

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL**

**MASTER OF ARTS-ENGLISH
SEMESTER -II**

**19TH CENTURY STUDIES-I
CORE-202
BLOCK-2**

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

Postal Address:

The Registrar,

University of North Bengal,

Raja Rammohunpur,

P.O.-N.B.U., Dist-Darjeeling,

West Bengal, Pin-734013,

India.

Phone: (O) +91 0353-2776331/2699008

Fax: (0353) 2776313, 2699001

Email: regnbu@sancharnet.in ; regnbu@nbu.ac.in

Website: www.nbu.ac.in

First Published in 2019



All rights reserved. No Part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from University of North Bengal. Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this book may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages. This book is meant for educational and learning purpose. The authors of the book has/have taken all reasonable care to ensure that the contents of the book do not violate any existing copyright or other intellectual property rights of any person in any manner whatsoever. In the even the Authors has/ have been unable to track any source and if any copyright has been inadvertently infringed, please notify the publisher in writing for corrective action.

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-I

BLOCK-1

Unit-1 Introduction to the Social, Political and Religious Background of the 19th century

Unit-2 Victorian Compromise

Unit-3 Tendencies of the 19th Century English Literature

Unit-4 19th Century: An Age of Prose

Unit- 5 19th Century Novel

Unit- 6 Novel as a Social Force in the 19th Century

Unit-7 Emily Bronte – Life and works

BLOCK- 2

Unit-8 Emily Brontë's Wuthering Height..... 7

Unit-9 George Eliot: Life And Works 34

Unit- 10 George Eliot's Middlemarch..... 56

Unit-11 Henry James: Life And Works 74

Unit-12 Henry James' The Portrait Of A Lady 105

Unit-13 Thomas Hardy: Life And Works..... 131

Unit-14 Tess Of The D'urbervilles 163

BLOCK 2- 19TH CENTURY STUDIES-I

Introduction to the Block-2

This block introduces the eminent and most representative writers of the 19th century along with their classical works to outline the salient features of the contemporary literature.

Unit-8: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Height*

Unit-9: George Eliot's life and literary contribution.

Unit-10: Critically analysis of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*

Unit-11: Henry James's life and Works

Unit-12: Henry James' *The Portrait of a Lady*

Unit-13: Thomas Hardy's contribution in English literature

Unit-14: Analysis of Thomas Hardy's : *Tess of the D'urbervilles*

UNIT-8 EMILY BRONTË'S WUTHERING HEIGHTS

STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Critical Study of Wuthering Heights
- 8.3 Wuthering Heights - A Study of Provincial Life and Realism
- 8.4 'I Am Heathcliff'
- 8.5 Wuthering Heights -As a Satire on the Modern World
- 8.6 Moral Considerations in Wuthering Heights
- 8.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.8 Keywords
- 8.9 Questions for Review
- 8.10 Suggested Readings and References
- 8.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Critically analyze Emily Brontë
- Understand the views of the novelist about her family, society and also about the era in which she was writing her novel
- Delineate the salient features of the author as a novelist
- Learn about the varied themes worked upon by Emily Brontë

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* considered by the literary codes as gothic literature and a Victorian romance, is a symbolic and psychological study of the nature of love. Her work on *Wuthering Heights* cannot be dated, first published in 1847, she may well have spent quite a while on this exceptional, unequivocally envisioned novel. Its setting is in the moors of Northern England. Soon after the publication of

her novel, Emily's health began to fail rapidly. She had been ill for some time, but her breathing gradually became difficult, and she suffered great pain. She died of tuberculosis in December 1848.

8.2 CRITICAL STUDY OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Despite the fact that *Wuthering Heights* got neither primary recognition nor any nearby prominence during its underlying production, the scene has changed considerably since 1847, and now both basic and prevalent assessment acclaim Emily Brontë's single work of fiction. Victorian culture would not acknowledge the savage characters and unforgiving substances of *Wuthering Heights*, however ensuing public are both all the more understanding and tolerating of the utilization of offensive parts of human life in writing.

The primary individual to laud freely *Wuthering Heights* was Charlotte Brontë, Emily's sister, who composed a Prelude and presentation for the second edition of the novel in 1850 and turned into the novel's first critic.

THEMES:

Wuthering Heights is a significant contemporary novel for two reasons: Its justifiable and precise depiction of life during an early time gives a look at history, and the artistic authenticity it has all by itself empowers the content to transcend excitement and rank as quality writing. The depiction of women, society, and class take the stand concerning a period that is unfamiliar to contemporary pursuers. In any case, despite the fact that society is unexpected today in comparison to it was two centuries prior, individuals continue as before, and contemporary pursuers can even now identify with the sentiments and feelings of the central characters- Heathcliff and Catherine- just as those of the supporting characters. Since Brontë's characters are genuine, they are human subjects with human feelings; along these lines, *Wuthering Heights* is not only a wistful romance book it is a prologue of life, an article on adoration, and a look at connections. Numerous critics, applauding

Brontë's style, symbolism, and word decision, argue that *Wuthering Heights* is poetic appearance of writing.

The idea that pretty much every reader of *Wuthering Heights* centers around is the enthusiasm love of Catherine and Heathcliff, regularly to the prohibition of each other topic this regardless of the way that different sorts of affection are exhibited and that Catherine bites the dust part of the way through the novel. The loves of the subsequent age, the affection for Frances and Hindley, and the "helpless heart" of Lockwood get meager consideration from such perusers. Thematically it is debatable as to whether the novel is all about love or about earning wealth and riches in the society or of revenge. The longing for riches motivates Catherine's marriage, which results in Heathcliff's flight and makes him get *Wuthering Heights*, to fitting Thrushcross Grange, and to seize Hareton.

ROMANTIC ELEMENTS IN THE NOVEL:

The significant qualities of Romanticism that can be delineated in the novel are visible in the very structure, plot, theme and characters. Brontë tries different things with the account structure (the Chinese-box structure which Lockwood describes what Nelly lets him know, who rehashes what others advised her), the taste for nearby shading shows in the depiction of Yorkshire, its scene, its old stories, and its kin, nature is a living, vitalizing power and offers an asylum from the limitations of human advancement,

- The energy driving Catherine and Heathcliff and their fanatical love for one another are the focal point of their being and rise above death,

Heathcliff is the Byronic legend; insubordinate, enthusiastic, pessimistic, segregated, and wilful, have baffling starting points, need family ties, dismiss outer confinements and control, and try to determine their detachment by combining with an affection object,

Notes

- The creative mind is released to investigate extraordinary conditions of being and encounters.
- The wild, stormy states of mind are observed along with calm and serene sense of nature prevailing in the atmosphere.
- Extraordinary an emphasis is set on the person such that society is pushed to the fringe of the activity and the reader's cognizance,
- Childhood and the grown-up's creating from youth encounters are displayed reasonably,
- Hareton is the respectable savage and, contingent upon perusing of the novel, so is Heathcliff,
- The extraordinary or the probability of the powerful shows up more than once.

CONFLICT OF NATURAL POWERS:

The universe is comprised of two inverse powers, chaos and serenity. Wuthering Heights and the Earnshaws express the chaos; Thrushcross Grange and the Lintons, the serenity. Catherine and Heathcliff are natural bearers of the chaos.

ROMANTIC LOVE:

Love affairs among the characters the most dramatic elements that can turn and twist the plot. Sentimental love full of enthusiasm is that of Heathcliff and Catherine, the characterless nostalgic mulling of Lockwood, the coupleism of Hindley and Frances, the agreeable extravagance of Edgar, the sentimental captivation of Isabella, the pup love of Cathy and Linton, and the coquettish sexual fascination of Cathy and Hareton. These pairs, with the conceivable exemption of Hareton and Cathy, are at last narcissistic and overlook the requirements, emotions, and cases of others; what makes a difference is the lover's very own sentiments and necessities.

Nevertheless, it is the story of Heathcliff and Catherine that most readers react to and recall and that has made this novel one of the incredible romantic tales not just of English writing however of European writing also. Simone de Beauvoir refers to Catherine's cry, "I am Heathcliff," in her dialog of sentimental love, and motion picture adjustments of the novel incorporate a Mexican and a French form. The love-relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine, communicates the energetic yearning to be entire, an individual, to give oneself wholeheartedly to another and increase an entire self or feeling of personality back, to be with everything taken into account for one another, so nothing else on the planet matters, and to be cherished along these lines until the end of time. This kind of enthusiasm love can be summarized in the expression more- - and still more, for it is unquenchable, incomplete, and unwavering in its requests upon the pairs.

THE CONFLICT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND SOCIAL CLASSES:

The novel opens in 1801, a date Q.D. Leavis trusts Brontë picked all together "to fix its happenings at a time when the old rough farming culture, based on a naturally patriarchal family life, was to be challenged, tamed and routed by social and cultural changes; these changes produced Victorian class consciousness and 'unnatural' ideal of gentility." In 1801, the Industrial Revolution was in progress in England; when Emily Brontë was writing in 1847, it was a prevailing power in English economy and society, and the conventional relationship of social classes was being upset by mushroom-new fortunes and an upwardly-hopeful middle class. Another standard for characterizing a courteous fellow, cash, was testing the customary criteria of rearing and family and the later models of character. This social-financial reality gives the setting to financial readings of the novel.

Brontë, while dealing with the present state of affairs, tries to penetrate the inner realm of the socio-economic setup. The reader identifies with

Notes

Heathcliff, the rover mistreated by a rigid class framework and slandered as "imp" or "fiend." But as Heathcliff seeks his vengeance and domineering abuse of the guiltless, the peril presented by the uncontrolled individual to the network winds up evident. Like different books of the 1830s and 40s which uncover the maltreatment of industrialism and domineering independence, *Wuthering Heights* may truly propose the need of saving conventional ways.

The Marxist, Arnold Kettle, observes the fundamental clash and intention power of the novel to be rooted in the social setting. He finds the origin of Catherine and Heathcliff's inclination in the (class) resistance constrained on them by the shamefulness of Hindley and Frances, his wife.

Heathcliff is a sufferer of great torment as an outcast; goes to the active, lively, daring young lady who alone offers him human comprehension and comradeship. Catherine, feels that to accomplish a full mankind hood and to retain individuality, she should relate herself absolutely with him in his defiance to the oppression of the Earnshaws and to stand against all such oppressions.

Catherine's death upsets the common standards of bourgeois morality and so has "revolutionary force." Heathcliff is ethically cruel with his vicious analysis of the significance of Catherine's choosing Edgar as her husband. He feels himself rejected for this order of his birth and his being lower in the social grades of economy accepted by the English society. Heathcliff's pitiless revenge, instead of arousing hatred towards him, invites reader's sympathies for his existence. His strategy of arranged marriage, earning wealth and expropriating property that are counted upon by the Victorian society, against those with power appears to be blameless moves of a person in anguish. But in reality, he deceives humanity. Through the desires communicated in the affection for Cathy and Hareton, Heathcliff perceives a portion of the nature of his adoration for Catherine and the insignificance of retribution and property; he in this way is empowered to recover his humankind and to accomplish

association with Catherine. "*Wuthering Heights* at that point," Kettle finishes up, "is an expression in the imaginative terms of art of the stresses and tensions and conflicts, personal and spiritual, of nineteenth-century capitalist society."

The story is set when the Industrial Revolution was in full swing, and was changing the economy as well as the conventional social structure and the relationship of the classes. The region Haworth in West Riding, where the Brontës lived was especially influenced by these social and financial conditions as a result of the grouping of enormous bequests and modern focuses in West Riding.

The yeoman or decent cultivating class (Hareton) was being demolished by the monetary union of the recently well off capitalists (Heathcliff) and the customary power-holding nobility (the Lintons). Terry Eagleton, another Marxist, observes that in the plot there is as apparent conflict between the landed nobility and aristocracy, the customary power-holders, and the entrepreneur, newly formed industrial middle classes, who were pushing for social acknowledgment and political power. All the while with the battle among these social orders, a communication was gaining power dependent on financial interests. In spite of the fact that the landed nobility and privileged opposed wedding into original entrepreneur riches, they were happy to blend socially and to shape financial partnerships with the producers and industrialists.

Eagleton thus perceives the mid-nineteenth century society with its class struggle and class settlement in *Wutheirng Heights*. Heathcliff has no social or natural place in the current social structure; he offers Catherine a non-social or pre-social relationship, a departure from the ordinary limitations and material solaces of the privileged societies, spoken to by the sophisticated Lintons. This relationship outside society is "the only authentic form of living in a world of exploitation and inequality." It is Heathcliff's demeanor of a characteristic non-social method of being which gives the relationship its generic quality and makes the contention one of nature versus society. Heathcliff's association with nature is showed in his running wild as a chijd and in

Notes

Hindley's decreasing him to a ranch worker. Catherine's marriage and Hindley's maltreatment redefined Heathcliff and his outlook and he felt his importance in the social framework, a change which mirrors a reality about nature—nature is not generally "outside" society since its contentions are communicated in the public arena.

Nevertheless, Heathcliff grows up into an entrepreneur, an expropriator, and a predator, using the weapons of the society that rejected it against it. The message to tame and civilize generations, represented by Hareton is delivered by the novel. In embracing the conduct of the missing white collar classes, Heathcliff works in the same way as the industrialist landowner Edgar Linton to smother the yeoman class; having been brought up in the yeoman class and having obtained his fortune outside it, he joins "otherworldly powers" against the conventional class. In this way, he represents the capitalists on one hand and on the other rejects them. But the industrialist class loses its fire of revolution and cannot serve Heathcliff's motive. This situation leads to what Eagleton calls Heathcliff's own disaster: his conflictive solidarity comprising of profound dismissal and social mix. Heathcliff tirelessly seeks after his objective of having Catherine, a fixation that is unaffected by social substances. The novel does not completely serve the means to express the entirety of Heathcliff's implications.

Eagleton recognizes that eventually the estimations of Thrushcross Grange win, however that Brontë's feelings lie with the more just, comfortable Wuthering Heights. The entrepreneur triumph over the yeomanry is symbolized by the dislodging of Joseph's cherished currant hedges for Catherine's blossoms, which are in Marxist terms "surplus value." With Heathcliff's demise a more extravagant life than that of Thrushcross Grange comes to an end. It is a fundamental demise on the grounds that the future requires a compromise between nobility and industrialist white collar class.

DESIRE FOR TRANSCENDENCE

It is not simply adore that Catherine and Heathcliff look for however a higher, profound presence which is perpetual and constant, as Catherine clarifies when she thinks about her affection for Linton to the seasons and her adoration for Heathcliff to the rocks. The withering Catherine anticipates accomplishing this state through death.

RELIGIOUS NOVEL

Wuthering Heights is definitely not a religious novel as in it bolsters a specific religion (Christianity), or a specific part of Christianity (Protestantism), a specific Protestant division (Church of England). Or maybe, religion in this novel appears as the attention to or conviction of the presence of a preeminent being or soul existence in the wake of death.

A staggering feeling of the nearness of a bigger reality moved Rudolph Otto to call *Wuthering Heights* a preeminent case of "the daemonic" in writing. Otto was worried about distinguishing the non-sane puzzle behind all religion and every religious experience; he considered this fundamental component or riddle the *numinous*. The *numinous* holds or mixes the brain so capably that one of the reactions it produces is *numinous* fear, which comprises of wonder or stunningness completion. *Numinous* fear infers three characteristics of the numinous: its supreme aloofness, its capacity, and. its criticalness or vitality. A misconception of these characteristics and of numinous fear by crude individuals offers ascend to daemonic fear, which is the principal arrange in religious improvement. While they feel fear, they are drawn by the intriguing intensity of the numinous. Otto clarifies, "The daemonic-divine item may appear to the mind an object of ghastliness and fear, and yet it is no less something that appeals with an intense appeal, and the animal, who trembles before it, totally cowed and cast down, has consistently simultaneously the drive to go to it, nay even to make it some way or another his own." Still, affirmation of the "daemonic" is a certifiable

Notes

religious encounter, and from it emerge the divine beings and evil presences of later religions. It has been proposed that Gothic fiction started essentially as a mission for numinous fear, which Otto additionally calls the 'mysterium tremendum.'

For Derek Traversi the intention power of Brontë's epic is "a thirst for religious experience," which is not Christian. It is the soul which moves Catherine to shout, "Surely you and everybody have a notion that there is, or should be, an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of my creation if I were entirely contained here? (Ch. ix, p. 64). Brontë', through her character is expressing the desire for completeness of the human being. The human limits are enormous and so rises the desire of fullness, a longing for a higher reality, everlasting; and would likewise supplant the sentiment of the vacancy of this world with sentiments of the fullness of being. Brontë's religious motivation turns a dialog of the ideal approach to go through an inert summer's day into a question about the idea of *paradise*. Her religious view includes both Cathy's and Linton's perspectives on *paradise* and of life, for she sees a universe of battling powers which are contained inside her very own inclination. She looks to join them in this novel, however, Traversi concedes, the accentuation on energy and demise will in general dominate the drive for solidarity. Indeed, even Heathcliff's moving toward death, when he shouts out "My soul's bliss kills my body, but does not satisfy itself" (Ch. xxxiv, p. 254), has a religious reverberation.

Thomas John Winnifrith observes that for Heathcliff, the loss of Catherine is truly damnation; there is no figurative significance in his case "existence after losing her would be hell" (Ch. xiv, p. 117). In their last meeting, Catherine and Heathcliff both endure desolations at the possibility of partition, she to endure "the same distress underground" and he to "writhe in the torments of hell" ((XV, 124). Heathcliff is tormented by his fixation for the dead Catherine. Enduring a natural hellfire drives Heathcliff at last to his paradise, which is association with Catherine as a soul. The perspectives on Nelly and Joseph about paradise

and hellfire are traditional and do not match to those of Brontë's perspectives.

THE PATRIARCHAL FAMILY SETUP

The male heads of family unit misuse females and members who are frail or weak. This can be found in their utilization of different sorts of detainment or restriction, which takes social, enthusiastic, monetary, legitimate, and physical structures. Mr. Earnshaw anticipates that Catherine should act appropriately and terribly rejects her "trouble maker" conduct. Edgar's final offer that Catherine must settle on a last decision between him or Heathcliff limits Catherine's personality by constraining her to dismiss a fundamental piece of her temperament; with adoring narrow-mindedness Edgar limits his little girl Cathy to the limits of Thrushcross Grange. A noxious Hindley strips Heathcliff of his situation in the family, along these lines catching him in a debased working position. Heathcliff actually detains Isabella (as her better half and lawful manager), and later he detains both Cathy and Nellie; likewise, Cathy is disengaged from the remainder of the family unit after her union with Linton by Heathcliff's disdain for and scorn of them.

Investigation of adolescence and the family.

The antagonistic vibe toward and the maltreatment of children and relatives at *Wuthering Heights* cut over the ages. The brutality of children discovers full articulation in Hindley's animosity toward Heathcliff and in Heathcliff's arrangements of retribution. Enveloped by the conceit of youth, Heathcliff claims Hindley's pony and utilizations Mr. Earnshaw's favoritism furthering his own potential benefit, making no arrival of fondness. Mr. Earnshaw's objection to Catherine solidifies her and, in the same way as other abused youngsters, she ends up defiant. Regardless of maltreatment, Catherine and Heathcliff demonstrate the quality of kids to endure, and maltreatment at any rate somewhat shapes the grown-up characters and conduct of Catherine and Heathcliff and produces a significant security between them.

THE IMPACTS OF EXCEPTIONAL TORMENT.

In the energy driven characters—Catherine, Heathcliff, and Hindley—torment drives them to turn on and to torment others. Perpetrating torment gives them some help; this conduct brings up issues about whether they are brutal ordinarily or are shaped by youth misuse and to what degree they ought to be considered in charge of or accused for their savageries. Is all their enduring delivered by others or by outside powers, similar to the demise of Hindley's wife, or is probably a portion of their torment self-dispensed, similar to Heathcliff's considering Catherine in charge of his enduring after her passing? Enduring additionally burns the feeble; Isabella and her child Linton become malicious, and Edgar transforms into a liberal, despairing loner. The offspring of affection, the debased Hareton and the detained Cathy, can conquer Heathcliff's maltreatment and to discover love and a future with one another.

WILLFUL CONSTRAINMENT AND DEPARTURE.

Both Catherine and Heathcliff discover their bodies' detainment facilities which trap their spirits and avoid the satisfaction of their wants: Catherine longs to be joined with Heathcliff, with a lost youth opportunity, with Nature, and with an otherworldly domain; Heathcliff needs ownership of and association with Catherine. Repression additionally characterizes a mind-blowing course: in youth, she shifts back and forth between the requirement of Wuthering Heights and the opportunity of the fields; in pubescence, she is limited by her damage to a sofa at Thrushcross Grande; at last womanhood and her decision of spouse bind her to the politeness of Thrushcross Grange, from which she escapes into the opportunity of death.

IDEA OF OUTCAST AND DISLOCATION

Heathcliff enters the novel as an outcast, nameless and homeless. He loses the only love and care he gets in the world after Mr. Earnshaw's demise. Heathcliff uproots Hindle. Catherine is tossed out of paradise,

where she feels uprooted, sees herself an outcast at Thrushcross Grange toward the end, and meanders the fields for a long time as a phantom. Hareton is seized of property, order, and societal position. Isabella cannot come back to her dearest Thrushcross Grange and sibling. Linton (Heathcliff's child) is dislodged twice after his mom's demise, being evacuated first to Thrushcross Grange and afterward to Wuthering Heights. Cathy is dislodged from her home, Thrushcross Grange.

ASSOCIATION AND COMPREHENSION

The plot of the novel rotates around association and comprehension; Lockwood understands the connections at Wuthering Heights, and Nelly edifies him by imparting the historical backdrop of the Earnshaws and the Lintons. Attempting to come back to the Grange in a blizzard, Lockwood cannot see the stone markers which framework the street. A superstitious Nellie will not give Catherine a chance to disclose to her fantasies; more than once Nellie doesn't comprehend what Catherine is discussing or won't acknowledge what Catherine is stating, strikingly after Catherine secures herself her room. Isabella will not regard Catherine's notice and Nellie's recommendation about Heathcliff. What's more, likely the most genuine mis-correspondence of all is Heathcliff's hearing just that it would debase Catherine if she marries him.

THE RUIN:

As of late, various critics have seen the novel invested with the theme of the downfall of virtue. However, the reasons behind this downfall of different characters is debatable. The following doubts have been raised in the plot: Does Catherine fall, in order to secure comfort and security of Thrushcross Grange? Does Heathcliff fall in his "moral teething" of vengeance and quest for property? Is Wuthering Heights or Thrushcross Grange the fallen world? Is the tumble from paradise to hellfire or from damnation to paradise? Does Catherine truly lose the Devil/Heathcliff? The subject of these ruins depends on the references to paradise and damnation that go through the novel, starting with Lockwood's express reference to Wuthering Heights as a "misanthrope's heaven" and

consummation with the suggested paradise of the phantoms of Heathcliff and Catherine meandering the fields together. Catherine fantasies about being ousted from paradise and incoherently observes herself an outcast cast out from the "paradise" of *Wuthering Heights*—an exacting just as an emblematic fall. Heathcliff, similar to Satan, is tireless in his dangerous quest for retribution. Definitely, the thoughts of removal from paradise, outcast, and want for vengeance have been associated with Milton's *Paradise Lost* and parallels drawn between Milton's epic and Brontë's tale; Catherine's agony at her change from free youngster to detained grown-up is contrasted with Satan's discourse to Beelzebub, "how chang'd from an angel of light to exile in a fiery lake."

PLOT AND STRUCTURE:

This lyrical prose has a distinct structure and style. There are two story lines running one after the other; that of the first generation and the next of the second generation. Each of the two main story lines of the two generations comprises 17 chapters. Some critics expel the plot of the second-age characters just like a basic retelling of the principal story; in any case, in doing as such, they are expelling the whole second half of the book. Plainly, so as to acknowledge completely *Wuthering Heights*, consideration must be paid to the subsequent half, especially noticing that the subsequent half is not only a retelling yet rather an amending — a type of recharging and resurrection.

Significantly, *Wuthering Heights* is about ordered pairs: two households, two generations, and two pairs of children. These organized pairs, as a rule, are sets of difference. The most perceptible pair is that of the two houses: *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*. *Wuthering Heights* has the wild, blustery fields and its occupants have similar attributes. Contrary to this *Wuthering Heights* house are the quiet, precise parks of *Thrushcross Grange* and its occupants. Every family unit has a male and female with a partner at the other. Pursuers gain insight into these characters not just by seeing what they think, say, and do yet in addition by contrasting them with their partners, seeing how they do not think, talk, and act. Much is found out by perceiving what one is not.

Basically the account is likewise fundamentally told from a combined perspective. Lockwood outlines the underlying story, telling the start and closure sections (with minor remarks inside). Inside the system of his story, Nelly relates most of the activity from her untouchable's perspective. Basically, readers are listening stealthily as opposed to encountering the activity. Also, implanted inside Nelly's account are sections told principally from outsider's perspective that has been identified with Nelly. This strategy enables readers to encounter more than would with any one storyteller, empowering them to increase an insider's point of view.

The job of the outsider ought not be neglected in light of the fact that the setting of *Wuthering Heights* is one of complete seclusion; along these lines, just those with first-or recycled encounters can relate them to other people. The moors providing a connectivity to Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, fill a double need — connecting the two families while at the same time isolating them from the town and all others.

CHARACTERS:

Remarking upon the fitness of making characters, for example, Heathcliff, Charlotte expresses, "I scarcely think it is [advisable]." Charlotte's remarks might be an immediate concession and advance to Victorian crowds to acknowledge and regard *Wuthering Heights* without tolerating totally everything inside the content. Notwithstanding experiencing issues with the substance, the Victorian group of spectators' perspective on ladies couldn't enable anybody of that period to acknowledge that *Wuthering Heights* was the formation of a female (it had been distributed initially under the alias Bell). After its underlying production, both basic and prevalent spectators wound up grasping *Wuthering Heights*, and it stays one of the exemplary works still read and contemplated.

Check Your Progress-1

Q1 What is the influence of Romanticism on *Wuthering Heights*? -

Q2. What are Emily Brontës' view on the socio-economic set up of the contemporary society?

8.3 WUTHERING HEIGHTS - REALISM AND GOTHIC SYMBOLISM

The setting of the novel is significant for Brontë's merging of realism and gothic imagery. Brontë took conventions of the time and rather than just reproducing them in her very own work, utilized them as a springboard to compose an altogether unique story, making characters who are all the while real and symbolic models.

Brontë utilizes these characters to investigate subjects of good versus crookedness, wrongdoing and discipline, energy versus objectivity, vengeance, self-centeredness, division and compromise, confusion and request, nature and culture, good and disorder, insubordination, and the idea of affection. These topics are not independent of one another; fairly, they blend, blend, and entwine as the story unfurls. Essentially the record is similarly on a very basic level told from a paired point of view. Lockwood plots the fundamental story, telling the beginning and conclusion chapters. Inside the arrangement of his story, Nelly relates the greater part of the action from her distant viewpoint. Fundamentally, reader are listening stealthily rather than experiencing the movement. Likewise, embedded inside Nelly's record are segments told essentially from outcast's point of view that has been related to Nelly. This methodology empowers reader to experience more than would with any one storyteller, enabling them to build an insider's perspective.

The activity of the moors should not be dismissed in light of the way that the setting of *Wuthering Heights* is one of complete isolation; thus, only those with first-or reused experiences can relate them to other individuals. The fields giving an availability to *Wuthering Heights* and Thrushcross Grange, fill a twofold need — associating the two families while simultaneously segregating them from the town and all others.

GOTHIC SENSE UNDERLYING THE STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL

Wuthering Heights has a Gothic design, limits are trespassed in the development of the plot, and explicitly love crossing the limit among life and demise and Heathcliff's violating social class and family ties. The gothic setting of the novel is infused in the mansions and the climate. The Gothic creates feelings of gloom, mystery, and suspense and tends to the dramatic and the sensational, like incest, diabolism, necrophilia, and nameless terrors. It crosses boundaries, daylight and the dark, life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness. Moers sees disruption in Brontë's acknowledgment of the merciless as an ordinary, very nearly an empowering some portion of life and in her depiction of the sensual in youth. The remorselessness interfaces this novel to the Gothic custom, which has been related with women authirs since Anne Radcliffe.

Wuthering Heights is the traditional castle, and Catherine resembles Ann Radcliffe's heroines in her appreciation of nature. As for the theme, Brontë has fused the Gothic trappings of detainment and getaway, flight, the mistreated courageous woman, the champion charmed by a perilous and a decent suitor, phantoms, necrophilia, a secretive foundling, and retribution.

Brontë pursues Walpole and Radcliffe in depicting the oppressions of the father and the brutalities of the patriarchial family and in reconstituting the family on non-man centric lines, despite the fact that no counterbalancing female authority or matriarchal family is displayed. Even the characters have a strange feature about them; like the ordinary Gothic saint offender, Heathcliff is a puzzling figure who crushes the

delightful lady he seeks after and who usurps legacies, and with regular Gothic abundance he crushes his head against a tree. There is the trace of necrophilia in Heathcliff's viewings of Catherine's carcass and his arrangements to be buried alongside her and a trace of inbreeding in their being raised as sibling and sister. Certain critics have raised the issue that Heathcliff may be Catherine's illegitimate half-brother.

8.4 I AM HEATHCLIFF

How deep a chord Emily strikes with the relationship of Catherine and Heathcliff is shown by the use Simone de Beauvoir makes of it in writing of the French tradition of the *grandes amoureuses* or the the *great female lovers*. Catherine's affirmation "I am Heathcliff" is for de Beauvoir the cry of every woman in love. In her feminist, existentialist reading, the woman in love surrenders her identity for his identity and her world for his world; she becomes the incarnation or embodiment of the man she loves, his reflection, his double. The basis for this relationship lies in the roles society assigns to males and females.

The male is the standard or norm, the One; he is the subject who is capable of choice, of acting, of taking responsibility, and of affecting his destiny. The female, who is measured against the standard of the male, becomes the other, dependent on him; she is an object to be acted upon by man, the subject; she is given meaning and status by her relationship to him. She is taught to regard man as godlike and to worship him; the goal of her existence is to be associated with him, to love him and be loved by him, because this allows her to share in his male power and sovereignty. She achieves happiness when the man she loves accepts her as part of his identity. In reality, because no man is godlike, she is ultimately disappointed but refuses to acknowledge his fallibility; because no man can give her either his ability to act and choose or the character to accept responsibility for those actions and choices, she does not really achieve or even participate in his status as subject or standard. She remains dependent, other. It comes as no surprise, then, to find that

the woman in love, who is seldom the wife, at least traditionally in France, is the woman who waits.

Catherine implies that their love is timeless and exists on some other plane than her feelings for Linton, which are conventionally romantic. If their love exists on a spiritual or at least a non-material plane, then she is presumably free to act as she pleases in the material, social plane; marrying Edgar will not affect her relationship with Heathcliff. By dying, she relinquishes her material, social self and all claims except those of their love, which will continue after death. Heathcliff, in contrast, wants physical togetherness; hence, his drive to see her corpse and his arrangements for their corpses to merge by decaying into each other.

If identity rather than personal relationship is the issue or the nature of their relationship, then Catherine is free to have a relationship with Edgar because Heathcliff's feelings and desires do not have to be taken into account. She needs to think only of herself, in effect.

