on themselves. To be sweet, a thing must have a taster; it is only sweet while it is being tasted, and if the tongue had not the capacity of taste, then the sugar would not have the quality of sweetness.

And then they agree that the qualities of things which thus depend upon our perception of them, and upon our human nature as affected by them, shall be called Subjective; and the qualities of things which they always

have, irrespective of any other nature, as roundness or squareness, shall be called Objective.

From these ingenious views the step is very easy to a farther opinion, that it does not much matter what things are in themselves, but only what they are to us; and that the only real truth of them is their appearance to, or effect upon, us. From which position, with a hearty desire for mystification, and much egotism, selfishness, shallowness, and impertinence, a philosopher may easily go so far as to believe, and say, that everything in the world depends upon his seeing or thinking of it, and that nothing, therefore, exists, but what he sees or thinks of.

§ 2. Now, to get rid of all these ambiguities and troublesome words at once, be it observed that the word ' Blue' does 'not' mean the 'sensation' caused by a gentian on the human eye; but it means the 'power' of producing that sensation; and this power is always there, in the thing, whether we are there to experience it or not, and would remain there though there were not left a man on the face of the earth. Precisely in the same way gunpowder has a power of exploding. It will not explode if you put no match to it. But it has always the power of so exploding, and is therefore called an explosive compound, which it very positively and assuredly is, whatever philosophy may say to the contrary.

In like manner, a gentian does not produce the sensation of blueness if you don't look at it. But it has always the power of doing so; its particles being everlastingly so arranged by its Maker. And, therefore, the gentian and the sky are always verily blue, whatever philosophy may say to the

contrary; and if you do not see them blue when you look at them, it is not their fault but yours.

§ 3. Hence I would say to these philosophers: If, instead of using the sonorous phrase, 'It is objectively so,' you will use the plain old phrase, 'It is so;' and if instead of the sonorous phrase, 'It is subjectively so,' you will say, in plain old English, 'It does so,' or 'It seems so to me;' you will, on the whole, be more intelligible to your fellow-creatures: and besides, if you find that a thing which generally 'does so' to other people (as a gentian looks blue to most men), does 'not so to you, on any particular occasion, you will not fall into the impertinence of saying, that the thing is not so, or did not so, but you will say simply (what you will be all the better for speedily finding out), that something is the matter with you. If you find that you cannot explode the gunpowder, you will not declare that all gunpowder is subjective, and all explosion imaginary, but you will simply suspect and declare yourself to be an ill-made match. Which, on the whole, though there may be a distant chance of a mistake about it, is, nevertheless, the wisest conclusion you can come to until farther experiment.

§ 4. Now, therefore, putting these tiresome and absurd words quite out of our way, we may go on at our ease to examine the point in question—namely, the difference between the ordinary, proper, and true appearances of things to us; and the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy; false appearances, I say, as being entirely unconnected with any real power or character in the object, and only imputed to it by us.

For instance —

The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould
Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold.

This is very beautiful, and yet very untrue. The crocus is not a spendthrift, but a hardy plant; its yellow is not gold, but saffron. How is it that we enjoy so much the having it put into our heads that it is anything else than a plain crocus?

It is an important question. For, throughout our past reasonings about art, we have always found that nothing could be good, or useful, or ultimately pleasurable, which was untrue. But here is something pleasurable in written poetry which is nevertheless untrue. And what is more, if we think over our favourite poetry, we shall find it full of this kind of fallacy, and that we like it all the more for being so.

§ 5. It will appear also, on consideration of the matter, that this fallacy is of two principal kinds. Either, as in this case of the crocus, it is the fallacy of wilful fancy, which involves no real expectation that it will be believed; or else it is a fallacy caused by an excited state of the feelings, making us, for the time, more or less irrational. Of the cheating of the fancy we shall have to speak presently; but, in this chapter, I want to examine the nature of the other error, that which the mind admits when affected strongly by emotion. Thus, for instance, in Alton Locke—

They rowed her in across the rolling foam—

The cruel, crawling foam.

The foam is not cruel, neither does it crawl. The state of mind which attributes to it these characters of a living creature is one in which the reason is unhinged by grief. All violent feelings have the same effect. They produce in us a falseness in all our impressions of external things, which I would generally characterize as the 'Pathetic Fallacy'.

§ 6. Now we are in the habit of considering this fallacy as eminently a character of poetical description, and the temper of mind in which we allow it as one eminently poetical, because passionate. But, I believe, if we look well into the matter, that we shall find the greatest poets do not often admit this kind of falseness — that it is only the second order of poets who much delight in it. (1)

Thus, when Dante describes the spirits falling from the bank of Acheron' as dead leaves flutter from a bough', he gives the most perfect image possible of their utter lightness, feebleness, passiveness, and scattering agony of despair, without, however, for an instant losing his own clear perception that 'these' are souls, and those are leaves; he makes no confusion of one with the other. But when Coleridge speaks of

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,

That dances as often as dance it can,

he has a morbid, that is to say, a so far false, idea about the leaf: he fancies a life in it, and will, which there are not; confuses its powerlessness with choice, its fading death with merriment, and the wind that shakes it with music. Here, however, there is some beauty, even in

the morbid passage; but take an instance in Homer and Pope. Without the knowledge of Ulysses, Elpenor, his youngest follower, has fallen from an upper chamber in the Circean palace, and has been left dead, unmissed by his leader, or companions, in the haste of their departure. They cross the sea to the Cimmerian land; and Ulysses summons the shades from Tartarus. The first which appears is that of the lost Elpenor. Ulysses, amazed, and in exactly the spirit of bitter and terrified lightness which is seen in Hamlet, (2) addresses the spirit with the simple, startled words:—

Elpenor! How camest thou under the shadowy darkness? Hast thou come faster on foot than I in my black ship?

Which Pope renders thus:—

0, say, what angry power Elpenor led
To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoined,
Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?

I sincerely hope the reader finds no pleasure here, either in the nimbleness of the sail, or the laziness of the wind! And yet how is it that these conceits are so painful now, when they have been pleasant to us in the other instances?

§ 7. For a very simple reason. They are not a 'pathetic' fallacy at all, for they are put into the mouth of the wrong passion — a passion which never could possibly have spoken them — agonized curiosity. Ulysses wants to know the facts of the matter; and the very last thing his mind could do at the moment would be to pause, or suggest in anywise what

was 'not' a fact. The delay in the first three lines, and conceit in the last, jar upon us instantly, like the most frightful discord in music. No poet of true imaginative power could possibly have written the passage. (3)

Therefore, we see that the spirit of truth must guide us in some sort, even in our enjoyment of fallacy. Coleridge's fallacy has no discord in it, but Pope's has set our teeth on edge. Without farther questioning, I will endeavour to state the main bearings of this matter.

§ 8. The temperament which admits the pathetic fallacy, is, as I said above, that of a mind and body in some sort too weak to deal fully with what is before them or upon them; borne away, or over-clouded, or over-dazzled by emotion; and it is a more or less noble state, according to the force of the emotion which has induced it. For it is no credit to a man that he is not morbid or inaccurate in his perceptions, when he has no strength of feeling to warp them; and it is in general a sign of higher capacity and stand in the ranks of being, that the emotions should be strong enough to vanquish, partly, the intellect, and make it believe what they choose. But it is still a grander condition when the intellect also rises, till it is strong enough to assert its rule against, or together with, the utmost efforts of the passions; and the whole man stands in an iron glow, white hot, perhaps, but still strong, and in no wise evaporating; even if he melts, losing none of his weight.

So, then, we have the three ranks: the man who perceives rightly, because he does not feel, and to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose, because he does not love it. Then, secondly, the man who

perceives wrongly, because he feels, and to whom the primrose is anything else than a primrose: a star, or a sun, or a fairy's shield, or a forsaken maiden. And then, lastly, there is the man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings, and to whom the primrose is for ever nothing else than itself—a little flower, apprehended in the very plain and leafy fact of it, whatever and how many so ever the associations and passions may be, that crowd around it. And, in general, these three classes may be rated in comparative order, as the men who are not poets at all, and the poets of the second order, and the poets of the first; only however great a man may be, there are always some subjects which 'ought' to throw him off his balance; some, by which his poor human capacity of thought should be conquered, and brought into the inaccurate and vague state of perception, so that the language of the highest inspiration becomes broken, obscure, and wild in metaphor, resembling that of the weaker man, overborne by weaker things.

§ 9. And thus, in full, there are four classes: the men who feel nothing, and therefore see truly; the men who feel strongly, think weakly, and see untruly (second order of poets); the men who feel strongly, think strongly, and see truly (first order of poets); and the men who, strong as human creatures can be, are yet submitted to influences stronger than they, and see in a sort untruly, because what they see is inconceivably above them. This last is the usual condition of prophetic inspiration.

§ 10. I separate these classes, in order that their character may be clearly understood; but of course they are united each to the other by imperceptible transitions, and the same mind, according to the influences

to which it is subjected, passes at different times into the various states. Still, the difference between the great and less man is, on the whole, chiefly in this point of 'alterability'. That is to say, the one knows too much, and perceives and feels too much of the past and future, and of all things beside and around that which immediately affects him, to be in anywise shaken by it. His mind is made up; his thoughts have an accustomed current; his ways are steadfast; it is not this or that new sight which will at once unbalance him. He is tender to impression at the surface, like a rock with deep moss upon it; but there is too much mass of him to be moved. The smaller man, with the same degree of sensibility, is at once carried off his feet; he wants to do something he did not want to do before; he views all the universe in a new light through his tears; he is gay or enthusiastic, melancholy or passionate, as things come and go to him. Therefore the high creative poet might even be thought, to a great extent, impassive (as shallow people think Dante stern), receiving indeed all feelings to the full, but having a great centre of reflection and knowledge in which he stands serene, and watches the feeling, as it were, from far off.

Dante, in his most intense moods, has entire command of himself, and can look around calmly, at all moments, for the image or the word that will best tell what he sees to the upper or lower world. But Keats and Tennyson, and the poets of the second order, are generally themselves subdued by the feelings under which they write, or, at least, write as choosing to be so, and therefore admit certain expressions and modes of thought which are in some sort diseased or false.

§ 11. Now so long as we see that the 'feeling' is true, we pardon, or are even pleased by, the confessed fallacy of sight which it induces: we are pleased, for instance, with those lines of Kingsley's, above quoted, not because they fallaciously describe foam, but because they faithfully describe sorrow. But the moment the mind of the speaker becomes cold, that moment every such expression becomes untrue, as being for ever untrue in the external facts. And there is no greater baseness in literature than the habit of using these metaphorical expressions in cold blood. An inspired writer, in full impetuosity of passion, may speak wisely and truly of 'raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame'; but it is only the basest writer who cannot speak of the sea without talking of 'raging waves',' remorseless floods', 'ravenous billows', etc.; and it is one of the signs of the highest power in a writer to check all such habits of thought, and to keep his eyes fixed firmly on the 'pure fact', out of which if any feeling comes to him or his reader, he knows it must be a true one.

To keep to the waves, I forget who it is who represents a man in despair, desiring that his body may be cast into the sea,

Whose changing mound, and foam that passed away,
Might mock the eye that questioned where I lay.

Observe, there is not a single false, or even overcharged, expression. 'Mound' of the sea wave is perfectly simple and true; 'changing' is as familiar as may be; 'foam that passed away', strictly literal; and the whole line descriptive of the reality with a degree of accuracy which I know not any other verse, in the range of poetry, that altogether equals. For most people have not a distinct idea of the clumsiness and massiveness of a

large wave. The word 'wave' is used too generally of ripples and breakers, and bendings in light drapery or grass: it does not by itself convey a perfect image. But the word 'mound' is heavy, large, dark, definite; there is no mistaking the kind of wave meant, nor missing the sight of it. Then the term 'changing' has a peculiar force also. Most people think of waves as rising and falling. But if they look at the sea carefully, they will perceive that the waves do not rise and fall. They change. Change both place and form, but they do not fall; one wave goes on, and on, and still on; now lower, now higher, now tossing its mane like a horse, now building itself together like a wall, now shaking, now steady, but still the same wave, till at last it seems struck by something, and changes, one knows not how, — becomes another wave.

The close of the line insists on this image, and paints it still more perfectly, — 'foam that passed away'. Not merely melting, disappearing, but passing on, out of sight, on the career of the wave. Then, having put the absolute ocean fact as far as he may before our eyes, the poet leaves us to feel about it as we may, and to trace for ourselves the opposite fact,—the image of the green mounds that do not change, and the white and written stones that do not pass away; and thence to follow out also the associated images of the calm life with the quiet grave, and the despairing life with the fading foam:

Let no man move his bones.

As for Samaria, her king is cut off like the foam upon the water.

But nothing of this is actually told or pointed out, and the expressions, as they stand, are perfectly severe and accurate, utterly uninfluenced by the

firmly governed emotion of the writer. Even the word 'mock' is hardly an exception, as it may stand merely for 'deceive' or 'defeat', without implying any impersonation of the waves.

§ 12. It may be well, perhaps, to give one or two more instances to show the peculiar dignity possessed by all passages which thus limit their expression to the pure fact, and leave the hearer to gather what he can from it. Here is a notable one from the Iliad. Helen, looking from the Scaean gate of Troy over the Grecian host, and telling Priam the names of its captains, says at last:

I see all the other dark-eyed Greeks; but two I cannot see, — Castor and Pollux, — whom one mother bore with me. Have they not followed from fair Lacedaemon, or have they indeed come in their sea-wandering ships, but now will not enter into the battle of men, fearing the shame and the scorn that is in Me?

Then Homer:

So she spoke. But them, already, the life-giving earth possessed, there in Lacedaemon, in the dear fatherland.

Note, here, the high poetical truth carried to the extreme. The poet has to speak of the earth in sadness, but he will not let that sadness affect or change his thoughts of it. No; though Castor and Pollux be dead, yet the earth is our mother still, fruitful, life-giving. These are the facts of the thing. I see nothing else than these. Make what you will of them.

§ 13. Take another very notable instance from Casimir de la Vigne's terrible ballad, La Toilette de Constance. I must quote a few lines out of it here and there, to enable the reader who has not the book by him, to understand its close.

Vite, Anna, vite; au miroir
Plus vite, Anna. L'heure s'avance,
Et je vais au bal ce soir
Chez l'ambassadeur de France.
Y pensez-vous, ils sent fanés, ces noeuds,
Ils sont d'hier, mon Dieu, comine tout passe!
Que du réseau qui retient mes cheveux
Les glands d'azur retombent avec grâe.
Plus haut! Plus bas! Vous ne comprenez rien!
Que sur mon front ce saphir étincelle:
Vous me piquez, maladroite. Ah, c'est bien,
Bien, — chère Anna! Je t'aime, je suis belle.
Celui qu'en vain je voudrais oublier
(Anna, ma robe) il y sera, j'espère.
(Ah, fi! profane, est-ce là mon collier?
Quoi ces grains d'or bénits par le Saint-Père!)
Il y sera; Dieu, s'il pressait ma main,
En y pensant, à peine je respire;
Père Anselmo doit m'entendre demain,
Comment ferai-je, Anna, pour tout lui dire?
Vite un coup d'oeil au miroir,
Le dernier. — J'ai l'assurance

Qu'on va m'adorer ce soir

Chez l'ambassadeur de France.

Près du foyer, Constance s'admirait.

Dieu! sur sa robe il vole une étincelle!

Au feu! Courez! Quand l'espoir l'enivrait,

Tout perdre ainsi! Quoi! Mourir, — et si belle

L'horrible feu ronge avec volupté

Ses bras, son sein, et l'entoure, et s'eleve,

Et sans pitié dévore sa beauté,

Ses dix-huit ans, hélas, et son dour rêve!

Adieu, bal, plaisir, amour!

On disait, Pauvre Constance!

Et on dansait, jusqu'au jour,

Chez l'ambassadeur de France.

Yes, that is the fact of it. Right or wrong, the poet does not say. What you may think about it, he does not know. He has nothing to do with that. There lie the ashes of the dead girl in her chamber. There they danced, till the morning, at the Ambassador's of France. Make what you will of it.

If the reader will look through the ballad, of which I have quoted only about the third part, he will find that there is not, from beginning to end of it, a single poetical (so called) expression, except in one stanza. The girl speaks as simple prose as may be; there is not a word she would not have actually used as she was dressing. The poet stands by, impassive as a statue, recording her words just as they come. At last the doom seizes her, and in the very presence of death, for an instant, his own emotions

conquer him. He records no longer the facts only, but the facts as they seem to him. The fire gnaws with 'voluptuousness—without pity'. It is soon past. The fate is fixed for ever; and he retires into his pale and crystalline atmosphere of truth. He closes all with the calm veracity,

They said, 'Poor Constance!'

§ 14. Now in this there is the exact type of the consummate poetical temperament. For, be it clearly and constantly remembered, that the greatness of a poet depends upon the two faculties, acuteness of feeling, and command of it. A poet is great, first in proportion to the strength of his passion, and then, that strength being granted, in proportion to his government of it; there being, however, always a point beyond which it would be inhuman and monstrous if he pushed this government, and, therefore, a point at which all feverish and wild fancy becomes just and true. Thus the destruction of the kingdom of Assyria cannot be contemplated firmly by a prophet of Israel. The fact is too great, too wonderful. It overthrows him, dashes him into a confused element of dreams. All the world is, to his stunned thought, full of strange voices.

'Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, "Since thou art gone down to the grave, no feller is come up against us." 'So, still more, the thought of the presence of Deity cannot be borne without this great astonishment. The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.'

§ 15. But by how much this feeling is noble when it is justified by the strength of its cause, by so much it is ignoble when there is not cause

enough for it; and beyond all other ignobleness is the mere affectation of it, in hardness of heart. Simply bad writing may almost always, as above noticed, be known by its adoption of these fanciful metaphorical expressions, as a sort of current coin; yet there is even a worse, at least a more harmful, condition of writing than this, in which such expressions are not ignorantly and feelinglessly caught up, but, by some master, skilful in handling, yet insincere, deliberately wrought out with chill and studied fancy; as if we should try to make an old lava stream look red-hot again, by covering it with dead leaves, or white-hot, with hoar-frost.

When Young is lost in veneration, as he dwells on the character of a truly good and holy man, he permits himself for a moment to be overborne by the feeling so far as to exclaim:

Where shall I find him? angels, tell me where.
You know him; he is near you; point him out.
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?

This emotion has a worthy cause, and is thus true and right. But now hear the cold-hearted Pope say to a shepherd girl:

Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade;
Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade;
Your praise the birds shall chant in every grove,
And winds shall waft it to the powers above.
But would you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,
The wondering forests soon should dance again;

The moving mountains hear the powerful call,

And headlong streams hang, listening, in their fall.

This is not, nor could it for a moment be mistaken for, the language of passion. It is simple falsehood uttered by hypocrisy; definite absurdity, rooted in affectation, and coldly asserted in the teeth of nature and fact. Passion will indeed go far in deceiving itself; but it must be a strong passion, not the simple wish of a lover to tempt his mistress to sing. Compare a very closely parallel passage in Wordsworth, in which the lover has lost his mistress

Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid,

When thus his moan he made:—

'Oh move, thou cottage, from behind yon oak,

Or let the ancient tree uprooted lie,

That in some other way you smoke

May mount into the sky.

If still behind you pine-tree's ragged bough,

Headlong, the waterfall must come,

Oh, let it, then, be dumb —

Be anything, sweet stream, but that which thou art now.'

Here is a cottage to be moved, if not a mountain, and a waterfall to be silent, if it is not to hang listening: but with what different relation to the mind that contemplates them! Here, in the extremity of its agony, the soul cries out wildly for relief, which at the same moment it partly knows to be impossible, but partly believes possible, in a vague impression that a miracle might be wrought to give relief even to a less sore distress, — that nature is kind, and God is kind, and that grief is strong: it knows not

well what is possible to such grief. To silence a stream, to move a cottage wall, — one might think it could do as much as that!

§ 16. I believe these instances are enough to illustrate the main point I insist upon respecting the pathetic fallacy, — that so far as it is a fallacy, it is always the sign of a morbid state of mind, and comparatively of a. weak one. Even in the most inspired prophet it is a sign of the incapacity of his human sight or thought to bear what has been revealed to it. In ordinary poetry, if it is found in the thoughts of the poet himself, it is at once a sign of his belonging to the inferior school; if in the thoughts of the characters imagined by him, it is right or wrong according to the genuineness of the emotion from which it springs; always, however, implying necessarily 'some' degree of weakness in the character.

Take two most exquisite instances from master hands. The Jessy of Shenstone, and the Ellen of Wordsworth, have both been betrayed and deserted. Jessy, in the course of her most touching complaint, says:

If through the garden's flowery tribes I stray,
Where bloom the jasmines that could once allure,
'Hope not to find delight in us,' they say,
For we are spotless, Jessy; we are pure.'
Compare with this some of the words of Ellen:

'Ah, why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge,
And nature, that is kind in woman's breast,

And reason, that in man is wise and good,

And fear of Him who is a righteous Judge,—

Why do not these prevail for human life,

To keep two hearts together, that began

Their springtime with one love, and that have need

Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet

To grant, or be received; while that poor bird—

0, come and hear him! Thou who hast to me

Been faithless, hear him; —though a lowly creature,

One of God's simple children, that yet know not

The Universal Parent, 'how' he sings! As if be wished the firmament of heaven

Should listen, and give back to him the voice

Of his triumphant constancy and love.

The proclamation that he makes, how far

His darkness doth transcend our fickle light.'

The perfection of both these passages, as far as regards truth and tenderness of imagination in the two poets, is quite insuperable. But, of the two characters imagined, Jessy is weaker than Ellen, exactly in so far as something appears to her to be in nature which is not. The flowers do not really reproach her. God meant them to comfort her, not to taunt her; they would do so if she saw them rightly.

Ellen, on the other hand, is quite above the slightest erring emotion. There is not the barest film of fallacy in all her thoughts. She reasons as calmly as if she did not feel. And, although the singing of the bird

suggests to her the idea of its desiring to be heard in heaven, she does not for an instant admit any veracity in the thought.

'As if,' she says, — ' I know he means nothing of the kind; but it does verily seem as if.'

The reader will find, by examining the rest of the poem, that Ellen's character is throughout consistent in this clear though passionate strength. (4)

It is, I hope, now made clear to the reader in all respects that the pathetic fallacy is powerful only so far as it is pathetic, feeble so far as it is fallacious, and, therefore, that the dominion of Truth is entire, over this, as over every other natural and just state of the human mind.

11.3 HISTORY OF THE PHRASE

Ruskin coined the term "pathetic fallacy" to attack the sentimentality that was common to the poetry of the late 18th century, and which was rampant among poets including Burns, Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. Wordsworth supported this use of personification based on emotion by claiming that "objects ... derive their influence not from properties inherent in them ... but from such as are bestowed upon them by the minds of those who are conversant with or affected by these objects." However Tennyson, in his own poetry, began to refine and diminish such expressions, and introduced an emphasis on what might be called a more scientific comparison of objects in terms of sense perception. The old order was beginning to be replaced by the new just

as Ruskin addressed the matter, and the use of the pathetic fallacy markedly began to disappear. As a critic, Ruskin proved influential and is credited with having helped to refine poetic expression.

The meaning of the term has changed significantly from the idea Ruskin had in mind. Ruskin's original definition is "emotional falseness", or the falseness that occurs to one's perceptions when influenced by violent or heightened emotion. For example, when a person is unhinged by grief, the clouds might seem darker than they are, or perhaps mournful or perhaps even uncaring.

There have been other changes to Ruskin's phrase since he coined it: The particular definition that Ruskin used for the word fallacy has since become obsolete. The word fallacy nowadays is defined as an example of a flawed logic, but for Ruskin and writers of the 19th century and earlier, "fallacy" could be used to mean simply a "falseness". In the same way, the word pathetic simply meant for Ruskin "emotional" or "pertaining to emotion".

Setting aside Ruskin's original intentions, and despite this linguistic 'rocky road', the two-word phrase has survived, though with a significantly altered meaning.

CHECK IN PROGRESS II

1. Give the analysis in brief of Pathetic Fallacy.

Answer……

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2. Write a note on History of the Phrase.

Answer……

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11.4 LET'S SUM UP

The phrase pathetic fallacy is a literary term for the attribution of human emotion and conduct to things found in nature that are not human. It is a kind of personification that occurs in poetic descriptions, when, for example, clouds seem sullen, when leaves dance, or when rocks seem indifferent. The British cultural critic John Ruskin coined the term in his book, Modern Painters (1843–60).

11.5 KEYWORDS

Anthropomorphism,: the attribution of human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities.

Animism:the religious belief that objects, places and creatures possess spiritual essence.

Figure of speech,:an expression that uses words to mean something different from their ordinary meaning:

Morgan's Canon,:the idea that it can be fallacious to interpret animal activity in terms of human psychology.

11.6 QUESTION TO REVIEW

- What John Ruskin's explain in Pathatic Fallacy?
- Discuss the history of the term pathetic Fallacy
- Identify few of the examples of pathetic fallacy

11.7 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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11.8 ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS

Answers to Check in Progress I

Answer 1. Check in topic 11.2

Answer 2. Check in topic 11.2

Answers to Check in Progress II

Answer 1. Check in topic 11.3

Answer 2. Check in topic 11.4

UNIT 12: MATHEW ARNOLD'S :LIFE

STRUCTURE

12.0 OBJECTIVE

By the end of this Unit, You will get to know the Inspirational life of Mathew Arnold. This chapter focuses on the following aspects of Arnold's Life:

- **Early Life**
- **Marriage and Career**
- **Literary career**
- **Arnold as a critic**

- **Death**
- **Arnold as an emerging poet**
- **Arnold's character**

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Mathew Arnold is an important critic of English Literature. Before him, English criticism was in fog, and whatever criticism we find, is more based on personal notions than on any consistent methods. Dryden is regarded as the first critic of English, but his criticism is based on personal notion-sympathy and knowledge rather than on any formula. It is the reason that even in his age, the authority of Aristotle remained unquestioned. The romantic critics besides their rich criticism were more lost in their theory of imagination and lo e for metaphysis. It is in Arnold that English literature could have a critic of real nature, who laid down certain principles following which poetry could be criticized. Herbert Paul very pertinently remarks, " Mr. Arnold did not merely criticize books himself. He taught others how to criticize. He laid down principles; if he did not always keep the principles he laid down. Nobody, after reading " Essays in Criticism " has any excuse for not being a critic. "

Like the work of all clear thinkers, Arnold's writing proceeds from a few governing and controlling criticism principles. It is natural, therefore, that we should o* Society, find in his criticism of society a repetition of the and Rellideas already encountered in his literary criticism. Of these, the chief is that of "culture," the theme of his most typical book. Culture

and anarchy, published in 1869. Indeed, it is interesting to see how closely related his doctrine of culture is to his theory of criticism, already expounded. True criticism, we have seen, consists in an "endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." The shortest definition that Arnold gives of culture is " a study of perfection."

But how may one pursue perfection ? Evidently by putting oneself in the way of learning the best that is known and thought, and by making it a part of oneself. The relation of the critic to culture thereupon becomes evident. He is the appointed apostle of culture. He undertakes as his duty in life to seek out and to minister to others the means of self-improvement, discriminating the evil and the specious from the good and the genuine, rendering the former contemptible and the latter attractive. But in a degree all seekers after culture must be critics also. Both pursue the same objects, the best that is thought and known. Both, too, must propagate it; for culture consists in general expansion, and the last degree of personal perfection is attained only when shared with one's fellows.

The critic and the true man of culture are, therefore, atbottom, the same, though Arnold does not specificallypoint this out. But the two ideals united in himself directall his endeavor. As a man of culture he is intent chieflyupon the acquisition of the means of perfection; as a critic, upon their elucidation and propagation.

This sufficiently answers the charge of selfishness that is frequently brought against the gospel of culture. It would never have been brought if its critics had not perversely shut their eyes to Arnold's express

statements that perfection consists in **a general expansion"; that it " is not possible while the individual remains isolated " ; that one of its characteristics is " increased sympathy," as well as " increased sweetness, increased light, increased life."

The other common charge of dilettantism, brought by such opponents as Professor Huxley and Mr. Frederic Harrison, deserves hardly more consideration. Arnold has made it sufficiently clear that he does not mean by culture " a smattering of Greek and Latin," but a deepening and strengthening of our whole spiritual nature by all the means at our command. No other ideal of the century is so satisfactory as this of Arnold's. The ideal of social democracy, as commonly followed, tends, as Arnold has pointed out, to exalt the average man, while culture exalts man at his best. The scientific ideal, divorced from a general cultural aim, appeals " to a limited faculty and not the whole man." The religious ideal, too exclusively cultivated, dwarfs the sense of beauty and is marked by narrowness. Culture includes religion as its most valuable component, but goes beyond it.

The fact that Arnold, in his social as in his literary criticism, laid the chief stress upon the intellectual rather than the moral elements of culture, was due to his constant desire to adapt his thought to the condition of hi sage and nation. The prevailing characteristics of the English people he believed to be energy and honesty. The sehe contrasts with the chief characteristics of the Athenians, openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence. As the best type of culture, that is, of perfected humanity, for the Englishman to emulate, he turns, therefore, to Greece

in the time of Sophocles. Greece, to be sure, failed because of the lack of that very Hebraism which England possesses and to which she owes her strength. But if to this strength of moral fiber could be added the openness of mind, flexibility of intelligence, and love of beauty which distinguished the Greeks in their best period, a truly grea t civilization would result. That this ideal will in the end revail, he has little doubt. The strain of sadness, melancholy, and depression which appears in Arnold's poetry is rigidly excluded from his prose. Both despondency and violence are forbidden to the believer in culture. ** We got he way the human race is going," he says at the close of Culture and Anarchy.

Arnold's incursion into the field of religion has been looked upon by many as a mistake. Religion is with most people a matter of closer interest and is less discussable than literary criticism. Literature and Dogma aroused much antagonism on this account.]\Moreover, it cannot be denied that Arnold was not well enough equipped in this field to prevent him from making a good many mistakes. But that the upshot of his religious teaching is whole some and edifying can hardly be denied. Arnold's spirit is a deeply religious one, and his purpose in his religious books was to save what was valuable in religion by separating it from what was non-essential. He thought of himself always as a friend, not as an enemy, of religion purpose of all his religious writings, of which St. Protestantism, 1870, and Literature and Dogma, 187cJ,are the most important, is the same, to show the naturaltruth of religion and to strengthen its position by freeing it from dependence on dogma and historical evidence, and especially to make clear the essential value of Christianity. Conformity with reason, true spirituality, and freedom from

materialistic interpretation were for him the bases of sound faith. That Arnold's religious writing is thoroughly spiritual in its aim and tendency has, I think ,never been questioned, and we need only examine some of his leading definitions to become convinced of this. Thus, religion is described as " that which binds and holds us to 'the practice of righteousness " ; faith is the " power, preeminently, of holding fast to an unseen power of goodness " ; God is " the power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness " ; immortality is a union of one's life with an eternal order that never dies. Arnold did not without reluctance enter into religious controversy, but when on centered he did his best to make order and reason prevail there. His attitude is well stated in an early essay not since reprinted: —"And you are masters in Israel, and know not these things; and you require a voice from the world of literature to tell them to you! Those who ask nothing better than to remain silent on such topics, who have to quit their own sphere to speak of them, who cannot touch them without being reminded that they survive those who touched them with far different power, you compel, in the mere interest of letters, of intelligence, of general culture, to proclaim truths which it was your function to have made familiar. And when you have thus forced the very stones to cry out, and the dumb to speak, you call them singular because they know these truths, and arrogant because they declare them! " ^In political discussion as in all other forms of criticism Arnold aimed at disinterestedness. " I am a Liberal," he says in the Introduction to Culture and Anarchy, "yet Iam a Liberal tempered by experience, reflection, and self-renouncement." In the last condition he believed that his particular strength lay. " I do not wish to see men of culture entrusted with power." In his coolness and freedom from bitterness is to be found his chief

superiority to his more violent contemporaries. This saved him from magnifying the faults inseparable from the social movements of his day. In contrast with Carlyle he retains to the end a sympathy with the advance of democracy and a belief in the principles of liberty and equality, while not blinded to the weaknesses of Liberalism. Political discussion in the hands of its express partisans is always likely to become violent nd one-sided. This violence and one-sidedness Arnold believes it the work of criticism to temper, or as he expresses it, in Culture and Anarchy, " Culture is the eternal opponent of the two things which are the signal marks of Jacobinism, — its fierceness and its addiction to an abstract system."

1822–1888

Although remembered now for his elegantly argued critical essays, Matthew Arnold, born in Laleham, Middlesex, on December 24, 1822, began his career as a poet, winning early recognition as a student at the Rugby School where his father, Thomas Arnold, had earned national acclaim as a strict and innovative headmaster. Arnold also studied at Balliol College, Oxford University. In 1844, after completing his undergraduate degree at Oxford, he returned to Rugby as a teacher of classics. After marrying in 1851, Arnold began work as a government school inspector, a grueling position which nonetheless afforded him the opportunity to travel throughout England and the Continent. Throughout his thirty-five years in this position Arnold developed an interest in education, an interest which fed into both his critical works and his poetry. Empedocles on Etna (1852) and Poems (1853) established

Arnold's reputation as a poet and in 1857 he was offered a position, which he accepted and held until 1867, as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. Arnold became the first professor to lecture in English rather than Latin. During this time Arnold wrote the bulk of his most famous critical works, Essays in Criticism (1865) and Culture and Anarchy (1869), in which he sets forth ideas that greatly reflect the predominant values of the Victorian era.

Meditative and rhetorical, Arnold's poetry often wrestles with problems of psychological isolation. In "To Marguerite—Continued," for example, Arnold revises Donne's assertion that "No man is an island," suggesting that we "mortals" are indeed "in the sea of life enisled." Other well-known poems, such as "Dover Beach," link the problem of isolation with what Arnold saw as the dwindling faith of his time. Despite his own religious doubts, a source of great anxiety for him, in several essays Arnold sought to establish the essential truth of Christianity. His most influential essays, however, were those on literary topics. In "The Function of Criticism" (1865) and "The Study of Poetry" (1880) Arnold called for a new epic poetry: a poetry that would address the moral needs of his readers, "to animate and ennoble them." Arnold's arguments, for a renewed religious faith and an adoption of classical aesthetics and morals, are particularly representative of mainstream Victorian intellectual concerns. His approach—his gentlemanly and subtle style—to these issues, however, established criticism as an art form, and has influenced almost every major English critic since, including T. S. Eliot, Lionel Trilling, and Harold Bloom. Though perhaps less obvious, the tremendous influence of his poetry, which addresses the poet's most

innermost feelings with complete transparency, can easily be seen in writers as different from each other as W. B. Yeats, James Wright, Sylvia Plath, and Sharon Olds. Late in life, in 1883 and 1886, Arnold made two lecturing tours of the United States. Matthew Arnold died in Liverpool on April 15, 1888.

Arnold's career can be divided into four distinct phases: a period of youthful discontent during which he wrote most of his poetry; a decade during which he formulated the main ideas of his cultural theory; an eight-year period devoted almost exclusively to religious themes and biblical studies; and a final decade in which he returned to the more balanced concerns of his early criticism. The works written during his religious phase, St. Paul and Protestantism, Literature and Dogma, and God and the Bible, had an immense influence during his own time but have been little read or valued by later critics. Their basic argument is that religion can be reduced to moral sentiment illuminated by ideas that should be understood as “poetry” rather than as factual propositions. The prose works by which he is now chiefly known are the essays written before and after the religious books. These essays number in the dozens and engage a range of topics that includes education, politics, religion, classical studies, history, philosophy, and, most important, literary criticism. Arnold never lived by his writing. For most of his adult life, he served as an inspector of schools, and toward the end of his life he received a modest pension from the government in acknowledgment of his contributions as a writer. Arnold's career seems almost to have been designed to dramatize the spiritual crisis of the Victorian age. He is at

one with Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, George Eliot, and many others in giving expression

to the sense of distress at living in “an age of transition,” without settled beliefs, facing the need to create anew spiritual basis. The nadir of this experience, as Arnold describes it in his poem “Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse,” is a sensation of helpless suspension, “Wandering between two worlds, one dead,/The other powerless to be born.” Unlike his youthful friend and fellow poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, Arnold was constitutionally indisposed to remain long in any such condition of helplessness. In one of his early essays, “On the Modern Element in Literature” (1857), he declares that “the human race has the strongest, the most invincible tendency to live, to develop itself” (vol. 1, pp. 29–30; all citations from Arnold's essays are to R.H. Super's edition of the prose).

In his first published essay, the 1853 preface to his poems, Arnold's own instinct to survive and develop gets off to a false start. He renounces all engagement with the concerns of his age, both its spiritual travail and its enthusiasm for material progress and social reform. As an alternative, he recommends that the poet take refuge in the study of ancient literature so that he can “delight himself with the contemplation of some noble action of a heroic time” (vol. 1, p. 14) This position is an anomaly in Arnold's work. The aesthetic standards of classicism remain an elementary component of his total worldview, but at no other point in his career does he ever again recommend simply withdrawing from his own contemporary world. What he recommends instead, during the second phase of his career, is that the writer formulate a comprehensive

understanding of the historical progression of Western civilization. He calls this sort of understanding “an intellectual deliverance” (vol. 1, p. 19), and he anticipates that it will provide both fulfillment and peace of mind. “The deliverance consists in man's comprehension of this present and past. It begins when our mind begins to enter into possession of the general ideas which are the law of this vast multitude of facts. It is perfect when we have acquired that harmonious acquiescence of mind which we feeling contemplating a grand spectacle that is intelligible to us” (vol. 1, p. 20). In the period of his religious preoccupations, in the 1870s, Arnold turns away from the idea of an intellectual deliverance and seeks salvation instead through moral earnestness emotionally charged with the “poetry” of traditional religion.

Ultimately, the effort to save religion by treating it as poetry undercuts itself, and Arnold concludes by replacing religion with poetry. He declares that “the strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry. The future of poetry is immense, because in conscious poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay” (vol. 9, p. 63). In his final decade, he returns to the cultural theory worked out in the 1860s. He polishes and refines it, without altering its fundamental structure, and he applies it, with undiminished wit and force, to important topics like those discussed in “Literature and Science,” “The Study of Poetry,” and his revaluations of the Romantic poets. The “general ideas” through which Arnold seeks an intellectual deliverance are not merely objective laws of history, whatever laws those might, on dispassionate, scientific inquiry, turn out to be. Like other Victorians, Arnold regarded history as a quasi-providential, teleological progression leading, through a sequence of

necessary phases, to human "perfection"— both a perfected order of society and a perfected state of individual human development. In its perfected state, the individual human mind would replicate the larger order of Western cultural history, harmoniously integrating its dichotomous elements. The two ideas, at eleological cultural development and a perfected human consciousness, are interdependent. Culture achieve sits immanent purpose in producing human perfection, and humanity achieves perfection by assimilating culture. Arnold defines "culture" as "a study of perfection," and he defines perfection as "a harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature" (vol. 5, pp. 91, 94). A liberal education thus becomes a process of acculturation within a transcendent, ideal order that has been progressively manifested in the course of Western civilization.

The central motive in Arnold's main constructive phase, from "The Modern Element" through

Culture and Anarchy, is to work out in detail the relations among the components within the larger order of Western cultural history. He delineates a system of the human faculties and aptitudes and correlates these elements with the major cultural phases of Western history. The largest dichotomy within Arnold's system is the distinction between "Hebraism and Hellenism": the moral earnestness of the Judeo-Christian ethos and the intellectual spontaneity of the Hellenic temper. In Arnold's historical scheme, these concepts are associated with dynamic formal properties and set in dialectically alternating sequence. Hellenism is associated with "expansion" and Hebraism with "concentration." Ages of expansion are exploratory and

creative, adapting to changed circumstances and formulating new knowledge. Ages of concentration reaffirm

the established structures of belief and value within a culture and emphasize the importance of “conduct” and character. Periclean Athens establishes the central norms for Arnold's intellectual and aesthetic values, but for the sake of his dialectic he concedes that even the high Hellenic age lacked sufficient moral earnestness. Inits degenerate, Hellenistic phase, the ancient world reduces itself to a light and frivolous play of “the senses and the understanding,” and it thus gives rise, by dialectical counteraction, to a medieval phase in which the dominant faculties are “the heart and imagination” (vol. 3, pp. 223, 225). The stultification of intellect in the Christian Middle Ages is succeeded by the rebirth of Hellenic curiosity in the Renaissance, itself counter-pointed by a Hebraic Reformation.

The Enlightenment and the French Revolution, as assertions of intellectual freedom, generate a reaction of political and intellectual conservatism. Arnold's own age, he thinks, is just emerging out of this conservative phase, and it is invested with peculiar significance as a culminating moment of self-consciousness within the whole progression. Like many Victorians, Arnold has a foreshortened historical vision of a neatly ordered dramatic sequence in which his own time constitutes the climactic moment. He clearly expects that within a generation or so the historical process will have reached a final point of poise, a point at which each individual and the culture as a whole will be working in synchronized effort to produce that “harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature.”

Arnold's idea of perfection provides a theoretical link between two seemingly divergent aspects of his thought: his democratic political orientation and his cultural elitism. Presupposing that civilized people are endowed with charitable social motives, he maintains that "individual perfection is impossible so long as the rest of mankind are not perfected along with us" (vol. 5, p. 215). In this case, compassion joins hands with enlightened self-interest. A cultural elite depends on the energy generated by a nationally diffused enthusiasm for the life of the mind. Arnold invokes this principle of social energy to account for such peculiarly favored cultural epochs as Periclean Athens, Renaissance Italy, and Elizabethan England. When"high culture" pervades a large body of the community, "individual genius gets its proper nutriment, and Isanimated to put forth its best powers" (vol. 2, p. 316). Athens in particular offers an example of a community in which high culture is the culture of a whole people. It offers the spectacle of "the middle and lower classes in the highest development of their humanity that these classes have yet reached. It was the many Whorelished those arts" (vol. 2, p. 25).If there is no such "national glow of life and thought," Arnold thinks it might still be possible for a large intellectual elite to construct an intellectual substitute, a circulation of ideas that will provide "aquickening and sustaining atmosphere" (vol. 3, p. 263). The Weimar of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich von Schiller offers a model for this alternative. In his own efforts to achieve perfection through culture, Arnold wavers between the alternatives presented by Athens and Weimar. At times, he seems to believe it possible to educate and elevate the whole British population, and at other times he spurns the common

public and seeks salvation only among and for the cultivated few. n his later works, Arnold identifies four “powers” or faculties of civilization: conduct, intellect, social life, and beauty. The first two powers are those of Hebraism and Hellenism. The power of social life makes itself felt in his acknowledgment that great eras of artistic creation depend on a general circulation of cultural energy within a larger social order. As his definition of human perfection suggests, the idea of beauty exercises a crucial regulative function in all of his thinking. The final condition by which one can judge the adequacy of an intellectual deliverance is that it be “harmonious.” His judgments of the three classes of British society are based in large part on the aesthetic qualities of each class. And even his preoccupation with Hebraic moral rectitude is closely associated in his own mind with his devotion to the poetic power of traditional religious worship. Arnold's aesthetic standards are largely constituted by the interaction between his conceptions of the classical and the Romantic. Throughout his career, he takes classicism as the prototype for unity and formal symmetry in works of art. In the most thoroughgoing statement of a classicist aesthetic, the 1853 preface to his poems, Arnold contrasts this prototype with all of modern literature, and especially with the literature ofthe Romantic period. Tacitly invoking a well-established tradition in the battle between the ancients and the moderns, he affirms that the ancients are concerned with grand actions and elementary passions and that they

construct coherent designs in which all expression is subordinated to a “unity and profoundness of moral impression” (vol. 1, p. 12). Modern writers, in contrast, are said to occupy themselves with introverted and intellectualized reflections, and in matters of design they are led astray

by “attractive accessories” such as“ single thoughts,” “richness of imagery,” and “abundance of illustration” (vol. 1, p. 9). In other works, and especially in his later essays, Arnold acknowledges that Romantic literature is itself much concerned with elementary passions. In his own experience of literature, the Romantic poets, and above all WilliamWordsworth, evoke his deepest emotional responses. In his best-known treatment of poetic taste and value, the late essay on “The Study of Poetry,” Arnold rises above any simple opposition between the classic and the Romantic. His illustrative instances of “highand excellent seriousness” (vol. 9, p. 176) include passages from Homer, William Shakespeare, Dante Alighieri, and John Milton, and the criteria with which he judges them are concordant with those by which he offers positive revaluations, in other essays, of Wordsworth, George Byron, and John Keats. For about seventy years after his death, Arnold served as the preeminent authority in England and America for the idea of “culture,” a term that in his use meant primarily the study of great works of literate

Reform Western civilization. He witnessed and felt personally the collapse of Christian orthodoxy as the basic doctrinal framework for his civilization, and more than any other Victorian he was himself responsible for establishing the study of “culture” as the main substitute for this framework. Northrop Frye (1972), who is widely regarded as one of the most important literary theorists of the twentieth century, observes that“Arnold's doctrine in general was, for most humanists of my generation, the shadow of a rock in a wearyland.” T. S. Eliot (1951), the most prominent poet-critic of the first half of the century, rightly regarded Arnold as a threat to Eliot's own religious traditionalism, and he accordingly deprecated Arnold's authority ;nonetheless, he referred to

Arnold more often than to any other predecessor in cultural theory. In his own most general theoretical formulations, Eliot remained heavily dependent on Arnold, sometimes acknowledging this dependence, sometimes not. In the first half of the century, the two most influential evaluative and canonical critics, F. R. Leav is (1938) in Britain and Lionel Trilling (1939) in the United States, took Arnold as their chief model for cultural criticism. Trilling began his career by writing an intellectual biography of Arnold, and Leavis, despite his nearly idolatrous deference to Eliot, vigorously defended Arnold against Eliot's strictures.

In one of his essays, the poet Wallace Stevens (1989) remarks that "to see the gods dispelled in mid-air and dissolve like clouds is one of the great human experiences." A historian contemplating the fate of Arnoldian humanism in the past three or four decades might have an experience similar to that which Stevens describes. In the early 1970s, a metaphysical revolution took place in the literature departments of American and British universities. The doctrines that animated this revolution are variously designated as"postmodern" or "poststructuralist," and they are intimately affiliated with more specific critical schools such as deconstruction, New Historicism, reader-response criticism, and the cultural study of science.

The two leading divinities of the new dispensation are Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, and it has a pan the on of lesser gods such as Stanley Fish, Stephen Greenblatt, and Fredric Jameson. In its fundamental tenets, post structuralism runs directly counter to Arnoldian

humanism. Whereas Arnold invested the canonical texts of Western civilization with numinous value, current authorities tend to regard Western civilization itself as an engine of arbitrary power, and they view the canonical texts either negatively, as media for the propagation of this power, or positively, as countermines designed to subvert it. And whereas Arnold and his acolytes focused on the cultivated individual sensibility as a central locus of creativity and value, current authorities deprecate the individual as a mere medium for the self-realization of language or of autonomous cultural epistemes. Arnold remains a common point of reference in cultural theory, but he appears now almost exclusively in the role of foil for antihumanist polemic. Among the critics and theorists who hold positions of influence at a level equivalent to those once held by Frye, Leavis, and Trilling, not one would now identify himself closely with Arnold, and indeed, few would have even a respectful word to say about him.The vicissitudes of Arnold's influence are a boon to intellectual historians, for they correlate with the main movements of cultural thought since the Victorian period. The recent disappearance of Arnoldian humanism was presaged, less spectacularly but no less decisively, by the disappearance of the humanism practiced by Arnold himself. Although he was the founding father of humanism in the modernist age, he wasnot himself modern. He was among the last of the great Victorians, representative in his own time, but influential on later generations only by means of adaptations that tacitly, and for the most part unconsciously, altered the fundamental structure of his thought. He relied on metaphysical assumptions about the nature of mind and history that have not been tenable since his own time and that were not shared by the most prominent among his descendants. The fact that

Arnold could have exercised such influence as he did offers strong evidence that his perceptions and judgments are compatible with intuitive beliefs not limited to thepeculiarly Victorian structure of his ideas. These intuitive beliefs are decidedly not compatible with the assumptions of the current poststructuralist paradigm, but the tectonic shifts that have taken place in cultural theory since Arnold's time should make us cautious about assuming that the current dispensation has any final and definitive validity. Arnold's legacy can be detected in modern views of art or poetry as a numinous object, in the ideal of personal cultivation through the study of literature, and in the humanist belief in the central social function of liberal education. As they have been transmitted through the differing personalities and ideologies of other critics, Arnold's beliefs and attitudes have undergone major transformations, some of which would have been unpalatable to Arnold himself.

Arnold's substitution of poetry for religion can be associated with the efforts of at least two major modern poets, William Butler Yeats and Wallace Stevens. In his Byzantium poems, Yeats sought to invest the poem itself with mystical, magical powers to make of it a medium through which he could gain entry to an eternal aesthetic realm. Stevens's whole career orients itself to the production of a Grand Poem, a“supreme fiction” that would, he explains, take the place of God. Arnold himself would very likely have recoiled at Yeats's mystical reification of the poetic object. What he anticipated was that poetry would serve as the medium of a religious reverence, not that poetry would itself become a sacred object. Stevens'sproject, as an extension of the Romantic

visionary mode, would perhaps have been more congenial to Arnold, but Arnold distances himself from the more visionary aspects of Wordsworth's poetry. Instead, he
concentrates his attention on “the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties” (vol. 9, p.51).

In his declaration that “the future of poetry is immense,” Arnold might have seemed, in the first half of the twentieth century, to have been prophetically inspired. He regarded his own age as an age of prose and criticism that would create the “order of ideas” (vol. 3, p. 261) within which great poetry could later be written, and it might have seemed, at one point, that the whole of modernist literature, prose and poetry, was answering to the mission with which he had entrusted it. The peculiar intensity and iconoclastic fervor of modernist literature imply high ambitions, and in the same period the critical commentaries of th eprofessional academic class, especially the New Critics, have about them an air of priestly, sacerdotal reverence for the objects of their study. In the perspective presented by the history of poetry since WorldWar II, Arnold's prophetic stature seems considerably diminished. No contemporary poets hold a canonical status even remotely close to that of the great modernist poets, or, for that matter, of the great Victorian poets. At no other time in the past several centuries has poetry been so little regarded as a cultural force. Moreover, literature in general has not tended toward creating an atmosphere of religious reverence equivalent to that of traditional religion. The most influential aspect of Arnold's work has been the ideal of the cultivated individual sensibility. Among the critics who have adopted the ideal of literary cultivation, and who

have cited Arnold as an authority for it, very few have ever accepted the two central premises of his cultural theory: the idea that there are objective, universally valid laws of moral and aesthetic judgment, and that these laws have progressively manifested themselves in the course of Western civilization. Indeed, almost none of Arnold's commentators have even recognized the systematic character of his own thought or the crucial role he gives to the idea of a total, coherent cultural order. In the commentaries that grew out of Leavis'sdefenseofArnold, the one main point of consensus is that Arnold is not to be regarded as a systematic or coherentthinker. He is to be regarded, rather, as the proponent of a delicate humanist sensibility, a "temper of mind"that finds its central merit in "flexibility."