In Lord David Cecil's view, conflict arises between unlike characters, and the deepest attachments are based on characters' similarity or affinity as expressions of the same spiritual principle. Thus, Catherine loves Heathcliff because as children of the storm they are bound by their similar natures. This is why Catherine says she loves Heathcliff "because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same." As the expression of the principle of the storm, their love is, of course, neither sexual nor sensual.

Because of the merging of their identities or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, because of their intense desire to merge and refusal to accept their literal separateness, Catherine's betrayal of her own nature destroys not only her but threatens Heathcliff with destruction also.

Is Catherine deluding herself with this speech? Louis Beverslious answers yes, Catherine is preoccupied, if not obsessed with the image of herself "as powerfully, even irresistibly, attracted to Heathcliff." Their bond is a negative one:

they identify with one another in the face of a common enemy, they rebel against a particular way of life which both find intolerable. It is not enough, however, simply to reject a particular way of life; one cannot define oneself wholly in terms of what he despises. One must carve out

Notes

for oneself an alternative which is more than a systematic repudiation of what he hates. A positive commitment is also necessary. The chief contrast between Catherine and Heathcliff consists in the fact that he is able to make such a commitment (together with everything it entails) while she is not. And, when the full measure of their characters has been taken, this marks them as radically dissimilar from one another, whatever their temporary 'affinities' appear to be. It requires only time for this radical dissimilarity to become explicit.

Their dissimilarities appear when she allies herself, however sporadically, with the Lintons and oscillates between identifying with them and with Heathcliff. When Heathcliff throws hot applesauce at Edgar and is banished, Catherine initially seems unconcerned and later goes off to be with Heathcliff. Her rebelliousness changes from the open defiance of throwing books into the kennel to covert silence and a double character. Catherine both knows Heathcliff and does not know him; she sees his avarice and vengefulness, but believes that he will not injure Isabella because she warned him off. Catherine's mistaken belief that she and Heathcliff still share an affinity moves her to distinguish in their last conversation between the real Heathcliff whom she is struggling with and the image of Heathcliff which she has held since childhood. It is with the false image that she has an affinity:

Oh, you see, Nelly! He would not relent a moment, to keep me out of the grave! *That* is how I'm loved! Well, never mind! That is not *my* Heathcliff. I shall love mine yet; and take him with me—he's in my soul.

The fact that to maintain the fiction of their affinity Catherine has to create two Heathcliffs, an inner and an outer one, suggests that total affinity does not exist and that complete merging of two identities is impossible.

Catherine is similarly deluded about her childhood and has painted a false picture of the freedom of Wuthering Heights. (study.com web page)

8.5 WUTHERING HEIGHTS- CLASS CONCIOUSNESS

Wuthering Heights is likewise a social novel about class structure in the public as well as a treatise on the role of women. It is about the social structure of the Victorian society. Brontë shows how class versatility is not continually moving one way. For Catherine, speaking to a lower class, social class assumes a noteworthy job when choosing to get hitched. That is the reason she cannot marry Heathcliff and concurs, rather, to marry Edgar. For Isabella, in any case, the polar opposite is valid. She is attracted to the wild, secretive man, paying little respect to the way that he is underneath her social standing. Because of her captivation, she loses everything that is unforgettable to her. Reader should consequently look not exclusively to social class when judging and dissecting characters; they should figure out what choices are made by individuals from a specific class and why these characters settled on the choices they did.

Superficially, Wuthering Heights is a romantic tale. Diving further, pursuers find both a representative and mental novel. (Contemporary spectators, for instance, effectively identify with issues of youngster misuse and liquor addiction.) indeed, Wuthering Heights can't be effectively named a specific kind of novel — that is the abstract quality that Brontë's content has. The tale told from different perspectives is effectively perused and deciphered from various viewpoints, too.

8.6 MORAL CONSIDERATIONS IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS

On the surface, *Wuthering Heights* is a love story. Delving deeper, readers find both a symbolic and psychological novel. Child abuse, alcoholism, condition of women have been studied from a psychological point of view. In fact, *Wuthering Heights* cannot be easily classified as any particular type of novel — that is the literary strength that Brontë's text possesses. The novel told from multiple points of view is easily read and interpreted from multiple perspectives, also.

Check Your Progress- 2

Q3. Comment of the relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff.

Q4. A multitude of ordered pairs exist throughout the text. Discuss.

8.7 LET US SUM UP

The possibility that essentially every peruse of Wuthering Heights revolves around is the eagerness love of Catherine and Heathcliff, consistently to the disallowance of one another theme this paying little respect to the manner in which that various sorts of love are displayed and that Catherine fails horrendously almost through the novel. The loves of the ensuing age, the friendship for Frances and Hindley, and the "vulnerable heart" of Lockwood get small thought from such perusers. In any case, is love the central issue in this novel? Is its perspective power perhaps financial? The yearning for wealth propels Catherine's marriage, which results in Heathcliff's flight and causes him to get Wuthering Heights, to fitting Thrushcross Grange, and to seize Hareton. Is it possible that one of various subjects involves the point of convergence of the novel, or are various themes discretionary to the theme of love? Consider the going with points:

STRIFE OF CHARACTERISTIC FORCES.

The universe is contained two opposite forces, whirlwind and calm. Wuthering Heights and the Earnshaws express the whirlwind; Thrushcross Grange and the Lintons, the calm. Catherine and Heathcliff are normal creatures of the storm. This subject is discussed all the more totally in Later Critical response to Wuthering Heights

THE CONTENTION OF FINANCIAL INTERESTS AND SOCIAL CLASSES.

The story is set when free venture and industrialization are changing the economy just as the traditional social structure and the relationship of the classes. The fiscal association of the as of late wealthy agents (Heathcliff) and the standard influence holding respectability (the Lintons) was obliterating the yeoman or developing class (Hareton).

TRANSCENDENTAL LOVE

It isn't just transcendence that Catherine and Heathcliff search for a higher, significant nearness which is ceaseless and consistent, as Catherine explains when she considers her fondness for Linton to the seasons and her worship for Heathcliff to the stones. The wilting Catherine foresees achieving this state through death. This subject is discussed all the more totally in Religion, Metaphysics, and Mysticism.

THE DAMAGING PATRIARCH AND MAN DRIVEN FAMILY.

The male heads of nuclear family abuse females and folks who are slight or powerless. This can be found in their use of various sorts of confinement or limitation, which takes social, excited, money related, authentic, and physical structures. Mr. Earnshaw envisions that Catherine should act properly and frightfully rejects her "inconvenience producer" direct. Edgar's last offer that Catherine must choose a last choice between him or Heathcliff limits Catherine's character by obliging her to expel a key bit of her demeanor; with venerating intolerance Edgar restricts his daughter Cathy to the furthest reaches of Thrushcross Grange. A harmful Hindley strips Heathcliff of his circumstance in the family, thusly getting him in a degraded working position. Heathcliff really keeps Isabella (as her significant other and legitimate supervisor), and later he confines both Cathy and Nellie; in like manner, Cathy is withdrawn from the rest of the nuclear family after her association with Linton by Healthcliff's despise for and hatred of them.

8.8 KEYWORDS

- Archetypical – original pattern or model from which all things of the same kind
- Metaphysics- branch of philosophy that treats of first principles of abstract branches
- Symbolic- representing something.
- Legitimate- in terms of legal law
- Patriarch – male head of the family
- Mysticism –the beliefs and ideas or mystic thoughts
- Envision – the picture mentally made up
- Venerating – to regard
- Intolerance – not ready to accept something

8.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Q1. Is *Wuthering Heights* a novel of love? Comment.
- Q2. *Wuthering Heights* reflects the social structure and functioning of the contemporary society. Discuss.
- Q3. Bring out the characteristic of Emily Brontë's as a novelist.
- Q4. Outline the Gothic setup of *Wuthering Heights*.
- Q5. Catherine exclaims, "I am Heathcliff". Comment .

8.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. Brontë, Emily (2009). *Wuthering Heights*
2. Brontë, Emily *Wuthering Heights* (Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1976)
3. "Emily Brontë." The Victorian Web, ed. George Landow. Essays on Emily Brontë's writing techniques, themes, biography, and the Victorian cultural and historical context.
4. Vine, Steven. "Emily Brontë." A substantial introduction to Emily Brontë from the Literary Encyclopedia, 7 July 2001

5. Wasowski, Richard P. *CliffsNotes on Wuthering Heights*. 06 Sep 2019
</literature/w/wuthering-heights/wuthering-heights-at-a-glance>.
6. I am Heathcligg: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/i-am-heathcliff-quote-explained.html>

8.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The significant qualities of Romanticism that can be delineated in the novel are visible in the very structure, plot, theme and characters. Brontë tries different things with the account structure (the Chinese-box structure which Lockwood describes what Nelly lets him know, who rehashes what others advised her), the taste for nearby shading shows in the depiction of Yorkshire, its scene, its old stories, and its kin, nature is a living, vitalizing power and offers an asylum from the limitations of human advancement,

- the energy driving Catherine and Heathcliff and their fanatical love for one another are the focal point of their being and rise above death, Heathcliff is the Byronic legend; insubordinate, enthusiastic, pessimistic, segregated, and wilful, have baffling starting points, need family ties, dismiss outer confinements and control, and try to determine their detachment by combining with an affection object,
- The creative mind is released to investigate extraordinary conditions of being and encounters.
- The wild, stormy states of mind are observed along with calm and serene sense of nature prevailing in the atmosphere.
- Extraordinary an emphasis is set on the person such that society is pushed to the fringe of the activity and the reader's cognizance,
- Childhood and the grown-up's creating from youth encounters are displayed reasonably,
- Hareton is the respectable savage and, contingent upon perusing of the novel, so is Heathcliff,

Notes

- The extraordinary or the probability of the powerful shows up more than once.

2. Brontë, while dealing with the present state of affairs, tries to penetrate the inner realm of the socio-economic setup. The reader identifies with Heathcliff, the rover mistreated by a rigid class framework and slandered as "imp" or "fiend." But as Heathcliff seeks his vengeance and domineering abuse of the guiltless, the peril presented by the uncontrolled individual to the network winds up evident. Like different books of the 1830s and 40s which uncover the maltreatment of industrialism and domineering independence, *Wuthering Heights* tries to cherish the conventional setup which enjoys individual freedom and respect in the society irrespective of the economic arrangement.

3. The love-relationship of Heathcliff and Catherine, communicates the energetic yearning to be entire, an individual, to give oneself wholeheartedly to another and increase an entire self or feeling of personality back, to be with everything taken into account for one another, so nothing else on the planet matters, and to be cherished along these lines until the end of time. This kind of enthusiasm love can be summarized in the expression more- - and still more, for it is unquenchable, incomplete, and unwavering in its requests upon the pairs.

4. *Wuthering Heights* is about ordered pairs: two households, two generations, and two pairs of children. These organized pairs, as a rule, are sets of difference. The most perceptible pair is that of the two houses: Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Wuthering Heights has the wild, blustery fields and its occupants have similar attributes. Contrary to this Wuthering Heights house are the quiet, precise parks of Thrushcross Grange and its occupants. Every family unit has a male and female with a partner at the other. Pursuers gain insight into these characters not just by seeing what they think, say, and do yet in addition by contrasting them with their partners, seeing how they do not think, talk, and act. Much is found out by perceiving what one is not.

Basically the account is likewise fundamentally told from a combined perspective. Lockwood outlines the underlying story, telling the start and closure sections (with minor remarks inside). Inside the system of his story, Nelly relates most of the activity from her untouchable's

perspective. Basically, readers are listening stealthily as opposed to encountering the activity. Also, implanted inside Nelly's account are sections told principally from outsider's perspective that has been identified with Nelly. This strategy enables readers to encounter more than would with any one storyteller, empowering them to increase an insider's point of view.

UNIT-9 GEORGE ELIOT: LIFE AND WORKS

STRUCTURE

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 George Eliot
 - 9.2.1 Life of George Eliot
 - 9.2.2 A bird's eye View
 - 9.2.3. Works of George Eliot
 - 9 2.4 A Bird's eye view
- 9.3 Her Achievements
- 9.4 George Eliot as a Novelist
- 9.5 Characteristics of George Eliot's Novels
- 9.6 George Eliot's Realism
- 9.7 George Eliot: Psychological Analyst
- 9.8 George Eliot as a Moralist
- 9.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.10 Keywords
- 9.11 Questions for Review
- 9.12 Suggested Readings and References
- 9.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Become familiar with the life of George Eliot
- Explore the major themes in her novels
- Know about the chief characteristics of her writing
- Acknowledge her merits as a woman novelist of the Victorian Age

9.1 INTRODUCTION

George Eliot (1819-1880) is one of the great novelists of the Victorian age. "She stands at the gate way between the old novel and the new, no

unworthy heir to Thackeray and Dickens and no unworthy forerunner of Hardy and Henry James.” She was essentially a novelist of intellectual life, and her psychological insight into human motive and the resulting actions is deep and profound. She intellectualized the English novel and imparted it a moral enthusiasm and ethical bias. She contributed to the novel an air of sobriety, sternness and seriousness and defined the new structure and theme of the Victorian novel. She was very different from the preceding women novelists of the Victorian age. She is much more thoughtful, and occupies a much more important place in harnessing the English novel with her ideas.

9.2 GEORGE ELIOT

George Eliot was one of the most distinguished writers of fiction during the Victorian Age.

9.2.1 Life of George Eliot

Mary Ann Evans was born on 22nd November 1819 in rural Warwickshire. She came to be known as one of the leading English novelist of the 19th century under the pen name George Eliot. She was self-educated and so her common sense was intact. Mary attended a Day school at Griff and then a boarding school at Attleborough. She had an elder sister, Christiana and a brother Isaac. ‘Tom’ and ‘Maggie’ are dramatically drawn after them, in her novel, *Mill on the Floss*. After her mother’s death in 1836, she left her school to look after the house. She moved to Coventry in 1841 with her father. She remained with him until his death in 1849. After his death, she travelled in Europe and finally settled in London.

She taught herself German which she later used in the religious translations. As early as 1842 she refused to attend the church and this led to a quarrel with her father. However, the estrangement came to an end and she had to take care of his house. She proved herself to be woman of determination on subjects like religion, and marriage. She knew herself very well and made it clear to her relatives and friends that she was not going to follow the way of life dictated by use and wont by

Notes

society around her. Later she came under the influence of Herbert Spence, and it was even believed that they might have got married.

In her twenties, she came into contact with a circle of people whose thinking did not coincide with the opinions of most people and underwent an extreme change of her beliefs. Influenced by the so-called Higher Criticism—a largely German school that studied the Bible and that attempted to treat sacred writings as human and historical documents—she devoted herself to translating these works from the German language to English for the English public. She published her translation of David Strauss's *Life of Jesus* in 1846 and her translation of Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* in 1854. She also worked as a journalist and composed poems. She was a versatile author.

In 1851, Eliot began contributing to the *Westminster Review*, a leading journal for psychological fundamentals. Later she became its editor. Here she met many literary scholars of the positivists group who were the followers of the French philosopher August Comte (1798-1857) a believer of science and applied science to social problems. Among them was George Henry Lewes (1817-1878) a man of philosophy, and criticism, with whom she shared a large part of her life until his death in 1878. This relationship was scandalous as Henry Lewes was a married man. Her family and friends abandoned her.

Henry Lewes encouraged her to step forward in her writing. Her success brought her social acceptance and she became a literary figure who was surrounded by men of letters and intellectuals. After Lewes' death, she married a 20 years junior to her, John Cross. Her brother congratulated her on a truly religious marriage. While on her honeymoon to Venice she died on 22 December 1880 and was buried in Highgate Cemetery in north London.

9.2.2. A Bird's Eye View

Born	Mary	Anne	Evans
	22	November	1819
	Nuneaton, Warwickshire,		England,
	United Kingdom		

Died	22 December 1880 (aged 61) Chelsea, London, England
Resting place	Highgate Cemetery (East), Highgate, London, UK
Pen name	George Eliot
Occupation	Novelist, poet, journalist, translator
Period	Victorian
Notable works	<i>The Mill on the Floss</i> (1860), <i>Silas Marner</i> (1861), <i>Romola</i> (1862–1863), <i>Middlemarch</i> (1871–72), <i>Daniel Deronda</i> (1876)
Spouse	John Cross (m. 1880)
Partner	George Henry Lewes (1854–78)
Relatives	Robert Evans (father) Christiana Pearson (mother) (Wikipedia)

9.2.3 Works of George Eliot

In 1856, she began to write *Scenes of Clerical Life*, stories of people around her native Warwickshire. They were published in *Blackwood magazine*. In 1859, she published her first novel *Adam Bede* which brought her great success. To observe that her novels were taken seriously in a society where women were writing and enjoying romantic stories, she fancied a male pen name ‘George Eliot’. Her work as a translator of German language opened for her a world of new experiences in the fields of religion and philosophy which she applied in her novels.

The Mill on the Floss (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Romola* (1863), *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch* (1861-1872) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876) were her other novels. *Middlemarch* is among the best novels known for its psychological insight and realism of the Victorian Era.

Notes

Two minor works also came out of her pen- *Little Veile and Brother Jacob*

Poems: she composed *The Spanish Gypsy* and *the Legend of Jubal*, *Impressions of Theophrastus*, etc.

9.2.4 A Bird's Eye View

GEORGE ELIOT'S WORKS

I. Novels

- *"Adam Bede" (1859)*
- *"The Mill on the Floss" (1860)*
- *"Silas Marner" (1861)*
- *"Romola" (1863)*
- *"Felix Holt, the Radical" (1866)*
- *"Middlemarch" (1871-72)*
- *"Daniel Deronda" (1876)*

II. Poetry

- *Count That Day Lost*
- *Agatha (1869)*
- *Brother and Sister (1869)*
- *Armgart (1871)*
- *Stradivarius (1873)*
- *The Legend of Jubal (1874)*
- *I Grant You Ample Leave (1874)*
- *Arion (1874)*
- *A Minor Prophet (1874)*
- *A College Breakfast Party (1879)*
- *The Death of Moses (1879)*
- *From a London Drawing Room*

III. Essays/Nonfiction

- *"Three Months in Weimar" (1855)*
- *"Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" (1855)*
- *"Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" (1856)*

- *"The Natural History of German Life"* (1856)
- *"Scenes of Clerical Life"* (1857)
- *"The Lifted Veil"* (1859)
- *"Brother Jacob"* (1864)
- *"The Influence of Rationalism"* (1865)
- *"Impressions of Theophrastus Such"* (1879)

9.3 HER ACHIEVEMENTS

As a novelist of the 19th century she holds a mighty place of importance and significance since she had been the forerunner of the psychological novel which Woolf was to perfect shortly. She helped in the founding of the women's college in Cambridge University, namely Girton College.

George Eliot was a radical Tory. Her radicalism lay in the spheres of theology and ethics. Born in the Established Church she had become a Calvinist Methodist as a girl; essentially religious, she was brought up by her intellectual honesty to an agnosticism that laid a stress on morals, on right behaviour. She believed in determination, human beings were made for good or for ill by their actions. Her moral beliefs run chimed with what appeared to be the findings of contemporary science, particularly heredity, which appeared as a scientific determinism. The idea of Nemesis -the inescapable consequences of one's past - is a central one in Eliot's work. This gave her fiction great authority in its day; later it was to make it seem dated; now, when she is again seen as a great novelist, we realize how much of her strength is derived from the very intransigence of her view of human beings. By placing the responsibility for a man's life and fate firmly on the individual and his/her moral choices, she **changed the nature of the English novel**. It is the individual's choice of actions what shape his/her life, then plot - in the old sense of something external to character and often working unknown to it- is irrelevant and unnecessary. **Character, in fact, becomes plot.**(UCM)

9.4 GEORGE ELIOT AS A NOVELIST

Notes

George Eliot is one of the most important female authors of all time; one of the most important authors of all time. Her works can stand parallel in style, substance, and staying power to her male Victorian counterparts like Charles Dickens, **Thomas Hardy**, Wilkie Collins, and more. Eliot could not be beaten on grounds of her sex for the lack of equality that followed her sex throughout history: she prospered and thrived from it. Her novels highlight the best and worst parts of humanity, and they will be acclaimed for generations to come.

The length of many of Eliot's books can turn off some people; but once the reader gets into the reading he/she cannot stop till the end. *Middlemarch*, the masterpiece of the Victorian age is considered to be one of the greatest English novels ever written. The cast of characters has a collected sense of unity while also maintaining their own individuality. *Middlemarch* has themes of religion, rural society, politics, and love, but one never overpowers the other. Eliot makes the reader to delve into their thoughts, feelings, and trivialities with as much fervor and passion as she puts into her prose. She's hilarious, insightful, and keeps the reader hooked throughout the entire novel.

CONTRIBUTION OF GEORGE ELIOT TO THE ENGLISH NOVEL

George Eliot was one of the greatest novelists of the Victorian age. She stood at the gateway between the old novel and the new, no unworthy heir of Thackeray and Dickens and no unworthy forerunner of Hardy and Henry James. She was essentially a novelist of intellectual life and her psychological insight into the motives of her characters was deep and profound. Like Meredith she intellectualized the novel and gave in a moral fervour and ethical bias, which it had not yet possessed in the hands of Dickens and Thackeray. She made notable contribution to the English novel by giving it an air of sobriety, sternness and seriousness which it had not attained in the hands of the early Victorian novelists.

Check Your Progress-1

Q1. Why did Mary Ann Evans fancy a male pen name, 'George Eliot'?

Q2. Discuss George Eliot's achievements.

9.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVELS

THEMES OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVEL

George Eliot was one of the most distinguished writers of fiction during the Victorian age. She was something unlike the typical Victorian novelist. Where the other Victorian novelists seem shapeless, confused and without direction, because of their melodramatic plots and sub-plots and the careless and rich diversity of their characters, George Eliot marks out an ordered world, and articulates a constructed judgment. George Eliot's novels reveal an exceptional sense of the humour and pathos of human life, a deep religious conviction of the purifying effect of human trials, and wide and varied learning. If we read a novel in order to clarify our minds about human character, in order to pass judgment on the world outside itself and to estimate the ideas people have lived by, then George Eliot is one of the first to give such an intellectual direction to the English novel.

The Novels of George Eliot ,Scenes of Clerical Life (1858) It includes four stories Amos Barton, Mr. Gilfils, Love Story, Janet's Repentance. Like her later novels, they deal with the tragedy of ordinary lives, unfolded with an intense sympathy and deep insight into the truth of character. After this early work we have three full-length novels, in

Notes

which she went deeper into the obscure places of human nature and dealt more elaborately and in/greater variety with the conflicts and moral disorders that unhinge the will and the lapses which bring ruin upon the individual and his fellows. *Adam Bede* appeared the same year as *The Ordeal of Richard Fernald*. The plot of this novel is founded on a story told to George Eliot by her aunt, Elizabeth Evans, a Methodist preacher and the original of the Dinah Morris of the novel, of a confession of a child-murder, made to her by a girl in prison. A fine trilogy of novels followed *Romola* from the culmination point of George Eliot's literary career—*Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1867) and *Daniel Deronda* (1871). They burn with a passionate conviction and contain some of her best character studies. *Felix Holt*, only one of her novels to deal with British politics, is a study of political ideals.

GEORGE ELIOT'S PLOT-CONSTRUCTION

George Eliot did not care for plot-construction on the conventional Victorian lines. She was governed not by the story but by her idea. She worked out her plots in conformity with her idea giving all kinds of jolts and jerks to the expectations of the readers roused by the theory of probability of action under a particular set of circumstances. "Her plot was intended to follow not standardized formula but what she conceived to be the logical development that idea." She invariably omitted those strokes of fortune, coincidences, and sudden inheritances, long lost wills, which were the stock in trade of the ordinary Victorian plot in her novels. In her hands, the novel took its modern form which adds to her achievements. Every story derives its unity from its plot, while the plots derive their content from the characters. She successfully maintains a causal continuity of the episodes throughout the novel, and subordinates them to the main story. The inevitable catastrophe towards which the whole action moves is the focal point to generate emotions. W. H. Hudson views: "The novel, then, was humanitarian in the hands of Dickens and satiric in the hands of Thackeray. In the hands of Mary Ann, or Marian Evans, always known by her pen name of George Eliot (1819-1880), It became moral and philosophical. As Dickens's world was that of London's streets and Thackeray's that of the clubs and drawing-rooms,

so her's was for the most part that of the old-fashioned provincial life with which she had been familiar in her girlhood. In one novel, indeed, *Romola* a tale of the Renaissance in Florence—she made an excursion into the past; but she was always at her best when, as in *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), and *Middlemarch* (1871), she kept close to the scenes and the types of character she had early known and loved.”

Hers are the first novels which set out to give a picture of the wholly unmodified by those formulas of a good plot since the novel had taken over from comedy and romance. Her story is conditioned solely by the logical demands of situation of character; it ends sadly or happily; it includes heroes or omits them, deals with the married or the unmarried, accordingly as reason and observation lead her to think likely. In fact, the laws conditioning form of George Eliot's novels are the same laws that condition those of Henry James and Wells and Conrad and Arnold Bennett. Hers are the first examples in English of the novel in its mature form; in them, it structurally comes of age.

GEORGE ELIOT'S CHARACTERIZATION

George Eliot was interested not so much in the disintegration of society, the breakdown of-structures which seemed as large in mid-Victorian England as in the delineation of character, particularly the ‘**inner man**’. Instead of concentrating her attention on the external appearance and idiosyncrasies of her character, she directed her whole attention to the portrayal of the inner man. She portraits them in idiosyncrasy, but this idiosyncrasy is never the principal thing about them as with Dickens or Trollope or Mrs. Gaskell. We do not remember her serious characters by their appearance or the way they talked, indeed we do not remember these things clearly at all. Her paints the ‘inner man’

through her characters. Eliot's excellence as a portrayer of characters lies in her power and capacity to present the gradual evolution of her characters. Her characters are never fixed. They continue to grow either for the worse or for the better. They are never static. "Character too", she says, "is a process." Her heroes and heroines differ radically from those of Dickens and Thackeray in this respect,—that when we meet the men

Notes

and women of the later novelists, their characters are already formed, and we are reasonably sure what they will do under given circumstances. Her characters are 'round character' and they develop gradually revealing varied aspects of their personality. They go from weakness to strength, or from strength to weakness, according to the works that they do and the thoughts that they cherish. In *Romola*, for instance Tito, as we first meet him, may be either good or bad and we know not whether he will finally turn to the right hand or to the left. As time passes, we see him degenerate steadily because he follows his selfish impulses; while *Romola*, whose character is at the first only faintly indicated, grows into beauty and strength with every act of self-renunciation. The same applies to the character of Lydgate in *Middlemarch*. In the earlier part of the novel, he is represented as an enthusiastic and disinterested young doctor only intent on extending the bounds of knowledge. By the time we finish the novel, we find Lydgate completely degraded having very little of his former fervour and enthusiasm for science.

George Eliot exactly exhibits the mode by which gradually he goes down re-adjusting his principles to suit his practice, until imperceptibly he is transformed to the man of his final phase. George Eliot's characters are dominated and governed by moral consideration. Her concentration on the moral side of human nature is the chief source of her greatness as a novelist, the kernel of her precious contribution to literature. Her imagination, unlike Dicken's or Charlotte Brontë's, bestows life to her characters by the clearness with which she penetrates to the secret main-spring of their actions. George Eliot's characters are always true to themselves. They are consistent. They act inevitably under the irresistible force of their directing principle and so they are always true to themselves. "Through every change of fortune, every circumstance they remain the same clear recognizable individual moral entities."

George Eliot achieved eminent success in drawing complex characters. Novelist who concentrated on outside aspects of their characters failed in the portrayal of complex characters. Maggie Tulliver and Tito are psychologically complex personalities which could be handled only by a skilled writer and that George Eliot could only do. "It is the habit of my imagination," said George Eliot, "to strive after as full a vision of the

medium in which a character moves as of the character itself." George Eliot exhibited rare insight in the presentation of female characters, and her male figures were marked with a woman's attitude towards the male sex. The subject of her novel is analyzed and discussed from a female point of view. They represent her opinions about other people and situations that they are caught in. The women are so vastly superior to their lovers that it is difficult for the reader to appreciate all that it means for them. Arthur Donnithorne and Stephen Guest are drawn with the most convincing art, but that only serves to lay bare their unworthiness. The estimable Philip Wakem, whose father in the regular woman's idea of the wicked person a successful lawyer must be, *Felix Holt*, said to the portrait of Gerald Massey and Tito Melema, who, as Leslie Stephen pointed out, is really a woman in man's things, are all evidently evolved as embodiments of the qualities that a woman would justifiably prize in the opposite sex. They are flagrant examples of a woman's man, much more than Charlotte Brontë's *Rochester* and Paul Emmanuel were. George Eliot's characters appear to be real as they were identified with her relatives and friends. She reveals herself and her relatives through her characters. Her characters represent imaginary aspects or developments of her 'ego' and acquire the quality of truth due to this vital hand. Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede* is after the fashion of her aunt. Mrs. Poyser, Hetty's aunt, is said to show some trait of George Eliot's mother. *Adam Bede* was drawn from her father. The picture of Maggie Tulliver in *Mill on the Floss* is her own personal study. Her brother Tom is Isaac and her father is portrayed in the owner of the mill.

HUMOUR AND PATHOS IN GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVELS

George Eliot's novels reveal an exceptional sense of the humour and pathos of human life, a deep religious conviction of the purifying effect of human trials, and wide and varied learning." George Eliot was one of the most distinguished writers of fiction during the Victorian age. She was something unlike the typical Victorian novelist. Where the other Victorian novelists seem shapeless, confused and without direction, because of their melodramatic plots and sub-plots and the careless and rich diversity of their characters, George Eliot marks out an ordered

Notes

world, and enunciates a constructed judgment. If we read a novel in order to clarify our minds about human character, in order to pass judgment on the world outside itself and to estimate the ideas people have lived by, then George Eliot is one of the first to give such an intellectual direction to the English novel.

Though George Eliot was essentially a novelist of tragic life representing the shadows that cloud human existence, yet she was not without a touch of humour and fun in her novels. It is false, however, to suppose that she lacked humour. The dialogue in her books, the late as well as the early ones, is shot with touches and gleams, warm, rustic turns of speech, half-biblical, half-Shakespearean, yet wholly first hand and fragrant of the folk from whom she sprang. Her humour in her early novels tended to be funny though the note of gaiety declined in her later novels. In her rustic characters she could present plenty of grave and ironical' humour. Her rustic characters, Mrs. Poyser, for example, are unconsciously humours and are the cause of mirth in others ill without being mirthful themselves. George Eliot could not paint a humorous character like Sir John Falstaff who is mirthful himself and is the cause of mirth to others. She could paint humorous characters who provided mirth to others. Her humour, though often mirthful, could become satirical at times and ,r i 'tired a sharp edge as in the presentation of the Dodsons. The Dodson sisters Mk' a pleasant source of ironical humour, and the same is true of Mrs. Glegg's quarrels with Mr. Glegg. There were certain subjects about which she could never joke. "George Eliot keeps a tight rein on her humorous faculty. Conscientiously serious, like all Victorian intellectuals, she considered a great many subjects on joking matter. She thought it shockingly heartless to make fun of people's tender feelings, or sacred aspirations. Even at its brightest, her humour is not exuberant. But within its limitations, it is both individual and delightful. Intelligence gives it edge; good humour gives it a blow; it sparkles over the comedy of rustic provincial life, a satire at once cool and mellow, incisive and genial." (David Cecil) George Eliot's finest humour is that of her great aphorists. Very solemn and superior people would fain indentify humour with folly and buffoonery, whereas on close examination it turns out to be near akin to if not the same thing as wisdom. Pathos George Eliot has

successfully presented scenes of pathos in her novels. She could depict moving incidents touching the core of our heart. Her tragedies are heart-rending. Her pathos emanates from the situation and seems to be woven in the fabric of her scene. George Eliot completed the work of Wordsworth. He dealt with pathos of the pastoral life in a spirit of measureless humanity; she mingled its pathos with humour and produced the greatest dramatic effect.

GEORGE ELIOT'S STYLE

George Eliot's style is lucid, and, to begin with, simple, but later in her reflective passages, it is often overweighed with abstractions. Her dialogue is excellent for the revelation of character, and her command of the idiom of ordinary speech enables her to achieve a fine naturalness. Only rarely does she rise to the impassioned poetical heights of the Brontës', but her earlier novels, particularly *The Mill on the Floss*, are full of fine descriptions of the English countryside, and her faculty for natural description is never lost entirely. E. Albert aptly sums up her place in the history of the English novel: "She is of great importance in the history of fiction. Her serious concern with the problems of the human personality and its relationship with forces outside itself, her interest in detailed psychological analysis of the realms of the inner consciousness did much to determine the future course of the English novel. The twentieth century has seen the rapid development of these interests, and it is significant that the reputation of George Eliot, which suffered a temporary eclipse after her death, has recovered during the ten or twenty years to a surprising degree."

HER SERIOUSNESS

The great contribution of George Eliot to the novel was that of seriousness, gravity, solemnity and loftiness that she imparted to the novel. It was no longer an instrument of cheap entertainment but as a medium for the discussion of highly complicated philosophical and abstract thoughts. Repeatedly, it has been pointed out that fiction in her hand is no longer a mere entertainment; it strikes a new note of seriousness and even of sternness; it's become a looking review of the

gravest also because the pleasanter of human aspects existence reassuming the reflective and discursive rights and duties relating the novel at its beginnings, without however sacrificing any of the creative and dramatic qualities that had in the overriding developed centuries.

9.6 GEORGE ELIOT'S REALISM

The early novels of George Eliot bear the touch of reality while she made her plot develop in Midlands, Warwickshire and Derbyshire and the characters moving there as if in real life. When her novels were published under her pen name, it was speculated that the famous Mr. Liggins would have written them, for he was the only person familiar with such intimacy with the places drawn in the novels. But when she was declared the author of these novels people were surprised and congratulated her for her faithful delineation of the life of the Midlands. The fact is that in the early novels, prior to the writing of *Romola*, George Eliot played upon her own experiences of life, from her personal reminiscences and from the life and activities of the people around her. These experiences formed the warp and woof of her novels. She showed to the writers of fiction that personal experience and memories could supply all the matter that a novelist needed. One need not hunt for external experiences to make the frame-work of one's novels. Realism and faithful portraiture of life known to her are the hallmarks of her early novels. In the earlier novels scene after scene, character after character has been identified with some place or person within the range of her early experience. Her mansions and cottages, her lanes and meadows are those to which she had been accustomed to drive in childhood with her father, or over which she had rambled with her brother. Still more are the characters of her novels, the figures with whom she had been familiar, and almost in proportion to the familiarity is the frequency of their appearance.

No different cluster was thus usually set underneath contribution as her family. Her father, her mother, her brother, her sister, her aunt, and herself, all appear in her pages. In her later novels starting from *Romola*, she set aside her store of experience which she had almost exhausted in

Adam Bede, *Mill on the Floss* and *Silas* and turned to political experiences of other people (*Felix Holt*) problems of racial integration and presentation of a life in Florence during the fifteenth century *Romola*. When she left familiar grounds for unknown and untrodden fields, she faltered, and failed and it is only once again in *Middlemarch* that she could hold out a gleam of her tones glory, for this novel, like her earlier work, is a faithful picture of the life of Midlands and the people who lived in those surroundings such as the Garths and the Vincys.

9.7 GEORGE ELIOT: PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

George Eliot was a psychological novelist and the primary object of her art as a novelist was to lay bare the souls of her characters. Like Browning, she tried to represent the inner struggle of a soul, and to reveal the motives, impulses and hereditary influences which governed human action. She tried to pierce behind the show of things and to reveal the forces by that they are controlled. Her mind was always active; experience set it immediately and instinctively analyzing and generalizing to discovering why and how things happened. And once she turned her attention to the globe round her, it was this analysis that started her creative imagination working.

She was a rationalist and a philosophic thinker and she delivered to bear on the novel a extremely practiced intellect, a probing mind, and a searching analytic faculty. The novel was a mirror to her to reflect the true picture of the inner being. Her sense of responsibility deepened, and her novels grew more and more introspective and even theoretic as time went on, until with the exhaustion of her earliest and most vivid impressions they were that and nothing else, and in her last, *Daniel Deronda*, we see the complete decline of extroversion of the characters.

9.8 GEORGE ELIOT AS A MORALIST

George Eliot was a moralist at heart, and the tone of the novels is one of moral earnestness, and at times, in her later work of an austere grimness.

Notes

Her novels were secular sermons for a vast congregation of readers who could not subscribe to Christian codes. She was a sort of Moses to the Victorian Novel, leading it to the Promised Land of full intellectual, moral and political freedom, even though the results of its entering upon that inheritance have been similar to those that overtook the Jews after entering over Jordan. Eliot was searching for a moral and rational doctrine that could take the place of her lost religion. As a Moralist, George Eliot laid great emphasis on the performance of one's duty and in leading a life of virtue and righteousness. If a person failed to stick to these paths and deviated from the track of righteousness, he was likely to be swallowed up by the swirling waves of moral turpitude leading to his utter ruin. A slip in conduct was likely to lead to serious consequences resulting in the deterioration of the moral fibre in the person who succumbed to moment of weakness or selfish indulgence. She believed in the principle of free will. In her view, every man's character was in his own hand to mould into the right shape or wrong, and she desired that man's full strength should be devoted to the formation of right conduct and right thought. David Cecil writes, "Activities were right in so far they assisted you to the good, they were wrong in so far as they prevented you. And such activities as were neither right nor wrong, were frivolous, unworthy of the attention of a serious person." George Eliot believed that life is just. She was sure that those who live a virtuous life are essentially contented, that those who live a vicious life are essentially discontented. However well-meaning you might be or however lucky, she was sure that you could not escape the consequences of your own action that your sins find you out, that the slightest slip will be visited on you, if not immediately than later. Tiio's degeneration in *Romola*, Lydgate's fall in *Middlemarch*, Gwendolen Harleth's humiliation and recovery in *Daniel Deronda* were brought about by their lapses in moral conduct. She showed, through their downfall and decline, that disobedience to moral laws brought utter ruin to her characters. "Her ethical motive is a broader one than the emancipation of thought or the formulation of a political programme. It is to show how, in obedience to law, character grows or decays; how a single fault or flaw brings suffering and death, and throws a world into ruin, how, on the other

hand, there is a making perfect through suffering, a regeneration through sin itself, a hope for the world through the renunciation and self-sacrifice of the individual."

Check Your Progress-2

Q3. Explain the elements of realism in the novels of George Eliot.

Q4. Comment on George Eliot's plot construction.

Q5. What sort of characters does George Eliot paint her novels?

9.9 LET US SUM UP

George Eliot is one of the greatest novelist of not only the 19th century but of the modern world also. She was bound to the Victorian society rather she studied man in all his aspects and that has resulted in the greatness of her works. She was a versatile author. She had a keen observation and studied her society to draw her themes from the real world thus; we find the element of realism and the study of the inner man. We also find the reflections of her life in *Middlemarch*. She believed in the strength of her characters to mould their destinies but she wished them to follow the righteous path. The greatest contribution of her to the English novel was that of seriousness, gravity, solemnity and loftiness that she imparts to her novels.

9.10 KEYWORDS

- Provincial – belonging or peculiar to particular province.
- Sternness – strictness or sticking to a point
- Harnessing – combining straps and bands together.

Notes

- Calvinist –a person who follows the teachings of John Calvin
- Methodist - a member of the largest Christian denomination.
- Chimed –to sound harmoniously
- Contemporary –people with you at the same age
- Inescapable –incapable of escape
- Realism – related to reality
- Undogmatic – strong set of principles for a particular faith
- Anglicanism – related to the church of England.
- Round character -is a term coined by E.M. Forster and is the direct opposite of a flat character. A round character is extremely realistic, behaving and speaking in a "real life" manner. The character is complex and increases in complexity throughout the story. Jun 16, 2008 (study.com)

9.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q1. Discuss George Eliot as a woman novelist.

Q2. How far is George Eliot successful in pouring humour and pathos in her plots? Comment.

Q3. George Eliot believes that 'Character too is a process'. Elaborate/comment

Q4. What are the salient features of George Eliot's plot of the novels?

Q5. Discuss George Eliot's views on realism and how far are they reflected in her writings?

9.12 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. *Roberts, Neil. George Eliot-Her Beliefs and Her Art*
2. Ashton, Rosemary. *George Eliot: A Life*. London: Penguin Books, 1997.
3. *George Eliot: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs
4. Hughes, Kathryn. *George Eliot: The Last Victorian*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999.

5. Karl, Frederick R. *George Eliot, Voice of a Century: A Biography*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1995.
6. Lindle, Robert. *Novels of George Eliot*.
7. Bailey, Peter. *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830–1885* (Routledge, 2014).
8. O'Gorman, Francis, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture* (2010)
9. Carroll, D. (1971) *George Eliot: The Critical Heritage*.
10. Dentith, S. (1986) *George Eliot*, Brighton

ONLINE LINKS

11. George Eliot Biography,
TheFamousPeople.com. <https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/george-elliott-66.php> November 03, 2016
12. UCM , <https://www.ucm.es/data/cont/docs/119-2014-02-19-George%20Eliot.pdf>
13. www.victorianweb.org/religion/chesterton.html
everything2.com/title/Oxford+Movement
14. www.123helpme.com/view.asp?id=23066
15. Somervell, D. C. *English thought in the nineteenth century* (1929) online

9.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. To observe that her novels were taken seriously in a society where women were writing and enjoying romantic stories, she fancied a male pen name 'George Eliot.' She was a woman with a scandalous past which could have tainted her fame as a novelist thus, she published her works with a pen name to hide her identity and let the works survive on their own.
2. As a novelist of the 19th century she holds a mighty place of importance and significance since she had been the forerunner of the psychological novel which Woolf was to perfect shortly. She helped in

Notes

the founding of the women's college in Cambridge University, namely Girton College.

George Eliot was a radical Tory. Her radicalism lay in the spheres of theology and ethics. Born in the Established Church she had become a Calvinist Methodist as a girl; essentially religious, she was brought up by her intellectual honesty to an agnosticism that laid a stress on morals, on right behaviour. She believed in determination, human beings were made for good or for ill by their actions. Her moral beliefs run chimed with what appeared to be the findings of contemporary science, particularly heredity, which appeared as a scientific determinism. The idea of Nemesis - the inescapable consequences of one's past - is a central one in Eliot's work. This gave her fiction great authority in its day; later it was to make it seem dated; when she became a successful novelist, we realize how much of her strength is derived from the very intransigence of her view of human beings. By placing the responsibility for a man's life and fate firmly on the individual and his/her moral choices, she changed the nature of the English novel. It is the individual's choice of actions what shape his/her life, then plot - in the old sense of something external to character and often working unknown to it- is irrelevant and unnecessary. Character, in fact, becomes plot.

3. George Eliot played upon her own experiences of life, from her personal reminiscences and from the life and activities of the people around her. She showed to the writers of fiction that personal experience and memories could supply all the matter that a novelist needed. One need not hunt for external experiences to make the frame- work of one's novels. Realism and faithful portraiture of life known to her are the hallmarks of her early novels. In the earlier novels scene after scene, character after character has been identified with some place or person within the range of her early experience.

4. George Eliot did not care for plot-construction on the conventional Victorian lines. She was governed not by the story but by her idea. She worked out her plots in conformity with her idea giving all kinds of jolts and jerks to the expectations of the readers roused by the theory of probability of action under a particular set of circumstances. Hers are the first novels which set out to give a picture of the wholly unmodified by

those formulas of a good plot since the novel had taken over from comedy and romance.

5. George Eliot was interested not so much in the disintegration of society, the breakdown of-structures which seemed as large in mid-Victorian England as in the delineation of character, particularly the inner man. Instead of concentrating her attention on the external appearance and idiosyncrasies of her character, she directed her whole attention to the portrayal of the inner man. George Eliot's excellence as a portrayer of characters lies in her power and capacity to present the gradual evolution of her characters. Her characters are never fixed. They continue to grow either for the worse or for the better. They are never static. In George Eliot's novels, the characters develop gradually as we come to know them. They go from weakness to strength, or from strength to weakness, according to the works that they do and the thoughts that they cherish.

UNIT- 10 GEORGE ELIOT'S MIDDLEMARCH

STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Critical Study of *Middlemarch*
- 10.3 *Middlemarch*- A Study of Provincial Life and Realism
- 10.4 *Middlemarch*- As a Historical Novel
- 10.5 *Middlemarch*-As a Satire on the Modern World
- 10.6 Moral Considerations in *Middlemarch*
- 10.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.8 Keywords
- 10.9 Questions for Review
- 10.10 Suggested Readings and References
- 10.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Critically analyze George Eliot's novel *Middlemarch*
- Understand the views of the novelist about the society
- Delineate the salient features of the author as a novelist
- Learn about the varied themes worked upon by George Eliot

10.1 INTRODUCTION

George Eliot's epic novel *Middlemarch* was published by Blackwoods in 8 parts from December 1871 to December 1872, and as a 4-volume novel in the following year. It was begun when Eliot amalgamated two separate stories: the first concerning a doctor passionate about medical reform, and the second about a young woman passionate about scholarship. The novel took Eliot nearly 5 years to complete and the recent publication of her notebooks has now revealed the extraordinary extent of her research

into areas such as the history of medical reform in the 1830s, and the most recent work on the nature of mythology. (Uglow)

10.2 CRITICAL STUDY OF MIDDLEMARCH

Undoubtedly 'Middlemarch' is an extraordinarily rich novel depicting the life of a segment of English provincial society in the second quarter of the 19th century with such copiousness of details as to include its delineation of more than a hundred characters. There are four major plots which are intersected at many points. The main characters are presented with a wealth of moral and psychological symbols; the theme is concerned with the relation of the individual to society and of character to circumstances, the problem of vocation, the possibilities for heroic action in the modern world, the search for the minute processes which prepare human misery and joy and the importance of the fellow-feeling rather than ideas or doctrines as the basis of post-Christian religion of humanity. The novel superbly admits of a comprehensive examination of characters in its social and historical setting and of society in its interconnections (with country and town). Though huge is the canvas, it is a realistic fiction. Its thematic richness and intellectual sweep make it even more than that. While paying a tribute to Henry Fielding for his expansiveness and copious remarks she contrasts them with her own diminution of details. This is false modesty on her part' in its breadth of moral and philosophical vision the novel remains unsurpassed by 'Tom Jones' and many other novels.

No Victorian novel approaches Middlemarch in its width of reference, its effectual power, or the imperturbable spaciousness of its narrative. The novel is a study of provincial life and the scene is laid in the provincial town of Middlemarch in the first half of nineteenth century. The story is concerned principally with Dorothea Brooke, a lady of ardent religious views. She marries an elderly pedant Mr. Casaubon, possessed of an arch angelical manner. The marriage does not prove to be happy and successful. The two are soon alienated for Casaubon feels that his wife Dorothea is more attached to his cousin Will Ladislaw than to himself. Before dying, Casaubon makes a will wherein he states that if Dorothea

Notes

marries Ladislaw after his death, she will not be entitled to any fortune belonging to him. In spite of the will of Casaubon, Dorothea and Ladislaw are brought together. Parallel with this plot runs the story of the unhappy marriage of Terilus Lydgate, an ambitious young doctor, animated by hopes of scientific discoveries and medical reform, with the beautiful but commonplace Rosamond Vincy, whose materialism brings about the failure of his hopes. In *Middlemarch* there is humour and a vein of caustic irony which suggests that had George Eliot been less concerned with the moral purpose in human affairs she might have been a fine satirical novelist, anticipation—perhaps even excelling Samuel Butler. But her sense of ridiculous is always being subordinated to the pressing need to point a moral. In the same way, she is compelled to take the stuff of life and shape it rather too obviously towards some moral end.

Her contemporary Henry James speaks gloriously of Eliot's achievement in bringing forth- contrasting histories of the central characters having "that supreme sense of the vastness and variety of human life, under aspects apparently similar, which it belongs only to the greatest novels to produce". Emily Dickinson, the spiritual philosopher of America expressed her opinion on the novel thus: the mysteries of human nature surpass the 'mysteries of redemption'.

Middlemarch creates an era in the history of fiction since its incidents have been taken from the inner life of men and women and since the action is developed by the direct influence of mind on mind and character on character. The material conditions of the outer world are only subordinated and are treated only as an artist adjunct to present of a mental experience, they are only a background of perfect realistic truth to a profoundly imaginative psychological study.

Lord Acton observes that she is capable of not only reading the diverse hearts of men 'but also of creeping into their skin, watching the world through their eyes, feeling their latent background of conviction, discerning their theories of habits, influences of thought and knowledge, of life and of descent, and having obtained this experience, recovering the soul of her characters without attraction, preference, or caricature.'

Many remarked that there were certain mistakes in her handling of life. But she knew well what was happening in society and she could only faithfully portray the reality. The society smiled on matrimonial alliances between an old man, sickly also in health, marrying a young girl less than half his own age; the society ignored the modes of education which make a woman's knowledge, another name for motley ignorance - had not the society smiled on the rules of conduct which are in flat contradiction with its own loudly-asserted beliefs. The society could tolerate them and Eliot faithfully portrays them. They are the permitted social ills. 'While this is the social air in which mortals begin to breathe, there will be collisions such as those in Dorothea's life.'

Critics agree that 'Middlemarch' is more philosophical than her other novels. They observe that the novel is influenced by a melancholy vision of human existence which emphasized failure and disillusionment. While the story is noble, highly moral and intellectual, there is no high spirituality in it; there are struggles without a thought of God and that is unnatural.

Henry James observes of 'Middlemarch': "A treasure-house of details, Middlemarch was an indifferent whole - more a 'chain of episodes', broken into accidental lengths, than 'an organized, moulded, balanced, composition'". The novel is diffuse because the natural manner of the novelist is 'discursive and expansive'; her aim was to be a 'generous rural historian' and in it she succeeded splendidly. The novel is 'not compact doubtless, but when was a panorama compact? Indeed this very redundancy of touch, born of abundant reminiscence is one of its greatest charms'. 'Middlemarch' has a definite subject: the depiction of an obscure 'St. Theresa'.

There are several important themes, which make it a perfect book to explore the society, such as the status of women, the nature of marriage, idealism, political reform, hypocrisy, self-interest, and religion.

Check Your Progress- 1

Q1. In Middlemarch there is humour and a vein of caustic irony. Discuss.

Q2. Middlemarch presents a melancholic vision. Comment.

10.3 MIDDLEMARCH- A STUDY OF PROVINCIAL LIFE

Private life is determined by public life. The narrator plays the role of a social scientist and historian, since he represents the life of a society of bygone times. He offers an account of the provincial life of a particular shire and calls himself a provincial historian. Many years have passed since these events happened and hence they require a narrator to fill in certain gaps to maintain continuity. It is not a mere novel that he narrates but the history of the people. Henry James says that a novelist should regard himself as a historian and then he has the smallest locus standi. If the events were fictitious or imaginary, he has no standing then. He must relate events that are assumed to be real. The novel really is 'a study of provincial life'. The setting is Middlemarch (this Coventry) and the surrounding country in the north-east corner of Loamshire (that is Warwickshire) around the time of the First Reform Bill of 1832.

History is now re-created; accuracy of details need not be much verified. A very realistic account of farm-work is offered in Ch. 39 of the novel and the reader has a feeling that there is realism in her description and that all events and characters are true to life and must have lived in flesh and blood. The historical re-creation is thus richly detailed. In the dilapidated house, two of the chimneys were choked with ivy, the porch was blocked up with bundles of sticks, half the windows were blocked with grey worm-eaten shutters; there the jasmine grew in luxuriance; the mouldering garden wore a subdued colour and there was an aged goat lying against the back-kitchen door. The mossy-thatch of a cow-shed, the broken grey barn-doors, the pauper labourers in ragged breeches who had nearly finished unloading a wagon of corn into a barn ready for early

threshing; "the scanty dairy of cows being tethered for milking and the very pigs and white ducks not fed properly - this was the picture touching other sensibilities than those which are stirred by the depression of the agricultural interest, with the sad lack of farming capital as seen constantly in the newspapers of the time." Henry James.

The reader develops a sympathetic involvement with the family and he finds everything realistic. Then it is followed by a specific visual detail and a quiet display of the working knowledge of farm-life. Then there is a reference to the newspaper, the depression of agricultural interest and lack of farming capital. In the aesthetics of the novel, it is the romantic-realist contrast that is important. But the description gives the passage its sparkle and its chief interest. The novel has further to offer the simplification of experience. What was England 150 years ago is interesting to us to-day as it offers a socio-historical picture. Country and Town are the social divisions in the novel.

In the country (rural parts) there are clear distinctions of rank based on birth (as we have caste distinctions here based on birth). They have their traditional sanctions and justifications and they are termed 'providential arrangements'. At the other end of the village, someone may say that existing conditions are firmly based and any change will be worse. The chief country-characters belong to the small group of landed gentry, holding rank just below the aristocracy so to say. Those living in such "rarified social air" include Mr. Brooke of Tipton Grange whose connections are good and above question, whose estate would fetch not less than £3000 a year. Mr. Brooke, since he is rich and an estate-owner, is an honorary magistrate with responsibilities to preserve law and order in his district. This position involved him in two cases: one of sheep-stealing and the other of poaching.

Two orphaned nieces live with him, privately educated with an English and Swiss family. They marry into the family of gentry: Celia marries the young baronet who is the heir to the Chettam Estate; Dorothea weds Mr. Edward Casaubon who is a rector of Lovvick and owner of a prosperous estate. Casaubon has a curate to do all ecclesiastical duties except preaching in the morning. In his estate many live by pig-breeding and they tend well the garden at the back. The small boys wear corduroy

Notes

and the girls are neatly clothed; 'no looms here, no Dissent'. The social circle is completed by the Cadwalladers. Casaubon is rector and his study is filled with fishing-tackle. Dorothea is aristocratic and conscious of rank; she could be expensive and friendly and that makes her companionable to many and mitigates her husband's collection of tithe (one-tenth of agricultural produce).

There are men and women of the lower social order or rank: Mr. Featherstone of Stone Court. Tenants alone live there on the borders. One of them is old Timothy Cooper, who has savings in a stocking-foot and lives in a lone cottage. He and Dogley remain quite conservative, undisturbed by anything.

In Middlemarch there are many belonging to miscellaneous ranks and strata of society. There are too many characters and social ranks to be represented. At the lower end is Mrs. Dollop, landlady and her customers - Mr. Limp, the shoemaker, Mr Cabbe, the glazier, Mr. Dill, the barber, Mr. Baldwin, the tax-gatherer and Mrs. Jones, a dyer with crimson hands. At a higher level of society are Borthrop Trumbull, a prosperous provincial auctioneer alive to his jokes and sensible of his wide knowledge. Mr. Mawnsey, a grocer in the Top Market, wielding much social power, a retailer of grocery. Caleb Garth, estate agent and failed contractor who lives with his family a little away from the town. There are the patrons of the Green Dragon including Mr. Horrock, the vet and Mr. Bambridge, the horse-dealer.

Even these minor characters have been comprehensively dealt with, for characterization. For instance, George Eliot takes pains and pleasure to sketch the character and conduct of Mr. Bambridge; it is a fine and interesting picture of the man she offers and hence it is so realistic.

The central male character of the novel is a doctor and hence the reader comes to know more about medical practitioners of Middlemarch. Mr. Gambit is low in social standing; he has little education and he made none the worse accoucheur for calling the breathing apparatus 'longs' (lungs). Mr. Toiler and Mr. Wrench are surgeons, apothecaries socially lower than the physician. The former has a good house to live in but the latter has seven children, a small house and a lymphatic wife. His life is marked by misery and poverty. The two physicians are Dr. Sprague and

Dr. Minchim. They could be called 'Doctor' because they were graduates of the university of Oxford or Cambridge where no competent doctors were produced. Dr. Minchim could quote a line from Pope's 'Essay on Man' but never diagnose a disease properly: he would diagnose a cramp as a tumour! How piquant is her satire on quacks!

10.4 MIDDLEMARCH: HISTORICAL NOVEL

Middlemarch has sometimes been called a historical, novel. It is not really historical in the sense in which Scott's *Rob Roy*, Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*, Thackeray's *Henry Esmond* or George Eliot's own *Romola* are historical. It does not portray a historical personality as *Ivanhoe* does, *Richard Comdeleon* or *Woodstock* does or *Oliver Cromwell*, nor are the events portrayed in it of such significance as the French Revolution in Dickens' novel or the attempt of the Young Pretender to regain his throne in Thackeray's novel.

In Book IV of *Middlemarch* the death of George IV in 1830 is referred to. The events warming up to the Reform Bill of 1832 provide the background of the novel which itself came out in parts during 1871-72. In that sense - that is, in the sense in which the events of the story are not events which might have taken place in the very years during which it was written - it is historical. The reader is asked, as it were, to take his Mind back a couple of generations earlier and visualize conditions that would have prevailed in the country then. To that extent, we may say it is historical.

When Vincy gives as his reason for not helping Lydgate his inability, consequent on 'Parliament going to be dissolved and machine-breaking everywhere', a historical touch is added to the story. Mrs. Hawley suspecting Ladislav as an outsider, 'some loose fish from London who will begin with flourishing about the Rights of Man and end with murdering a wench', there is a clear reference to Tom Paine and the loose morals associated with the French Revolution. But these in themselves cannot be said to make *Middlemarch* a historical novel.

The subtitle of the novel, 'A Study of Provincial Life' highlights what the novel is primarily about. It is about life in the provinces as distinguished

Notes

from London, the metropolis. Middlemarch is a name invented by George Eliot and seems to correspond to Coventry, the Midland district, in which she had grown up and which she knows from intimate firsthand experience. Though the events described in the novel are some forty years or two generations behind the actual years during which the novel was written, life in the provinces had not changed during this time as dramatically as it would have if the novel was written, say in 1884. The pace of change was much slower in Victorian times, even more so in pre-Victorian times, than it is after the Second World War all over the world. In the 1830s which is the date of the events in Middlemarch, ("Peter Featherstone, you perceive was dead and buried some months before Lord Grey came into Office") society in England still stressed the importance of hierarchy. There were the three distinct classes — the landed gentry consisting of those who owned land, the middle classes consisting of the learned professions, clergymen, lawyers and the like, and those who had to work with their hands like Caleb Garth. The landowners looked down even a doctor like Lydgate upon. In the provinces, as in our villages even today, land was the important thing. The tenant farmer came between the landed gentry at the top and the artisan and the professionals at the bottom. Clergymen because of their association with the church were held in some regard. Casaubon because of his landed property though trained for the church had all the clerical work done by a curate to whom he gave a small monthly pay for this work, while he could devote himself to his scholarly pursuits. Birth counted for a good deal, but money counted for more. Certainly it was more important than education or culture. Bulstrode the banker counts for more than Lydgate or Farebrother.

Brooke thought of himself as a 'radical' just because he welcomed the Reform of Parliament., but he was very conscious of his class. The men working on his farm, like Dagley, had no illusions about his "liberalism". They were hoping that when "Reform" came along it would do away with all bad property owners, among whom he placed Brooke.

Their distinctions are based upon their possession of wealth and money and income rather than on birth. Anyone can raise himself socially by earning more. They come under a class rather than a rank. The

importance of money is stressed in the novel. Look at the relations between the Vincys and the Garths. Mr. Featherstone marries the sister of Mr. Garth and then of Mr. Vincy - thus Fred Vincy and Mary Garth become intimate in childhood. Garth's father fails in business and the family comes down in class-status in society. Mr. Garth is noted for his honesty of character and straightforwardness; but that does not help him to be esteemed by others in society. If there is no suitable furniture and dinner-table at home, he is not respected at all. Mrs. Vincy was formerly an inn-keeper's daughter only but now she is rich; she feels that she cannot feel easy with Mrs. Garth; she said that Mrs. Garth had to work for her bread; she was a teacher before her marriage! Mr. Farebrother, the clergyman, would call Mrs. Garth a fine lady but used to visit Mrs. Vincy only for her drawing-room and whist and tea!

Practical, undogmatic, kindly Anglicanism represented by Farebrother; and on the other by the vehement, dogmatic, Evangelicalism of Bulstrode and Tyke represented religion on the one hand. For Vincy and Farebrother religion was just decent behaviour. For Bulstrode and Tyke it was a matter of Divine election and grace, some being chosen by God to go to heaven and others doomed by Him to go to hell.

The average Middlemarcher, it may be said without fear of contradiction, as the average provincial or even town-dweller anywhere, did not like to be disturbed in the way of life to which he had been accustomed. He liked people to behave as he expected them to behave, to know their place and keep it. "Enthusiasm" in the 18th century was a term of disapprobation. Casaubon though a "dry" old bag could be understood, but not the dilettante Ladislaw. "Why does not Casaubon use his influence and get him out of the country?" asks one of the elderly women in the novel, and suggests that it should be easy to get a post for him in India!

Both Dorothea and Lydgate are frustrated because Middlemarch simply is not the atmosphere where they can work following their own ideals. Each of them is looked upon as quixotic. Money and position should be one's first and second priorities - and anyone who cannot see this is a fool.

Notes

To understand the part played by class in the European society of those days we must think of the part played by caste in our own set up until almost the other day, Casaubon's aunt Julia, because she dares to marry someone of her own choice not approved of by her relations is simply cut-off without the least compunction. Chettenham who had at one time admired her to the point of wishing to make her his wife, simply because she chooses to marry Ladislaw, disowns even Dorothea. Her own sister is not permitted to visit her for quite some time. All this may seem absurd to us today, but not to the contemporaries of George Eliot. She herself had to suffer for her "daring" thoughts and actions, whether in the matter of going to church with her father or living her own life with Mr. Lewes in London.

From all these, we can no doubt draw valuable information as to what society was like in the England of George Eliot's days, or the days of her childhood in the 1820s and 1830s. But that will not make *Middlemarch* a historical novel in the sense in which *Ivanhoe* and *Romola* are historical. We may however see a resemblance between it and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

10.5 MIDDLEMARCH: SATIRE ON THE MODERN WORLD

Leslie Stephen observes that *Middlemarch* lacks the peculiar charm of other novels and the *Spectator* critics have to say that George Eliot was the most melancholic of authors. The novel as such is not melancholic; it is the content that pours out the tragedy. George Eliot in her plots is trying to express her impressions of life and being a realist, she actually is giving her own views about life in the novel. She hopes for the better or even the people can do better in life.