In the absence of a larger system of ideas, the notion of individual cultivation tends to deteriorate into a cult of the "self." In Leavis, the fiction of D. H. Lawrence provides a temple for the mystical adulation of the individual identity. In Trilling's early work, Arnoldian "culture"serves as a medium for a "liberal" social ideal, but by the end of his career, Trilling's cultivation of the Arnoldian sensibility has virtually inverted itself, and Trilling has become a high priest of the neurotic Freudian inner identity a form of personal force that he sets in opposition to the repressive force of civilization.When the ideal of personal cultivation is combined with the idea of art as an end in itself, the result is the kind of "aestheticism" associated with Walter Pater, Arnold's first major disciple. Pater is the patron saint of "art for art's sake" and a primary source for at least two prominent aesthetes, Oscar Wilde and George Santayana. Henry James's idolization of art as an end in itself

affiliates him with the Paterian school, but James responded much more directly and favorably to Arnold than to Pater, and James, like Arnold, would have roundly rejected the proposition that the hedonistic exploitation of artistic “sensations” could serve ast he central motive in life. Arnold's concept of a canonical humanist education has survived through much of this century because our civilization has felt the value of a shared body of literary experience.

If we can no longer accep tthe transcendental theory through which Arnold tried to secure the authority of the canon, we can still recognize the need for what he called a “full humanity” (vol. 8, p. 286), and for many people the study ofgreat literature will continue to satisfy this need. The desire for normative cultural values will probably survive the adversarial ethos that currently animates the professional academic class. If it does, Arnold will continue to be read, for he is a highly capable guide to “the best that is known and thought in the world” (vol.3, p. 282)

12.2 EARLY LIFE

The Reverend John Keble stood as godfather to Matthew. Thomas Arnold admired Keble's Christian Year, first published in 1827, but the elder Arnold became disappointed with Keble when he became a leader of the Oxford or Tractarian Movement (1833–1845), whose leaders had a plan for the renewal of the Church of England that Thomas Arnold regarded as too conservative and traditionalist. In 1828, Arnold's father was appointed Headmaster of Rugby School and his young family took up residence, that year, in the Headmaster's house. In 1831, Arnold was

tutored by his uncle, Rev. John Buckland in the small village of Laleham. In 1834, the Arnolds occupied a holiday home, Fox How, in the Lake District. William Wordsworth was a neighbour and close friend. In 1836, Arnold was sent to Winchester College, but in 1837 he returned to Rugby School where he was enrolled in the fifth form. He moved to the sixth form in 1838 and thus came under the direct tutelage of his father. He wrote verse for the manuscript Fox How Magazine, co-produced with his brother Tom for the family's enjoyment from 1838 to 1843. During his years there, he won school prizes for English essay writing, and Latin and English poetry. His prize poem, "Alaric at Rome", was printed at Rugby.

In 1841, he won an open scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford. During his residence at Oxford, his friendship became stronger with Arthur Hugh Clough, another Rugby old boy who had been one of his father's favourites. Arnold attended John Henry Newman's sermons at St. Mary's but did not join the Oxford Movement. His father died suddenly of heart disease in 1842, and Fox How became his family's permanent residence. Arnold's poem Cromwell won the 1843 Newdigate prize. He graduated in the following year with a 2nd class honours degree in Literae Humaniores (colloquially Greats).

In 1845, after a short interlude of teaching at Rugby, he was elected Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. In 1847, he became Private Secretary to Lord Lansdowne, Lord President of the Council. In 1849, he published his first book of poetry, The Strayed Reveller. In 1850 Wordsworth died; Arnold published his "Memorial Verses" on the older poet in Fraser's Magazine.

12.3 MARRIAGE AND CAREER

Wishing to marry, but unable to support a family on the wages of a private secretary, Arnold sought the position of, and was appointed, in April 1851, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. Two months later, he married Frances Lucy, daughter of Sir William Wightman, Justice of the Queen's Bench. The Arnolds had six children: Thomas (1852–1868); Trevenen William (1853–1872); Richard Penrose (1855–1908), an inspector of factories; Lucy Charlotte (1858–1934) who married Frederick W. Whitridge of New York, whom she had met during Arnold's American lecture tour; Eleanore Mary Caroline (1861–1936) married (1) Hon. Armine Wodehouse (MP) in 1889, (2) William Mansfield, 1st Viscount Sandhurst, in 1909; Basil Francis (1866–1868).

Arnold often described his duties as a school inspector as "drudgery," although "at other times he acknowledged the benefit of regular work." The inspectorship required him, at least at first, to travel constantly and across much of England. "Initially, Arnold was responsible for inspecting Nonconformist schools across a broad swath of central England. He spent many dreary hours during the 1850s in railway waiting-rooms and small-town hotels, and longer hours still in listening to children reciting their lessons and parents reciting their grievances. But that also meant that he, among the first generation of the railway age, travelled across more of England than any man of letters had ever done. Although his duties were later confined to a smaller area, Arnold knew the society of

provincial England better than most of the metropolitan authors and politicians of the day."

12.4 LITERARY CAREER

In 1852, Arnold published his second volume of poems, Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems. In 1853, he published Poems: A New Edition, a selection from the two earlier volumes famously excluding Empedocles on Etna, but adding new poems, Sohrab and Rustum and The Scholar Gipsy. In 1854, Poems: Second Series appeared; also a selection, it included the new poem, Balder Dead.

Arnold was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1857, and he was the first in this position to deliver his lectures in English rather than in Latin. He was re-elected in 1862. On Translating Homer (1861) and the initial thoughts that Arnold would transform into Culture and Anarchy were among the fruits of the Oxford lectures. In 1859, he conducted the first of three trips to the continent at the behest of parliament to study European educational practices. He self-published The Popular Education of France (1861), the introduction to which was later published under the title Democracy (1879).

In 1865, Arnold published Essays in Criticism: First Series. Essays in Criticism: Second Series would not appear until November 1888, shortly after his untimely death. In 1866, he published Thyrsis, his elegy to Clough who had died in 1861. Culture and Anarchy, Arnold's major work in social criticism (and one of the few pieces of his prose work currently in print) was published in 1869. Literature and Dogma,

Arnold's major work in religious criticism appeared in 1873. In 1883 and 1884, Arnold toured the United States and Canada[7] delivering lectures on education, democracy and Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1883.[8] In 1886, he retired from school inspection and made another trip to America. An edition of Poems by Matthew Arnold, with an introduction by A. C. Benson and illustrations by Henry Ospovat, was published in 1900 by John Lane.

12.5 ARNOLD AS A CRITIC

It is said that when the poet in Arnold died, the critic was born; and it is true that from this time onward he turned almost entirely to prose. Some of the leading ideas and phrases were early put into currency in Essays in Criticism (First Series, 1865; Second Series, 1888) and Culture and Anarchy. The first essay in the 1865 volume, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," is an overture announcing briefly most of the themes he developed more fully in later work. It is at once evident that he ascribes to "criticism" a scope and importance hitherto undreamed of. The function of criticism, in his sense, is "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas." It is in fact a spirit that he is trying to foster, the spirit of an awakened and informed intelligence playing upon not "literature" merely but theology, history, art, science, sociology, and politics, and in every sphere seeking "to see the object as in itself it really is."

In this critical effort, thought Arnold, England lagged behind France and Germany, and the English accordingly remained in a backwater of provinciality and complacency. Even the great Romantic poets, with all their creative energy, suffered from the want of it. The English literary critic must know literatures other than his own and be in touch with European standards. This last line of thought Arnold develops in the second essay, "The Literary Influence of Academies," in which he dwells upon "the note of provinciality" in English literature, caused by remoteness from a "centre" of correct knowledge and correct taste. To realize how much Arnold widened the horizons of criticism requires only a glance at the titles of some of the other essays in Essays in Criticism (1865): "Maurice de Guérin," "Eugénie de Guérin," "Heinrich Heine," "Joubert," "Spinoza," "Marcus Aurelius"; in all these, as increasingly in his later books, he is "applying modern ideas to life" as well as to letters and "bringing all things under the point of view of the 19th century."

The first essay in the 1888 volume, "The Study of Poetry," was originally published as the general introduction to T.H. Ward's anthology, The English Poets (1880). It contains many of the ideas for which Arnold is best remembered. In an age of crumbling creeds, poetry will have to replace religion. More and more, we will "turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us." Therefore we must know how to distinguish the best poetry from the inferior, the genuine from the counterfeit; and to do this we must steep ourselves in the work of the acknowledged masters, using as "touchstones" passages exemplifying their "high seriousness," and their superiority of diction and movement.

The remaining essays, with the exception of the last two (on Tolstoy and Amiel), all deal with English poets: Milton, Gray, Keats, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley. All contain memorable things, and all attempt a serious and responsible assessment of each poet's "criticism of life" and his value as food for the modern spirit. Arnold has been taken to task for some of his judgments and omissions: for his judgment that Dryden and Pope were not "genuine" poets because they composed in their wits instead of "in the soul"; for calling Gray a "minor classic" in an age of prose and spiritual bleakness; for paying too much attention to the man behind the poetry (Gray, Keats, Shelley); for making no mention of Donne; and above all for saying that poetry is "at bottom a criticism of life." On this last point it should be remembered that he added "under the conditions fixed…by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty," and that if by "criticism" is understood (as Arnold meant) "evaluation," Arnold's dictum is seen to have wider significance than has been sometimes supposed.

Culture and Anarchy is in some ways Arnold's most central work. It is an expansion of his earlier attacks, in "The Function of Criticism" and "Heinrich Heine," upon the smugness, philistinism, and mammon worship of Victorian England. Culture, as "the study of perfection," is opposed to the prevalent "anarchy" of a new democracy without standards and without a sense of direction. By "turning a stream of fresh thought upon our stock notions and habits," culture seeks to make "reason and the will of God prevail."

Arnold's classification of English society into Barbarians (with their high spirit, serenity, and distinguished manners and their inaccessibility to

ideas), Philistines (the stronghold of religious nonconformity, with plenty of energy and morality but insufficient "sweetness and light"), and Populace (still raw and blind) is well known. Arnold saw in the Philistines the key to the whole position; they were now the most influential section of society; their strength was the nation's strength, their crudeness its crudeness: Educate and humanize the Philistines, therefore. Arnold saw in the idea of "the State," and not in any one class of society, the true organ and repository of the nation's collective "best self." No summary can do justice to this extraordinary book; it can still be read with pure enjoyment, for it is written with an inward poise, a serene detachment, and an infusion of mental laughter, which make it a masterpiece of ridicule as well as a searching analysis of Victorian society. The same is true of its unduly neglected sequel, Friendship's Garland (1871).

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:I

1.Write a note on Arnold as a Critic.

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2.Discuss is brief the early life of Matthew Arnold

Answer……

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12.6 DEATH

Arnold died suddenly in 1888 of heart failure whilst running to meet a train that would have taken him to the Liverpool Landing Stage to see his daughter, who was visiting from the United States where she had moved after marrying an American. He was survived by his wife, who died in June 1901

12.7 ARNOLD AS AN EMERGING POET

In 1844, Mathew Arnold began his career as a teacher at the Rugby School. Sorely disappointed by his result, he now began working for a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, winning the same in 1845. Many years ago, his father was also a fellow of the same college.

At Oriel, he studied both Western and Oriental philosophy. He also read English, French and German literature extensively, especially admiring the writings of George Sand. His studies here widened his intellectual perception.

In April 1847, he was appointed Private Secretary to Lord Lansdowne, then the Lord President of the Council in the Liberal government. Matthew moved to London to take up the post. All along he continued to write poems, publishing his first collection, 'The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems' two years later.

The poems in 'The Strayed Reveller', published in 1847 under the pseudonym of "A", were mostly of melancholic in nature. This surprised his family and friends, who had all along known him as a lighthearted

young man. However, the sale was poor and the book was subsequently withdrawn.

In April 1851, Arnold secured the position of an Inspector of Schools with the assistance of Lord Lansdowne, a job he held until 1886. Although he found it dull and boring, he was aware of the benefit of holding a regular job and hence continued with it.

As Inspector of Schools, he was required to travel a lot, visiting nonconformist schools in a large area in central England. While this allowed him to see much of England, it also meant much of his time was spent in railway coaches and waiting rooms.

His job also required him to listen to the students reciting their lessons and their guardians complaining about facilities. While such a work was anything but enjoyable, it allowed him come face to face with the society in provincial England, knowing them better than many of his contemporary authors.

In 1852, Matthew Arnold published his second collection of poems, 'Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems'. It was also a nonstarter with only fifty copies being sold. Thereafter, the book was withdrawn.

In 1853, he had his third book, 'Poems: A New Edition' published. Although it mostly contained a selection from the two earlier volumes, two new poems, 'Sohrab and Rustum' and 'The Scholar Gipsy' were added.

In 1854, he had his second selection, ‘Poems: Second Series’ published. Along with previously published poems, it included ‘Balder Dead’ a new narrative poem, drawn upon Norse mythology. Very soon, Arnold was famous enough to merit a position at Oxford.

12.8 ARNOLD'S CHARACTER

"Matthew Arnold," wrote G. W. E. Russell in Portraits of the Seventies, is "a man of the world entirely free from worldliness and a man of letters without the faintest trace of pedantry". Arnold was a familiar figure at the Athenaeum Club, a frequent diner-out and guest at great country houses, charming, fond of fishing (but not of shooting), and a lively conversationalist, with a self-consciously cultivated air combining foppishness and Olympian grandeur. He read constantly, widely, and deeply, and in the intervals of supporting himself and his family by the quiet drudgery of school inspecting, filled notebook after notebook with meditations of an almost monastic tone. In his writings, he often baffled and sometimes annoyed his contemporaries by the apparent contradiction between his urbane, even frivolous manner in controversy, and the "high seriousness" of his critical views and the melancholy, almost plaintive note of much of his poetry. "A voice poking fun in the wilderness" was T. H. Warren's description of him.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:II

1.Discuss Arnold as Emerging Poet.

Answer……

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2.Write a note on Arnolds Character.

Answer……

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12.9 LET'S SUM UP

Matthew Arnold (24 December 1822 – 15 April 1888) was an English poet and cultural critic who worked as an inspector of schools. He was the son of Thomas Arnold, the famed headmaster of Rugby School, and brother to both Tom Arnold, literary professor, and William Delafield Arnold, novelist and colonial administrator. Matthew Arnold has been characterised as a sage writer, a type of writer who chastises and instructs the reader on contemporary social issues.

12.10 KEYWORDS

1. **Dilettantism:** The act of behaving like a dilettante, of being an amateur or "dabbler", sometimes in the arts.

2. **Literary criticism:** the art or practice of judging and commenting on the qualities and character of literary works.

3. **Pre-eminently:** above all; in particular.

4. **Self-renouncement** :Renunciation of your own interests in favour of the interests of others.

12.11 QUESTION TO REVIEW

- What, according to Matthew Arnold, are the functions and qualifications of critic?
- How does Matthew Arnold use Nature in his poems?
- Discuss Matthew Arnold's concept of culture.
- What were Matthew Arnold's views on education and democracy?

12.12 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERRENCES

- George W. E. Russell (editor), Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1849–88, 2 vols. (London and New York: Macmillan, 1895)
- Published seven years after their author's death these letters were heavily edited by Arnold's family.
- Howard F. Lowry (editor), The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932)
- C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry (editors), The Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, Oxford University Press, 1950 standard edition, OCLC 556893161

- Kenneth Allott (editor), The Poems of Matthew Arnold (London and New York: Longman Norton, 1965) ISBN 0-393-04377-0
- Part of the "Annotated English Poets Series," Allott includes 145 poems (with fragments and juvenilia) all fully annotated.
- Robert H. Super (editor), The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold in eleven volumes (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1960–1977)
- Miriam Allott and Robert H. Super (editors), The Oxford Authors: Matthew Arnold (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 1986)
- A strong selection from Miriam Allot, who had (silently) assisted her husband in editing the Longman Norton annotated edition of Arnold's poems, and Robert H. Super, editor of the eleven volume complete prose.
- Stefan Collini (editor), Culture and Anarchy and other writings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) part of the Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought series.

12.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Check in Progress I

Answer 1. Check Topic 12.3

Answer 2. Check Topic 12.6

Answer to Check in Progress II

Answer 1. Check Topic 12.8

Answer 2. Check Topic 12.9

UNIT 13: MATHEW ARNOLD'S : WORK

STRUCTURE

13.0 OBJECTIVE

In this Unit you will get to know about the Arnold's Work and criticism he faced in his life.

Also you will get know what he is famous for.

This unit helps to achieve following objectives:

- Helps to Know his Work in biographical and historical context
- Helps to know his Work in literary context and Critical context
- Insight about his Poetry work and Prose
- Brief about his Major Work and Poetic achievements

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Matthew Arnold's work deals with the difficulty of preserving personal values in a world drastically transformed by industrialism, science, and democracy. His poetry often expresses a sense of unease with modernity. He asserted his greatest influence through his prose writings as a social critic, calling for a renewal of art and culture. His forceful literary criticism, based on his humanistic belief in the value of balance and clarity in literature, significantly shaped modern theory.

13.2 WORKS IN BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Child of the Headmaster Arnold was the eldest son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, an influential educator who became, in 1828, headmaster of the prestigious Rugby School. His family took many pleasant holidays in England's Lake District where they became acquainted with William Wordsworth. Much of the imagery in Arnold's landscape poetry was inspired by the locale.

Arnold's poetic landscapes also are indebted to the region around Oxford University, which Arnold attended after being offered a scholarship in 1840. At Oxford he met Arthur Hugh Clough, who became his close friend and correspondent. After leaving Oxford, Arnold took a temporary post as assistant master at Rugby for one term before accepting a position in London as private secretary to the politician Lord Lansdowne.