The novel is a provincial study and is the play and interplay of the characters in a social setting. They not only frame our opinions about them rather have their own opinions about other character which in turn affect our views too. The social circles surrounding the character effect their behaviour and thinking which is mirrored in the themes and the plot of this novel.

The novel presents the character in their stupidity. The characters are all 'enlightened public'. Dorothea is an orphan, a born Theresa struggling under 'dim lights and entangled circumstances' brought up by Mr. Brook who is well read in Wordsworth and Italian art. Dorothea does nothing substantial, though she has lofty ideas, seriousness and is aware of her limits in her circle. She considers Casaubon a 'living Bossuet', a modern Augustine uniting the glories of a doctor and a saint. Casaubon is a failure in his motives and wants to marry to be taken care of in his old age. This is a satire on the modern young women who strive with their noble idea. They marry and fail in their endeavours to be happy. Casaubon has no passion for her, while Dorothea has to live with an old man. Ladislaw flirts with others' wives but loves Dorothea. He is the second husband of Dorothea. Ladislaw becomes a reformer and a journalist with not a bit of morality in thought and action. He is just after money. The stupidity of Dorothea is visible here.

Lydgate and Vincy are another group who fall prey to stupidity and bear the sign of satire on the modern world. Lydgate is ambitious to become a leader in the medical science. Rosamond Vincy in her stupidity and self-centeredness torpedoes him and leads to his failures. This strong man of passion for his vocation had not fallen prey to woman and her desires would have become a promising scientist. Eliot paints Bulstrode with his superstitious beliefs of religion. Being a hypocrite maintains his self-respect by a curious blending of his motives and self-deception. He is afraid of the mistakes committed in past. In the last scene when he is to commit murder, though he does not do so, he abstains from imperiously saving a life. Mary Garth and Fred Vincy also form an unsuitable pair where Mary controls Vincy with her shrewdness. Thus the novel serves the purpose of satirizing the modern world, where man lives to follow impractical ideals without doing the right deeds, thus befooling himself.

10.6 MORAL CONSIDERATIONS IN MIDDLEMARCH

George Eliot is faced with the problem of a plethora of events and ideas. So her novel will not be brief but pretty long for she has to find

Notes

expression for all of them. She works with confidence on the matter she could readily have at her finger-tips. Her book seems to be overflowing with matter. Middlemarch is a novel of conflicting ideas and ideals; characters deserve more to be contrasted than compared. She fuses the two stories of Miss Brooke and Middlemarcher into one. There are many points of similarity between the two stories and similarity in the time and scene elements also. The themes are similar and she fuses them in a flash of insight. The stories of Lydgate and Dorothea are intertwined. Dorothea Brooke is certainly the great achievement of this novel. Her career is but one of the episodes and she is more important than the action of which she is the nominal centre. Too much time is unluckily spent on the 'relatively trivial' question of whether she should marry Ladislaw whose characterization is the only eminent failure in the book. He does not have the concentrated fervour in him chosen by her. That he is a dilettante is never removed from our memory. "Lydgate is the real hero of the story and the 'balanced contrast' of his history and Dorothea's is the novel's finest compositional felicity." The scene in which Lydgate and his miserable little wife appear is one of the finest scenes in English fiction. Nothing is certainly more intelligent. Though characters are many and are products of her creativity, Mr. Bulstrode is the only infelicitous figure.

Dorothea who knows much about the matter calls on her and informs her that Lydgate has had no hand in it and that she had no need to be ashamed of any act, not perpetrated. She finds her in the company of Ladislaw then and considers it indecent to be there any longer; yet she has the hope that Ladislaw will not earnestly love another man's wife, Rosamond. But Rosamond makes love to him, taking advantage of his loneliness and presence. He has merely flirted with her. Soon he says that she is an evil creature and cannot make love to her. He adores Dorothea. Sometime ago Bulstrode gave Lydgate a cheque for a thousand pounds and the object behind it was to keep him silent over the death of Raffles. Lydgate now returns the cheque. Dorothea helped him with the amount so that he could be free and his conscience freer from guilt.

Dorothea desires Rosamond to be happy at home with her husband Lydgate. She has already told her that Lydgate has had nothing to do

with the death of Raffles. Her only desire is to reconcile the wife to the husband and out of sheer goodness of heart, she endeavours. Rosamond realizes Dorothea's extreme goodness coupled with selflessness; she tells the former of the love and affection of Lydgate for Rosamond and both are reunited on a firmer basis now. Rosamond also informs her of the strong feelings of affection of Ladislaw for Dorothea, thus paving the way for their wedding.

Will Ladislaw has not properly understood Dorothea. She loves him ardently and he comes to know how much she cares for him. He who came to say good-bye to her stays behind to love her and wed her. Dorothea informs him that she has £700 and she can wed him and be happy with him. She does not want the property of her dead husband who stipulated the condition that if she married after his demise, she would forfeit his property. Money has no attraction for Dorothea; she being noble expresses her love for Ladislaw and marries him happily. It is very true that she has now dwindled into a housewife and soon will be a mother and disappear into commonalty. She will be an unsung Theresa. Fred has prospered with his hard work under Caleb Garth and marries Mary.

By marrying Ladislaw, Dorothea alienates her brother-in-law Chettam but when she is about to be delivered of a baby, Celia takes the permission from her husband to call on her and assist her at her childbirth. Dorothea has proved a fine housewife; she, an exemplary woman like Theresa with sterling virtues, may die and be buried and never visited by anyone.

Henry James observes that the novel is 'deeply human'. The novelist is real in her attitude to be realistic; she is an idealist. The intellectual result of the story is a fertilizing mixture. The brain- behind her observation accounts for its grand success. Sometimes it has the echoes of Darwin and Huxley.

Check your progress: 2

Q3. Middlemarch brings out the 'inner man'. Elaborate.

Q4. Discuss the Character of Dorothea.

10.7 LET US SUM UP

George Eliot is one of the greatest novelist of not only the 19th century but of the modern world also. She was bound to the Victorian society rather she studied man in all his aspects and that has resulted in the greatness of her works. She was a versatile author. She had a keen observation and studied her society to draw her themes from the real world thus; we find the element of realism and the study of the inner man. We also find the reflections of her life in Middlemarch. She believed in the strength of her characters to mould their destinies but she wished them to follow the righteous path. The greatest contribution of her to the English novel was that of seriousness, gravity, solemnity and loftiness that she imparts to her novels.

10.8 KEYWORDS

- Conflicting – fighting for something.
- Contrast - variation
- Consequent -finally
- Mirrioring -imaging
- Behavior –human nature
- Visualize – to make up images
- flourishing –prosper everywhere
- metropolis –very busy city

10.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q1. Consider critically *Middlemarch* as a provincial study of man and matters.

Q2. *Middlemarch* suffers from a plethora and not paucity of ideas. Comment critically.

Q3. *Middlemarch* is a novel of conflicting ideas and ideals; characters deserve more to be contrasted than compared. Critically discuss.

Q4. Would you consider *Middlemarch* as a historical novel?

Q5. Would you consider Dorothea as an exemplar figure among women or only as a stupid woman committing stupid acts?

10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

Hardy, Barbara. *Middlemarch- Critical Approaches*.

Harvey, W.H. *Introduction to Middlemarch*

Mc Sweeney, *Middlemarch- A study of Provincial life*.

Roberts, Neil. *George Eliot-Her Beliefs and Her Art*

Ashton, Rosemary. *George Eliot: A Life*. London: Penguin Books, 1997.

Hughes, Kathryn. *George Eliot: The Last Victorian*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999.

Karl, Frederick R. *George Eliot, Voice of a Century: A Biography*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1995.

Lindle, Robert. *Novels of George Eliot*.

Bailey, Peter. *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830–1885*(Routledge, 2014).

O'Gorman, Francis, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture* (2010)

Online links

George Eliot Biography,

TheFamousPeople.com. <https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/george-elliott-66.php> November 03, 2016

Citation:

Uglow, Nathan. "Middlemarch". *The Literary Encyclopedia*. First published 01 April 2002

[<https://www.litencyc.com/php/sworks.php?rec=true&UID=3605>, accessed 09 September 2019.]

Cover page picture:

https://books.google.co.in/books?id=v5o6DAAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0

www.victorianweb.org/religion/chesterton.html

everything2.com/title/Oxford+Movement

www.123helpme.com/view.asp?id=23066

Somervell, D. C. *English thought in the nineteenth century* (1929) online

10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. In *Middlemarch* there is humour and a vein of caustic irony which suggests that had George Eliot been less concerned with the moral purpose in human affairs she might have been a fine satirical novelist, anticipation—perhaps even excelling Samuel Butler. But her sense of ridiculous is always being subordinated to the pressing need to point a moral. In the same way, she is compelled to take the stuff of life and shape it rather too obviously towards some moral end.

2. George Eliot was interested not so much in the disintegration of society, the breakdown of structures which seemed as large in mid-Victorian England as in the delineation of character, particularly the inner man. Instead of concentrating her attention on the external appearance and idiosyncrasies of her character, she directed her whole attention to the portrayal of the inner man. Critics agree that '*Middlemarch*' is more philosophical than her other novels. They observe that the novel is influenced by a melancholy vision of human existence which emphasized failure and disillusionment. While the story is noble, highly moral and intellectual, there is no high spirituality in it; there are struggles without a thought of God and that is unnatural.

3. Middlemarch creates an era in the history of fiction since its incidents have been taken from the inner life of men and women and since the action is developed by the direct influence of mind on mind and character on character. The material conditions of the outer world are only subordinated and are treated only as an artist adjunct to present of a mental experience, they are only a background of perfect realistic truth to a profoundly imaginative psychological study.

5. Dorothea is an orphan, a born Theresa struggling under 'dim lights and entangled circumstances' brought up by Mr. Brook who is well read in Wordsworth and Italian art. Dorothea does nothing substantial, though she has lofty ideas, seriousness and is aware of her limits in her circle. She considers Casaubon a 'living Bossuet', a modern Augustine uniting the glories of a doctor and a saint. Casaubon is a failure in his motives and wants to marry to be taken care of in his old age. This is a satire on the modern young women who strive with their noble idea. They marry and fail in their endeavours to be happy. Casaubon has no passion for her, while Dorothea has to live with an old man. Ladislav flirts with others' wives but loves Dorothea. He is the second husband of Dorothea. Dorothea Brooke is certainly the great achievement of this novel. Her career is but one of the episodes and she is more important than the action of which she is the nominal centre. Too much time is unluckily spent on the 'relatively trivial' question of whether she should marry Ladislav whose characterization is the only eminent failure in the book. He does not have the concentrated fervour in him chosen by her. That he is a dilettante is never removed from our memory. "Lydgate is the real hero of the story and the 'balanced contrast' of his history and Dorothea's is the novel's finest compositional felicity."

UNIT-11 HENRY JAMES: LIFE AND WORKS

STRUCTURE

- 11.0 Objective
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Henry James
 - 11.2.1 Life of Henry James
 - 11.2.2 A Bird's Eye View
 - 11.2.3 Works of Henry James
 - 11.2.4 A Bird's Eye View
- 11.3 Henry's James Contribution
- 11.4 Salient Features Henry James's Writings
- 11.5 Henry James Philosophy of Life
- 11.6 Hardy's Realism
- 11.7 Hardy's *Meliorism*
- 11.8 Hardy's Treatment of Nature
- 11.9 Hardy's Imagination
- 11.10 Hardy's Shortcomings
- 11.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 11.12 Keywords
- 11.13 Questions for Review
- 11.14 Suggested Readings and References
- 11.15 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Become familiar with the author
- Know about his personal life and whereabouts
- Delineate his features of writing from his works
- Understand his style; to be able to compare it with other authors
- Outline the influence of the Victorian Age on his thinking and imagination
- Observe how he has influenced the age and other writers.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

American novelist and, as a naturalized English citizen from 1915, a great figure in the transatlantic culture. Henry James, whose mastery of the psychological novel markedly influenced twentieth-century literature, was born in New York City. His father, Henry James, Sr., was an unconventional thinker who had inherited considerable wealth and was a follower of Swedenborgian mysticism, a belief system devoted to the study of philosophy, theology, and spiritualism, and socialized with such eminent writers as Thomas Carlyle, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Washington Irving, and William Makepeace Thackeray. James's older brother, William James, profoundly influenced the emerging science of psychology through his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) and *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). He also distinguished himself as an exponent of a brand of philosophical pragmatism he named "radical empiricism," the idea that beliefs do not work because they are true but are true because they work

11.2 HENRY JAMES

Henry James was a true cosmopolite. He was a citizen of the world and moved freely in and out of drawing rooms in Europe, England, and America. He was perhaps more at home in Europe than he was in America, but the roots of his life belong to the American continent. Thus, with few exceptions, most of his works deal with some type of confrontation between an American and a European.

11.2.1 Life of Henry James

Henry James was born in Manhattan, New York in 1843. His father, Henry James, Sr., had inherited a considerable sum of money and spent his time in leisured pursuit of theology and philosophy. Wishing to protect his sons' minds from any tainting through proper tutoring, and to

Notes

leave them open to encounter he sent them to schools in America, France, Germany and Switzerland, and H. James, the writer 3 to-be, left for Europe in 1869 after a brief period at Harvard Law School. In the strictest feeling of the word, Henry James had no proper instruction. The youthful Henry was a bashful, book-dependent kid who accepted the job of calm onlooker adjacent to his dynamic senior sibling. They were accepted abroad as babies, were educated by mentors and tutors, and spent their preadolescent years in Manhattan. Come back to Geneva, Paris, and London during their teenagers, the James youngsters obtained dialects and an attention to Europe vouchsafed to couple of Americans in their occasions. On the eve of the American Civil War, the James family settled at Newport, Rhode Island, and there, and later in Boston, Henry came to know New England personally.

The universe of Europe left an everlasting impact on youthful Henry James. He was at last to return and make his home in Europe.

At the point when the family came back from Europe, the senior James chose to settle in New England. He picked Cambridge since this was the focal point of American scholarly idea. A considerable lot of the journalists of Cambridge, Boston, and close by Concord, where Emerson and Thoreau lived, were frequently guests in the James family..

When the family returned from Europe, the elder James decided to settle in New England. He chose Cambridge because this was the center of American intellectual thought. Many of the writers of Cambridge, Boston, and nearby Concord, where Emerson and Thoreau lived, were often visitors in the James household.

At the age of 19, he was selected at the Harvard Law School, yet he committed his attention to peruse Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Honoré de Balzac, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. His first story published up namelessly two years after the fact in the *New York Continental Monthly* and his first book surveys in the *North American Review*. At the point when William Dean Howells moved toward becoming manager of *The Atlantic Monthly*, James found in him a companion and coach who distributed him routinely. Between them, James and Howells introduced the period of American "realism".

By his mid-20s James was viewed as one of the most capable writer of short stories in America. Critics hated his inclination to compose of the life of the brain, as opposed to of activity. James traveled to another country for his first grown-up experience with Europe in 1869. His year's meandering in England, France, and Italy set up for a lifetime of movement in those nations. James never wedded. Commonly he was cordial and even gregarious, be that as it may, while he was an observer and affiliate in the public arena, he tended, until late middle age, to be "distant" in his relations with individuals and was mindful so as to dodge "involvement."

Henry James died in February 28, 1916, London, England

11.2.2 A Bird's Eye View

Born	15 April 1843 New York, U.S.
Died	28 February 1916 (aged 72) Chelsea, London, England
Citizenship	American British
Alma mater	Harvard Law School (1863–1916)

11.2.3 Works of Henry James

Henry James, an American novelist of Irish antecedents, “With 22 novels (2 unfinished), 112 tales, 7 plays, to say nothing of his critical and descriptive work – (the New York edition of his novels and tales published between 1907 and 1909 comprises 24 volumes) –became a naturalized British citizen a year before his death, is a formidable literary monument, as W. Morris put it, “the central defect in the mind and art of James is a defect of riches—he is simply too much for us”.(Carmignani)

FIRST PHASE

As a child, James was shy, delicate, and had a difficult time mixing with other boys—his brother, who was much more active, called him a sissy. William James, of course, went on to become a great American philosopher, while Henry became one of the nation's preeminent novelists.

MIDDLE PHASE

By the late 1860's, James had done some reviewing and had sold one work of fiction to the *Atlantic Monthly*. He also went to Europe on his own, to see the continent as an adult. He returned again to Cambridge and New York in the hope of continuing his literary career, but he gradually came to the realization that Europe was more suitable for his writings. Thus, in 1876, when he was in his thirty-third year, James made the momentous decision to take up residence abroad. With the exception of short trips to various parts of the world, he lived the rest of his life in and near London. Until 1915, he retained his American citizenship, but when World War I broke out, he became a naturalized citizen of England in protest over America's failure to enter the war against Germany.

Recognizing the appeal of Europe, given his cosmopolitan upbringing, James made a deliberate effort to discover whether he could live and work in the United States. Two years in Boston, two years in Europe, mainly in Rome, and a winter of unremitting hackwork in New York City convinced him that he could write better and live more cheaply abroad. Thus began his long expatriation—heralded by publication in 1875 of the novel *Roderick Hudson*, the story of an American sculptor's struggle by the banks of the Tiber between his art and his passions; *Transatlantic Sketches*, his first collection of travel writings; and a collection of tales. With these three substantial books, he inaugurated a career that saw about 100 volumes through the press during the next 40 years.

During 1875–76 James lived in Paris, writing literary and topical letters for the *New York Tribune* and working on his novel *The American* (1877), the story of a self-made American millionaire whose guileless and forthright character contrasts with that of the arrogant and cunning

family of French aristocrats whose daughter he unsuccessfully attempts to marry. From Turgenev he received confirmation of his own view that a novelist need not worry about “story” and that, in focusing on character, he would arrive at the life experience of his protagonist.

In small rooms in Bolton Street off Piccadilly, he wrote the major novels of his middle years. In 1878 he achieved international renown with his story of an American flirt in Rome, *Daisy Miller* and further advanced his reputation with *The Europeans* that same year.

James’ reputation was founded on his versatile studies of “*the American girl*.” In a series of witty tales, he pictured the “self-made” young woman, the bold and brash American innocent who insists upon American standards in European society. James ended this first phase of his career by producing his masterpiece, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). *Washington Square* (1881) is James’s understanding of power in personal relations.

In Boston that James met with William Dean Howells, who, as editor of one of America's leading magazines, was able to help James in his early efforts to write and publish. Henry James enrolled briefly in the Harvard Law School but soon withdrew to devote himself to writing. By the late 1860's, James had done some reviewing and had sold one work of fiction to the *Atlantic Monthly*. He also went to Europe on his own, to see the continent as an adult. He returned again to Cambridge and New York in the hope of continuing his literary career, but he gradually came to the realization that Europe was more suitable for his writings. Thus, in 1876, when he was in his thirty-third year, James made the momentous decision to take up residence abroad. With the exception of short trips to various parts of the world, he lived the rest of his life in and near London. Until 1915, he retained his American citizenship, but when World War I broke out, he became a naturalized citizen of England in protest over America's failure to enter the war against Germany.

In the 1880s James wrote two novels dealing with social reformers and revolutionaries, *The Bostonians* (1886) and *The Princess Casamassima* (1886).

The Bostonians remains the fullest and most-rounded American social novel of its time in its study of cranks, faddists, and “do-gooders.” In *The*

Notes

Princess Casamassima James exploited the anarchist violence of the decade and depicted the struggle of a man who toys with revolution and is destroyed by it. These novels were followed by *The Tragic Muse* (1890), in which James projected a study of the London and Paris art studios and the stage, the conflict between art and “the world.” The latter novel raised the curtain on his own “dramatic years,” 1890–95, during which he tried to win success writing for the stage. His dramatization of *The American* in 1891 was a modest success, but an original play, *Guy Domville*, produced in 1895, was a failure, and James was booed at the end of the first performance. Crushed and feeling that he had lost his public, he spent several years seeking to adapt his dramatic experience to his fiction. The result was a complete change in his storytelling methods. In *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Turn of the Screw* and *In the Cage* (1898), and *The Awkward Age* (1899), James began to use the methods of alternating “picture” and dramatic scene, close adherence to a given angle of vision, a withholding of information from the reader, making available to him only that which the characters see. The subjects of this period are the developing consciousness and moral education of children—in reality James’s old international theme of innocence in a corrupting world, transferred to the English setting.

FINAL PHASE

The experiments of this “transition” phase led James to the writing of three grandiose novels at the beginning of the new century, which represent his final—his “major”—phase, as it has been called. In these novels James pointed the way for the 20th-century novel. He had begun as a realist who describes minutely his crowded stage. He ended by leaving his stage comparatively bare, and showing a small group of characters in a tense situation, with a retrospective working out, through multiple angles of vision, of their drama. In addition to these technical devices he resorted to an increasingly allusive prose style, which became dense and charged with symbolic imagery. His late “manner” derived in part from his dictating directly to a typist and in part from his

unremitting search for ways of projecting subjective experience in a flexible prose.

The first of the three novels was *The Ambassadors* (1903), comedy of manners of a middle-aged American who goes to Paris to bring back to a Massachusetts industrial town a wealthy young man who, in the view of his affluent family, has lingered too long abroad. The “ambassador” in the end is captivated by civilized Parisian life. The novel is a study in the growth of perception and awareness in the elderly hero, and it balances the relaxed moral standards of the European continent against the parochial rigidities of New England. The second of this series of novels was *The Wings of the Dove*, published in 1902, before *The Ambassadors*, although written after it. This novel, dealing with a melodramatic subject of great pathos, that of an heiress doomed by illness to die, avoids its cliché subject by focusing upon the characters surrounding the unfortunate young woman. It becomes a powerful study of well-intentioned humans who, with dignity and reason, are at the same time also birds of prey. In its shifting points of view and avoidance of scenes that would end in melodrama, *The Wings of the Dove* demonstrated the mastery with which James could take a tawdry subject and invest it with grandeur. His final novel was *The Golden Bowl* (1904), a study of adultery, with four principal characters. The first part of the story is seen through the eyes of the aristocratic husband and the second through the developing awareness of the wife.

While many of James’s short stories were potboilers written for the current magazines, he achieved high mastery in the ghostly form, notably in *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), and in such remarkable narratives as “The Aspern Papers” (1888) and “The Beast in the Jungle” (1903)—his prophetic picture of dissociated 20th-century man lost in an urban agglomeration. As a critic, James tended to explore the character and personality of writers as revealed in their creations; his essays are a brilliant series of studies, moral portraits, of the most famous novelists of his century, from Balzac to the Edwardian realists. His travel writings, *English Hours* (1905), *Italian Hours* (1909), and *A Little Tour in France* (1884), portray the backgrounds James used for his fictions.

Notes

In his later years, James lived in retirement in an 18th-century house at Rye in Sussex, though on completion of *The Golden Bowl* he revisited the United States in 1904–05. James had lived abroad for 20 years, and in the interval America had become a great industrial and political power. His observation of the land and its people led him to write, on his return to England, a poetic volume of rediscovery and discovery, *The American Scene* (1907), prophetic in its vision of urban doom, spoliation, and pollution of resources and filled with misgivings over the anomalies of a “melting pot” civilization. The materialism of American life deeply troubled James, and on his return to England he set to work to shore up his own writings, and his own career, against this ephemeral world. He devoted three years to rewriting and revising his principal novels and tales for the highly selective “New York Edition,” published in 24 volumes. For this edition James wrote 18 significant prefaces, which contain both reminiscence and exposition of his theories of fiction.

Throwing his moral weight into Britain’s struggle in World War I, James became a British subject in 1915 and received the Order of Merit (O.M.) from King George V.

While he was a dedicated observer of human beings in society, James was a socially distant man who formed few close friendships. He never married and openly claimed to practice celibacy. He died on February 28, 1916, shortly after receiving the English Order of Merit for his dedication to the British cause in World War I (Wiki.).

11.2.4 A Bird’s Eye View

NOVELS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>WATCHANDWARD</i>(1871) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What Maisie Knew</i> (1897)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Roderick Hudson</i> (1875) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Awkward Age</i> (1899)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The American</i> (1877) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Sacred Fount</i> (1901)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Europeans</i> (1878) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Wings of the Dove</i> (1902)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Confidence</i> (1879) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Ambassadors</i> (1903)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Washington Square</i> (1880) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Golden Bowl</i> (1904)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Portrait of a Lady</i> (1881) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Whole Family</i> (collaborative novel with eleven other authors, 1908)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Bostonians</i> (1886) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Outcry</i> (1911)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Princess Casamassima</i> (1886) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Ivory Tower</i> (unfinished, published posthumously 1917)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Reverberator</i> (1888) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Sense of the Past</i> (unfinished, published posthumously 1917)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Tragic Muse</i> (1890) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Other House</i> (1896) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Spoils of Poynton</i> (1897) 	

SHORT STORIES AND NOVELLAS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Tragedy of Error</i> (1864) • <i>The Story of a Year</i> (1865) • <i>A Landscape Painter</i> (1866) • <i>A Day of Days</i> (1866) • <i>My Friend Bingham</i> (1867) • <i>Poor Richard</i> (1867) • <i>The Story of a Masterpiece</i> (1868) • <i>A Most Extraordinary Case</i> (1868) • <i>A Problem</i> (1868) • <i>De Grey: A Romance</i> (1868) • <i>Osborne's Revenge</i> (1868) • <i>The Romance of Certain Old Clothes</i> (1868) • <i>A Light Man</i> (1869) • <i>Gabrielle de Bergerac</i> (1869) • <i>Travelling Companions</i> (1870) • <i>A Passionate Pilgrim</i> (1871) • <i>At Isella</i> (1871) • <i>Master Eustace</i> (1871) • <i>Guest's Confession</i> (1872) • <i>The Madonna of the Future</i> (1873) • <i>The Sweetheart of M. Briseux</i> (1873) • <i>The Last of the Valerii</i> (1874) • <i>Madame de Mauves</i> (1874) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i><u>An International Episode</u></i> (1878) • <i><u>The Pension Beaurepas</u></i> (1879) • <i><u>A Diary of a Man of Fifty</u></i> (1879) • <i><u>A Bundle of Letters</u></i> (1879) • <i><u>The Point of View</u></i> (1882) • <i><u>The Siege of London</u></i> (1883) • <i><u>Impressions of a Cousin</u></i> (1883) • <i><u>Lady Barberina</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>Pandora</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>The Author of Beltraffio</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>Georgina's Reasons</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>A New England Winter</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>The Path of Duty</u></i> (1884) • <i><u>Mrs. Temperly</u></i> (1887) • <i><u>Louisa Pallant</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Aspern Papers</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Liar</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Modern Warning</u></i> (1888, originally published as <i>The Two Countries</i>) • <i><u>A London Life</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Patagonia</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Lesson of the Master</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Solution</u></i> (1888) • <i><u>The Pupil</u></i> (1891) • <i><u>Brooksmith</u></i> (1891) • <i><u>The Marriages</u></i> (1891) • <i><u>The Chaperon</u></i> (1891) • <i><u>Sir Edmund Orme</u></i> (1891) • <i><u>Nona Vincent</u></i> (1892) • <i><u>The Real Thing</u></i> (1892) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Altar of the Dead</i> (1895) • <i>The Figure in the Carpet</i> (1896) • <i>The Way It Came</i> (1896, also published as <i>The Friends of the Friends</i>) • <i>The Turn of the Screw</i> (1898) • <i>Covering End</i> (1898) • <i>In the Cage</i> (1898) • <i>John Delavoy</i> (1898) • <i>The Given Case</i> (1898) • <i>Europe</i> (1899) • <i>The Great Condition</i> (1899) • <i>The Real Right Thing</i> (1899) • <i>Paste</i> (1899) • <i>The Great Good Place</i> (1900) • <i>Maud-Evelyn</i> (1900) • <i>Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie</i> (1900) • <i>The Tree of Knowledge</i> (1900) • <i>The Abasement of the Northmores</i> (1900) • <i>The Third Person</i> (1900) • <i>The Special Type</i> (1900) • <i>The Tone of Time</i> (1900) • <i>Broken Wings</i> (1900) • <i>The Two Faces</i> (1900) • <i>Mrs. Medwin</i> (1901) • <i>The Beldonald Holbein</i> (1901) • <i>The Story in It</i> (1902) • <i>Flickerbridge</i> (1902) • <i>The Birthplace</i> (1903) • <i>The Beast in the Jungle</i> (1903) • <i>The Papers</i> (1903) • <i>Fordham Castle</i> (1904)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adina</i> (1874) • <i>Professor Fargo</i> (1874) • <i>Eugene Pickering</i> (1874) • <i>Benvolio</i> (1875) • <i>Crawford's Consistency</i> (1876) • <i>The Ghostly Rental</i> (1876) • <i>Four Meetings</i> (1877) • <i>Rose-Agathe</i> (1878, as <i>Théodolinde</i>) • <i>Daisy Miller</i> (1878) • <i>Longstaff's Marriage</i> (1878) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u><i>The Private Life</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>Lord Beaupré</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>The Visits</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>Sir Dominick Ferrand</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>Greville Fane</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>Collaboration</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>Owen Wingrave</i> (1892)</u> • <u><i>The Death of the Lion</i> (1894)</u> • <u><i>The Coxon Fund</i> (1894)</u> • <u><i>The Next Time</i> (1895)</u> • <u><i>Glasses</i> (1896)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Julia Bride</i> (1908) • <i>The Jolly Corner</i> (1908) • <i>The Velvet Glove</i> (1909) • <i>Mora Montravers</i> (1909) • <i>Crapy Cornelia</i> (1909) • <i>The Bench of Desolation</i> (1909) • <i>A Round of Visits</i> (1910)
<p>OTHER WORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transatlantic Sketches</i> (1875) • <i>French Poets and Novelists</i> (1878) • <i>Hawthorne</i> (1879) • <i>Portraits of Places</i> (1883) • <i>A Little Tour in France</i> (1884) • <i>Partial Portraits</i> (1888) • <i>Essays in London and Elsewhere</i> (1893) • <i>Picture and Text</i> (1893) • <i>Terminations</i> (1893) • <i>Theatricals</i> (1894) • <i>Theatricals: Second Series</i> (1895) • <i>Guy Domville</i> (1895) • <i>The Soft Side</i> (1900) • <i>William Wetmore Story and His Friends</i> (1903) • <i>The Better Sort</i> (1903) • • <i>English Hours</i> (1905) • <i>The Question of our Speech; The Lesson of Balzac. Two Lectures</i> (1905) • <i>The American Scene</i> (1907) • <i>Views and Reviews</i> (1908) • <i>New York Edition</i> (1907–1909), "definitive" edition of James's fiction, selected and revised by James. • <i>Italian Hours</i> (1909) • <i>A Small Boy and Others</i> (1913) • <i>Notes on Novelists</i> (1914) • <i>Notes of a Son and Brother</i> (1914) • <i>Within the Rim</i> (1918) • <i>Travelling Companions</i> (1919) • <i>Notebooks</i> (various, published posthumously) • <i>The Middle Years</i> (unfinished, published posthumously 1917) • <i>A Most Unholy Trade</i> (1925, published posthumously) • <i>The Art of the Novel : Critical Prefaces</i> (1934) 		

Notes

James composed plays, starting with one-act plays composed for periodicals in 1869 and 1871 and a sensation of his well-known novella *Daisy Miller* in 1882. From 1890 to 1892, having gotten an estate that liberated him from magazine distribution, he tried to prevail on the London arrange, composing about six plays of which just one, a sensation of his novel *The American*, was delivered. This play was performed for quite a long while by a visiting repertory organization and had a decent kept running in London, yet did not gain especially cash for James. His different plays composed right now were not created.

In 1893, notwithstanding, he reacted to a solicitation from entertainer administrator George Alexander for a genuine play for the opening of his remodeled St. James' Theater, and composed a long dramatization, *Guy Domville*, which Alexander created. There was an uproarious turmoil on the premiere night, 5 January 1895, with murmuring from the exhibition when James took his bow after the last blind, and the creator was vexed. The play got respectably great surveys and had an unobtrusive kept running of about a month prior being taken off to clear a path for Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which Alexander thought would have better prospects for the coming season.

After the anxieties and disillusionment of these endeavors James demanded that he would compose no more for the theater, yet inside weeks had consented to compose a drapery raiser for Ellen Terry. This turned into the one-demonstration "Summersoft", which he later changed into a short story, "Covering End", and after that ventured into a full-length play, *The High Bid*, which had a concise kept running in London in 1907, when James endeavored to compose for the stage. He composed three new plays, two of which were underway when the demise of Edward VII on 6 May 1910 led to theaters' shutdown. Debilitated by bombing wellbeing and the worries of showy work, James did not recharge his endeavors in the theater, yet reused his plays as fruitful books. *The Outcry* was a blockbuster in the United States when it was distributed in 1911. During the years 1890–1893 when he was most drawn in with the theater, James composed a decent arrangement of dramatic analysis and helped Elizabeth Robins and others in interpreting and delivering Henrik Ibsen without precedent for London.

NON-FICTION:

James was one of the more significant artistic critic in the history of the novel. In his great paper *The Art of Fiction* (1884), he contended against unbending medicines on the author's decision of subject and strategy for treatment. He kept up that the most stretched out conceivable opportunity in substance and approach would help guarantee story fiction's proceeded with imperativeness. James composed numerous significant basic articles on different authors; run of the mill is his book-length investigation of Nathaniel Hawthorne, which has been the subject of basic discussion. Richard Brodhead has proposed that the examination was meaningful of James' battle with Hawthorne's impact, and comprised a push to put the senior author "at a disadvantage." Gordon Fraser, in the mean time, has recommended that the investigation was a piece of an increasingly business exertion by James to acquaint himself with British readers as Hawthorne's regular successor.

At the point when James gathered the *New York Edition* of his fiction in his last years, he composed a progression of introductions that exposed his own work to looking, incidentally cruel analysis.

James composed *The Noble School of Fiction* for *The Nation's* first issue in 1865. He composed, on the whole, more than 200 articles and book, workmanship, and theater surveys for the magazine.

For a large portion of his life, James harbored desire for progress as a dramatist. He changed over his novel *The American* into a play that delighted in humble returns in the mid-1890s. In all he expounded on twelve plays, a large portion of which went unproduced. His outfit show *Guy Domville* flopped appallingly on its premiere night in 1895. James at that point to a great extent surrendered his endeavors to vanquish the stage and came back to his fiction. In his *Notebooks* he kept up that his showy analysis profited his books and stories by helping him sensationalize his characters' contemplations and feelings. James delivered a little however profitable measure of dramatic analysis, including keen thanks of Henrik Ibsen.

With his wide-extending creative interests, James often composed on the visual expressions. His most profitable commitment was his ideal

Notes

appraisal of individual ostracize John Singer Sargent, a painter whose basic status has improved extraordinarily in late decades. James likewise composed some of the time beguiling, once in a while agonizing articles about different spots he visited and lived in. His most popular books of movement composing incorporate *Italian Hours* (a case of the enchanting methodology) and *The American Scene* (most certainly on the agonizing side).

James was one of the incredible letter-authors of any time. In excess of ten thousand of his own letters are surviving, and more than 3,000 have been distributed in an enormous number of accumulations. A total version of James' letters started production in 2006, altered by Pierre Walker and Greg Zacharias. Starting at 2014, eight volumes have been distributed, covering the period from 1855 to 1880. The letters go from the "unimportant twaddle of benevolence's to genuine talks of aesthetic, social and individual issues.

Extremely late in life James started a progression of self-portraying works: *A Small Boy and Others*, *Notes of a Son and Brother*, and the incomplete *The Middle Years*. These books depict the improvement of an exemplary spectator who was energetically inspired by masterful creation however was to some degree hesitant about taking an interest completely in the life around him.

11.3 HENRY'S JAMES CONTRIBUTION

Henry James's career was one of the longest and most productive—and most influential—in American letters. A master of prose fiction from the first, he practiced it as a fertile innovator, enlarged the form, and placed upon it the stamp of a highly individual method and style. He wrote for 51 years—20 novels, 112 tales, 12 plays, several volumes of travel and criticism, and a great deal of literary journalism. He recognized and helped to fashion the myth of the American abroad and incorporated this myth in the “international novel,” of which he was the acknowledged master. His fundamental theme was that of an innocent, exuberant, and democratic America confronting the worldly wisdom and corruption of Europe's older, aristocratic culture. In both his light comedies and his

tragedies, James's sense of the human scene was sure and vivid, and, in spite of the mannerisms of his later style, he was one of the great prose writers and stylists of his century.

Throughout his career, James earned criticism for the slow pacing and uneventful plotting of his novels, as well as for his elliptical technique, James was the first American qualified to develop the theme of the American in Europe. By the time he made his decision to settle in Europe, he had made several trips there and had lived and attended school in several parts of Europe. Thus, the subject matter of most of James' works is concerned with an American of some degree of innocence meeting or becoming involved with some European of experience.

11.4 SALIENT FEATURES HENRY JAMES'S WRITINGS

THEMES:

James' life and background were ideally suited for the development of his artistic temperament. Even though he was not extremely wealthy, he did have sufficient independent means to allow him to live a leisured life. His father's house provided all the intellectual stimulation he needed. The visitors were the most prominent artists of the day, and James was able to follow the latest literary trends. In his travels, he moved in the best society of two continents and came into contact with a large variety of ideas.

With such a life, it is natural that James' novels are concerned with a society of people who are interested in subtle ideas and subtle refinements. There are no really poor people in his novels. He wrote about people who had enough money to allow them to develop and cultivate their higher natures. His novels develop with a deliberate slowness and conscientious refinement. Many critics and readers resent the deliberate withholding of information and the slow development found in the Jamesian novel, but James' life was lived with a high degree of leisure and refinement. And finally, James was the first American

Notes

qualified to develop the theme of the American in Europe. By the time he made his decision to settle in Europe, he had made several trips there and had lived and attended school in several parts of Europe. James contrasts the active life of the American with the mannered life of the European aristocracy. Embodied in this contrast is the moral theme in which the moral innocence of the American is contrasted with the knowledge and experience (and evil) of the European.

Thus, the subject matter of most of James' works is concerned with an American of some degree of innocence meeting or becoming involved with some European of experience. The clash with the corruption and wisdom of the Old in the modern world are exemplified in the works as *Daisy Miller* (1879), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), and *The Ambassadors* (1903).

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS:

Henry James as a novelist had interest in the working of the inner self of the man. He worked on both, realism and modernism and sought a midway between the two. In his novels, has the themes from the real life worked out by the implementation of the Modernists technique. He used the *stream-of-consciousness* narration to explore the psychology of his characters; to find out the internal conflicts which inspire action in the external world, and vice-versa. William James, Henry's brother, the founder of pragmatism, first used the term stream of consciousness. However, he did not use it to describe the strategy used in novels to develop the plot but the workings of the mind.

William Harmon and C. Hugh Holman ed., *Of Handbook of Literature* defined *stream of consciousness* as a that takes as its subject, 'the flow of the stream of consciousness of one or more of its characters.' Marcel Proust along with Henry James is the forerunner of this technique. Marcel Proust used this in *Remembrance of Things Past*. Henry James created a "central consciousness" or a governing intelligence, a character that the novelist/reader would stay with throughout a story; and whose mind would thus be limited to in the perception of the action of the novel by the novelist and the reader, respectively. The theme of these novels are the inner thoughts and emotions of the character. Overt action was

minimal. To show the inner being of the character it was necessary to frame long passages, one such is when Isabel considers her choice in front of the fireside.

The Victorian era had seen the shift in the believes and faiths of man. Thus a shift in importance to the inner lives of characters during the late Victorian period and in the modern period was but obvious. A growing shift away from a belief in an independent, verifiable external reality was need of the day. The man had begun to think instead of depending on others to think for them. The breakdown of religious faith after Darwin and in certain forms of scientific certainty after Heisenberg, Einstein, et al. also paralleled these gradual shifts of emphasis in the arts.

Quite a few novels used *interior monologue* or the *free indirect style* in their rendition of a central character's perceptions of the world and inner thoughts in response.

HENRY JAMES' CHARACTERIZATION:

James' novels are concerned with a society of people who are interested in subtle ideas and subtle refinements. There are no really poor people in his novels. He wrote about people who had enough money to allow them to develop and cultivate their higher natures. His novels develop with a deliberate slowness and conscientious refinement.

In spite of his decision to live abroad, James remained essentially American in his sympathies. His central characters are always Americans along with of his most unpleasant characters. He makes his American Character to change, mature, and achieve a touch of magnitude.

He imagines a certain state of affairs, place his characters in it and allows the interaction to take place. The interaction may be of the inner world of the character or of the outer world in the company of other characters. This allows James to understand the mode of action of the characters when they confront a new situation. This strategy helps James to relax and let the characters move to a suitable end, i.e. allows them to choose an end. James said, he had- no particular ending in mind when he began a novel. Thus, there is more freedom both for James and for the characters to move about and grow within the framework. James gets an

Notes

opportunity of "getting to know" his character by observing him in a series of scenes.

James works on the themes of contrast which can be listed as the following:

The American vs. The European

innocence vs. knowledge or experience

utility vs. form and ceremony

spontaneity vs. ritual

sincerity vs. urbanity

action vs. inaction

nature vs. art

natural vs. artificial

honesty vs. evil

The above list could be extended to include other virtues or qualities, but this list, or even half this list, will suffice to demonstrate James' theme or idea in the use of this American-European contrast.

The reader ought to additionally bear in mind that James uses these concepts with a good deal of flexibility. It does not always hold that every European will have exactly these qualities or that every American will. In fact, some of the more admirable characters are indeed Europeans who possess many of these qualities and in turn lack others. Because a European may possess good manners, information, and skill does not essentially mean that he is artificial and evil. And quite the contrary, many Americans come with natural spontaneity and are not necessarily honest and admirable. For example, Lord Warburton possesses urbanity and adheres to forms, ceremonies, and rituals, but he is nevertheless an admirable character. On the other hand, Henrietta Stackpole, who possesses a great amount of spontaneity, is at times rather overbearing and indiscreet. Furthermore, the American is a person of action. The Europeans are bred to think work as vulgar; they are people of inaction. Osmond has apparently never performed any useful task. He remains inactive while the American, such as Henrietta, can enter into any type of pursuit. The Americans are endowed with a sense of spontaneousness, honesty, which sets them to natural actions and they define nature itself. On the contrary, the Europeans place

stress on category, observance, rite, and sophistication and looks to communicate the unreal. They go for art as an entity opposing nature.

In conclusion, these qualities lead to the eventual hostility of honesty versus evil. When those of the European's replace all of the American's qualities, form and ritual become more important than honesty. Thus, Osmond will insist upon Isabel's putting up the front of a happy marriage even though they detest each other. In other words, the form of the marriage must be maintained. James is not emphasizing that one should have all of one tendency and none of the other. The ideal person is the one who can retain all of the American's innocence and honesty, and yet gain the European's experience and knowledge. Lord Warburton is then great because he has the knowledge and experience; he has the form and ceremony and ritual. But he is not artificial, for he reacts to things with sincerity and naturalness. Isabel is great because she has retained all of her American qualities, but has learned a great deal about form and ritual and urbanity, and has also gained a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience without losing her native virtues.

HIS NARRATION AND STYLE

CIRCULAR METHOD:

In a perfect ideal creative work, all lines must point toward the thing that supremely matters, but in reality, this seldom happens as the writer is subject to thinking and imagination which divert his attention and he is forced to subdue to these inner forces of his unconscious and sub-conscious. Thus, these lines do not follow a straight course. And it is also not the way James structures his novels. As a rule, everything in the novel is aimed at the central situation of the plot, but he moves in a haphazard manner toward the center by exploring all the related matters with in the story. That is to say, the construction of the plot is a sequence of other circles moving around the focal point. Within the framework, each circle is an incident that is a part of the final center, but this incident is just a short instance that highlights only a part of the whole. Each circle being an incident involves the actions and opinion of different

Notes

characters. Thus different actions and different opinions meet at the end at the final centre to bring out a suitable solution that initiated the development of the plot. For instance, one character observes something, forms his opinion and sets out to discuss it with other characters and further they on their meet many other characters to discuss their views on the same incident. By the end of the diverse discussions, and opinions are assessed and investigated to bring out the entire of views to find out the psychological implications inherent in the particular situation under discussion. This incident and its discussion forms one circle. Likewise the sequence of discussions carry on till the end when the final investigation is done by the author through the mouth of one of the characters. Thus by the end of the novel, James has explored and examined every moral, ethical, and psychological aspect of the central situation, and the reader gets an insight views of many people on the same topic.

Consequently, the frameworks of James' novels are circular in approach to the central theme, but every circle in some way illuminates the thing that *supremely matters*. Every incident in its way gives information about the characters and their psychological bent of mind and also their feelings and emotions towards other characters or situation in the novel. There is nothing unnecessary or irrelevant in the plot.

ELLIPTICAL TECHNIQUE:

Throughout his career, James earned criticism for the slow pacing and uneventful plotting of his novels, as well as for his *elliptical technique*, in which many of the important scenes are not narrated, but only implied by later scenes. For many of the novel's most important scenes, James utilizes an elliptical technique, which means literally that he simply does not narrate them. Instead, many of the most crucial moments of the novel are skipped over, and the reader is left to infer that they have occurred based on later evidence and their mention in peripheral conversation. Moments which are eluded from the novel include Osmond's proposal to Isabel, their wedding, and Isabel's decision to return to Rome after traveling to England for Ralph's funeral. In this way, James tends to skip over the moments in which Isabel chooses to sacrifice her freedom for

Gilbert Osmond; this helps to create the sense that Osmond is a sinister figure, as though, in choosing to be with him, Isabel is placing herself beyond the reach of the reader.

As a stylist James earned consistent admiration; he is often considered to be a "writer's writer," and his prose is remarkable for its elegance of balance, clarity, and precision.

Check Your Progress-1

Q1. What is the theme of contrast applied by Henry James' in his novels?

Q2. Outline the Circular Method used by James in his novels.

11.5 HENRY JAMES PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Henry James was a key transitional figure between literary modernism and realism. James was interested in human behaviour and the inner workings of the mind. In his novels, he employed Modernist techniques such as stream-of-consciousness narration to explore the psychology of his characters, focusing in particular on the effect of external events on individual consciousness.

11.6 HENRY JAMES' THEORY OF NOVEL

Henry James has had a great influence on the advancement of the novel. He was one of the first to see it as a creative art. To him the novel was principally a fine art to be judged exclusively by masterful standards, concerned, not with good reason, however with the target and unbiased

Notes

presentation of the truth of life. In this image, there was the wrong spot for the lavishness of sentiment or the mutilations of nostalgia. He was minimal worried about outer occasions and on the whole with the point by point and expound investigation of the subtlest shades of human.

Some portion of this impact has experienced the kind of authenticity that he utilizes. Then again, the most continuous analysis against James has been that he isn't sensible enough. Numerous pundits have protested that James doesn't expound on life, that his books are loaded up with individuals whom one could never meet in this world. One pundit (H. L. Mencken) recommended that James required a decent whiff of the Chicago stockyards to get a little life into his books. Others have recommended that James' reality is excessively restricted and inadequate to warrant characterization as a practical delineation of life.

As a matter of fact, James' authenticity is of a unique sort. By the early definitions, James is not a pragmatist. The early definitions expressed that the author ought to precisely portray life, and the novel should "hold up a mirror to life"; at the end of the day, the early pragmatist should make a practically logical chronicle of life.

In any case, James was not worried about all parts of life. There is nothing of the appalling, the profane, the normal, or the explicit in James. He was not worried about destitution or with the working class who needed to battle professionally. Rather, he was keen on delineating a class of individuals who could bear to give themselves to the refinements of life.

When we allude to James' authenticity, we mean James' constancy to his very own material. To best value his books and his authenticity, we should go into James' unique world. It is just as we climbed a stepping stool and landed at a different universe. When we have landed at this extraordinary world and once we acknowledge it, at that point we see that James is exceptionally practical. That is, as far as his reality, he never damages his character's pith. Hence, James' authenticity, in the most genuine sense, implies being devoted to his characters. At the end of the day, characters from different books frequently get things done or submit acts that don't appear to mix in with their basic nature. In any

case, the demonstrations of the Jamesian character are constantly justifiable regarding that character's actual nature.

James clarified his own authenticity as far as its resistance to sentimentalism. For James the reasonable speaks to those things which, eventually, somehow, everybody will experience. Yet, the sentimental represents those things which, with every one of the endeavors and all the riches and offices of the world, we can never know straightforwardly. In this manner, it is possible that one can encounter very similar things that the characters are encountering in a James epic; however one can never really experience the occasions described in the sentimental novel. Whenever James, in this manner, makes a particular kind of character from the get-go in the novel, this character will act in a steady way all through the whole book. This is being practical. The character will never do whatever is not legitimate and worthy to his sensible nature. In later years, James, recorded as a hard copy about authenticity, kept up that he was progressively intrigued by a reliable version of a character in some random circumstance than in delineating all parts of life. In this way, when he has once drawn Isabel Archer's character in one circumstance, the reader can foresee how she will act in some other given circumstance. Her activities are not unexplainable. We can consistently see every last bit of her activities. Along these lines, James' authenticity could never enable the characters to perform activities which would be conflicting with their actual natures.

11.7. HENRY JAMES' TECHNIQUES

Practically the majority of James' plots are modeled on the circular plan and the elliptical methods. There must be a *centre* - something toward which every one of the lines points and which "supremely matters." This is basically James' own clarification of his structure. What "supremely matters" is the focal thought of the novel or that thought around which the novel capacities. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, what "supremely matters" is for Isabel Archer to have the chance to grow uninhibitedly to the furthest reaches of her own ability. She is viewed as an individual who

Notes

has incredible potential, however she does not have that opportunity which would enable her to build up her own intrinsic characteristics. In this way, practically the majority of the scenes and activity of the novel are intended to prevent or to bring to culmination this possibility for Isabel to accomplish her full limit.

James' imaginative procedure is additionally imperative to understanding the structure of his works. He starts his books with a circumstance and a character. He throws a specific circumstance, and after that he would put his characters in it. James would at that point, as a result, kick back and essentially see what might happen when a character was gone up against with this new circumstance. Regularly, James stated, he had no specific completion as a primary concern when he started a novel. Rather, he would give the character and circumstance a chance to decide the consummation. This permitted him more opportunity, and permitted him the chance of "becoming more acquainted with" his character by watching him in a progression of scenes.

HENRY JAMES' USE OF POINT-OF-VIEW

One of James' commitments to the craft of fiction is in his utilization Point-of-View. This implies the point from which the story is told. For instance, past to James' tale, a great part of the fiction of the day was being composed from the writer's perspective, that is, the writer was recounting to the story and he was guiding the reader's reaction to the story. A great part of the fiction of the nineteenth century had the creator as the storyteller, and the creator would make scenes in which certain characters would be included, yet every scene would not really have similar characters in them.

James' fiction contrasts in his treatment of Point-of View. He was keen on setting up a focal individual about whom the story rotated. As a rule, the reader would need to see all the activity of the story through this present character's eyes. This focal character was called now and again the "central intelligence" and on occasion the "sentient character." Thus in James' fiction, we have the focal character of the novel, and it is just as the focal character were recounting to the story since we see or catch

wind of all occasions through him. The readers respond to specific occasions as this central character would respond to them.

Each scene in the novel, in this way, will be a scene which uncovers something about the primary character, and normally he is available in each scene. As the focal insight, his reasonableness is the prevailing part of the novel. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, Isabel Archer is, obviously, the central character. Each scene is restricted to demonstrating her associated with some sort of circumstance, and each scene limits itself to the interests of this focal character.

USE OF THE FORESHADOWING AND CONTRAST

James is a very careful artist who uses rather often and freely the technique of foreshadowing a later action. This means that he has given hints in the early parts of the novel about some important thing that is going to happen later in the story. Thus, a touch of realism is added to the novel because so many things have foreshadowed the main action that the reader should not be surprised to discover the action at the end.

11.8 JAMES' PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

James' use of psychology in *Portrait of a Lady* enables him to unite his thematic exploration with his character portrayal. In short, the novel is an exploration of the conflict between individualism and social convention; He was a successful writer at an early age. William Dean Howells, the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, was his friend and he became one of the most qualified writers in America. In novels such as *The American*, *The Europeans*, and *Daisy Miller*, James developed and theorized his view on psychological realism, taking as his primary subject the social maneuverings of the upper classes, particularly the situation of Americans living in Europe. For James, America was an emblem of hopeful and innocence, while Europe was of decadence and social superiority.

In *Portrait of a Lady* the psychological treatment enables him to unite his thematic exploration with his character portrayal. In short, the novel is an exploration of the conflict between individualism and social convention.

Notes

He ensures that Isabel has a conscious commitment to individualism, but an unconscious desire for the comfort, safety, and stability of social custom. Isabel's upbringing was haphazard, and her father often left her have her freedom; this gave her a sense of intellectual independence, but this freedom she saw was more than enough; made her long for a more secure environment. Her imagination is nourished by her self-instructions in her grandmother's library. She is attracted to Gilbert Osmond for the stability and direction his life seems to offer her, and she overlooks his obvious flaws—his arrogance, his narcissism, and his cruelty and creates her own pleasant picture of him. In this way, Isabel allows her need for social convention to overcome her commitment to independence, and she becomes the target of her own judgment and her marriage to Osmond becomes the tragic turning point in her life.

11.9 HENRY JAMES'S IMAGINATION

Henry James had travelled and thus had occupied a lot of material for his novels through his direct observation and involvement in the life of the people in America and in England. His interactions with people in different and circumstances allow him to create new characters and new plots for his novels.

11.10 HENRY JAMES'S SHORTCOMINGS

Throughout his career, James earned criticism for the slow pacing and uneventful plotting of his novels, as well as for his elliptical technique

Check Your Progress-2

Q3. Define Henry James' *elliptical technique*.

Q4. Why does Henry James use 'Foreshadowing and Contrast?'

11.11 LET US SUM UP

Henry James' profession was one of the longest and most beneficial—and most powerful—in American letters. An ace of writing fiction from the main, he rehearsed it as a ripe trailblazer, extended the structure, and put upon it the stamp of an exceptionally singular technique and style. He composed for a long time—20 books, 112 stories, 12 plays, a few volumes of movement and analysis, and a lot of scholarly news coverage. He perceived and designed the legend of the American abroad and fused this fantasy in the "universal novel," of which he was the recognized ace. His basic topic was that of an honest, extravagant, and just America going up against the common knowledge and debasement of Europe's more seasoned, blue-blooded culture. In the two his light comedies and his catastrophes, James' feeling of the human scene was certain and distinctive, and, notwithstanding the characteristics of his later style, he was one of the extraordinary composition scholars and beauticians of his century.

James' open stayed restricted during his lifetime, in any case, after a recovery of enthusiasm for his work during the 1940s and '50s, he arrived at a consistently enlarging group of spectators. His works were deciphered in numerous nations, and he was perceived in the late twentieth century as one of the subtlest experts who at any point rehearsed the specialty of the novel. His rendering of the internal existence of his characters made him a trailblazer of the "continuous flow" development in the twentieth century.

11.12 KEYWORDS

- central consciousness

Notes

- Stream of consciousness
- Foreshadowing and contrast
- Central intelligence
- supremely matters
- American-European contrast
- Elliptical technique

11.13 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Q1. Critically analyze the techniques employed by Henry James in his novel.
- Q2. Outline the Salient features of Henry James as a novelist.
- Q3. Describe the elliptical technique Henry James often uses in his narration.
- Q4. What themes does Henry James work upon in his literary works?
- Q5. What is James' Theory of Novel? Discuss.

11.14 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. A Henry James Encyclopedia by Robert L. Gale (1989).
2. A Henry James Chronology by Edgar F. Harden (2005).
3. The Daily Henry James: A Year of Quotes from the Work of the Master. Edited by Michael Gorra (2016).
4. Henry James: A Life by Leon Edel (1985)
5. Henry James: The Young Master by Sheldon M. Novick (1996)
6. Henry James: The Mature Master by Sheldon M. Novick (2007)
7. Henry James: The Imagination of Genius by Fred Kalpan (1992)

Online sources:

Roberts, James R. *CliffsNotes on The Portrait of a Lady*. 06 Sep 2019
</literature/p/the-portrait-of-a-lady/book-summary>.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-James-American-writer/Legacy>

Paul Carmignani: The Portrait of a Lady, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/ce1-01756490/document>

11.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Henry James was the first novelist to write on the theme of the American versus the European with any degree of success. Almost all of his major novels may be approached as a study of the social theme of the American in Europe, in which James contrasts the active life of the American with the mannered life of the European aristocracy. Embodied in this contrast is the moral theme in which the moral innocence of the American is contrasted with the knowledge and experience (and evil) of the European.

James was the first American qualified to develop the theme of the American in Europe. By the time he made his decision to settle in Europe, he had made several trips there and had lived and attended school in several parts of Europe. Thus, the subject matter of most of James' works is concerned with an American of some degree of innocence meeting or becoming involved with some European of experience.

In a perfect ideal creative work, all lines must point toward the thing that *supremely matters*, but in reality, this seldom happens as the writer is subject to thinking and imagination which divert his attention and he is forced to subdue to these inner forces of his unconscious and subconscious. Thus, these lines do not follow a straight course. And it is also not the way James structures his novels. As a rule, everything in the novel is aimed at the central situation of the plot, but he moves in a haphazard manner toward the center by exploring all the related matters within the story. That is to say, the construction of the plot is a sequence of other circles moving around the focal point. Within the framework, each circle is an incident that is a part of the final center, but this incident is just a short instance that highlights only a part of the whole. Each circle being an incident involves the actions and opinion of different characters. Thus different actions and different opinions meet at the end

Notes

at the final centre to bring out a suitable solution that initiated the development of the plot.

In his *elliptical technique*, many of the important scenes are not narrated, but only implied by later scenes. For many of the novel's most important scenes, James utilizes an elliptical technique, which means literally that he simply does not narrate them. Instead, many of the most crucial moments of the novel are skipped over, and the reader is left to infer that they have occurred based on later evidence and their mention in peripheral conversation.

1. James is a very careful artist who uses rather often and freely the technique of foreshadowing a later action. This means that he has given hints in the early parts of the novel about some important thing that is going to happen later in the story. Thus, a touch of realism is added to the novel because so many things have foreshadowed the main action that the reader should not be surprised to discover the action at the end.

UNIT-12 HENRY JAMES' THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Critical Study of *The Portrait of a Lady*
- 12.3 The Portrait of a Lady - A Study of Realism
- 12.4 The Portrait of a Lady - As a Historical Novel
- 12.5 The Portrait of a Lady -As a Satire on the Modern World
- 12.6 The Portrait of a Lady- Moral Considerations
- 12.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 12.8 Keywords
- 12.9 Questions for Review
- 12.10 Suggested Readings and References
- 12.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to: Critically analyze Henry James' *The Portrait of a Lady* Understand the views of the novelist about the society Delineate the salient features of the author as a novelist Learn about the varied themes worked upon by James Observe the use of various techniques of narration used in the novel

12.1 INTRODUCTION

First written during the 1880s and widely overhauled in 1908, *The Portrait of a Lady* is frequently viewed as James' most prominent accomplishment. In it, he investigated a numbers of his most trademark topics, including the contention between American individualism and European social custom and the condition of Americans in Europe. It likewise incorporates a large numbers of his most essential characters, including the lady of the novel's title, Isabel Archer, the unstoppable Mrs. Touchett, the savvy and amusing Ralph Touchett, the quick talking

Notes

Henrietta Stackpole, and the evil reprobates, Gilbert Osmond and Madame Merle.

Aside from the use of Social Contrasts James also used contrast in many other ways. There are many people surrounding Isabel. The contrast between Henrietta Stackpole and Madame Merle enables us to see how Isabel can attract different people to her. Through this contrast, we come to believe that Isabel has expansive qualities which allow her to react to varying types of people. Thus such differing people as Lord Warburton, Osmond, and Caspar Goodwood all find themselves in love with Isabel. This fact also attests to Isabel's charm and personality.

12.2 CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

As far as *The Portrait of a Lady* is concerned, the theme of the international situation is embodied in the confrontation between Isabel Archer (and Henrietta Stackpole) and Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond who represent the two countries of James's imagination : America, the boring paradise, and Europe, seductive, sensual, an enchanting hell. Isabel's fate illustrates “the disabling effects upon the American mind of the simplicities and freedoms of the American life, and their effect in particular of placing Americans at a severe disadvantage in their intercourse with the English and the Europeans” (The Wings of the Dove). After those necessary preliminaries bearing on the general framework of the “international theme”, it is necessary to revert to places in particular, for *The Portrait of a Lady* (which is also a portrait of places²) sends its heroine (and its readers) on an instructive journey through both a “geographic” and “social” map, in other words Isabel's journey in space is also an initiation into the intricacies of “the social atlas” and the complexities of the self. Consequently, the symbolic and social values of the places Isabel traverses differ widely and one could almost trace Isabel's education by reference to the houses and rooms she occupies : from the cluttered office in Albany to the comforting spaciousness of Gardencourt ; through the “stout grey pile” of Lockleigh (Lord Warburton's estate which, to Isabel, looks like ‘a noble picture’ and ‘a castle in a legend’) ; Mrs Touchett's Florentine

palace ; Osmond's ancient villa with its imposing front and perpetually chilled antechamber ; the garish hotel room in which Osmond proposes marriage ; Osmond's Palazzo Roccanera, that 'dark and massive structure' like 'a dungeon' ; and finally the bare cold apartments of the convent to which Pansy is banished by her father. Each of these references to places, houses, palaces, etc. in a word, architecture, is a clue to Isabel's development. The novel is of Isabel's leaving an American house—a way of life, that is—for a European house. Ostensibly she conceives of this as an escape from frustrating and cramping confinement to a fuller, freer, more resonant and significant life.

Isabel Archer's aunt comes to America after the demise of Isabel's dad so as to take her niece to Europe. On her landing in England, Isabel meets her cousin Ralph, her uncle, Mr. Touchett, and the incredible aristocrat of the zone, Lord Warburton, who quickly begins to look all starry eyed at her. A little while later, Warburton proposes to Isabel, yet she turns him down, keeping up that she loves her opportunity and autonomy an excessive amount to wed. A brief timeframe later, her writer companion Henrietta Stackpole touches base in England and discloses to Isabel that her American suitor Caspar Goodwood has pursued Isabel to England.