Success as a Poet While holding this position, Arnold wrote some of his finest poems. He published them, signed with the initial A., in two separate volumes: The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems (1849) and Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems (1852). Arnold published the bulk of his poetry, including Poems in 1853, in the eight years following the publication of The Strayed Reveller. However, his best-known poem, “Dover Beach,” was not published until 1867. The poem, often viewed as a meditation on the importance of love, describes a locale on the coast of England that Arnold is said to have visited in 1851.

Oxford Lectures At the age of thirty-four, Arnold was elected to the poetry chair at Oxford University, an appointment that required him to deliver several lectures each year. Traditionally, the lectures had been

read in Latin, but Arnold decided to present his in English. He used the occasion of his first lecture in 1857 to discuss his views about the worth of classical literature. In the first lecture, entitled "On the Modern Element in Literature," later published in Macmillan's magazine (1869), Arnold advocates a liberal education that features wide-ranging knowledge and the use of the comparative method to build knowledge and to shape understanding.

Arnold's next major prose work, On Translating Homer, was a series of three lectures given at Oxford in 1860 and 1861. In these essays, he evaluates selected translations of Homer, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each in an attempt to establish the characteristics of a well-written translation. They are lively introductions to classical poetry and urge English writers to imitate Homer's "grand style"

Social Criticism In his prose works, Arnold pursued many of the same ideas he had introduced in his poems, especially man's need for spiritual and intellectual fulfillment in a materialistic, provincial society. In his Oxford lectures and in his education reports, Arnold suggested a single solution to humankind's problems—a liberal education. As an essayist, Arnold continued to address the subject of intellectual and spiritual growth.

Of the several books that Arnold wrote on politics and sociology, the most important is Culture and Anarchy (1869). He criticizes nineteenth-century English politicians for their lack of purpose and their excessive concern with the machinery of society. The English people—and the

narrow-minded middle class in particular—lack “sweetness and light,” a phrase that Arnold borrowed from Jonathan Swift. England can only be saved by the development of “culture,” which for Arnold means the free play of critical intelligence and a willingness to question all authority and to make judgments in a leisurely and disinterested way.

The subject of four of Arnold's books was the threat to religion posed by science and historical scholarship. The most important of these is Literature and Dogma (1873). He argues that the Bible has the importance of a supremely great literary work, and as such it cannot be discredited by charges of historical inaccuracy. And the Church, like any other time-honored social institution, must be reformed with care and with a sense of its historical importance to English culture.

Arnold focused on social and literary topics during the last ten to twelve years of his life, offering more elaborate or definitive statements of his views on matters that had long interested him. In 1883 and 1886 he toured the United States and gave lectures in which he tried to win Americans to the cause of culture. Many of Arnold's late essays deal with literature and, more specifically, with sound criticism of literature. The best known of his later collections is Essays in Criticism, Second Series, which Arnold began discussing with his publisher in January of 1888, but which was not actually printed until November of that year, seven months after Arnold's sudden death from a heart attack

13.3 WORKS IN LITERARY CONTEXT

Emptiness One of the dominant themes of Arnold's poems is that of the intellectual and spiritual void he believed to be characteristic of nineteenth-century life. Looking about him, he witnessed the weakening of traditional areas of authority, namely the dwindling power of the upper classes and the diminishing authority of the Church. He believed man had no firm base to cling to, nothing to believe in, nothing to be sustained by.

Arnold's early poetry, such as Alaric at Rome (1840), had the brooding tone that would become characteristic of his mature work. In "To Marguerite—Continued," he concludes that the individual is essentially isolated. The theme of man's alienation and longing for refuge is echoed in later poems such as "Rugby Chapel" and "Dover Beach"

Influences For Arnold, the German poet Heinrich Heine truly possessed the critical spirit. Heine cherished the French spirit of enlightenment and waged "a life and death battle with Philistinism," the narrowness Arnold saw typified in the British. Arnold felt that the English romantics had failed to reinstitute the critical spirit. The German romantic Heine, however, he believed, was able to accomplish what the English romantics could not.

Despite his criticism, however, the two romantics Arnold held in highest esteem were Lord Byron and William Wordsworth. He praised Byron at length for his stand on social injustice, and ranked Wordsworth only after William Shakespeare, Moliére, John Milton, and Johann von Goethe in his list of the premier poets of "the last two or three centuries."

13.4 WORKS IN CRITICAL CONTEXT

Poetry As E. D. H. Johnson has pointed out, Arnold tried "to reaffirm the traditional sovereignty of poetry as a civilizing agent." Arnold believed that great art, functioning as a civilizing agent to enrich the intellectual and spiritual life of man, had universal application. But his views were not the same as those of his contemporaries, who felt that art should have immediate, practical application to everyday experience.

Arnold's first collection, The Strayed Reveller (1849) was a failure; sales were poor and the book was withdrawn. Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems (1852), after a sale of only fifty copies, also was withdrawn. Critics charged that Arnold's first two volumes of poems did not consistently deal with contemporary life. Charles Kingsley's comments in 1849 are representative: "The man who cannot … sing the present age, and transfigure it into melody, or who cannot, in writing of past ages, draw from them some eternal lesson about this one, has no right to be versifying at all."

Poems (1853) included works from the two earlier collections as well as new ones, notably "Sohrab and Rustum" and "The Scholar Gypsy." That volume contains his famous preface outlining why he did not include the title poem from Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems. Arnold declared that it did not fulfill the requirements of a good poem and therefore did not qualify as meaningful art. Alba Warren explains that "great poetry for Arnold is not lyric, subjective, personal; it is above all objective and impersonal." H. F. Lowry says of Arnold that "[t]he deepest passion of his life was for what is permanent in the human mind and the human heart," and that he found this in classical literature.

Because, perhaps, of the mournful tone of his verse, Arnold was not a popular poet in his day. However, many of his poems—most notably "The Scholar-Gypsy," "Empedocles on Etna," "Thyrsis," and "Dover Beach"—are still studied and respected as some of the best verse of the Victorian period. T. S. Eliot stated that "the valuation of the Romantic poets, in academic circles, is still very largely that which Arnold made."

"Culture and Its Enemies " In "Culture and Its Enemies," published in the Cornhill Magazine in 1867 and later included in Culture and Anarchy, Arnold continues to wage war against complacency. But his views were met with considerable scorn. Readers claimed that he was an elitist, a snob, and they labeled his ideas inadequately developed and impractical. Henry Sidgwick found the essay "over-ambitious, because it treats of the most profound and difficult problems of individual and social life with an airy dogmatism that ignores their depth and difficulty."

Arnold responded to his critics in a series of five essays published in 1868, entitled "Anarchy and Authority." In the essay series Arnold continues his championship of culture by stressing the present need for it.

Essays on Religion Arnold also championed religion as a profound cultural force. However, Ruth Roberts shows that Arnold is guilty of "overingenuity" in his religious works. His argument is not as disinterested as he claims, and he often glosses over biblical passages inconsistent with his position. For Arnold, the Bible was literature and

must be read as such. J. C. Shairp, a contemporary of Arnold's, argued, "They who seek religion for culture-sake are aesthetic, not religious." The same charge was later echoed by T. S. Eliot, who found that Arnold had confused "poetry and morals in the attempt to find a substitute for religious faith."

13.5 LITERARY AND HISTORICAL CONTEMPORARIES

Arnold's famous contemporaries include:

- *Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919): American industrialist and businessman; made his fortune in the steel industry*

- *Charles Darwin (1809–1882): English naturalist who, with A. R. Wallace, first introduced the idea of natural selection*

- *Charles Dickens (1812–1870): English novelist and journalist, whose writing often commented on the lives of the poor*

- *George Eliot (1819–1880): Pen name of Mary Ann Evans; English novelist who emphasized realistic plots and characters*

- *Karl Marx (1818–1883): Prussian philosopher and revolutionary; developed the theory of communism with Friedrich Engels; author of Das Kapital (1867), criticizing capitalism.*

- *George Sand (1804–1876): Pen name of AmantineDupin; French novelist and feminist; stated that women should have the same rights within marriage as men*

Basil Willey summarized Arnold's view in Literature and Dogma as being a “false approach to the Bible which seeks to extract dogma from poetry.” Unsurprisingly, Literature and Dogma stirred even more controversy than his previous religious works. Many of Arnold's critics were clergymen, such as John Tulloch, who was not alone in accusing Arnold of dabbling in “amateur theology.”

“The Study of Poetry ” One of Arnold's most important later essays, “The Study of Poetry,” first appeared in 1880 as the introduction to The English Poets, an anthology edited by T. Humphry Ward. R. H. Super reminds that the essay was intended “to give some guidance to a middle-class public not sophisticated in the reading of poetry.” “The Study of Poetry” no more remained unchallenged than had any of Arnold's other works. Many, including contemporary critics, have disagreed with Arnold's choice of touchstone passages, and many have taken offense at Arnold's pronouncements about the merits of individual authors. Despite such objections, the essay remains an historically important piece of criticism and an important guide to Arnold's own tastes.

As John Holloway observes, in Arnold's prose, it is “his handling of problems” that is more important than his solutions to them. One of Arnold's contemporaries, John Burroughs, writing two months after Arnold's death, claimed that Matthew Arnold deserved to be read

extensively, for only then could he be fully appreciated. In Arnold's prose, Burroughs wrote, “his effect is cumulative; he hits a good many times in the same place, and his work as a whole makes a deeper impression than any single essay of his would seem to warrant.”

13.6 RESPONSES TO LITERATURE

Look up several definitions of culture. What does today's popular culture—movies, music, TV shows, books—say about American culture as a whole? Does “American culture” mean different things depending on someone's gender or ethnicity? Should it?

What is the point of education? Should it broaden students' minds, or should it focus on practical results? Is it more worthwhile to learn about interesting things you may never use, or to learn practical things, even if they're less exciting?

Arnold thought art should be a “civilizing agent.” What does he mean by that? Is it patronizing to think that art should improve people? Should art shock, anger, calm, or excite people? Write a paper discussing your views of the purpose of art today, using specific examples.

One criticism of Arnold's poetry was that he did not deal with contemporary issues. Does poetry have to be contemporary to be effective? Research three poets from different eras, and write a paper examining how—or whether—their time period affects their current relevance.

CHECK IN PROGRESSS I

1. Discuss in short the work of Arnold in Historical Context.

Answer

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2. Discuss in short the work of Arnold in Critical Context.

Answer

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13.7 POETRY WORK

Arnold is sometimes called the third great Victorian poet, along with Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Robert Browning. Arnold was keenly aware of his place in poetry. In an 1869 letter to his mother, he wrote:

My poems represent, on the whole, the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions which reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetical sentiment than Tennyson and less intellectual vigour and abundance than Browning; yet because I have perhaps more of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn as they have had theirs.

Stefan Collini regards this as "an exceptionally frank, but not unjust, self-assessment. ... Arnold's poetry continues to have scholarly attention

lavished upon it, in part because it seems to furnish such striking evidence for several central aspects of the intellectual history of the nineteenth century, especially the corrosion of 'Faith' by 'Doubt'. No poet, presumably, would wish to be summoned by later ages merely as an historical witness, but the sheer intellectual grasp of Arnold's verse renders it peculiarly liable to this treatment."

Harold Bloom echoes Arnold's self-characterization in his introduction (as series editor) to the Modern Critical Views volume on Arnold: "Arnold got into his poetry what Tennyson and Browning scarcely needed (but absorbed anyway), the main march of mind of his time." Of his poetry, Bloom says,

Whatever his achievement as a critic of literature, society, or religion, his work as a poet may not merit the reputation it has continued to hold in the twentieth century. Arnold is, at his best, a very good but highly derivative poet. ... As with Tennyson, Hopkins, and Rossetti, Arnold's dominant precursor was Keats, but this is an unhappy puzzle, since Arnold (unlike the others) professed not to admire Keats greatly, while writing his own elegiac poems in a diction, meter, imagistic procedure, that are embarrassingly close to Keats.

Sir Edmund Chambers noted that "in a comparison between the best works of Matthew Arnold and that of his six greatest contemporaries ... the proportion of work which endures is greater in the case of Matthew Arnold than in any one of them." Chambers judged Arnold's poetic vision byits simplicity, lucidity, and straightforwardness; its literalness ...

; the sparing use of aureate words, or of far-fetched words, which are all the more effective when they come; the avoidance of inversions, and the general directness of syntax, which gives full value to the delicacies of a varied rhythm, and makes it, of all verse that I know, the easiest to read aloud.

He has a primary school named after him in Liverpool, where he died, and secondary schools named after him in Oxford and Staines.

His literary career — leaving out the two prize poems — had begun in 1849 with the publication of The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems by A., which attracted little notice and was soon withdrawn. It contained what is perhaps Arnold's most purely poetical poem, "The Forsaken Merman." Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems (among them "Tristram and Iseult"), published in 1852, had a similar fate. In 1858 he published his tragedy of Merope, calculated, he wrote to a friend, "rather to inaugurate my Professorship with dignity than to move deeply the present race of humans," and chiefly remarkable for some experiments in unusual – and unsuccessful – metres.

His 1867 poem, "Dover Beach," depicted a nightmarish world from which the old religious verities have receded. It is sometimes held up as an early, if not the first, example of the modern sensibility. In a famous preface to a selection of the poems of William Wordsworth, Arnold identified, a little ironically, as a "Wordsworthian." The influence of Wordsworth, both in ideas and in diction, is unmistakable in Arnold's best poetry. Arnold's poem, "Dover Beach" was included in Ray

Bradbury's novel, Fahrenheit 451, and is also featured prominently in the novel Saturday by Ian McEwan. It has also been quoted or alluded to in a variety of other contexts (see Dover Beach).

Some consider Arnold to be the bridge between Romanticism and Modernism. His use of symbolic landscapes was typical of the Romantic era, while his sceptical and pessimistic perspective was typical of the Modern era. The rationalistic tendency of certain of his writings gave offence to many readers, and the sufficiency of his equipment in scholarship for dealing with some of the subjects which he handled was called in question, but he undoubtedly exercised a stimulating influence on his time. His writings are characterised by the finest culture, high purpose, sincerity, and a style of great distinction, and much of his poetry has an exquisite and subtle beauty, though here also it has been doubted whether high culture and wide knowledge of poetry did not sometimes take the place of true poetic fire. Henry James wrote that Matthew Arnold's poetry will appeal to those who "like their pleasures rare" and who like to hear the poet "taking breath."

The mood of Arnold's poetry tends to be of plaintive reflection, and he is restrained in expressing emotion. He felt that poetry should be the 'criticism of life' and express a philosophy. Arnold's philosophy is that true happiness comes from within, and that people should seek within themselves for good, while being resigned in acceptance of outward things and avoiding the pointless turmoil of the world. However, he argues that we should not live in the belief that we shall one day inherit eternal bliss. If we are not happy on earth, we should moderate our

desires rather than live in dreams of something that may never be attained. This philosophy is clearly expressed in such poems as "Dover Beach" and in these lines from "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse":

Wandering between two worlds, one dead
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.

Arnold valued natural scenery for its peace and permanence in contrast with the ceaseless change of human things. His descriptions are often picturesque, and marked by striking similes. However, at the same time he liked subdued colours, mist and moonlight. He seems to prefer the 'spent lights' of the sea-depths in "The Forsaken Merman" to the village life preferred by the merman's lost wife.

In his poetry he derived not only the subject matter of his narrative poems from various traditional or literary sources but even much of the romantic melancholy of his earlier poems from Senancour's "Obermann".

13.8 PROFESSOR OF POETRY

In 1857, while working as the Inspector of Schools, Arnold was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, a part time position, requiring the appointee to give only three lectures per year. While traditionally the professors gave the lectures in Latin, Arnold spoke in English, setting up a new precedence.

While he continued to publish poems such as ‘Merope. A Tragedy’ (1858), he now began to steer towards prose. ‘On Translating Homer’, published in January 1861, was one such work. It was based on a series of lectures he gave at Oxford from 3 November 1860 to 18 December 1860.

’The Popular Education of France’, also published in 1861, was another important work of this period. In 1859, he had conducted a trip to the continent at the request of the parliament to study the European educational system and the work was an outcome of it.

In 1862, he was reelected as Professor of Poetry at Oxford for another five-year term. In the same year, he published ‘Last Words on Translating Homer’, a sequel to his 1861 publication, ‘On Translating Homer’ entitled.

Continuing to write both poems and prose, he published ‘Essays in Criticism: First Series’ in 1865, and ’Thyrsis’, an elegy to his old friend Clough, in 1866. He also wanted to publish ‘Essays in Criticism: Second Series’; but that did not happen until after his death.

In 1867, he had his last book of poems, ‘New Poems’, published. Among many other well-known works, the collection contained his famous poem, ‘Dover’ Beach’, which he wrote while on his honeymoon. Within the following year, the book sold 1000 copies. Thereafter, he mainly concentrated on essays.

13.9 AS AN EASSYIST

In 1868, Mathew Arnold began a new phase of his life with the publication of ‘Essay on the Study of Celtic Literature’. It was

stimulating exercise in philosophy and anthropology in imitation of Renan and Gobineau.

In 1869, he had one of his most important works, ‘Culture and Anarchy’, published in book form. It was a collection of essays published in1867-1868 in the Cornhill Magazine. After this, he turned to religion, writing four books on the subject.

'St. Paul and Protestantism’ his first book on religion, was published in 1870. It was followed by, ‘Literature and Dogma’, published 1873, ‘God and the Bible’ published in 1875, and ‘Last Essays on Church and Religion’ published in 1877.

By then, Matthew Arnold had made his name as an esteemed lecturer. ’Last Essays on Church and Religion’ contained his famous lecture, ‘The Church of England’, delivered at the London Clergy at Sion College. In it, he rebuked them for their deference to the landed gentry because such attitude was not in conformity with Christianity.

In 1883, William Gladstone, Prime Minister of England, offered him a yearly pension of £250. In the same year, he was invited to the United States of America, touring both the USA and Canada until 1884, delivering lectures on democracy and education.

In 1886, he retired from his job as Inspector of Schools and traveled to the USA once more. He continued to work, writing essays almost until his sudden and untimely death two years later.

13.10 PROSE

Assessing the importance of Arnold's prose work in 1988, Stefan Collini stated, "for reasons to do with our own cultural preoccupations as much as with the merits of his writing, the best of his prose has a claim on us today that cannot be matched by his poetry." "Certainly there may still be some readers who, vaguely recalling 'Dover Beach' or 'The Scholar Gipsy' from school anthologies, are surprised to find he 'also' wrote prose."

George Watson follows George Saintsbury in dividing Arnold's career as a prose writer into three phases: 1) early literary criticism that begins with his preface to the 1853 edition of his poems and ends with the first series of Essays in Criticism (1865); 2) a prolonged middle period (overlapping the first and third phases) characterised by social, political and religious writing (roughly 1860–1875); 3) a return to literary criticism with the selecting and editing of collections of Wordsworth's and Byron's poetry and the second series of Essays in Criticism.[21] Both Watson and Saintsbury declare their preference for Arnold's literary criticism over his social or religious criticism. More recent writers, such as Collini, have shown a greater interest in his social writing, while over the years a significant second tier of criticism has focused on Arnold's religious writing. His writing on education has not drawn a significant critical endeavour separable from the criticism of his social writings.

Literary criticism

Arnold's work as a literary critic began with the 1853 "Preface to the Poems". In it, he attempted to explain his extreme act of self-censorship in excluding the dramatic poem "Empedocles on Etna". With its emphasis on the importance of subject in poetry, on "clearness of arrangement, rigor of development, simplicity of style" learned from the

Greeks, and in the strong imprint of Goethe and Wordsworth, may be observed nearly all the essential elements in his critical theory. George Watson described the preface, written by the thirty-one-year-old Arnold, as "oddly stiff and graceless when we think of the elegance of his later prose."

Criticism began to take first place in Arnold's writing with his appointment in 1857 to the professorship of poetry at Oxford, which he held for two successive terms of five years. In 1861 his lectures On Translating Homer were published, to be followed in 1862 by Last Words on Translating Homer, both volumes admirable in style and full of striking judgments and suggestive remarks, but built on rather arbitrary assumptions and reaching no well-established conclusions.[citation needed] Especially characteristic, both of his defects and his qualities, are on the one hand, Arnold's unconvincing advocacy of English hexameters and his creation of a kind of literary absolute in the "grand style," and, on the other, his keen feeling of the need for a disinterested and intelligent criticism in England.

Although Arnold's poetry received only mixed reviews and attention during his lifetime, his forays into literary criticism were more successful. Arnold is famous for introducing a methodology of literary criticism somewhere between the historicist approach common to many critics at the time and the personal essay; he often moved quickly and easily from literary subjects to political and social issues. His Essays in Criticism (1865, 1888), remains a significant influence on critics to this day, and his prefatory essay to that collection, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", is one of the most influential essays written on the

role of the critic in identifying and elevating literature — even while admitting, "The critical power is of lower rank than the creative." Comparing himself to the French liberal essayist Ernest Renan, who sought to inculcate morality in France, Arnold saw his role as inculcating intelligence in England. In one of his most famous essays on the topic, "The Study of Poetry", Arnold wrote that, "Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry". He considered the most important criteria used to judge the value of a poem were "high truth" and "high seriousness". By this standard, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales did not merit Arnold's approval. Further, Arnold thought the works that had been proven to possess both "high truth" and "high seriousness", such as those of Shakespeare and Milton, could be used as a basis of comparison to determine the merit of other works of poetry. He also sought for literary criticism to remain disinterested, and said that the appreciation should be of "the object as in itself it really is."

Social criticism

He was led on from literary criticism to a more general critique of the spirit of his age. Between 1867 and 1869 he wrote Culture and Anarchy, famous for the term he popularised for the middle class of the English Victorian era population: "Philistines", a word which derives its modern cultural meaning (in English – the German-language usage was well established) from him. Culture and Anarchy is also famous for its popularisation of the phrase "sweetness and light," first coined by Jonathan Swift.

In Culture and Anarchy, Arnold identifies himself as a Liberal and "a believer in culture" and takes up what historian Richard Bellamy calls the "broadly Gladstonian effort to transform the Liberal Party into a vehicle of political moralism." Arnold viewed with skepticism the plutocratic grasping in socioeconomic affairs, and engaged the questions which vexed many Victorian liberals on the nature of power and the state's role in moral guidance. Arnold vigorously attacked the Nonconformists and the arrogance of "the great Philistine middle-class, the master force in our politics." The Philistines were "humdrum people, slaves to routine, enemies to light" who believed that England's greatness was due to her material wealth alone and took little interest in culture. Liberal education was essential, and by that Arnold meant a close reading and attachment to the cultural classics, coupled with critical reflection. Arnold saw the "experience" and "reflection" of Liberalism as naturally leading to the ethical end of "renouncement," as evoking the "best self" to suppress one's "ordinary self." Despite his quarrels with the Nonconformists, Arnold remained a loyal Liberal throughout his life, and in 1883, William Gladstone awarded him an annual pension of 250 pounds "as a public recognition of service to the poetry and literature of England."

Many subsequent critics such as Edward Alexander, Lionel Trilling, George Scialabba, and Russell Jacoby have emphasized the liberal character of Arnold's thought. Hugh Stuart Jones describes Arnold's work as a "liberal critique of Victorian liberalism" while Alan S. Kahan places Arnold's critique of middle-class philistinism, materialism, and

mediocrity within the tradition of 'aristocratic liberalism' as exemplified by liberal thinkers such as John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville.

Arnold's "want of logic and thoroughness of thought" as noted by John M. Robertson in Modern Humanists was an aspect of the inconsistency of which Arnold was accused. Few of his ideas were his own, and he failed to reconcile the conflicting influences which moved him so strongly. "There are four people, in especial," he once wrote to Cardinal Newman, "from whom I am conscious of having learnt – a very different thing from merely receiving a strong impression – learnt habits, methods, ruling ideas, which are constantly with me; and the four are – Goethe, Wordsworth, Sainte-Beuve, and yourself." Dr. Arnold must be added; the son's fundamental likeness to the father was early pointed out by Swinburne, and was later attested by Matthew Arnold's grandson, Mr. Arnold Whitridge. Others such as Stefan Collini suggest that much of the criticism aimed at Arnold is based on "a convenient parody of what he is supposed to have stood for" rather than the genuine article.

Journalistic criticism

In 1887, Arnold was credited with coining the phrase "New Journalism", a term that went on to define an entire genre of newspaper history, particularly Lord Northcliffe's turn-of-the-century press empire. However, at the time, the target of Arnold's irritation was not Northcliffe, but the sensational journalism of Pall Mall Gazette editor, W.T. Stead. Arnold had enjoyed a long and mutually beneficial association with the Pall Mall Gazette since its inception in 1865. As an occasional contributor, he had formed a particular friendship with its first editor,

Frederick Greenwood and a close acquaintance with its second, John Morley. But he strongly disapproved of the muck-raking Stead, and declared that, under Stead, "the P.M.G., whatever may be its merits, is fast ceasing to be literature."

He was appalled at the shamelessness of the sensationalistic new journalism of the sort he witnessed on his tour the United States in 1886. In his account of that tour, "Civilization in the United States", he observed, "if one were searching for the best means to efface and kill in a whole nation the discipline of self-respect, the feeling for what is elevated, he could do no better than take the American newspapers."

Religious criticism

His religious views were unusual for his time and caused sorrow to some of his best friends. Scholars of Arnold's works disagree on the nature of Arnold's personal religious beliefs. Under the influence of Baruch Spinoza and his father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, he rejected the supernatural elements in religion, even while retaining a fascination for church rituals. In the preface to God and the Bible, written in 1875, Arnold recounts a powerful sermon he attended discussing the "salvation by Jesus Christ", he writes: "Never let us deny to this story power and pathos, or treat with hostility ideas which have entered so deep into the life of Christendom. But the story is not true; it never really happened".

He continues to express his concern with Biblical truth explaining that "The personages of the Christian heaven and their conversations are no more matter of fact than the personages of the Greek Olympus and their conversations." He also wrote in Literature and Dogma: "The word 'God'

is used in most cases as by no means a term of science or exact knowledge, but a term of poetry and eloquence, a term thrown out, so to speak, as a not fully grasped object of the speaker's consciousness – a literary term, in short; and mankind mean different things by it as their consciousness differs." He defined religion as "morality touched with emotion".

However, he also wrote in the same book, "to pass from a Christianity relying on its miracles to a Christianity relying on its natural truth is a great change. It can only be brought about by those whose attachment to Christianity is such, that they cannot part with it, and yet cannot but deal with it sincerely."

13.11 MAJOR WORK

Arnold is best remembered for his essay, 'Culture and Anarchy'. In it, he defined culture as "a study of perfection" and said that England could only be saved if critical intelligence capable of questioning the authority was allowed to develop. He also criticized the contemporary politicians for their lack of purpose.

In 'Literature and Dogma', his other major work, he argued that the Church was a time-honored social institution that must be reformed; but without undermining its position in English history and culture. It also said that Bible, with its great literally value, should not be discredited because of historical inaccuracy.

'Dover Beach', written in 1851 and published in his 'New Poems' in 1867, is one of his most notable poems. It is also the most difficult poem

to analyze and different critics have analyzed it differently. It also finds mention in number of novels, plays, poems and films.

13.12 POETIC ACHIEVEMENT

The work that gives Arnold his high place in the history of literature and the history of ideas was all accomplished in the time he could spare from his official duties. His first volume of verse was The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems. By A. (1849); this was followed (in 1852) by another under the same initial: Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems. In 1853 appeared the first volume of poems published under his own name; it consisted partly of poems selected from the earlier volumes and also contained the well-known preface explaining (among other things) why Empedocles was excluded from the selection: it was a dramatic poem "in which the suffering finds no vent in action," in which there is "everything to be endured, nothing to be done." This preface foreshadows his later criticism in its insistence upon the classic virtues of unity, impersonality, universality, and architectonic power and upon the value of the classical masterpieces as models for "an age of spiritual discomfort"—an age "wanting in moral grandeur." Other editions followed, and Merope, Arnold's classical tragedy, appeared in 1858, and New Poems in 1867. After that date, though there were further editions, Arnold wrote little additional verse.

Not much of Arnold's verse will stand the test of his own criteria; far from being classically poised, impersonal, serene, and grand, it is often intimate, personal, full of romantic regret, sentimental pessimism, and nostalgia. As a public and social character and as a prose writer, Arnold

was sunny, debonair, and sanguine; but beneath ran the current of his buried life, and of this much of his poetry is the echo:

From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy into all our day.

"I am past thirty," he wrote a friend in 1853, "and three parts iced over." The impulse to write poetry came typically when

A bolt is shot back somewhere in the breast,
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.

Though he was "never quite benumb'd by the world's sway," these hours of insight became more and more rare, and the stirrings of buried feeling were associated with moods of regret for lost youth, regret for the freshness of the early world, moods of self-pity, moods of longing for

The hills where his life rose
And the sea where it goes.

Yet, though much of Arnold's most characteristic verse is in this vein of soliloquy or intimate confession, he can sometimes rise, as in "Sohrab and Rustum," to epic severity and impersonality; to lofty meditation, as in "Dover Beach"; and to sustained magnificence and richness, as in "The Scholar Gipsy" and "Thyrsis"—where he wields an intricate stanza form without a stumble.

In 1857, assisted by the vote of his godfather (and predecessor) John Keble, Arnold was elected to the Oxford chair of poetry, which he held for 10 years. It was characteristic of him that he revolutionized this professorship. The keynote was struck in his inaugural lecture: “On the Modern Element in Literature,” “modern” being taken to mean not merely “contemporary” (for Greece was “modern”), but the spirit that, contemplating the vast and complex spectacle of life, craves for moral and intellectual “deliverance.” Several of the lectures were afterward published as critical essays, but the most substantial fruits of his professorship were the three lectures On Translating Homer (1861)—in which he recommended Homer’s plainness and nobility as medicine for the modern world, with its “sick hurry and divided aims” and condemned Francis Newman’s recent translation as ignoble and eccentric—and the lectures On the Study of Celtic Literature (1867), in which, without much knowledge of his subject or of anthropology, he used the Celtic strain as a symbol of that which rejects the despotism of the commonplace and the utilitarian.

13.13 RELIGIOUS WRITINGS

Lastly Arnold turned to religion, the constant preoccupation and true centre of his whole life, and wrote St. Paul and Protestantism (1870), Literature and Dogma (1873), God and the Bible (1875), and Last Essays on Church and Religion (1877). In these books, Arnold really founded Anglican “modernism.” Like all religious liberals, he came under fire from two sides: from the orthodox, who accused him of infidelity, of turning God into a “stream of tendency” and of substituting vague

emotion for definite belief; and from the infidels, for clinging to the church and retaining certain Christian beliefs of which he had undermined the foundations. Arnold considered his religious writings to be constructive and conservative. Those who accused him of destructiveness did not realize how far historical and scientific criticism had already riddled the old foundations; and those who accused him of timidity failed to see that he regarded religion as the highest form of culture, the one indispensable without which all secular education is in vain. His attitude is best summed up in his own words (from the preface to God and the Bible): "At the present moment two things about the Christian religion must surely be clear to anybody with eyes in his head. One is, that men cannot do without it; the other, that they cannot do with it as it is." Convinced that much in popular religion was "touched with the finger of death" and convinced no less of the hopelessness of man without religion, he sought to find for religion a basis of "scientific fact" that even the positive modern spirit must accept. A reading of Arnold's Note Books will convince any reader of the depth of Arnold's spirituality and of the degree to which, in his "buried life," he disciplined himself in constant devotion and self-forgetfulness.

Arnold died suddenly, of heart failure, in the spring of 1888, at Liverpool and was buried at Laleham, with the three sons whose early loss had shadowed his life.

CHECK IN PROGRESSS II

3. Write a brief note on Poetry of Arnold.

Answer

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4. How was Arnold as an Essayist

Answer

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…….

13.14 LET'S SUM UP

Mathew Arnold is an important critic of English Literature. Before him, English criticism was in fog, and whatever criticism we find, is more based on personal notions than on any consistent methods. Dryden is regarded as the first critic of English, but his criticism is based on personal notion- sympathy and knowledge rather than on any formula. It is the reason that even in his age, the authority of Aristotle remained unquestioned. The romantic critics besides their rich criticism were more lost in their theory of imagination and lo e for metaphysis. It is in Arnold that English literature could have a critic of real nature, who laid down certain principles following which poetry could be criticized. Herbert Paul very pertinently remarks, "Mr. Arnold did not merely criticize books himself. He taught others how to criticize. He laid down principles; if he did not always keep the principles he laid down. Nobody, after reading "Essays in Criticism" has any excuse for not being a critic."

13.15 KEYWORDS

- **Exceptional** : unusual; not typical
- **Ernest :**resulting from or showing sincere and intense conviction.
- **Hexameters** :a line of verse consisting of six metrical feet.
- **Religious criticism** :religion involves criticism of the validity, concept, or ideas of religion.

13.16 QUESTIONS TO REVIEW

- Mathew Arnold's poetry as a glory of the vanished past?
- Describe Arnold's idea that "poetry is the criticism of life."
- Describe Arnold's view of criticism of life
- What is the effect of Arnold's use of the terms, "barbarians, Philistines, populace"? Faced with these unpleasant alternatives, what should we desire?

13.17 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

- George Saintsbury, Matthew Arnold (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1899)
- Saintsbury combines biography with critical appraisal. In his view, "Arnold's greatness lies in 'his general literary position' (p. 227). Neither the greatest poet nor the greatest critic, Arnold was able to achieve distinction in both areas, making his contributions to literature greater than those of virtually any other writer before him." Mazzeno, 1999, p. 8.

- Herbert W. Paul, Mathew Arnold (London: Macmillan, 1902)
- G. W. E. Russell, Matthew Arnold (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904)
- Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (New York: Norton, 1939)
- Trilling called his study a "biography of a mind."
- Park Honan, Matthew Arnold, a life (New York, McGraw–Hill, 1981) ISBN 0-07-029697-9
- "Trilling's book challenged and delighted me but failed to take me close to Matthew Arnold's life. ... I decided in 1970 to write a definitive biography ... Three-quarters of the biographical data in this book, I may say, has not appeared in a previous study of Arnold." — Preface, pp. viii–ix.
- Stefan Collini, Arnold (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988)
- A good starting point for those new to Arnold's prose. "Like many late century scholars, Collini believes Arnold's chief contribution to English literature is as a critic. ... Collini insists Arnold remains a force in literary criticism because 'he characterizes in unforgettable ways' the role that literary and cultural criticism 'can and must play in modern societies'" (p 67). Mazzeno, 1999, pp. 103–104.
- Nicholas Murray, A Life of Matthew Arnold (New York: St. Martin's, 1996)

13.18 ANSWERS TO CHECK IN PROGRESS

Answers to Check in Progress I

Answer 1 .Check Topic 13.3

Answer 2 Check Topic 13.5

Answers to Check in Progress II

Answer 1 .Check Topic 13.10

Answer 2 Check Topic 13.8

UNIT 14: MATHEW ARNOLD- "SWEETNESS AND LIGHT"

STRUCTURE

14.0 OBJECTIVE

In this Chapter, you will get to know what is all about Sweetness and light by Arnold.