During a visit to London, Isabel experiences Caspar Goodwood, who attempts to persuade her that she ought to wed him. Once more, Isabel says that she should have opportunity to see the world and make a couple of autonomous decisions. She guarantees Goodwood that she will talk about the subject again in two years. He leaves, promising to stay in America for this time.

While in London, Isabel knows about the disorder of her uncle. She comes back to his home, Gardencourt, where she discovers him dying. She likewise finds another visitor, Madame Merle, an old companion of Mrs. Touchett's. During the long days when the house is engaged with ailment, Isabel and Madame Merle become great companions. Ralph Touchett knows that his father plans to leave him a huge fortune, but he also knows that he is slowly dying himself and does not need much money. He therefore convinces his father to leave some of his fortune to Isabel.

Notes

After Mr. Touchett's demise, Isabel turns into an extraordinary beneficiary. She keeps on going with her auntie and they go to Mrs. Touchett's home in Florence, Italy. Here, Madame Merle introduction/duces Isabel to her old companion Gilbert Osmond. Madame Merle has just taught Osmond to be pleasant to Isabel in light of the fact that she believes that Gilbert ought to wed her.

After some time, Isabel accepts that she is infatuated with Osmond. She keeps up her autonomy by declining to tune in to any guidance. Everybody is against her wedding Osmond in light of the fact that all vibe that he is a useless fortune tracker.

A few years after the fact, Isabel realizes that she has committed an error. Gilbert Osmond, presently her significant other, has attempted to break Isabel's free nature and has attempted to cause her to comply with his each desire. He needs Isabel to be as tranquil and faithful just like his little girl. Pansy, the little girl, has been raised in a religious circle and has been educated to comply with her dad in all things. Along these lines when the dad objects to the youngster that Pansy is enamored with, she should submit to his desires.

At the point when Isabel gets a letter revealing to her that her cousin Ralph is near his death, she needs to go to England to visit him. Osmond restricts the outing since it would not look legitimate. Right now, Isabel finds that Pansy is really the ill-conceived offspring of Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. She at that point understands that her companion Madame Merle fooled her into an incautious marriage with Osmond, and with this information Isabel leaves for England disregarding her better half's dissatisfaction.

In England, she admits the misstep she made in wedding Osmond, and Caspar Goodwood begs her to leave her better half. Isabel, nonetheless, feels that she can't neglect the consecrated obligations of marriage and feels that Pansy needs her assistance. She in this way chooses to come back to Osmond disregarding her aversion for him.

PLOT OF THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

Isabel Archer is a woman in her mid-twenties who originates from a refined family in Albany, New York, in the late 1860s. Her mom passed on when she was a little youngster, and her dad brought her up in an

indiscriminate way, enabling her to teach herself and empowering her autonomy. Accordingly, the grown-up Isabel is generally perused, inventive, positive about her very own psyche, and marginally narcissistic; she has the notoriety in Albany for being a considerable acumen, and subsequently she regularly appears to be scaring to men. She has had couple of suitors, yet one of them is Caspar Goodwood, the ground-breaking, magnetic child of a well off Boston factory proprietor. Isabel is attracted to Caspar, yet her responsibility to her autonomy makes her dread him too, for she feels that to wed him is penance her opportunity.

Not long after Isabel's dad dies, she gets a visit from her inexorable aunt, Mrs. Touchett, an American who lives in Europe. Mrs. Touchett offers to take Isabel out traveling to Europe, and Isabel enthusiastically concurs, disclosing to Caspar that she cannot reveal to him whether she wishes to wed him until she has had at any rate a year to go in Europe with her aunt. Isabel and Mrs. Touchett leave for England, where Mrs. Touchett's antagonized spouse is a ground-breaking broker. Isabel establishes a solid connection on everybody at Mr. Touchett's region house of Gardencourt: her cousin Ralph, gradually biting the dust of a lung issue, turns out to be profoundly committed to her, and the Touchetts' refined neighbor Lord Warburton begins to look all starry eyed at her. Warburton proposes, however Isabel decreases; however she fears that she is leaving behind an incredible social open door by not wedding Warburton, regardless she accepts that marriage would harm her prized freedom. Subsequently, she promises to achieve something superb with her life, something that will legitimize her choice to dismiss Warburton. Isabel's companion Henrietta Stackpole, an American writer, accepts that Europe is evolving Isabel, gradually dissolving her American qualities and supplanting them with sentimental optimism. Henrietta comes to Gardencourt and subtly organizes Caspar Goodwood to meet Isabel in London. Goodwood again presses Isabel to wed him; this time, she reveals to him she needs at any rate two years before she can answer him, and she guarantees him nothing. She is excited to have practiced her autonomy so strongly. Mr. Touchett's wellbeing decreases, and Ralph persuades him that when he bites the dust, he should leave a large portion

Notes

of his riches to Isabel: this will secure her freedom and guarantee that she will never need to wed for cash. Mr. Touchett concurs without further ado before he bites the dust. Isabel is left with a huge fortune without precedent for her life. Her legacy arouses the enthusiasm of Madame Merle, Mrs. Touchett's cleaned, exquisite companion; Madame Merle starts to extravagant consideration on Isabel, and the two ladies become dear companions.

Isabel goes to Florence with Mrs. Touchett and Madame Merle; Merle acquaints Isabel with a man named Gilbert Osmond, a man of no social standing or riches, however whom Merle portrays as one of the best men of their word in Europe, entirely committed to workmanship and style. Osmond's girl Pansy is being raised in a religious circle; his better half is dead. Covertly, Osmond and Merle have a baffling relationship; Merle is endeavoring to control Isabel into wedding Osmond so he will approach her fortune. Osmond is satisfied to wed Isabel, for her cash, yet additionally in light of the fact that she makes a fine option to his accumulation of workmanship objects.

Everybody in Isabel's reality dislikes Osmond, particularly Ralph, however Isabel weds him in any case. She has a youngster the year after they are hitched, yet the kid dies a half year after he is conceived. Three years into their marriage, Isabel and Osmond have come to disdain each other; they live with Pansy in a palazzo in Rome, where Osmond treats Isabel as scarcely an individual from the family: to him, she is a social entertainer and a wellspring of riches, and he is irritated by her freedom and her emphasis on having her own sentiments. Isabel abrades against Osmond's self-importance, his self-centeredness, and his vile want to pulverize her independence, yet she doesn't think about leaving him. For all her promise to her freedom, Isabel is likewise dedicated to her social obligation, and when she wedded Osmond, she did as such with the expectation of changing herself into a decent spouse.

A youthful American craftsmanship gatherer who lives in Paris, Edward Rosier, comes to Rome and begins to look all starry eyed at Pansy; Pansy restores his emotions. In any case, Osmond is tenacious that Pansy ought to wed an aristocrat, and he says that Rosier is neither rich nor aristocratic enough. Matters grow entangled when Lord Warburton is in

contact and starts to court Pansy. Warburton is still infatuated with Isabel and needs to wed Pansy exclusively to draw nearer to her. However, Osmond frantically needs to see Pansy wedded to Warburton. Isabel is torn about whether to satisfy her obligation to her significant other and help him organize the match among Warburton and Pansy, or to satisfy the drive of her heart and demoralize Warburton, while helping Pansy figure out how to wed Rosier.

At a ball one night, Isabel indicates Warburton the down and out looking Rosier and clarifies this is the man who is enamored with Pansy. Culpably, Warburton concedes that he is not infatuated with Pansy; he discreetly organizes to leave Rome. Osmond is enraged with Isabel, persuaded that she is plotting purposefully to mortify him. Madame Merle is likewise enraged with her, standing up to her with stunning inappropriateness and requesting shamelessly to comprehend what she did to Warburton. Isabel has understood that there is something secretive about Madame Merle's association with her significant other; presently, she all of a sudden understands that Merle is his beloved.

Right now, Ralph is quickly falling apart, and Isabel gets word that he is dying. She yearns to venture out to England to be with him however Osmond disallows it. Presently Isabel must battle to choose whether to comply with his direction and stay consistent with her marriage promises or to ignore him and rush to her cousin's bedside. Urging her to go, Osmond's sister, the Countess Gemini, discloses to her that there is still more to Merle and Osmond's relationship. Merle is Pansy's mother; Pansy was born from wedlock. Osmond's wife passed on at about a similar time, so Merle and Osmond spread the story that she died in labor. Pansy was set in a community to be raised, and she does not have the slightest idea about that Merle is her genuine mother. Isabel is stunned and sickened by her better half's monstrous conduct—she even feels frustrated about Merle for falling completely devoted to him—so she chooses to pursue her heart and travel to England.

After Ralph's passing, Isabel battles to choose whether to come back to her husband or not. She guaranteed Pansy that she would come back to Rome, and her pledge to social legitimacy incites her to return and respect her marriage. However, her autonomous soul encourages her to

Notes

escape from Osmond and discover joy somewhere else. Caspar Goodwood shows up at the memorial service, and a short time later, he asks Isabel to flee with him and disregard her significant other. The following day, unfit to discover her, Goodwood asks Henrietta where she has gone. Henrietta discreetly discloses to him that Isabel has come back to Rome, incapable to split away from her union with Gilbert Osmond.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Isabel Archer:

Isabel Archer is the novel's hero, the Lady of the title. She is a young lady from Albany, New York, who goes to Europe with her auntie, Mrs. Touchett. In Europe, she is charmed by an English master, acquires a fortune, and falls prey to a disgusting plan to wed her to the evil Gilbert Osmond—drive her to stand up to the contention between her craving for individual autonomy and her pledge to social appropriateness. Isabel is the primary focal point of *Portrait of a Lady*, and the greater part of the topical investigation of the novel happens through her activities, contemplations, and encounters. At last, Isabel stays in her hopeless union with Osmond as opposed to disregard custom by leaving him and scanning for a more joyful life.

Isabel is the central concern of the novel. She is endowed with all the attributes of James' average American. She is innocent, yet intelligent. As opposed to the European, for example, Madame Merle, she is not experienced, however she has the ability to welcome any new experience.

Isabel has a comprehensive character. Ralph Touchett and others are pulled in to Isabel in light of the fact that she obviously has an extraordinary limit with respect to development. This quality enables her to respond precipitously to any new encounter. Her reaction demonstrates a profundity of observation missing from other individuals. She energizes the profound respect of individuals as various as Madame Merle and Henrietta Stackpole, or as various as Gilbert Osmond and Ralph Touchett. Besides, men as disparate in characters as Caspar Goodwood and Lord Warburton both begin to look all starry eyed at Isabel. Along these lines, some portion of her significance lies in her capacity to pull in a wide range of individuals to her.

Despite the fact that Isabel is not viewed as an incredible marvel, she is alluring enough to win consideration. She has a characteristic appeal and an earnestness that add to her looks. Her most striking characteristics are her longing for freedom and her imagination. She accepts unequivocally as she would like to think and appreciates the privilege to assess freely any individual or circumstance. This note of freedom is struck in the major parts of the novel. Ralph appreciates the characteristic significantly. Related to her freedom, Isabel is additionally an extremely innovative individual. Ralph Touchett feels that with the end goal for Isabel to understand her creative mind, she should be made monetarily free. In this way, her legacy gives her the opportunity to enable her creative mind to take off.

One of the primary employments of her free creative mind is in assessing Gilbert Osmond. He revealed to her that he had carried on with a dull life, yet Isabel's creative mind took off to make for him an extremely intriguing life. In her creative mind, she filled in the empty spots and considered him to be a considerably more fascinating individual than he really was.

Ironically Isabel's craving for complete freedom makes her wed Osmond. In her assurance to pursue just her own assessment, she would not hear her out numerous companions who advised her against such a marriage. Thus, her most noteworthy quality additionally turned into her defeat.

Isabel additionally has a fairly over-solid feeling of pride. Indeed, even after she perceives that she committed an error in her marriage, she cannot concede this openly. It required an incredible exertion to admit her blunder to Ralph, and toward the end, she has an excess of pride to admit her error to the entire world. Along these lines, mostly hence, she comes back to Rome to proceed with her existence with Osmond.

She comes back to Osmond not in adjustment to his concept of structure; not on the grounds that she needs to keep confidence with him, yet with herself. She had picked her fate for herself and in this manner she should acknowledge it.

The tale of the novel arrives at an end however it gives the idea that Isabel's adventure, is not finished. James himself says in the introduction that the novel has "a structural ability" which makes it "the most

Notes

proportioned" of every one of his "creations." He is not proposing that he has completed his account of Isabel Archer. In her arrival to Italy there is something of the conventional idea of otherworldly triumph through death. Her renunciation of her physical freedom and her disavowing of her own wants, comprises a sort of death of the substance through which her spirit triumphs. In aesthetic terms, this is both the peak and the end. Toward the end, Isabel is tremendously transformed; she has held her pride, assurance, and nobility of character yet she has lost a decent a considerable lot of her immature figments.

Isabel, therefore, represents the innocent young American who is deceived by the superior cunning and deceit of Osmond and Madame Merle, who are representatives of the old order of European thinking. Isabel was capable of great potential and of great development— she had a large capacity for growth and for life. Her tragedy is in her mistaken judgment of Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. Once, however, she has recognized her error, she is determined to try to make the best of it.

RALPH TOUCHETT:

Isabel's savvy, clever cousin, who is sick with lung ailment all through the whole novel, which ends after his death. Ralph loves life, however he is kept from taking an interest in it enthusiastically by his affliction; therefore, he goes about as a committed observer, setting out to live vicariously through his beloved cousin Isabel. It is Ralph who persuades Mr. Touchett to leave Isabel her fortune, and it is Ralph who is the staunchest backer of Isabel staying autonomous. Ralph fills in as the ethical focus of *Portrait of a Lady*: his assessments about different characters are constantly exact, and he fills in as a sort of good informer for the reader, who can tell quickly whether a character is great or underhandedness by Ralph's reaction to that character.

Ralph works as the cosmopolite who has intrigued himself with regards to Isabel's vocation. Upon first gathering her, he detects her potential limit with regards to advancement. He at that point gives his life to watching Isabel's exercises.

Ralph is appropriate for his functioning in the novel. Realizing that he has just a couple of more years to live, he has built up a sensibility which

empowers him to infiltrate to the centre of things. Weak from his infection, he remains generally uninvolved and objective. Nevertheless, he is not totally unengaged. He feels that his final years will be enriched watching Isabel's activities. Hence, he is instrumental in setting an enormous fortune available to her. His demonstration was performed so as to give Isabel the chance to create to her fullest limit. Be that as it may, in fact, it made her become a detainee.

Ralph's objectivity and true love for Isabel additionally enable him to work as a compatriot to her. He can talk about personally with her different parts of her profession and in this manner give the reader a progressively adjusted perspective on any circumstance.

Ralph, at that point, is an individual of high insight and affectability who can see the essential parts of any circumstance, and the reader approaches what he knows. Ralph realizes that Osmond is a "sterile dilettante," however cannot persuade Isabel of this reality. Besides, he perceives that a few people, similar to Madame Merle, are excessively impeccable. He remains, be that as it may, Isabel's storage room companion and admirer and the individual who realizes her first open break with Gilbert Osmond.

MADAME ALERLE

Madame Merle, an accomplished, graceful, and manipulative woman, is a popular lady who does not have a husband or a fortune. Inspired by her love for Gilbert Osmond, Merle controls Isabel into wedding Osmond, conveying Isabel's fortune into his hands and destroying Isabel's life all the while. Unknown to either Isabel or Pansy, Merle is not just Osmond's lover, however she is likewise Pansy's mother, a reality that was concealed after Pansy's birth to the world. Pansy was raised to accept that her mother died in labor.

Madame Merle is one of the most respected ladies in Europe. All that she does is in impeccable great taste. As Mrs. Touchett says, she has not a shortcoming. Yet, this implies Madame Merle has made a noticeable outside to conceal her inward debasement. As the reader later learns she has been an adulteress, yet she secured her salacious conduct with such great taste that the world is uninformed of it.

Notes

Madame Merle had incredible desire as a more youthful individual. She has continually been baffled in her wants and has thus built up specific structures and services to make up for her disappointment. She plays the piano impeccably, she is invited in a large portion of the incredible places of Europe; she is wise, clever, and enchanting, she is never given to overabundances, and she never makes a screw up. She comprehends human instinct and realizes how to achieve anything.

Given her inclination, it is just regular that Isabel, guiltless as she seems to be, should fall prey to Madame Merle's progressively cleaned and experienced ways. At the end of the day, Isabel is not a simple unfortunate casualty; her hero or unrivaled must be a prevalent individual.

Madame Merle's incredible defect is her aspiration. When she sees Isabel accomplish something that she would have jumped at the chance to have, her actual nature is uncovered. Subsequently, it is her desire to have Pansy make a brilliant marriage that leads Madame Merle to execute her injustice against Isabel. Since Madame Merle has flopped so hopelessly throughout everyday life, she wants that her girl should make a splendid match. Her solid desire and firm quest for her objective at long last make her a despicable individual. She is so resolved to succeed that she goes past her standard great taste and propriety. This permits Isabel to see her for what she is. In any case, even in her disappointment, Madame Merle perceives that she has been "abominable" for no obvious increase. Moreover, we perceive that at long last even Madame Merle's own girl does not care for her and an incredible opposite, the little girl likes Isabel, whom Madame Merle had so horrendously sold out.

In the last examination, Madame Merle, similar to Gilbert Osmond, speaks to the European character that forfeits all that is human and common and true for something that speaks to the ideal structure and service. The obtained taste and standard become more significant than genuine human connections. In the final analysis, Madame Merle, like Gilbert Osmond, represents the European personality that sacrifices all that is human and natural and sincere for something that represents the perfect form and ceremony. The acquired taste and rule become more important than real human relationships.

GILBERT OSMOND

Gilbert Osmond is a coldblooded, narcissistic honorable man of no specific social standing or riches, who entices Isabel and weds her for her cash. A craftsmanship authority, Osmond acts like an impartial connoisseur, yet in actuality he is edgy for the acknowledgment and profound respect of everyone around him. He treats everybody who loves him as basically an item to be utilized to satisfy his wants; he puts together his girl Pansy's childhood with respect to that she ought to be unswervingly subservient to him, and he even treats his long-term lover Madame Merle as a minor instrument. Isabel's union with Osmond compels her to go up against the contention between her longing for freedom and the excruciating social legitimacies that power her to stay in her marriage.

Gilbert Osmond is the exemplification of everything that one finds shocking in European culture. He was, actually, conceived in America, yet since he was brought to Europe as a little youngster and has carried on with as long as he can remember in Europe, we may consider him for every single topical reason an European.

Osmond is an individual who puts outrageous incentive on the right structure and immaculate custom. He is a conceited person who feels that the world should observe his irregular qualities. All that he does is determined for its impact. He hits never done anything without considering first what impact it will bear upon him. He is essentially an inactive man who has the vanity to feel that the world should come to him. On the off chance that he is hateful of the majority of the things on the planet, it is on the grounds that he wants them so firmly.

He is a man of flawless taste. Yet, the reader should take note of that ideal taste can be conveyed excessively far. Similarly as with Madame Merle, everything is thought up to the point that the genuine individual is hidden behind a veil of affectations. Everything that he has is flawless. His objects of craftsmanship, his home, his view, his girl are altogether brought to outright flawlessness. Consequently, when he wants to wed Isabel, it is simply because she will reflect what great taste he has. Be that as it may, when one commits oneself completely to making an impact, there is normally something counterfeit about the outcomes.

Notes

Gilbert Osmond, at that point, has grown great taste with the goal that he will be applauded for it. It has been a venture with him; it is obtained. In actuality, Isabel has great taste yet it is a normally blessed quality. It comes from her character; though Osmond's taste is studied and counterfeit.

It must be noted, be that as it may, that Osmond does not wed Isabel Archer exclusively for her wealth. Had Isabel not had ability, fascinate, knowledge, taste, and looks, her money would not have been adequate reason to realize the marriage. Unexpectedly, if Isabel had each quality and characteristic aside from cash, Osmond would not have hitched her.

The malevolence of Osmond's tendency originates from the way that he ascertains all that he does. That is, he doesn't contemplate Isabel's free character. A remarkable turnaround, he sees this as the most frightful piece of her cosmetics. Therefore, after the marriage, he intentionally gets on track to undermine Isabel's distinction. He feels that his wife must fit in with his each desire and want. As it were, he needs a wife who will obey him with immaculate obedience, as does his girl. Thus, he is resolved to break Isabel's free and autonomous soul. In endeavoring to do as such, he is attempting to annihilate the better limit of her character. Subsequently, his craving to have everything, including his wife, rotate around him, demonstrates his basic nature.

At last, Osmond is not real. He inclines toward structures and services to genuine human relations. He does not love Isabel, yet he needs her to obey him. He looks just to the presence of things. He is, at last, the unfilled and shrewdness man.

Other Character of the Novel

LORD WARBURTON

Caspar Goodwood is the son of a prominent Boston mill owner, Isabel's most dedicated suitor in America. Goodwood's charisma, simplicity, capability, and lack of sophistication make him the book's purest symbol of James's conception of America.

LORD WARBURTON IS An aristocratic neighbor of the Touchetts who falls in love with Isabel during her first visit to Gardencourt. Warburton remains in love with Isabel even after she rejects his proposal and later tries to marry Pansy simply to bring himself closer to Isabel's life.

Henrietta Stackpole is Isabel's intensely independent friend, a feminist journalist who does not believe that women need men in order to be happy. Like Caspar, Henrietta is a symbol of America's democratic values throughout the book. After Isabel leaves for Europe, Henrietta fights a losing battle to keep her true to her American outlook, constantly encouraging her to marry Caspar Goodwood. At the end of the book, Henrietta disappoints Isabel by giving up her independence in order to marry Mr. Bantling.

Mrs. Touchett is Isabel's aunt, an indomitable, independent old woman who first brings Isabel to Europe. The wife of Mr. Touchett and the mother of Ralph, Mrs. Touchett is separated from her husband, residing in Florence while he stays at Gardencourt. After Isabel inherits her fortune and falls under the sway of Merle and Osmond, Mrs. Touchett's importance in her life gradually declines.

Pansy Osmond is Gilbert Osmond's placid, submissive daughter, raised in a convent to guarantee her obedience and docility. Pansy believes that her mother died in childbirth; in reality, her mother is Osmond's longtime lover, Madame Merle. When Isabel becomes Pansy's stepmother, she learns to love the girl; Pansy is a large part of the reason why Isabel chooses to return to Rome at the end of the novel, when she could escape her miserable marriage by remaining in England.

Edward Rosier is a unfortunate American art collector who lives in Paris. Rosier falls in love with Pansy Osmond and does his best to win Osmond's permission to marry her. But though he sells his art collection and appeals to Madame Merle, Isabel, and the Countess Gemini, Rosier is unable to change Gilbert's mind that Pansy should marry a high-born, wealthy nobleman, not an obscure American with little money and no social standing to speak of.

Mr. Touchett is an elderly American banker who has made his life and his vast fortune in England, is Ralph's father and the proprietor of

Notes

Gardencourt. Before Mr. Touchett dies, Ralph convinces him to leave half his fortune to his niece Isabel, which will enable her to preserve her independence and avoid having to marry for money.

Mr. Bantling is a pastime Englishman who acts as Henrietta's escort across Europe, eventually persuading her to marry him at the end of the novel.

Countess Gemini is Osmond's vapid sister, who covers up her own marital infidelities by gossiping constantly about the affairs of other married women. The Countess seems to have a good heart, however, opposing Merle's scheme to marry Osmond and Isabel and eventually revealing to Isabel the truth of Merle's relationship to Osmond and Pansy's parentage.

HENRY JAMES' STYLE

Practically the majority of James' plots are modeled on the **circular plan** and the **elliptical methods**. There must be a *centre* - something toward which every one of the lines points and which "supremely matters." This is basically James' own clarification of his structure. What "supremely matters" is the focal thought of the novel or that thought around which the novel capacities. In *The Portrait of a Lady*, what "supremely matters" is for Isabel Archer to have the chance to grow uninhibitedly to the furthest reaches of her own ability. She is viewed as an individual who has incredible potential, however she does not have that opportunity which would enable her to build up her own intrinsic characteristics. In this way, practically the majority of the scenes and activity of the novel are intended to prevent or to bring to culmination this possibility for Isabel to accomplish her full limit.

James' imaginative procedure is additionally imperative to understanding the structure of his works. He starts his books with a circumstance and a character. He throws a specific circumstance, and after that he would put his characters in it. James would at that point, as a result, kick back and essentially see what might happen when a character was gone up against with this new circumstance. Regularly, James stated, he had-no specific completion as a primary concern when he started a novel. Rather, he would give the character and circumstance a chance to decide the

consummation. This permitted him more opportunity, and permitted him the chance of "becoming more acquainted with" his character by watching him in a progression of scenes.

HENRY JAMES' USE OF POINT-OF-VIEW

One of James' commitments to the craft of fiction is in his utilization Point-of-View. This implies the point from which the story is told. James' fiction contrasts in his treatment of Point-of View. He was keen on setting up a focal individual about whom the story rotated. As a rule, the reader would need to see all the activity of the story through this present character's eyes. This focal character was called now and again the "central intelligence" and on occasion the "sentient character." In *The Portrait of a Lady*, Isabel Archer is, obviously, the central character. Each scene is restricted to demonstrating her associated with some sort of circumstance, and each scene limits itself to the interests of this focal character.

Thus in James' fiction, we have the focal character of the novel, and it is just as the focal character were recounting to the story since we see or catch wind of all occasions through him. Hence, the focal circumstance in *The Portrait of a Lady* is the appearance of an enchanting little youngster in Europe who is confined by having no way to travel and be free. Numerous characters who meet her miracle what might occur in the event that she were splendidly allowed to create to her fullest. What "remarkably matters" is the full improvement of Isabel Archer. Subsequently, it must be organized to verify money for her and after that we will basically watch her to see which of the incredible men of Europe she will at last decide for a spouse. The readers respond to specific occasions as this central character would respond to them. Each scene in the novel, in this way, will be a scene which uncovers something about the primary character, and normally she is available in each scene. As the focal insight, her reasonableness is the prevailing part of the novel.

USE OF THE FORESHADOWING AND CONTRAST

James is a very careful artist who uses rather often and freely the technique of foreshadowing a later action. This means that he has given hints in the early parts of the novel about some important thing that is

Notes

going to happen later in the story. For example, early in the novel there are many hints that too much independence will get a person in trouble. Accordingly, it is Isabel's absolute desire for independence that made her ignore the advice of others and rely solely upon her own Judgment in marrying Osmond. Likewise, there are many hints that Isabel must suffer. Consequently, we are not surprised to find her suffering at the end of the novel. She is also a person who puts much emphasis on her promises and vows. So she must return to Osmond because of her marriage vows and her promise to Pansy. Thus, every action that is central to the novel has been prepared for by hints and many types of foreshadowing.

He also uses *elliptical technique*, in which many of a work's important scenes are not narrated, but only implied by later scenes. But as a stylist James earned consistent admiration; he is often considered to be a "writer's writer," and his prose is remarkable for its elegance of balance, clarity, and precision.

James's language is a very idiosyncratic variety of English, known as "the mid-Atlantic variety", a strange combination of English, American and European influences subserving "his ambition of appearing to write from a sort of detached equipoise in MidAtlantic" (M. Swan). Then he is biased to "the warring words of an oxymoron", a figure of speech by which a locution produces an effect by seeming self-contradiction, as in "cruel kindness" or "to make haste slowly." Thus, the novel is set using all his techniques with a master's touch.

Check your progress-1

Q1. What does the title 'The Portrait of a Lady' signify?

Q2. How is Isabel a counterpart to Madam Mere?

12.3 THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY-REALISM

The Portrait of a Lady recounts to the narrative of a young lady named Isabel Archer, who claims that she's partial to her opportunity yet who stands in any case, after the death of her dad, very nearly union with a New England plant proprietor. At that point she endures a fantasy salvage on account of an aunt. Taken to Europe and outfitted with a startling legacy, Isabel finds what sees first like a regularly extending field wherein to practice her very own feeling of freedom. She begins by dismissing one suitor after another, including an English ruler who appears to her less an individual than a personage, a lot of acquired belongings and forces. She discloses to her auntie, in addition, that "I generally need to know the things one shouldn't do," not just so as to do them, yet in order to pick. Isabel has to realize other individuals' standards so as to make her own. For she sees, herself, in Emerson's words, as consummately self-getting the job done, and the fulfillment of that extreme independence, that completely American want to pick, will be to choose an European home.

Isabel strolls around evening time through London with the feeling that "the world [lies] all before her," that she may do whatever she prefers. James' words are, in any case, an intentional reverberation of what Milton sent in removing Adam and Eve from Paradise, and in this fallen world not even Isabel can have that opportunity. One of the novel's most interesting minutes comes during a discourse of apparel. Isabel considers her to be assets as unessential to her feeling of self, contending that "Nothing that has a place with me is any proportion of me." Her companion Madame Merle, interestingly, considers those to be as both forming and communicating oneself—her very dresses are a sort of shell inside which oneself is bound and through which other individuals come to know it. To Madame Merle oneself is socially decided and not completely distinguishable from it's general surroundings. In any case, Isabel is the voice of American exceptionalism, and she accepts just in her own empowering and praising seclusion.

That conviction is one that her later experience will challenge, and the novel recommends that what's valid for the character is valid for her

nation too, every one of them endeavoring to characterize their connection to the world outside. What Isabel will in the long run learn is just what the Old World has consistently needed to educate us. She discovers that her own most personal relations have been dictated by things that occurred before she was thought of, by a past of which she was insensible and that she possibly comprehends when it's past the point of no return. She discovers that America itself has had no different or unique creation, that there is no new beginning, no city on a slope, no exclusion from history itself. None of us are completely independent, and James' record of the breaking points of that Emersonian confidence, the cutoff points of our own most appreciated convictions, is the thing that makes *The Portrait of a Lady* an Great American Novel.

12.4 STREAM-OF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Henry James, who created what he called a "central consciousness" or a governing intelligence, a character that he would stay with throughout a story or novel and whose mind we would thus be limited to in our perception of the action of the novel. The subject of these novels often was precisely the inner thoughts and emotions of the character rather than any external events. Long passages would be devoted to the rendition of these inner states of mind, such as in the famous fireside scene in James's *Portrait of A Lady* wherein Isabel must consider her choices.but the workings of the mind.(acweb)

12.6 THE AMERICAN-EUROPEAN CONTRAST

In *The Portrait of a Lady*, the character who speaks to the American in the best feeling of the word is, obviously, Isabel Archer. The agent of the European in the more terrible feeling of the word is Gilbert Osmond, and to a lesser degree Madame Merle. Obviously, both of these individuals were really conceived in America, however they have experienced their whole lives in Europe and think about themselves European.

One of the extraordinary contrasts that is underscored is the distinction between the American's common sense and the European's emphasis on structure and service. Isabel likes to respond to any circumstance as per her own wants. Right off the bat in the novel, Isabel's auntie reveals to her that it isn't appropriate to stay with two noble men without an escort. Isabel likes to do what she believes is correct and not what other individuals advise her is correct. Be that as it may, individuals like Osmond know early what kind of structure and function they will utilize in some random circumstance. The American at that point demonstrates precipitously, while the Europeans have formalized certain customs so they will never need to go up against an obscure circumstance. In this way, there is a feeling of earnestness in the American's activities; though the European is more described by a feeling of outrageous urbanity. All through the novel, we never observe Madame Merle or Osmond play out an unconstrained demonstration — they are the encapsulation of the ideal and right structure. All that they do is determined by the impact it will have. Subsequently, there is something false in their responses, while Isabel's response strikes one as legit and true.