It provides summary an analysis of Sweetness and Light. Following objectives may also be achieved:

- Analysis and Interpretation of Sweetness and light
- Genesis and culture in Sweetness and Light
- Critical points and criticism in Sweetness and light.
- Description of Religion and color

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Sweetness and light is an English idiom that can be used in common speech, either as statement of personal happy consciousness, (though this may be viewed by natives as being a trifle in earnest) or as literal report on another person. Depending upon sense-of-humour, some may use the phrase with mild irony. For example: The two had been fighting for a month, but around others it was all sweetness and light. P. G. Wodehouse, esteemed humorous writer employed the phrase often, sometimes with a slight nod to the phrase's dual-edge. Originally, however, "sweetness and light" had a special use in literary and cultural criticism meaning "pleasing and instructive", which in classical theory was considered to be the aim and justification of poetry.

Jonathan Swift first used the phrase in his mock-heroic prose satire, "The Battle of the Books" (1704), a defense of Classical learning, which he published as a prolegomenon to his A Tale of a Tub. It gained widespread currency in the Victorian era, when English poet and essayist Matthew Arnold picked it up as the title of the first section of his 1869 book Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism, where "sweetness and light" stands for beauty and intelligence, the two key components of an excellent culture.

14.2 MATTHEW ARNOLD ON SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

Intro

In 1704 Jonathan Swift wrote of beauty and intelligence as "the two noblest of things, sweetness and light." In 1869, Matthew Arnold made Swift's latter phrase a touchstone of Victorian sensibility as the title of the first chapter of his "Culture and Anarchy." The following passage suggests that he meant more than the cloying gentility with which the words have often been associated in later years.

Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater! - the passion for making them prevail. It is not satisfied till we all come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a national glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive.

Only it must be real thought and real beauty; real sweetness and real light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments

constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organisations give an example of this way of working on the masses.

I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely, - nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other , the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time.

Summary

In Culture and Anarchy, Matthew Arnold sought a center of authority by which the anarchy caused by the troubled passage of the Reform Bill of 1867 might be regulated. At its best, his style is clear, flexible, and convincing. He wrote in such a complicated mood of indignation, impatience, and fear, however, that his style and his argumentative method are frequently repetitious and unsystematic. The book is nevertheless a masterpiece of polished prose, in which urbane irony and shifts of ridicule are used to persuade the Victorian middle class that it must reform itself before it can begin to reform the entire nation.

Writing as a so-called Christian humanist, Arnold primarily directed his criticism against the utilitarianism of the followers of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and against the various movements of liberal reform. Disturbed by the social and political confusion, by Fenianism and the Hyde Park Riots of 1866, and by the inability of either the church or the government to cope with the growing unrest both in England and on the Continent, Arnold attempted to describe an objective center of authority that all, regardless of religious or social bias, could follow.

This center of authority is culture, which he defined on the level of the individual as "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world." Because this authority is internal, it is a study of perfection within the individual, a study that should elevate the "best self" through a fresh and free search for beauty and intelligence. By following "right reason," the disinterested intellectual pursuits of the best self, Arnold foresaw a way to overcome the social and political confusion of the 1860's and to prepare for a future in which all could be happy and free. With this basically romantic view of human beings as a means and human perfectibility as the end, Arnold turned to social criticism, carefully showing that no other center of authority was tenable. The ideal of nonconformity, the disestablishment of the church, led to confusion or anarchy because it represented the sacrifice of all other sides of human personality to the religious. The ideal of the liberal reformers, on the other hand, led to anarchy because it regarded the

reforms as ends rather than means toward a harmonious totality of human existence.

Arnold clarifies his definition of culture by tracing its origin to curiosity or "scientific passion" (the desire to see things as they really are) and to morality or "social passion" (the desire to do good). Christianity, as he saw it, is like culture in that it also seeks to learn the will of God (human perfection) and make it prevail. Culture goes beyond religion, however, as interpreted by the Nonconformists in that it is a harmonious expansion of all human powers. In even sharper terms, culture is opposed to utilitarianism, which Arnold considered "mechanical" because it worshiped means rather than ends. In fact, anything—materialism, economic greatness, individual wealth, bodily health, Puritanism—that was treated as an end except that of human perfectibility was to Arnold mere "machinery" that led to anarchy. Only culture, the harmonious union of poetry (the ideal of beauty) and religion (the ideal of morality), sees itself as a means that preserves the totality of the individual. Culture looks beyond machinery; it has only one passion—the passion for "sweetness" (beauty) and "light" (intelligence) and the passion to make them prevail. With such a passion it seeks to do away with social classes and religious bias to make the best that has been thought and known in the world (right reason) the core of human endeavor and institutions.

After establishing his definition of culture in terms of the individual, Arnold turned toward the problem of society. He saw the characteristic view of English people toward...

Matthew Arnold is a well- known figure of Victorian Age. This era is very glorious in the history of England because of It's an exemplary progress in all branches of life. This age is very popular by its material prosperity, political awakening, democratic reforms, industrial and mechanical progress, scientific development, social unrest etc. He remained pessimist in the age due to a conflict between religion and science. He wrote a book 'Culture & Anarchy' with a view to reviving the values which were like honey in ancient Greek. He checks the values of his own time by the light of that culture. His work 'Culture & Anarchy' is a collection of a few separate essays; they show his fighting and struggle against material affluence.

Here, we analyze his concept about 'Sweetness &Light'. In this treatise, his central focus and argument is on curiosity. It is defined as a liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of mind or mental activities. According to him, the natal place of curiosity is a desire. It is desires that make some body pursue. The work of desire is to see the things as they are. If it is pursued by an intelligent person with an impartial understanding of mind, it becomes praise worthy. It bears a genuine scientific passion that is the right kind of curiosity. Such curiosity leads us to real culture. So, beyond the man of culture is curiosity.

Matthew Arnold views about a social aspect of culture. It comes out from the love of neighbor. In other words, it can be said that this aspect of culture gets birth from the desire for removing human errors and diminishing human misery. It is a person of culture who works in the society for its betterment. Such desire sees the things as they are, and the

man of culture works impartially with eagerness. So, it gives birth to sweetness and light. He calls it a real culture that inspires a person to lean the world better and happier than he found it. Indeed, it occupies a genuine scientific passion and a balance and instruction of mind to fight against the diseased inclination of mind.

The author goes to the origin of culture that lies in the love of perfection. In other words, it can be called that culture is a study of perfection. In it two dominant desires work in harmony__the scientific passion for pure knowledge and moral and social passion for doing well. The man of culture should have the pursuit of pure knowledge with impartial desire or passion and prevail it in society for diminishing human miseries. Such miseries can be diminished by prevailing sweetness and light that is the job of a man of culture or a man of pursuing perfection. Such job is easy for a man of culture.

Culture is inclined to real reason and the will of God to prevail. It consists of the study and the pursuit of perfection. The direct inspiration for man to desire for perfection comes from religion. Arnold calls religion' the voice of the deepest of human experience'. All the voices of human experience are available in art, science, poetry, philosophy and history which a man of true culture listens with a distinguished attention. All the above fields make man perfect internally, or its aim is total human perfection. The out ward expression of culture is shown in the general sweet expansion of thoughts and feelings, rich in dignity, wealth and happiness of human nature. The culture brings internal as well as external perfection of human. It quits all partialities and errors of man. Partialities and errors make anarchy in society.

Arnold finds sincere and genuine connection between culture and the idea of sweetness and light. His ideal man of culture is a Greek man called Euphuasis. Arnold borrowed the phrase 'sweetness and light' from Swift. The character of a man of culture is moulded by religion and poetry. The aim of religion is to make man perfect ethically, where as the poetry possesses the idea of beauty and of human nature perfect on all its sides. Culture has the power to prevail peace and satisfaction by killing our bestiality and drawing nearer to the world of spirituality with perfection. Indeed, religion fails to lead us to such perfection. He describes about religious organizations of his time in England that they seem to have failed morally. He submits example of Puritanism that is based on the impulse of man towards moral development and self - conquest. This perfection leads to the idea or impulse of narrowness and insufficiency. He jumps to such conclusion by judging the religious organizations in terms of sweetness and light.

Culture has perfection that is free from all kinds of narrowness.it stands against all the mischief men who have blind faith in machinery. In his opinion, the pursuit of perfection is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness works in the end for light also; he who works for light works in the end for sweetness also. Those who work united for sweetness and light, work to make the reason and the will of God to prevail. Culture looks beyond machinery___ social, political and economic, beyond population, wealth and industry, beyond middle class liberalism and avoids all kinds of narrowness and hatred. Culture has one great opinion, the passion for sweetness and light.

Arnold shows pleasure to insist on the arousing of his contemporaries in all spheres of creative activities in art, literature and life. He insists that the light of culture must guide this national re-awakening to sweetness and light. Culture works differently, and it does not work with ready-made judgment and watch words. Its appeal is not confined to any one peculiar class in society. It deals with the best self that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere. Culture implies itself to make all men to live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas as it uses them itself freely.

The great men of culture believe in equality and broad mindedness. They are possessed by a passion to spread culture from one end of society to the other. They carry the best knowledge and the best ideas of their times. It is the duty of these men to humanize knowledge, and therefore, it becomes the best knowledge and thought of the ages, and becomes a true source of sweetness and light. The great men of culture broaden the basis of life and intelligence and work powerfully to expand sweetness and light to make reason and the will of God to prevail.

Consequently, a man of culture is like a honey bee. The job of honey bee is to suck the juice from all flowers (sweet or sour) and to make honey. Honey is sweet and liked by all in all forms. Honey has wax that is not useless because the candles are made of it light. Hence, in the end of sweetness is light. In this way, a man of culture seeks knowledge from all departments and shares it to all. He is not narrow-minded because

such knowledge brings perfection. So his pursuit of perfection is sweetness and light.

14.3 GENESIS

"The Battle of the Books" spoofed the famous seventeenth-century Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, a controversy that had raged first in France and then, less intensely, in England, about which was better the Ancient or Modern learning. Should people still model their writings and artistic productions on Greek and Latin authors? Or should they study the (moderns from the Renaissance on), who used living vernacular languages (not dead ones) and produced practical inventions, and new artistic genres that could be read by everyone. In On Ancient and Modern Learning (1697), Swift's patron, the urbane Sir William Temple, had weighed in on the losing side, that of the Ancients, repeating the famous paradox used by Newton that we moderns see further only because we are dwarves standing on the shoulders of giants. Swift has the books come to life and step down from the library shelves to stage a mock-Homeric battle, while the goddess Criticism, a hideous hag, intervenes on the side of her beloved "Moderns" in the manner of the Olympians of yore.

Midway through the story, Aesop, an ancient book, stumbles on a debate between a bee and a spider. The spider claims that the bee creates nothing of its own, whereas the spider is an original creator who "spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without" and his web is a triumph of architecture and

mathematics. The bee counters that the spider's web is spun from digested flies and other dirt and that all the spider really contributes is his poison. Bees range far and wide to search out the very best flowers, which they do not harm, while the spider only moves four inches and feeds on insects and other "vermin of the age".

Aesop judges the argument. The ancient writers, Aesop says, are like bees who fill their "hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light." The Ancients "are content with the bee to pretend to nothing of [their] own, beyond…flights and…language." That is, imitation of Ancient authors results in works filled with delight (sweetness) and moral wisdom (light). Later writers, notably Matthew Arnold used the phrase "sweetness and light", to designate the positive effects of a (predominantly classical) humanistic culture in arts and letters (without Swift's emphasis on originality versus imitation).

14.4 POPULARIZATION IN CULTURAL CRITICISM

The Victorian poet and essayist Matthew Arnold, who was also an inspector of schools, popularized Swift's phrase as the theme and title of the first chapter of his celebrated book of cultural criticism, Culture and Anarchy. Arnold contends that the most valuable aspect of civilization is its ability to confer "sweetness and light," and he contrasts this to the moralism, hatred, and fanaticism of some of the would-be educators and materialistic improvers of mankind. For Arnold, sweetness is beauty, and light is intelligence – and together they make up "the essential character

of human perfection," which had its fullest development, he believed, among the ancient Greeks.

Arnold criticizes the religious and utilitarian reformers of his own day for wanting only to improve humanity's moral and material condition, or for focusing "solely on the scientific passion for knowing," while neglecting the human need for beauty and intelligence, which comes about through lifelong self-cultivation. Arnold concedes that the Greeks may have neglected the moral and material, but:

Greece did not err in having the idea of beauty and harmony and complete human perfection so present and paramount; it is impossible to have this idea too present and paramount; but the moral fiber must be braced too. And we, because we have braced the moral fibre, are not on that account in the right way, if at the same time the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection is wanting or misapprehended amongst us; and evidently it is wanting or misapprehended at present. And when we rely as we do on our religious organisations, which in themselves do not and cannot give us this idea, and think we have done enough if we make them spread and prevail, then, I say, we fall into our common fault of overvaluing machinery.

The phrase came into regular use as an English language idiom after the publication of Arnold's essay.

CHECK PROGRESS I:

1. Give the brief summary about the Sweetness and Light.

Answer……

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2. Discuss in short the Genesis of Sweetness and Light.
3. Answer……

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14.5 CULTURE BY MATHEW ARNOLD

Mathew Arnold defines culture as study of perfection. In such a case, harmonious perfection is a general perfection that affects all the members of society because if one member suffers, all the others must suffer with it. The entire book of Arnold takes culture as collection of everything what is the best and perfect in the world.

The book was written when it was a time of political and social change. The book argues in reconstructing England social ideology. Mathew Arnold states that culture is the process of self discipline and coming out of self centering but having an obligation to the whole society.

14.6 SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

This is the title of the first chapter of Mathew Arnold. Materialism is one of the themes that come out. Materialism covers all the individuals who

perceive England from an economic point of view. Arnold argues that England achievements are in poetry, universities instead of mines, railways and factories.

The prominent theme in the second chapter is scholarly totalitarianism. It is explained as doing what you want, having freedom. Also he brings in the instrument of social perfection. Arnold advocates for a situation where the state protects its citizens against anarchy.

14.7 THE THREE GROUPS IN THE SOCIETY

Arnold has a theory of the benefits of a strong state and can be understood by how he writes of social class. Arnold resents aristocracy for its greed and outmoded customs and he suggest that it should be supplanted by the state. The second group, for which Arnold holds a lot of criticism, is Philistines.

They are selfish and materialistic. They are the middle class.The third group is the populace.They are the poverty stricken, lower class who have been neglected by the Barbarian and selfish Philistines. Arnold shows that uneducated English people could achieve form of perfectionism by using their skills and talents.

The three groups comprise the English society. For Arnold, Populace is the group of people whom to be removed out of anarchy through the pursuit of culture.

Therefore, when we speak of ourselves as divided into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, we must be understood always to imply that

within each of these classes there are a certain number of aliens, if we may so call them, people who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection (Arnold 110 b).

14.8 MAIN THEMES

The main themes all have one agenda. Culture involves forsaking ones narrow mindedness to pursuit perfectionism. Anarchy represents the lack of guiding principle which prevents someone to achieve perfectness.

Arnold stresses that without instilling people the need of culture, it can lead to increased anarchy hence he introduced the idea of Hebraism and Hellenism. Arnold explains Hebraism as the behavior of people that are ignorant or opposed to culture. Hellenism refers to being open-minded.

14.9 RELIGION

Arnolds argues that those who labor for sweetness and light labors for the will of God to win through. One who labors for loathing, labors for confusion as well. He, who works for hatred, works for confusion. According to Arnold, culture despises spite and is passionate about sweetness and light.

The preachers of culture will always have a difficult time and they are likely be considered as Jeremiahs as opposed to friends and patrons.

That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. Protestant religion;' There is sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! Arnold stresses that one

only needs the language of religion to judge culture. ‘At long last, be of one in body and soul,’ quotes St. Peter (Arnold 27 c).

Arnold further wrote that culture seeks to do away with the classes, to make all men live in atmosphere of light and sweetness. Arnold recommends culture as our great help to come out of our difficulties.

There is another view of culture, the desire to see things as they are, to stop human error and to leave the world happier than it was found.

These motives are social and come out as parts of the grounds of culture. Culture moves by the force of moral and social passion of wanting to do well. Arnold wants culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail.

14.10 ARNOLD CRITICISMS

One of the areas where Arnold has shown criticism is religion. Arnold’s religious views were unorthodox during his times. His views were influenced highly by Baruch Spinoza as well as his father (Freud 3). For instance, he opposed the supernatural claims of religion even after while having a soft spot for ritual.

Arnold wants to belong to a practical position that is concerned with the poems of religion than the presence of God. He wrote in the preface of God and the Bible in 1875 “The personages of the Christian heaven and their conversations are no more matter of fact than the personages of the Greek Olympus and their conversations’’.

On the other hand, he also noted down in the matching book, "To come out of the belief of Christianity depending on miracles to Christianity depending on normal truth is a big change.