Besides, the American is an individual of activity. The Europeans have been reproduced to view function as foul; they are individuals of inaction. Osmond has evidently never played out any valuable assignment. He stays inert while the American, for example, Henrietta, can go into an interest.

The American's feeling of immediacy, earnestness, and activity drives him into regular activities. He appears to speak to nature itself. Then again, the European's accentuation on structure, service, custom, and urbanity appears to recommend the fake. It speaks to workmanship as an element contradicting nature.

At last, these characteristics lead to a definitive resistance of genuineness versus insidious. At the point when the majority of the American's characteristics are supplanted by the majority of the European's we find that structure and custom are considered more significant than genuineness. Along these lines, Osmond will demand Isabel's setting up the front of a glad marriage despite the fact that they despise one another.

Notes

At the end of the day, the type of the marriage must be kept up. James isn't accentuating that one ought to have every one of one propensity and none of the other. The perfect individual is the person who can hold the majority of the American's guiltlessness and trustworthiness, but then gain the European's understanding and information. Ruler Warburton is then extraordinary on the grounds that he has the information and experience; he has the structure and service and custom. In any case, he isn't counterfeit, for he responds to things with truthfulness and expectation. Isabel is extraordinary in light of the fact that she has held every last bit of her American characteristics, however has taken in a lot about structure and custom and urbanity, and has additionally increased a huge measure of learning and experience without losing her local ethics.

12.6 THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY- HISTORICAL FACTS

In spite of the fact that *The Portrait of a Lady* is a work of fiction and no sociological archive, the novel was not formed in a vacuum; it is immovably grounded in history and joins a strong texture of true detail. The tale happens in the later half of the XIXth century, in post-Civil War America (p. 35), and especially in the decades known as "The Gilded Age" (after the title of an ironical novel, *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*, that Charles Warner and Mark Twain wrote in 1873). It was the period between the Civil War and the "Dynamic Era" which began around the part of the arrangement century (the Progressive Movement which gave its name to the accompanying time frame was an incredible new dreamer development which planned for improving the insignificant, baffling truth of the cash grubbing society America had moved toward becoming). The Gilded Age alludes to the period when the country was experiencing a sensational adjustment, going from an agrarian-business economy to a mechanical industrialist one. It was a time of extraordinary monetary advancement which saw the introduction of the modern transformation, the expansion of the railroad organize, the ascent of social Darwinism and of the Labor Movement. As indicated by various antiquarians, the intellectual and moral environment of the nation was never so poor as during that "age"; hence the tag is very fitting since

it accentuates both the essential pretended by capital and the fake estimations of the age, plated and not brilliant (the period was additionally named the "Time of Sham" for example falsification, extortion, fake impersonation). The Press was one of those fake qualities or foundations ; the crudest articulation of the pervasive profanity. For a mind-blowing duration, James never botched a chance to parody American papers and newspaper(wo)men. It can incompletely be clarified by his very own unacceptable association with certain American periodicals and his hatred for their low measures. The outline of 8 Henrietta Stackpole in *The Portrait of Lady* demonstrates the veracity of James' disappointment with and doubt of the Press : "there's something of the 'people' in her [...] she is a kind of emanation of the great democracy – of the continent, the country, the nation. I don't say that she sums it all up, that would be too much to ask of her. But she suggests it ; she vividly figures it" (p. 93) ; "I don't like Miss Stackpole – everything about her displeases me ; she talks so much too loud and looks at one as if one wanted to look at her – which one doesn't. I'm sure she has lived all her life in a boarding-house and [...] I detest a boarding-house civilization" (95)

Check Your Progress- 2

Q3. How does Isabel express her right to freedom?

Q4. Why does Ralph talk his father into leaving Isabel a huge fortune?

12.7 LET US SUM UP

The *Portrait of a Lady* is the narrative of a vivacious youthful American lady, Isabel Archer, who, in "going up against her destiny", thinks that its staggering. She acquires a lot of cash and accordingly turns into the

casualty of Machiavellian conspiring by two American ostracizes. In the same way as other of James' books, it is set in Europe, for the most part England and Italy. For the most part viewed as the magnum opus of James' initial period, this novel mirrors James' proceeding with enthusiasm for the contrasts between the New World and the Old, regularly to the disadvantage of the previous. It likewise treats in a significant manner the topics of individual flexibility, obligation, and double-crossing.

12.8 KEYWORDS

- Stream of consciousness – Characterised by the manner of writing in which the characters thoughts are presented as occurring in random form.
- Foreshadow – Indicate before hand
- Contrast - Variation
- Point-of –View – Opinion of any person
- Disgusting - Irritating
- Contention – Struggling together in opposition
- Autonomy – Independence for freedom of once action
- focal point - principle of focus
- comprehensive - In detail or covering or involving much
-

12.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Q1. Examine the differences between Henrietta Stackpole and Ralph?
- Q2. Discuss the plot of The Portrait of a Lady.
- Q3. What style does Henry James uses in The Portrait of a Lady?
- Q4. How far does the 'idea of independence' help in the development of the plot of the novel, The Portrait of a lady?

12.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. James, Henry (1961). *The Portrait of a Lady*. Dell Publishing Co. James, Henry (1908). "Preface". *The Portrait of a Lady*. New York.
2. Habegger, Alfred (2004). *Henry James and the 'Woman Business'*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Hadella, Paul M. (1994). "Rewriting Misogyny: The Portrait of a Lady and the Popular Fiction Debate". *American Literary Realism, 1870–1910*. University of Illinois Press.
4. James, Henry; Edel, Leon (ed.) (1980). *Letters, Volume III: 1883–1895*, pp. 46–47. Belknap Press.

ONLINE SOURCES:

- Stream of consciousness:
<http://acweb.colum.edu/departments/english/eng2/woolf/stream.html>
- *Portrait of a Lady* at IDBD. Retrieved 19 August 2015
- Original magazine publication of *The Portrait of a Lady* (1880–81)

12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. James's use of psychology in *Portrait of a Lady* enables him to unite his thematic exploration with his character portrayal. In short, the novel is an exploration of the conflict between individualism and social convention; James ensures that Isabel has a conscious commitment to individualism, but an unconscious desire for the comfort, safety, and stability of social custom. Isabel's upbringing was haphazard, and her father often left her to herself; this gave her a sense of intellectual independence, but it also made her long for a more secure environment. Additionally, Isabel's active imagination was nourished by her self-directed education in her grandmother's library. When she meets Gilbert Osmond, Isabel is attracted to the stability and direction his life seems to offer her, and her imagination enables her to overlook his obvious flaws—his arrogance, his narcissism, and his cruelty—and to create her own idyllic picture of him. In this way, Isabel allows her need for social convention to overcome her commitment to independence, and her marriage to Osmond becomes the tragic turning point in her life.

Notes

2. As far as *The Portrait of a Lady* is concerned, the theme of the international situation is embodied in the confrontation between Isabel Archer (and Henrietta Stackpole) and Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond who represent the two countries of James's imagination : America, the boring paradise, and Europe, seductive, sensual, an enchanting hell. Isabel's fate illustrates “the disabling effects upon the American mind of the simplicities and freedoms of the American life, and their effect in particular of placing Americans at a severe disadvantage in their intercourse with the English and the Europeans”

3. Isabel's most striking characteristics are her longing for freedom and her imagination. She accepts unequivocally as she would like to think and appreciates the privilege to assess freely any individual or circumstance. This note of freedom is struck in the major parts of the novel.

4. Isabel's most striking characteristics are her longing for freedom and her imagination. She accepts unequivocally as she would like to think and appreciates the privilege to assess freely any individual or circumstance. This note of freedom is struck in the major parts of the novel. Ralph appreciates the characteristic significantly. Related to her freedom, Isabel is additionally an extremely innovative individual. Ralph Touchett feels that with the end goal for Isabel to understand her imagination and freedom, she should be made monetarily free. In this way, her legacy gives her the opportunity to enable her creative mind to take off.

UNIT-13 THOMAS HARDY: LIFE AND WORKS

STRUCTURE

13.0 Objective

13.1 Introduction

13.2 Thomas Hardy

13.2.1 Life of Thomas Hardy

13.2.2 A bird's eye View

13.2.3 Works of Thomas Hardy

13.2.4 A bird's Eye View

13.3 Thomas Hardy's Contribution

13.4 Salient features Thomas Hardy's Writings

13.5 Hardy's Pessimism And Philosophy Of Life

13.6 Hardy's Realism

13.7 Hardy's Meliorism

13.8 Hardy's Treatment Of Nature

13.9 Hardy's Imagination

13.10 Hardy's Shortcomings

13.11 Let us Sum Up

13.12 Keywords

13.13 Questions for Review

13.14 Suggested Readings And References

13.15 Answers to Check your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

Become familiar with the author

- Know about his personal life and whereabouts
- Delineate his features of writing from his works
- Understand his style; to be able to compare it with other authors
- Outline the influence of the Victorian Age on his thinking and imagination

- Observe this also in his works, and how he has influenced the age and other writers.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hardy was a Victorian novelist and poet though a highly critic of the Victorian urban society and despised the declining status of the English rural social structure, especially his native South West England. He was a poet but did not publish poetry until 1898, thus the reason for him to be known as a novelist of the first order. As a poet he was acclaimed as mentor by the young Victorian poets.

13.2 THOMAS HARDY

Thomas Hardy is one among the most celebrated novelist with a versatile personality. He with his novels belongs to the ages.

13.2.1 Life of Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy, the eldest son of Thomas Hardy, stonemason and builder and his wife Jemima ('nee Hand) was born on June 2nd 1840 at Higher Bockhampton, Dorset, England. He received his love for reading books from his mother. He led his early life in an isolated cottage and open field on the edge of open heathland. It was here that he lived a very quiet, retired and secluded life for the rest of his life and literary career. Though he was often ill as child, he kept observing the rural setup and the life around him which became a fundamental background for his writings and compositions. The region, called Wessex in those days, has come to be sanctified by his patience and was later immortalized in his writings. This beautiful southern region of England is preserved in its pristine beauty in his novels. This nature background served as a stage for his characters to play their game of life.

At the age of eight, after spending a year in the village school, he moved on to schools in Dorchester, the nearby county town. There he received

his lessons in mathematics and Latin. His parents destined him to become an Anglican minister but his destiny drove him into quite a different field. His primary education completed at the age of sixteen then he apprenticed with John Hicks, a local architect in 1856.

Monetary problems interrupted his education and he could not attend the university. Unable to realize his wish to be an Anglican minister, shifted his attention to self-study, especially poetry, and started composing poems. At the age of 17, he began writing, although he was a practicing architect.

In 1862, Hardy left for London to work as a draftsman in the office of Arthur Bloomfield, a top ecclesiastical architect. While in London, Hardy was influenced by the works of Charles Swinburne, Robert Browning, and Charles Darwin. The climate did not suit him and he had to return to his native region in 1867, where he worked for Hicks again and for another architect, G.R. Crickmay, Weymouth architect.

Hardy's first novel manuscript, *The Poor Man and the Lady* (1867-68), was rejected by the publishers but George Meredith (publisher) encouraged him carry on writing while refining his style. By 1870, Hardy was sent by his employer to the St. Juliot Church in Cornwall for renovation of the church. He met his first wife, Emma Lavinia Gifford, and they got married in 1874. *Desperate Remedies* (story) (1871), was accepted and published. Emma encouraged him to write, and by 1872, Hardy left architecture to assign his time to his literary career. *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), brought forth a polished novelist with a well-defined style of his own. Hardy was indeed a voracious reader of literature and he joined the King's College k study modern languages. He pursued his interest in Gothic architecture also; his genius lay in his appreciation of architectural designs and won for him some medals. *The Poor Man and His Lady'* was his maiden manuscript for a novel; Meredith, the publisher, commented that his ideas militated against Hardy's successful future. Hardy took it back and offered another entitled '*Desperate Ne-medies*'. This brought him to public notice as a fiction-writer.

When Hardy left his career as architect, he did so with a contract for 11 monthly installments of a tale, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, in the *Cornhill*

Notes

Magazine. His reputation as one of England's newer novelists sustained the Hardy family from that time on. His novels are replete with descriptions of natural scenery and its benign influence upon human beings and men and women chosen from the lower rungs of English society.

Far from the Maddening Crowd (1874), introduced the Wessex area setting, which continued as the setting for *Tess*. *The Return of the Native* (1878) and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), established Hardy as a prolific writer.

The last novels challenged the sensibilities of Victorian readers with their themes of immoral sex, murder, illegitimate children, and the unmarried living together. Fierce criticism over of these books made him think about writing poetry. The criticism was so intensely felt by him that he stopped writing novels. He also wrote short stories and plays. Two volumes of poetry and short stories appeared, *The Dynasts: A Drama of the Napoleonic Wars* (1903-08) and *Winter Words* (1928), a volume of verse. Hardy was quite prolific during this period, writing some 900 poems on a variety of subjects.

In 1912, Hardy's wife, Emma, died, and thus ended the 20 years of "domestic estrangement." In 1914, Hardy married Florence Emily Dugdale, with whom he lived until his death on January 11, 1928. Not many personalities are destined to have two mausoleums, however, the eminent and well- known novelist and a poet, Thomas Hardy has his corpse entombed in Westminster Abbey in Poet's Corner, next to the illustrious writer, Charles Dickens, but his heart placed in the churchyard at Stinford, a small village in the Dorset countryside, near the graves of his ancestors and his first wife, Emma. which he fancied the most and which he wrote about so well in his "Wessex novels". (IRJMSH Vol 7) His second wife was later buried near her husband.

13.2.2 A Bird's Eye View

Birth	2 June 1840 Stinsford, Dorset England
-------	--

Death	11 January 1928 (aged 87) Dorchester, Dorset, England
Resting place	Stinsford parish church (heart) Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey (ashes)
Occupation	Novelist, poet, and short story writer
College/School	King's College, London
Literary movement	Naturalism, Victorian Literature
Spouse	Emma Gifford (1874–1912) Florance Dugdale (1914–1928)

13.2.3 Works of Thomas Hardy

Prose:

Hardy divided his novels and collected short stories into three classes:

NOVELS OF CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT

The Poor Man and the Lady (1867, unpublished and lost)

Under the Greenwood Tree: A Rural Painting of the Dutch
School (1872)

Far from the Madding Crowd (1874)

The Return of the Native (1878)

The Mayor of Casterbridge: The Life and Death of a Man of
Character (1886)

The Woodlanders (1887)

Wessex Tales (1888, a collection of short stories)

Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented (1891)

Life's Little Ironies (1894, a collection of short stories)

Jude the Obscure (1895)

ROMANCES AND FANTASIES:

Notes

A Pair of Blue Eyes: A Novel (1873)

The Trumpet-Major (1880)

Two on a Tower: A Romance (1882)

A Group of Noble Dames (1891, a collection of short stories)

The Well-Beloved: A Sketch of a Temperament (1897) (first published as a serial from 1892)

NOVELS OF INGENUITY

Desperate Remedies: A Novel (1871)

The Hand of Ethelberta: A Comedy in Chapters (1876)

A Laodicean: A Story of To-day (1881)

Hardy also produced a number of minor tales;

Story, *The Spectre of the Real* (1894) was written in collaboration with Florence Henniker.[69]

Short-story collection: *A Changed Man and Other Tales* (1913).

24-volume Wessex Edition (1912–13) and the 37-volume Mellstock Edition (1919–20): collections of his works

The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840–91 and *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892–1928*: His largely self-written biography appears under his second wife's name in two volumes from 1928 to 1930. Now published in a critical one-volume edition as *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*, edited by Michael Millgate (1984).

Short stories (with date of first publication)

"How I Built Myself A House" (1865)

"Destiny and a Blue Cloak" (1874)

"The Thieves Who Couldn't Stop Sneezing" (1877)

Short stories collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*

"The Honourable Laura" (1881)

"The First Countess of Wessex" (1889)

"Anna, Lady Baxby" (1890)

"The Lady Icenway" (1890)

"Lady Mottisfont" (1890)

"The Lady Penelope" (1890)

"The Marchioness of Stonehenge" (1890)

"Squire Petrick's Lady" (1890)

- "Barbara of the House of Grebe" (1890)
- "The Duchess of Hamptonshire" (1878)
- Short stories collected in *Wessex Tales*:
- "The Distracted Preacher" (1879)"Fellow-Townsmen" (1880)
- "*The Three Strangers*" (1883)
- "Interlopers at the Knap" (1884)
- "The Withered Arm" (1888)
- "An Imaginative Woman" (1894) (collected in *Wessex Tales*,
- Short stories collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*:
- "What The Shepherd Saw" (1881)
- "The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid" (1883)
- "*A Mere Interlude*" (1885
- "A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork" (1885)
- "*Alicia's Diary*" (1887
- "The Waiting Supper" (1887–88)
- "Master John Horseleigh, Knight" (1893)
- "A Committee-Man of 'The Terror'" (1896)
- "The Duke's Reappearance" (1896)
- "The Grave by the Handpost" (1897)
- "A Changed Man" (1900)
- "Enter a Dragoon" (1900)
- Short stories collected in *Life's Little Ironies*:
- "*A Tragedy of Two Ambitions*" (1888)
- "The Melancholy Hussar of The German Legion" (1890)
- "Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir" (1891)
- "The Winters and the Palmleys" (1891)
- "A Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four" (1882)
- "For Conscience' Sake" (1891)
- "Incident In The Life Of Mr. George Crookhill" (1891)
- "The Doctor's Legend" (1891)
- "Andrey Satchel and the Parson and Clerk" (1891
- "The History of the Hardcomes" (1891)
- "Netty Sargent's Copyhold" (1891)
- "On The Western Circuit" (1891
- "A Few Crusted Characters: Introduction" (1891)

Notes

"The Superstitious Man's Story" (1891)
"Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver" (1891)
"To Please His Wife" (1891)
"The Son's Veto" (1891)
"Old Andrey's Experience as a Musician" (1891)
"*Our Exploits At West Poley*" (1892–93)
"*The Fiddler of the Reels*" (1893/1896 edition)
"The Spectre of the Real" (1894)
"Blue Jimmy: The Horse Stealer" (1911)
"Old Mrs. Chundle" (1929)
"*The Unconquerable*" (1992)

POETRY COLLECTIONS

Wessex Poems and Other Verses (1898)
Poems of the Past and the Present (1901)
Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses (1909)
Satires of Circumstance (1914)
Moments of Vision (1917)
Late Lyrics and Earlier with Many Other Verses (1922)
Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs and Trifles (1925)
Winter Words in Various Moods and Metres (1928)

DRAMA:

The Dynasts: An Epic-Drama of the War with Napoleon (verse drama)
The Dynasts, Part 1 (1904)
The Dynasts, Part 2 (1906)
The Dynasts, Part 3 (1908)
The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall at *Tintagel* in
Lyonnesse (1923) (one-act play)

Pastoral Tragedies :

The Return of the Native
The Mayor of Casterbridge
Tess of the D'Urbervilles
The Simpletons and the Hearts Insurgents.

Pastoral Comedies :

1. The Hand of Ethelberta

2. A Laodicean

3. Two on a Tower.

Pastoral Romances :

Under the Greenwood Tree

Far from the Madding Crowd

A Pair of Blue Eyes

The Trumpet Major 5. The Woodlanders.

Pastoral Extravagance:

1. The Well Beloved

THOMAS HARDY AS A NOVELIST

Thomas Hardy was the last great novelist of the Victorian age, though his work, as a poet and a story writer, covers a few years of twentieth century. He began his career as a novelist at the insistence of his wife Emma, who wanted to see her husband's name blazing in letters of gold in the galaxy III of the novelists. Hardy, to go with his wife's desires, took up writing seriously and achieved eminent success in it. He is remembered as a novelist though he himself wanted to become a poet. Hardy's first experiment in novel writing was an utter failure and George Meredith. Criticized his two early works, *The Poor Man and Lady* and *Desperate Remedies*, in severe terms. He received instructions from Meredith master in the technique of plot-construction, and his later works were acclaimed as successful experiments in fiction writing.

13.3 THOMAS HARDY'S CONTRIBUTION

Hardy's Range:

The range of Hardy's novels was fairly wide. He was interested in the presentation of conflict between the country surrounding and the new urban civilization reared on materialism and machinery. Hardy's preference for the old civilization of the countryside is well marked in strong contrast to the conflict and dissension of modern advanced civilization. Besides presenting the conflict between the old and new ways of thinking, Hardy's novels represent the problems of marriage and

Notes

divorce in our society. His range covers social problems particularly the problems of marriage, unhappy wedlock, divorces and love-affairs. The helplessness of man under the impelling force of destiny is also brought out with all its grimness and the novelist feels a sense of frustration in presenting the unhappy lot of human beings swept away by the force of destiny and fate. His subject is not men but man. His theme is mankind's predicament in the universe. At every moment in the life of man a feeling of helplessness is presented bringing about despair and grief in the life of his characters. The range of Hardy's novels inspite of the wide canvas covered by the novelist is after all limited.

The theatre of Hardy's drama is built on a large scale, but it is sparsely furnished. His range does not allow him to present the vast, varied panorama of human life that we find in War and Peace. His scene is too narrow. The subtleties of intellectual life, the complexities of public life, the sophistications of social life do not kindle Hardy's imagination to work. The truth is that Hardy's range excludes the presentation of the liner shades of civilized life or the diversity of the human scene as a whole. The life portrayed by him can be reduced to its basic elements. People in Hardy's books are born, work hard for their living, fall in love and die. They do not do anything else. Such a life limits in its turn the range of their emotions. His comedy, tragedy, and poetry furnish his novels, but they centre mostly round rustic life, and fail to take into account the life of urban areas and the sophisticated society of modern times.

13.4 SALIENT FEATURES THOMAS HARDY'S WRITINGS

As an Artist

"It would be claimed for the Wessex novels of Thomas Hardy", says Abercormbie, "that in them fiction has achieved both siNi, And •111,,Lince that enable it to fulfill the greatest functions of art." Hardy believed that the novel should be as much of a whole a living organism, in which all component parts such as plot, dialogue, character, scenery, are skillfully framed together, giving the impression of a splendid

building. He achieved eminent success in his mission of elevating his writing into a conscious art. There is the stamp of the architect that was visible in his artistic productions. His novels are masterly works of art.

Hardy's Plot-Construction

Great masters of English fiction have always realized the importance of plot in a novel and have cultivated the art of plot-construction in a remarkable way. Hardy was a lover of stories from the days of his childhood and as he advanced in years and became a literary artist, he realized the importance story-telling in his novels. Hardy laid great stress in the plot or story of his novels, and reared the edifice in a skilful manner. He was an architect by profession, and left the impression of his professional proficiency in his novels. The plots are well-knit inspite of the presence of chance element and strange coincidences. They are complex for there are many incidents and details, however, the compactness and unity of his plots is not lost. Nothing is forced and the incidents are bound together by a cause and effect relation—one incident arising out of a former and leading to a latter. In the words of Duffin, "Every novel is an answer to the question. Given certain characters in certain situations, and allowing for the irony of fate what will happen—what will become of them." In these, marshalling of events to an ulterior purpose Hardy exhibits his skill as an architect and master artist in plot-construction. Hardy's plots are not simple. In the words of Cazamian, "They grow out of elementary passions; ambition, greed, love, jealousy and the thirst for knowledge and the springs which move them are psychological. Hardy tends to shift the construction of his novels to the inner world; he writes a moral drama, shows a conflict of-contradictory wills guide themselves by feelings."

Hardy's Plots with Themes:

Love Affairs: Hardy presents stories of love, involving the love-affairs of the principal characters, Jude, Tess, Eustacia Vye, Bathsheba Everdene, Trop, Oak, Grace Mulberry have their love affairs. Some of the characters achieve success in their love affairs while others meet with despair. Hardy presents in his novels the trials and tribulations that come-in the way of lovers.

Conflict Between Rural and Urban Civilization:

Notes

Hardy presents in his plots the conflict between the old rural civilization and the new urban civilization. Tragedy in his novels rises from the influence of modern competitive civilization on the primitive and simple life.

The primitive belief and manners of the old world people receive a rude kick from the impact of the strange disease of modern life with its sick hurry/ and divided aims, and misery follows in the wake of such a conflict.

The plot of *Far the Madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess of the D'Urbensilles*, and *Jude the Obscure* is based on this conflict between the old and the new world, between characters, belonging to the countryside, and characters coming to rural life from urban centres. Hardy's preference in his novels is for the countryside and rural surroundings. His novels lament the loss of rustic simplicity and essence of country life under the impact of urban civilization.

Hardy's Humour

Hardy was a writer of tragedies and from such a writer we cannot expect pleasant and genial humour like that of Goldsmith. He cannot tickle us to broad laughter like Dickens. He cannot be placed in the category of great humorists like Fielding and Thackeray. The humour that runs through his work is of a grim and ghastly kind. There is a note of bitterness in Hardy's novels. "Occupying less space but more characteristic, are his flashes of satiric humour, sometimes grim and occasionally ghastly. Here and there is delicate and evanescent smile. His humour has not the society grace, nor often the artistic point of finish of Meredith; but it always rings true, and is never gross, coarse or vulgar." Mostly humour in Hardy's novels rises from his rustic characters. They create humour out of their ignorance. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* there is pleasant humour when the driver of coach says that, "If there could be a George IV, there should also be a Charles IV for Charles are as common as George." Rustic humour also rises when Creedle and Crawtree indulge in mirthful talks in *Woodlanders*. The remarks of Mother Cuxom and Solomon Longways on the 'cannibal deal' of Christopher Conney in *the Mayor of Casterbridge* are particularly humorous. We are made to laugh at the

immemorial butts of village life-garrulous, reminiscent old grandfathers, henpecked husbands, ludicrous, timid simpletons, and the incongruity between the facts of life and the countryman's ignorant comment on them. The bitterness and satiric force of Hardy's humour can be seen in his death scenes and funerals. There is a grim humour in the remark that Sue's children in *Jude the Obscure* died because they were too many. The death of Judge Fawley and Michael Henchard are instinct with ghastly and bitter kind of humour and irony.

Hardy's View of Death

Hardy does not believe in life after death. He finds no evidence of a conscious state after death. He does not hold out a land of bliss to the virtuous dyad. All that virtuous people should expect is to live in the memory of some persons after their exit from the world. Dead persons can continue to live in the fragrant memory of those who are in some way related to the dead. No one should fear death for it marks the end of all miseries and sufferings in the world: "Of comfort no man speak

Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs

Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes

Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth."

Hardy's Attitude towards Marriage and Love

Hardy deals with the problems of marriage and love in two of his novels *Lesser of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. Problem of marriage is set out with great force. In Hardy's view, at first sight does not very much help in making life happy. Marriages that are the result of love at first sight generally end in unhappiness. Marriages should be performed after matured consideration. The two people should study and understand each other before they rush into marriage. It is only by thoughtful consideration that marriages ought to be cemented. However, when married life becomes irksome or unhappy for anyone of the partners, each one must have the right to divorce the other. Man or woman must have the right to free himself or herself from his or her partnership in case it is impossible to carry on well in the married state of life. The Mayor of Casterbridge Hardy puts his viewpoint in the conversation that takes place between Susan and Henchard. "The conversation took a high turn, it often does on such occasions. The ruin of good men by bad

Notes

wives, and more particularly, the frustration of many a promising youth's high aims and hopes and the extinction of his energies, by an early impudent marriage was the theme." In one of his famous prefaces Hardy writes, "A marriage should be dissolved as soon as it becomes a cruelty to either of the parties, being essentially no marriage." Hardy insisted on breaking the bond of marriage if it fails to make the couple happy.)

Hardy's Landscape

Hardy has immortalized his native district of Wessex and there he struck the true vein of his talent. In his Wessex novels, Hardy reaches classic grandeur and shows all the signs of a mature writer. D. Hawkins aptly views, "It WM Hardy who for the first time used the word "Wessex" in the special sense which it has since acquired. Before 1874, Wessex was an ancient Saxon kingdom, and nothing more.

Relations Between Men and Women

Relations between men and women constitute the core of almost all Hardy's novels. The author's seeming conservatism, based on devotion to the rustic, pastoral picture of the English countryside, in particular his home (rural Dorset), did not, however, prevent him from exploring topics related to sex, physical desire, extramarital love and strained, love-hate male-female relations, which were considered taboo by the majority of writers in the Victorian era. The issues of gender and sexuality are ubiquitous in Hardy's work, especially in the novels of character and environment, such as *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) or *Jude the Obscure* (1895). In these novels, the author presents the emotions experienced by his powerful, elemental characters, principally those of his female protagonists.

Hardy's Characters

Hardy's creative power is best exhibited in the portrayal of characters. His range in characterization is limited, and he could draw only people belonging to the Wessex region. Hardy, for the first time in English literature, has chosen peasant types for his heroes and heroines in a series of literary masterpieces.

The Wessex people are his ideals. He has given convincing pictures of Wessex peasants, labourers, shepherds, and singers. His Wessex

characters seem to be like elemental force on a background of vaster elemental forces. They are the logical and natural expression of sleepy woodland places, gaunt austere hills, purling streams, and solitary extensive landscape. When he attempts to portray characters from the higher aristocratic life of the urban areas, he fails, and his aristocratic characters like Lady Charmond and Lady Lucetta are not at all credible.

Hardy's characters are emotional rather than intellectual. He did not adopt the psychological method of character portrayal popularized by George Eliot and George Meredith. He laid greater emphasis on the emotional side of his characters than on their intellectual side. Bathsheba and Tess, Henchard and Oak are emotional characters, and they leave an indelible impression in our minds. Hardy, being a poet and delineator of emotional characters, achieved eminent success in the portrayal of lovers implied by passion and emotion. He has presented men and women in love. Some of his characters like Troy and Boldwood, Wildeve and Angel Clare are passionate lovers exhibiting the fervour of their hearts in passionate speeches, while a good many of his characters are quiet and restrained in matters of love like Elizabeth Jane, Marty South and Fanny Robbin.

It is one of the peculiar features of Hardy's characterization that he presents good people with great admiration and enthusiasm, and condemns villains and sophisticated persons with a sneering contempt. Hardy's sympathy is always with good, noble and gentle-hearted characters like Tess, Elizabeth Jane, Gabriel Oak and Venn, the Reddlemen. He dislikes hypocritical characters like Sergeant Troy, Dr. Fitzpiers, and Alec. He is seldom successful in drawing horrible people. Hardy's characters are generally flat and belong to certain types. His characters can be placed under certain groups, and persons belonging to one group have a family likeness about them.

Hardy's concern is with men in general, rather than with individual man or woman. His characters can be classified into a group with characters who are noble, selfless, self-sacrificing, tender-hearted and uncomplaining. To this group belong Gabriel Oak, Giles Winterborne, Diggory Venn, Marty South, Elizabeth Jane, Tess. In another group are characters that are dashing, sparkling, vivacious, cunning, shifty, and

Notes

fickle-minded. To this group belong characters such as Troy, Wildeve, Dr. Fitzpiers, Alec D'Urbervilles, Eustacia Vye, Mrs. Channon, Lucetta, Lady Constatine. Another group of characters are intellectual snobs like Angel and Knight.