Those who have fixed them to Christianity can bring the change of depending on normal truth of the gospel instead of depending on miracles. Arnold defined Religion as morality touched with emotion (Arnold 43 b). Arnold was also a political liberal, and he saw that democracy would bring power to the masses and England to bring in culture for not Apathy to follow.

Arnold wanted culture to be the new religion of the west maintaining social order. He further explains that culture would be a civil religion anyone could accept and to which there anyone could conform.

It required no fixed beliefs, had no fixed end but needed someone to pursue perfectness. Therefore, he saw social transformation and culture as solution for all ills. Arnold was viewed as late, decayed advocate of the compromised civil religion by Edmund Burke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

In 1848, a year of European revolutions, Matthew Arnold, the eldest son of a celebrated Victorian headmaster, voiced fears about his society that still seem hauntingly prescient and topical. "I see a wave of more than American vulgarity, moral, intellectual, and social, preparing to break over us," he wrote. Arnold was also a poet, critic and educationist of

great distinction. In Dover Beach, his finest poem, he expressed similar anxieties in some famous lines:

"And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

Arnold was acutely conscious of the threat of "ignorant armies" during 1866-69, the years in which he incubated this classic of social and literary criticism. Like many Victorian masterpieces, Culture and Anarchy began as a magazine series, and an important part of its appeal is as a tour de force of magazine journalism, a genre Arnold himself defined as "literature in a hurry".

The two great events, foreign and domestic, that shaped the writing of Arnold's passionate argument for self-improvement through culture were, first, the European revolutions of 1866-70, especially the rise of Prussia; and second, the great reform bill of 1867, together with the London riots that preceded it.

Initially, however, this is a book inspired by, and dedicated to, literature. Arnold was his father's son, a passionate advocate for the civilising effect of words and ideas, after the classical example of Greece and Rome. Arnold was also influenced by JH Newman's The Idea of a University, and was inspired to define culture as the essential means by which the provincial stupidity and boorishness of English life could be

neutralised on behalf of progress. Arnold's disdain for what passed as "culture" in Victorian times, is evident from his opening page:

"The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued out of sheer vanity and ignorance, or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it."

It caught the public mood and aroused in its Victorian readers a bout of self-analysis and self-criticism "True" culture, as Arnold defines it, with reference to the glorious Hellenic past, is simply "the study of perfection", the harmonious expansion of all the powers of human nature. In sentiments that would later be developed and enriched by the more feverish imagination of Oscar Wilde, for whom "culture" was at once sacrosanct and sublime, Arnold believed that a full apprehension of its virtues must be attained by a knowledge of the best that has been said and thought in the world, by the free play of the mind over the facts of life, and by a sympathetic attitude towards all that is beautiful. In one typical passage, he expresses his argument thus:

"I have been trying to show that culture is, or ought to be, the study and pursuit of perfection; and that of perfection, as pursued by culture, beauty and intelligence, or, in other words, sweetness and light, are the main characters."

Arnold's famous borrowing from Jonathan Swift – "Sweetness and light" – expresses culture as a dynamic concept: "sweetness" as a mature sense of beauty, and "light" as the exercise of an alert and active intelligence. Although the overall expression of this belief reeks of Victorian high-mindedness, Arnold gave both purpose and direction to an articulate critique of industrial society.

Culture & Anarchy appeared in book form just one year before Forster's all-important Education Act of 1870 and it posed questions that still perplex us today: what kind of life should individuals in mass societies be encouraged to lead? How do such societies best ensure that our quality of life is not impoverished ? How to preserve an elevated and exclusive freedom of thought in an age of democratic fervour?

Opposed to this exalted assertion of an ideal version of "the good life", there was the vulgarity, vigour and vehemence of Victorian England at its zenith. This, Arnold argues, was a heedless and exuberant individualism (replete with prejudice, greed, xenophobia, racism, intolerance and aggression) that would lead to anarchy. He nails this claim by showing how Victorian barbarism affected all strata of national life.

In some of his wittiest and most entertaining passages, Arnold divided English society into three classes — the Barbarians, the Philistines, and the Populace. (With an almost audible sigh, he complains: "It is awkward and tiresome to be always saying the aristocratic class, the middle class, the working class.") The Barbarians or aristocracy, he says, have a

superficial "sweetness and light", but are too concerned with the maintenance and enjoyment of their privileges to attain a true sense of beauty and a true liberation of thought:

"The Barbarians had the passion for field-sports; as of the passion for asserting one's personal liberty…. The care of the Barbarians for the body, and for all manly exercises; the chivalry of the Barbarians, with its characteristics of high spirit, choice manners, and distinguished bearing – what is this but the politeness of our aristocratic class?"

"The Philistines or middle classes are devoted to money-making and a narrow form of religion; they are indifferent or hostile to beauty; and they are 'the enemy of the children of light', or servants of the idea."

Finally, the rowdy Populace are violent in their prejudices and brutal in their pleasures. But all three groups are agreed that "doing as one likes" is the chief end of man, and all are self-satisfied. As a magazine writer of genius, Arnold dazzles his readers with entrancing contemporary detail: for instance, the case of the Mr Smith who "feared he would come to poverty and be eternally lost", to the great Reform crises, and to the commercial values to which working people had become enslaved. There are also many topical jokes in the text (nicely explicated in the Cambridge University Press edition of Culture and Anarchy, edited by J Dover Wilson), which indicate Arnold's wry and subtle sense of humour. He comes across as the kind of man you'd be happily stuck with on a wet afternoon in the country. His sensibility is supremely English; exquisitely well read; and exceedingly sophisticated.

In a further analysis of this English preference for putting action before thought, Arnold distinguishes two forces which he describes as "Hebraism" and "Hellenism". The former is concerned with resolute action and strict obedience to conscience; the latter with clear thinking and spontaneity of consciousness.

Favouring both, Arnold says that, when harmoniously combined, they lead to the perfect balance of an individual's nature, which is the desirable end of culture. The excessive development of one quality over the other, he suggests, results in imperfection. Hebraism with its insistence on conduct is the more essential and it triumphed with Christianity. However, the reaction that followed the pagan revival of the 16th century led to its over-development into Puritanism, a discipline intolerant of beauty and free intelligence.

According to Arnold, the English middle-class is still dominated by Puritanism, despising art and mental cultivation as an end in itself. Through a revival of the best in Hellenism, in language that anticipates Oscar Wilde, Matthew Arnold would bring "sweetness and light" to the English middle classes; and he would overcome the unthinking individualism of all classes by developing the idea of right reason embodied in the state.

By its wit, its pithy definitions and its potent charm, Culture and Anarchy caught the public mood and aroused in its Victorian readers a mid-season bout of self-analysis, even self-criticism, whose influence lingered for decades. As one later commentator observed, "The evils of English

society it attacks and the remedies it proposes are by no means out of date".

Arnold might be surprised by that verdict. In his closing paragraph, he notes, ironically, that "now we go the way the human race is going, while they [the Liberals] abolish the Irish Church by the power of the Nonconformists' antipathy to establishments, or they enable a man to marry his deceased wife's sister."

Matthew Arnold was the most important educational reformer of the 19th century. He realised that, in the modern world, education would be one of the keys to a good society. But it had to be education of a special kind – and not one that we nowadays necessarily recognise or strive for. Instead of saying that schools should teach more trigonometry or improve the literacy rates in particular socio-economic percentiles, Arnold advocated a strange sounding, but deeply sane and necessary, agenda. Schools should promote – as he put it – 'Sweetness and Light'. It was a turn of phrase calculated to irritate his contemporaries, but it neatly captured what he was trying to do – and what we might be inspired to try in turn. NPG Ax27807; Matthew Arnold by Elliott & Fry, published by Bickers& Son In his lifetime, Arnold was a laughing stock for some of the newspapers of Britain. The Daily Telegraph in particular constantly teased him for being pretentious: 'an elegant Jeremiah' as they put it. Whenever there was a strike or a riot, they imagined Arnold earnestly telling people not to fuss so much about vulgar, practical things like unemployment or low wages, and instead to raise their minds to higher ideals and concentrate on 'Sweetness and Light'. It was a deeply unfair

criticism (as we shall see) but there was just enough in Arnold's character to make it stick. It reveals just how easy it is to come across as fey, out of touch and inconsequential when one is trying to stand up for fragile, slightly complicated things. Matthew Arnold was born in 1822. His father, Thomas Arnold, was a major intellectual celebrity of his times: a tireless, immensely active and stern headmaster of Rugby public school, who had a starring role in Tom Brown's Schooldays, one of the bestselling novels of the era. 721px-Thomas_Arnold_by_Thomas_Phillips

Matthew's father, Thomas Arnold, 1840

Matthew was a disappointment, and a puzzle, to his father. He liked to read in bed in the morning, he enjoyed strolling through woods and meadows, he was charmed by young women in Paris, he wrote poetry, he neglected his studies and published – to the world's indifference – a couple of slim volumes of verse. Eventually, he fell in love with a woman called Frances Lucy Wightman – his pet name for her was Flu – the daughter of a judge. But to get married he needed a solid career, so he took up a senior post in the Department of Education as an Inspector of Schools. For years, he travelled the length and breadth of Victorian England, checking whether children were being properly taught. He earned a very respectable salary; the family grew, they went on interesting holidays and lived comfortably and happily in the West End of London – though Arnold was never quite on top of his finances. Arnold didn't write a great deal of poetry in these years but his charm (and his late father's many influential friends) got him elected to the highly prestigious position of Professor of Poetry at Oxford. There was no money attached to the role – but it meant he got to give a series of

lectures each year to the opinion formers of the nation. It was to prove the making of him, for it was thanks to his post that he matured into a profound social critic. His best lectures were gathered together into his most important and influential book, Culture and Anarchy (1869). London street scene There was a lot that bothered Arnold about the modern world – as it was just beginning to reveal itself. But he summed it up in one embracing idea: Anarchy. By ‘anarchy’, he didn’t mean people in black balaclavas breaking shop windows. Rather he meant something much more familiar and closer to home: a toxic kind of freedom. He meant a society where market forces dominate the nation; where the commercial media sets the agenda and coarsens and simplifies everything it touches; where corporations are barely restrained from despoiling the environment, where human beings are treated as tools to be picked up and put down at will; where there is no more pastoral care and precious little sense of community, where hospitals treat the body but no one treats the soul, where no one knows their neighbours any more, where romantic love is seen as the only bond worth pursuing – and where there is nowhere to turn to at moments of acute distress and inner crisis. It’s a world we’ve come to know well. Arnold believed that the forces of anarchy had become overwhelming in Europe in the second half of the 19th century. Religion was in terminal decline. Business reigned triumphant. A practical, unpsychological money-making mentality ruled. Newspaper circulation was growing exponentially. And politics was dominated by partisanship, conflict and misrepresentation. The Galeries Lafayette, a department store. Paris, France. In the past, religion might have served to reign in these anarchic tendencies. But in his best poem, Dover Beach, Arnold described how ‘the sea of faith’ had

ebbed away, like a tide from the shore, leaving only a 'melancholy, long, withdrawing roar.' What could replace the function that religion had once played in society? What forces might constrain anarchy and civilise, guide, inspire and humanise instead? Arnold proposed one resounding solution: Culture. It must be Culture, he proposed, that would overcome the forces of anarchy inadvertently unleashed by Capitalism and Democracy. But to play such a role, by Culture one could not simply continue to mean what a lot of people then (as today) understood by the term: namely, an interest in going to art galleries on holiday, watching an occasional play and writing some essays about Jane Austen at school. 400px-Matthew_Arnold_Waddy_1872

A contemporary cartoon of Matthew Arnold, showing him balancing adroitly between poetry and philosophy

By Culture, Arnold meant a force that would guide, educate, console and teach, in short, in the highest sense, a therapeutic medium. The great works of art weren't to be thought of as mere entertainment, they contained – when interpreted and presented properly (and this is where Arnold thought his society had gone so wrong) – a set of suggestions as to how we might best live and die, and govern our societies according to our highest possibilities. Arnold's goal was therefore to try to change the way the elite establishment (the museums, the universities, the schools, the learned societies) were teaching works of Culture, so that they could become what he felt they had it in their power to be: a proper bulwark against modern Anarchy and the agents to deliver appropriate doses of those important qualities, 'Sweetness and Light'. By 'Light', Arnold meant 'understanding.' The great works of culture have it in their power to clear mental confusion, they give us words for things we had felt but

had not previously grasped, they replace cliche with insight. Given their potential, Arnold believed that schools and the mass media had a responsibility to help us get to know as many of these light-filled works as possible. He wanted a curriculum that would systematically teach everyone in the land: 'the best that has been thought and said in the world,' so that through this knowledge, we might be able to 'turn a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits.' The painting entitled Midsummer (L) by E But Arnold was conscious of how the teaching of works of Culture in fact needlessly distances us from their power. Academic commentary grows like ivy around masterpieces, choking the majesty and interest of their message to us. Museums for their part make art sound immensely complicated, abstract and peculiar. As for the big and insightful thoughts that may lie in philosophy, they have frequently been formulated in ways that make it exceptionally difficult to understand them and see their personal import (Arnold had academic culprits like Hegel in mind). So, Arnold tried to impress upon his intellectual contemporaries a project which remains urgent to this day: that of 'carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge and the best ideas of the time; labouring to divest knowledge of all that is harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanise it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned.' To make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned. Note how this ostensibly rarefied and impractical commentator had something deeply practical and very democratic in mind. He recognised that, in a populist, market driven society, it was no use keeping culture for the few, writing books that only a hundred people could understand. The real task was to know how to popularise. If

Culture was to be properly powerful, it would have to learn to be popular first. By ‘sweetness,’ Arnold meant that he wanted works of Culture to be presented to the audience in sweet ways. He saw the absolute necessity of sugar-coating things. In a free society, cultural authority could no longer be strict and demanding – people would simply turn away or vote for something less severe. Anyone who wanted to advocate serious (but potentially very beneficial) things would have to learn the art of sweetness. They would have to charm and amuse and please and flatter. Not because they were insincere but precisely because they were so earnest. In Arnold’s ideal world, the lessons of advertising – which in his day discovered how to sell expensive watches and fire tongs and special knives for boning chickens – would have to be used by intellectuals and educators. Instead of wondering how to persuade middle-income people to purchase potato peelers or soup dishes, they would ponder how to make Plato’s philosophy more impressive or how to find a larger consumer base for the ideas of St Augustine. Pink's Marmalade, 19th century. By sweetness, Arnold also meant kindness and sympathy. He wanted a world where people would – in the public realm – be nicer to one another. Enough of the brutality and coarseness of the Daily Telegraph, a publication that every day took pleasure in gunning down new victims and turning personal tragedies in to the stuff of mockery. He wished Culture to help foster a spirit of kind-hearted enquiry, a readiness to suppose that the other person might have a point, even if one didn’t quite see it yet. He wanted to promote a tenderness to people’s failings and weaknesses. He saw sweetness as an essential ingredient of a good, humane society. Culture and Anarchy remains filled with eminently valid answers to the problems of the modern world.

With religion gone, it really is only Culture that can prevent Anarchy. But we still have a way to go before Culture has been divested of, to use Arnold's words, all that is 'harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive' about it.

CHECK PROGRESS II:

1. Share in short the Arnold Critics in Sweetness and Light?

   Answer……

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2. Discuss how Religion was engaged in Arnold's Sweetness and Light.
3. Answer……

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14.11 LET'S SUM UP

There are several scholar and modern artist who have given their views on culture and anarchy by Mathew Arnold. Lincoln Allison retired as a reader in politics at the University of Warwick finds Arnold "Culture and Anarchy" work written by Mathew Arnold to express mad, bad and

dangerous ideas. According to Lincolns, Arnold is compassionate and bright towards culture and anarchy

In the second chapter, he sees to take on scholar and moral positions which he thinks as mad, bad and unsafe to show than any writer he knows. In the second chapter where Lincoln Allison finds Arnold misleading, doing as one likes comes out clearly. It is an error because Arnold equates freedom with being able to do what one wants. It is an error which leads to anarchy.

In his discussion, William E. Buckler portrays Arnold as a classical moralist who with a firm belief that a true approach to life is a reward in itself and it facilitates personal growth.

Although Arnold strove to imitate classical Greek and Roman models in his poetry, Buckler agrees that his work manifests Romantic subjectivism. As a matter of fact, he continues to say that Arnold work is one of the most celebrated works of social criticism to be written. His work has become a reference point for all the discussions in relation between politics and culture.

14.12 QUESTION TO REVIEW

- Are "beauty and intelligence" inevitable synonyms for "sweetness and light"?
- Discuss the theme of Sweetness and Light
- Give your interpretation about Sweetness as Light.
- How religion and color was important in Arnold work.

14.13 SUGGESTED READING AND REFERENCES

- Arnold, Matthew (a). Complete Prose Works. R. H. Super Ed. University of Michigan Press,1960. Print.

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- Arnold, Matthew (c). Essays in Criticism, Second Series. London: Macmillan, 1888.

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- "Culture and Anarchy." Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2011. Web. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Culture-and-Anarchy>.

- Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and Its Discontents. Reissue edition, July 1989. Print.

14.14 ANSWER FOR CHECK IN PROGRESS

Check in Progress I

Answer 1 Check point no.14.3

Answer 2. Check point no.14.4

Check in Progress II

Answer 1 Check point no.14.11

Answer 2. Check point no14.10