In his conviction the rural and the countryside has the capacity of producing noble, gentle, and good-hearted souls. City life, with all its sophistications, has a beautiful effect on human character and is likely to produce shifty, cunning and hypocritical characters. This preference of Hardy for his rustic and country-bred characters is well-marked in his novels.

Hardy has given a rich picture of human characters in his novels. He has drawn men as well as women with remarkable skill. It is necessary to make a few observations about Hardy's **men and women** characters:

Hardy's **male** characters are vivid, passionate, emotional and impulsive. They usually suffer from indecision. They are sometimes the victims of passions and sometimes of stern determination. They sometimes exhibit valour and vitality, and on other occasions effeminacy and moral depravity. Hardy's male characters are real human beings, men of flesh and blood, and in their portrayal, he brings the disinterested objectivity of a detached observer of life. He pictures all classes of male characters. There are selfless, noble, gentle, kind-hearted and serviceable men like Gabriel Oak, Diggory Venn, and Giles Winterborne. There are bold, shifty, cunning and hypocritical characters like Troy, Wildeve, Fitzpiers and Alec. There are men, brave and heroic, like Henchard, and persons, passionate and stormy, like Boldwood.

Hardy's skill is best exhibited in the presentation of **female** characters. "Profound as is his comprehension of human nature at large", say Duffin, "it is in the female personality that he is most marvelously learned." He has unfolded feminine character with all her delicacy, emotion, and passionate adour in his novels. Duffin has classified Hardy's women characters in three groups:

The first group includes full-length portraits of women who are of a higher order of personality e.g. Tess, Sue, Eustacia, Bathsheba and Elizabeth Jane.

The second group also consists of full-length study of women, but they have less personal significance e.g. Ethelberta, Elfride, Grace, Mulberry, Viviette, Anne.

The third group includes woman of much less significance e.g. Lucetta, Arabella, Tomasia, Marty South, Paula, Fancy Picotel.

It is to be noted that Hardy prefers women who belong to the countryside, for their finest qualities. Women from a city are sophisticated, cunning and hypocritical. Tess, Elizabeth Jane and Marty South are noble and gentle because they have been reared in the rural surroundings far away from the sick, hurry and divided aims of modern life.

There is a category among Hardy's characters which may be called 'chorus' characters, the groups of rustics which in his greatest works form, as it were, the chorus of the main drama. They always appear in a group and never separately. They make observations about life and the activities of his characters. They are moralists at heart and carping in their criticism.

Check Your Progress-1

Q1. Discuss Hardy's plot construction. -

Q2. Comment on Hardy's humour in his novels.

13.5 HARDY'S PESSIMISM AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Hardy was primarily an artist. It was his ambition to present his impressions of life in a detached and objective manner. He did not favour the idea of being called a philosopher though his words display a compact philosophical ideology of Hardy. He did not follow any fixed pattern of philosophy that could be related to any particular school of

Notes

thought. He was an artist and an impressionist, recording his impressions of life in his novels. Hardy, in fact, considered a novel as a work of impressionism rather than philosophy. In the preface to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* he says, "A novel is an impression, not an argument. A tale-teller writes down how the things of the world strike him without any intentions whatever." Hardy's novels are impressions that the novelist gathered from life. Several influences worked effectively in the formation of Hardy's impression about life. Hardy's physical ill-health, the morbidity of his temper, and his general inclination towards the funeral side of things determined his melancholy and pessimistic outlook and impressions about life. Then there were the external factors of his age and the times in which he lived. The rapid advancement of industrial life, destroying the serenity of country surroundings, and the general acceptance of the Darwinian *Theory of Evolution* striking a smashing blow at old religious convictions, coloured Hardy's thoughts and considerably modified his way of looking at life and its problems. Such thoughts as the following began to flash through Hardy's mind—"If, as seemed possible, it (world) was only a fancy process evolving from one knew whiter, what was the significance of those moral and spiritual values which he had learned to regard as a the most religious things in life? If Christianity was not true, what became of the conception of Divine Justice bringing all to good in the end." Considerably impressed by the above statement, Hardy approached life and its varied visions. He viewed life in a **realistic manner**. He did not look at life through the many coloured glass of romance or of fancy, but in the spirit of a detached observer accepting without any disappointment what life really unfolded to him. It is this realistic approach to life that we find in Hardy's novels. Hardy's vision of life is certainly not very attractive and glamorous. He did not find success, jollity, hopefulness, and ruddy optimism among the people whom he witnessed, and with whom his lot was cast. He came across despair, dejection, failure, frustration in human life. He noticed abundance of tragedy in the life of Wessex people who were poor, dependent, and ignorant. He found them exposed to the oppressions of the social system, the caprice of weather and "The President of Immortals" every now and then undoing their lives. This is

what Hardy saw, and this is what is actually presented in his novels. His attitude towards life is pessimistic and gloomy in the sense that utmost in all his tragic novels like *Tess*, *Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Jude the Obscure* and *The Return of the Native* there are scenes of despair and dejection, of hopes unfulfilled, and plans unearned out. Man proves feeble before chance, fate or destiny that so often comes to fouled man's plans and schemes.

Hardy considers men and women as mere puppets in the hands of a mocking fate which is relentless in its blind justice. The scene of misery and despair saturate the novels with gloominess. 'Man proposes and God disposes' stands true in all his works. The tragedy of human life is enacted in all its grimness, for somehow or the other, destiny, fate, divinity stands completely opposed to man's noble plans mid schemes. Hardy sees the working of a malignant power and an imminent ill pitted against frail human beings pouring disaster and distress in their lives. He feels that some mighty Power blind and impotent to tend has framed us in jest and is playing a cruel game with man's life. Everywhere in his novels human beings appear to be crushed by this power which is indifferent, callous and hostile to man. He considers that gods are opposed to human beings and it is their pleasure that men and women should suffer, and meet with hard knocks and blows in life.

He upholds the Greek mythology, according to which the gods are cruel and heartless and kill men for their sport. Hardy presents with firm conviction the working of a sinister intelligence in the affairs of human beings, and reiterates with a firm force that Shakespeare had stated: 'As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods They kill us for their sport.' Hardy fails to see any justification in Browning's observations about God and the goodness of human life. In *Tess* Hardy controvert Browning's earlier statement about God and his wise dispensation of the Universe, and makes one of his characters to remark: God's not in the Heaven All's wrong with the world. The picture of life in Hardy's novels is thus gloomy and pessimistic. He does not find happiness in human life and in the concluding part of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, he makes the pregnant observation through the mouth of Elizabeth Jane that "Happiness is an interlude in a general drama of pain." Happiness in

Notes

human life is an oasis which is easily submerged by the swirling waves of agonies, sorrows and sufferings. Through the wide canvas of his works we notice the shadows of darkness and somberness pervading the entire scenes of his novels. There is suffering everywhere in the world and the virtuous as well as the vicious share it:

To each his suffering; all are men

Condemned alike to groan

The tender for another's pain

The unfeeling for his own.

To him life does not hold out any charm and he knows what life has in store for human beings. In his poem, *To Life* Hardy makes his vision of life very clear. He says:

“O, Life with the sad sacred face I weary, of seeing thee,

I know what thou wouldst tell

Of Death, Time, Destiny I have known it long, and know, too well,

What it all means for me.”

13.6 HARDY'S REALISM

Hardy's attitude towards life is undoubtedly pessimistic and gloomy. He holds out no hope for human beings. But his pessimism is not depressing; he exhorts man to struggle and fight against the decrees of fate and cruel destiny. He does not propose to make a weak surrender to the majesty of the sinister and malignant force governing the universe. Hardy is of the view that in spite of his inevitable fate, man should strive and struggle and fight against untoward circumstances that come in his life. He should go down fighting in a brave and heroic spirit. This attitude towards life is being presented by Hardy through the character of Mayor in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, where the Mayor struggles and fights against the decrees of fate throughout his life though he ultimately meets his tragic end. Hardy is not for intellectual coward and invalids. His pessimism will be depressing to those who are morally and intellectually incapable of standing shocks in life. Hardy is not complacent in his attitude. He does not simply give way to the cheap optimistic feelings that "somehow good will be the final goal of ill." He

is a sturdy realist who takes life at its face value; and what actually is the state of affairs in the world. He considers it simply wish-fulfillment to indulge in cheap optimism, when the forces of evil, sadness and despair overpower from all sides. It is foolish and unwise for anybody to be an optimist when he sees the conditions of life in a realistic and faithful light. Such is the realistic vision of life unfolded by Hardy in his novels. He is a pessimist, but his pessimism is more satisfying than the cheap optimism of some thinkers who hesitate to call a spade a spade, and gloss over the realities of life by a thin veneer of superficial optimism. Hardy's philosophy and sturdy realism will enable human being to drive away day-dreaming and come to the realities of a hard and stem world. Hardy brings home to us to view life realistically as it is without expecting too much from the world, its Controller and His created beings. Hardy always impresses upon his readers that it is mere folly to seek happiness at the hands of Destiny or Providence. Man must depend on himself and learn to face the vicissitudes of fortune in a brave and heroic manner. Abandoned by God, treated with scorn by nature, man lies helplessly at the mercy of those purblind doomsters,—accident, chance and time from which he has had to endure injury and insult from the cradle to the grave. Let him face his destiny bravely. Though Hardy arraigns and accuses God of imbecility and malignancy, yet he is not harsh and bitter against human beings. He has infinite sympathy for human beings crushed under the wheels of an overpowering fate. Hardy exhorts his readers to be sympathetic to the victims of social injustice and inequality and pleads feelingly for those who have to suffer the blows of fate and society in a rapacious manner. He impresses on his readers not so indulge in condemnation of their fellowmen even when they are weak and yield to temptations of the world. His philosophy is thus based on a sympathetic and catholic attitude towards life and is surely one of the finest fruits of literary culture in modern times.

13.7 HARDY'S MELIORISM

Hardy, himself, did not like to be dubbed as a pessimist, but a **meliorist**. Hardy seems to have winced at the suggestion of **pessimism** in his

thought. He has answered the charge to pessimism in the following words: "People call me a pessimist; and if it is pessimism to think, with Sophocles, that Snot to have been born is best,' then I do not reject the designation. I never could understand why the word 'pessimism' should be such a red rag to many worthy people; and I believe, indeed, that a good deal of the *robustious* swaggering optimism of recent literature is at bottom cowardly and insincere. I do not see that we are likely to improve the world by asserting, however loudly, that black or white, or at least that black is but a necessary contrast and foil, without which white would be white no longer. That is mere juggling with a metaphor." Hardy expresses his own theory about pessimism in these words, "As to pessimism, my motto is: first correctly diagnose the complaint in this case, the human ills and ascertain the cause; then set about tiding a remedy if one exists. The motto or practice of the optimists is; blind eyes to the real malady, and use empirical panaceas to suppress the symptoms. My view is to find a remedy for the ills if one can easily do so." These words of Hardy sound satisfying and heartening.

13.8 HARDY'S TREATMENT OF NATURE

Nature has always exercised a fascinating influence on the mind of poets, from the time of Chaucer to our own day. The Romantic Revival produced a number of Nature worshippers, the chief of them being Wordsworth, who applauded Nature's holy plans and considered her a gentle and kind mother. He took Nature as his guide, nurse and sheet anchor of life. Hardy's attitude towards nature is quite the opposite of Wordsworth. Hardy does not regard Nature as a kind and generous mother. For Hardy Nature is the agent of cruelty and destruction. She has no sympathy for human being. For him all the resourcefulness, all the beauty, all the charms, all the bewitching moves of Nature are for the destruction of man. Hardy thinks that Nature is insensible to the feelings of man, and finds a sort of fiendish delight in slaying simple human beings. Egdon Heath is the terrible spot where many lives are crushed. Alec in the very lap of Nature ravishes the virginity of Tess and not a

word of protest is heard against the act by nature. Hardy asks—"Darkness and silence ruled everywhere around. Above them rose the primeval years and oaks of the chase. About them stole the hopping rabbits and hare. But, might sonic say, where was Tess' guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith?" Lord David Cecil makes Hardy's attitude towards Nature quite clear in his admirable study of Hardy. He says—"However, Hardy's attitude towards Nature was not Wordsworthian. He did not believe that Nature has any holy plan or healing power. Being influenced by the theory of Evolution he found Much in Nature that was cruel and antagonistic to man." Hardy has used nature in several capacities in his novels. The Influence of nature on humanity has been presented in different ways in his novels. Nature influences the moods and actions of Hardy's human character understand the self-sacrificing love of Mary South, we must realize the spell of the brooding woods, the magic of the quiet, enduring trees whose life she knew so well. The strange, unearthly feeling or early morning to Clara in proximity to Tess; the tense, boring atmosphere while Gabriel Oak works to save Bathsheba's ricks from burning—these and many other scenes show natural aspects working on the mood of the persons and through them on the mood of the readers. The influence of nature on human beings is best illustrated in *The Woodlanders*, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Return of the Native*.

In most of his Nature scenes, Hardy presents an emotional connection between nature and human beings. Sometimes nature is affected by human emotions, and sometimes man is affected by nature's feelings. In *Tess* we notice a change in nature's feelings in accordance with the emotional change in Tess's life. With the progressive wreck of Tess' happiness, there is also a symbolic change in the climate and atmosphere of the place where she goes, from the secluded vale of Blackmoor to the silent vale of the Great Dairies, the bleak chalk table-land of Fintcombe-Ash, fashionable sandy bower and at last the Great Plain and the Druid temple of Stonehenge. In *The Return of the Native*, Egdon Heath influences the emotions and feelings of the characters. The Heath imparts a tragic gloom to the characters of the novel. The Heath is employed to

Notes

create feelings of terror among the characters of the novel. Nature, in fact, enters too much in the mood and emotion of human beings in Hardy's novels.

Lord David Cecil very nicely puts this inter-relation of man and nature in Hardy's novels in the following words: "Nature, first of all, played a larger part in Hardy's books than in those of any other English novelist. It is not just the background in his drama, but also a leading character in it. Sometimes, it exercises an active influence on the course of events; more often, it is a spiritual agent, colouring the mood and shaping the disposition of human beings. The huge bleak darkness of Egdon Heath dominates the lives of the characters in *The Return of the Native* infusing into them its splendor and its gloom. His most living characters, moreover, are always creatures of the country-side. Farmers and shepherds, thatchers and hedgers, and most of them, never stray beyond its borders." Whatever may be the relation between man and nature in Hardy's novels, it cannot be denied that the pictures of nature drawn by the novelist in his novels are graphic, vivid and exhibit his intense love for the external beauties of nature. Hardy has left innumerable descriptions of birds, grass, flowers, gardens, bridges, and sunset in his novels. He has perception both for the finer shades as well as the solemn harmonies of nature. His acute sense of observation and keen reception of the sounds of nature can be felt in all his novels. His landscapes and pictures of nature, both in its animate and inanimate aspects, exhibit the dexterous hand of a skilled artist and a meticulous painter. He combines the method of general broad line painting with the art of minute and accurate painting in his novels. He loves to paint the wood, where the seasons go through the infinitely varied circle of rich pastures, the sober hills of his native district; the bare uplands where the furrow of a Roman road runs straight and empty to the horizon; the gloomy vastness of the moor in which every living vanishes as if swallowed up in the depths of the centuries whose image is called by its immobility.

13.9 HARDY'S IMAGINATION

Hardy, with his imagination sets his plots in his native land to give a sense of historical continuity; the Roman legions, the Danes, the Angles Celts, their bloody fights, cruelty, wars and a host of other associations are called up by that name the Wessex, the land of the West Saxons. "They all are novels of provincial, and even rustic life; for if the scene is sometimes shifted from the country to the towns, these are steeping boroughs or cities, flooded by the influences of the fields, Oxford, the great university, which lifts its towers and spires on the horizon is, to the north, the boundary of the agricultural country, hardly eaten into by the fever of modern manners whose heart is Hardy's own Dorsetshire, and for which he has kept its old name of Wessex. Through this land of memories, where hills are crowned with Roman camps and where harrows hide even more ancient remains, the fates are unrolled of heroes placed in a lower or middle condition." (Cazamian) The Wessex region with its streams, heaths, Roman monuments, tales of sorrow and superstitions lends an enchanting and serve a highly romantic background to the novels. Moreover, Hardy uses his background greatly to invest his novels with symbolic breadth. He also loads his descriptions with philosophy. Description, when it reaches this degree of symbolic breadth, is loaded with philosophy. Hardy's gaze perceives time as well as space. The past of the world casts a spiritual but visible shadow over the surface of a globe grown old, where the brightest rays are shown of the gaiety of young light. The ashes of the dead fertilize the mould, and give the flowers their beauty; the ploughshare bring up the tools, the arms, of the first masters of 'a soil which we believe ours, and whose aspect is to us familiar and reassuring, because we are not acquainted with the luxurious dramas that are hidden in it. To the spring bloom or autumn ripen is to call up within the only setting that is unchanged in the long history of mankind, still ravaged by the same passions, overwhelmed by the same fate, vainly, seeking a cure for its anguish in an aimless agitation. Hardy's pessimism is not only a way of thinking; lived by his most instinctive sensibility, it imbues all his visions; it is the very essence of his admirable poetry of nature." (Cazamian) " We find this very symbolic power in the description of Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native* in which Hardy describes Eustacia's lonely night-time vigil.

Notes

"Throughout the blowing of these plaintive November winds that note bore a great resemblance to the ruins of human song which remain to the throat of fourscore and ten. It was a worn whisper, dry and papery, and it brushed so distinctly across the ear that, by the accustomed, the material minutiae in which it originated could be realized as by touch. It was the united products of infinitesimal vegetable causes, and these were neither stems; leaves, fruits, blades, prickles, lichen, nor moss."

"They were the mummied heath-bells of the past summer, originally lender and purple, now washed colourless by Michaelmas rains, and dried to dead skins by October suns. So low was an individual sound from silence, and the myriads of the whole declivity reached the woman's ear but as a thrivelled and intermitter recitative." This shows the grand canvas on which Hardy painted his pictures. Moreover, it also shows that as far as Hardy was concerned landscape as such had no meaning. Landscape always had its human association. For Hardy landscape is a landscape with figures. And Hardy sees landscape not only in space but also in time. While talking about Egdon he tells us that it was unaltered from the time of Caesar.

He views the scene along with its past. For example: "He frequently walked the heath alone, when the past seized upon him with its shadowy hand and held him there to listen to its tale. His imagination would then people the spot with ancient inhabitants; forgotten. Celtic tribes trod their tracks about him, and he could almost live among them, look in their faces, and see them standing beside the barrows which swelled around, untouched and perfect as at the time of their erection. Those of the dyed barbarians who had chosen the cultivable tracts were in comparison with those who had left their marks here, as writers on paper beside writers on parchment. Their records had perished long ago by the plough, while the works of these remained. Yet they all had lived and died unconscious of the different fates awaiting their relics." Dorset is what it is, but Hardy's imagination helped him to paint in its sublime relation to space and time. He also presented it in its relation to man. "The customary rural ceremonies and merry-makings caught his fancy, both from their association with landscape and with the historic past. He always seized the chance to bring out into his stories, and always describes it in detail.

The parties in *The Woodlanders* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*, with their homely jests and rude, plenty and boisterous country dances; winter delights, as when the mummers perform the old Christmas play, St. George, by the firelight of Mrs. Yeobright's kitchen, or the carol-singers call Fancy to her window under the frosty starlight; and those of summer—the Maypole, sprung up in the night like Jack's beanstalk, and gay with bluebell and cowslip and ragged robin, which greets Thomasin's eyes when she looks out of her window in the early morning; or the midsummer, rites that send the village girls of Hintock stealing through the shadowy woods in the voluptuous June night; the sun burnt: Harvest Home supper, with its songs and its cider drinking, outside Bathsheba's farmhouse—these are high spots in Hardy's books, and from that he distils its individual perfume of rustic poetry." (Lord David Cecil) Hardy brings out the humdrum dullness of agricultural life with its petty but he also reveals the soul of agricultural life.

Hardy's Wessex presents before us a beautiful panorama of the people, history, conventions, customs, and superstitions. The old associations and old history are irretrievably mixed with the present rustic people and their ways of life.

13.10 HARDY'S SHORTCOMING

Great as Hardy is as an artist, he is not entirely flawless in his workmanship. The chief defect is that his novels have a jerky movement; action does not proceed smoothly; but it moves by fits and starts. Sometimes it is felt that he is "...desperately inventing out of a tired and bored mind." The reason for this is that most of the novels of Hardy were published in serial form. This serial writing for magazines has its good as well as bad points. Desmond Hawkins has noted, "Hardy, on the contrary, always had reasons to be anxious about his ability to become "a good hand at a serial." His style is so often circuitous and wandering. His instinct is to deepen rather than to advance. And when he is obliged to advance, he is apt either to tiptoe furtively past the reader's sentries without giving the password, or to close his eyes and make a wild rush. There comes the moment when he wants to achieve a certain effect. The

Notes

plot jerks and jolts suddenly and in his impatience Hardy omits to chart any probable, logical course of events by which he could have reached his destination."

He was a faulty writer and his works have a number of noticeable blemishes. He possessed the creative gift in the highest degree but his presentation was faulty. He could not design his plots well. His plots are clear but their design is clumsy. Let us take the case of *Two On a Tower*. In this novel the interstellar universe is contrasted with the lives of Lady Constantine and Swithin, the astronomer. "But, in order to make a full-length novel about it, Hardy incorporates it in an intricate and improbable tale of intrigue in high life, featuring a jealous peer and an unscrupulous bishop, and interspersed with reflections on the difficulty of women's lot in conventional society. This plot is feeble in itself and it has nothing to do with the imaginative stimulus which prompted him to write the book." (Lord David Cecil) Hardy's novels abound in coincidences and accidents which do not sound very natural. It is not that accidents or coincidences do not happen in life. But in the novels of Hardy it appears that their appearance is rather forced. For example, in *The Woodlanders* Hardy had to get rid of Mrs. Channon, once Grace and Fitzpiers were reconciled. So what he does is that he invents a desperate lover who comes at the right time and shoots her. In 'Tess' the desperate letter for help which Tess had written to Angel Clare does not reach him. He gets it but it is too late. Hardy's range was limited to Wessex peasantry. But at times, as in *A Group of Noble Dames*, Hardy tries to portray grand dames and fails miserably. He had never seen grand dames intimately. So he had to paint conventional and therefore lifeless portraits of such ladies as Lady Constantine (*Two on a Tower*), Mrs. Chamiond and others. These are not realistic characters and they lack the breath of life. Similarly, he is not at home while painting intellectually complex characters. For example in Sue, he tries to paint an advanced woman; he succeeds in making her another Tess incongruously dressed. Similarly, incongruous characters are Fitzpiers and Knight. Whenever Hardy tries his hand at characters, he did not know intimately, his failure becomes glaring and his characters become puppets going through conventional motions. In matter of plots, Hardy is neither very

resourceful nor very inventive. Occasionally he is downright careless. In the story of *The Son's Veto*, Sophy is shown to possess "nut-brown hair," yet on the next page, he says that she had "black hair." Another weakness of Hardy is that he over-emphasizes the part played by chance. In other words, he taxes the credulity of the reader too much because blind chance he introduced in a work of fiction only at a critical moment. In fact, a thin line divides the legitimate and undue uses of chance and Hardy is quite prone to using it illegitimately also. For example, Tess did not tell her husband the fact about her earlier seduction. The fear of Angel's disapproval was quite a legitimate reason for her silence; but Hardy makes her write a letter of confession and put it under Angel's door; Hardy makes the letter slip under the carpet and Angel, in the end, does not receive that letter. All this elaborate ado about the letter is too much for the reader to swallow. Or take the case of *The Return of the Native*. We can appreciate that Mrs. Yeobright should go to see Clym at the wrong moment. We can also believe that, disappointed, she may wander back across Egdon Heath and be bitten by a snake. But Eustacia's letter of appeal to Clym goes astray simply because the messenger forgets to post it. This is a clumsy twist and his readers are not prepared to accept it as a legitimate case of chance. As David Cecil puts it, "The characters are puppets all right; but puppets not in the hands of the Fate but of author."

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-2

Q3. Write a note on Hardy as a Meliorist

.

Q4. Discuss Hardy's use of chorus in his novels.

13.11 LET US SUM UP

Thomas Hardy not only depicts miseries, especially women miseries, social injustices, economical inequalities, but also probes deeper into the ways in which his protagonists can find their own freedom. His work basically reflects different aspects of female conflicts and women are always down trodden shown in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. The significance of this research work exists in evaluating Thomas Hardy's outlook about pessimism and how it influences on his characters. How it takes place in their lives through chance and co-incidences, fate and circumstances. Many a times they suffer without any fault, for instance in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess Durbeyfield, the daughter of a poor and dissipated villager, walk out of the house to earn living and in her search for respectability her fortunes fluctuates wildly. And her relationships with two different men and her struggle against the social mores bring pessimism. In a nut shell, the study of the pessimism in this novel will help the readers, teachers and students to understand the contemporary views about pessimism.

13.12 KEYWORDS

- Dorset- prehistoric culture which flourished in the American Arctic during the 1st millennium AD and was displaced by the Thule culture
- Meliorism: the belief that the world tends to improve and that humans can aid its betterment.
- Pessimism- negative feelings
- Rural –related to villages
- Mankind- Human Race
- Predicament- a difficult, unpleasant, or embarrassing situation.

13.13 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Discuss Thomas Hardy as a novelist.

Outline the salient features of Hardy's novels.

Comment on Hardy's Rural setting in his novels.

Point out the main features of the characters painted by Hardy.

Write short notes on Hardy's Pessimism, Philosophy of life, Realism and Treatment of Nature.

13.14 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

(IRJMSH Vol 7) Issue 8 [Year 2016] ISSN 2277 – 9809 (Online) 2348–9359 (Print) International Research Journal of Management Sociology & Humanity (IRJMSH) Page 241 www.irjmsh.com

13.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Hardy's plots with themes:

Hardy presents stories of love, involving the love-affairs of the principal characters, Jude, Tess, Eustacia Vye, Bathsheba Everdene, Trope, Oak, Grace Mulberry have their love affairs. Some of the characters achieve success in their love affairs while others meet with despair. Hardy presents in his novels the trials and tribulations that come- in the way of lovers. Hardy presents in his plots the conflict between the old rural civilization and the new urban civilization. Tragedy in his novels rises from the influence of modern competitive civilization on the primitive and simple life.

The primitive belief and manners of the old world people receive a rude kick from the impact of the strange disease of modern life with its sick hurry/ and divided aims, and misery follows in the wake of such a conflict.

The plot of Far the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders, Tess of the D'Urbens, and Jude the Obscure is based on this conflict between the old and the new world, between characters, belonging to the countryside, and characters coming to rural life from urban centres.

2. Hardy was a writer of tragedies and from such a writer we cannot expect pleasant and genial humour like that of Goldsmith. The humour that runs through his work is of a grim and ghastly kind. There is a note

Notes

of bitterness in Hardy's novels. Here and there is delicate and evanescent smile. His humour has not the society grace, nor often the artistic point of finish of Meredith; but it always rings true, and is never gross, coarse or vulgar." Mostly humour in Hardy's novels rises from his rustic characters. They create humour out of their ignorance. We are made to laugh at the immemorial butts of village life-garrulous, reminiscent old grandfathers, henpecked husbands, ludicrous, timid simpletons, and the incongruity between the facts of life and the countryman's ignorant comment on them. The bitterness and satiric force of Hardy's humour can be seen in his death scenes and funerals. There is a grim humour in the remark that Sue's children in *Jude the Obscure* died because they were too many. The death of Judge Fawley and Michael Henchard are instinct with ghastly and bitter kind of humour and irony.

3. There is a category among Hardy's characters which may be called '**chorus**' characters, the groups of rustics which in his greatest works form, as it were,-the chorus of the main drama. They always appear in a group and never separately. They make observations about life and the activities of his characters. They are moralists at heart and carping in their criticism.

4. Hardy called himself a **meliorist**. He has answered the charge to pessimism in the following words: "People call me a pessimist; and if it is pessimism to think, with Sophocles, that Snot to have been born is best,' then I do not reject the designation. ... "As to pessimism, my motto is: first correctly diagnose the complaint in this case, the human ills and ascertain the cause; then set about tiding a remedy if one exists. The motto or practice of the optimists is; blind eyes to the real malady, and use empirical panaceas to suppress the symptoms. My view is to find a remedy for the ills if one can easily do so." These words of Hardy sound satisfying and heartening.

UNIT-14 TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

STRUCTURE

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
 - 14.1.1 Publication and Title of the Novel
- 14.2 Summary of the Novel
- 14.3 The Plot
- 14.4 The Setting
- 14.5 Major Themes
- 14.6 Character Sketches
 - 14.6.1 Teresa Tess" Durbeyfield"
 - 14.6.2 Angel Clare
 - 14.6.3 Alec Stoke-d'Urberville
- 14.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 14.8 Keywords
- 14.9 Questions for Review
- 14.10 Suggested Readings and References
- 14.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVE

Study about the novel Tess of the D'urbervilles.

Study the characters and themes of the novel.

Study of the society and it's culture of that time.

Analysis of the story and the themes .

Status of women in the society.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

14.1.1 PUBLICATION AND TITLE OF THE NOVEL

Thomas Hardy began writing *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1888-89 and was first published as his 6th novel in 1891. The novel underwent many

Notes

changes in its name since its writing began in 1889. During the writing process, while deciding the names for the characters he thought of names as Love, Cis, Cissy or Sue, for the title character. Tess, the protagonist, was so long called Sue in the manuscript. But he finalized the name 'Tess'. In the very beginning the novel carried the title "The Body and Soul of Sue", which was replaced by "Too Late, Beloved" in a fortnights' time. The name of the novel was altered into "The Daughter of d'Urbervilles" until finally it becomes "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" (Millgate, 1982).

Hardy intended to submit it for serial publication, in which only a few chapters were to be released at a time. And he had a plan, depending on the material's reception and the publisher's readiness, to combine the complete manuscript/chapters in a book form and publish it. Hardy contracted with W. F. Tillotson & Son in 1887 for the serial venture of the story. It was to be delivered in four installments between 1887 and June 30, 1889. At the same time, he also consulted *Harper's Bazaar* in America for the story's publication.

The editors associated with Tillotson & Son thought the content of the story to be vulgar and the publisher suggested Hardy to change some scenes of it to be removed or be re-written. Hardy however, refused and the assignment was set aside unpublished. Providentially, the *Graphic (London) Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* threw an offer to Hardy to publish it in serial form, Hardy got ready for the revision of the content and it appeared as a serial on July 4, 1891, in the *Graphic* and the *Nottinghamshire Guardian and Midlands Counties Advertiser* (England) and in the *Sydney Mail* (Australia). On July 18 it appeared in America in *Harper's Bazaar*.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles was received well by the audience and thus it was in book form consisting of three volumes. In late 1892, all the three volumes were combined and published in a single book form. Later, a paperback version of the novel was edited which sold 300,000 editions in England in a single year. Until his death in 1928, Hardy kept on bringing out editions of the book which were received well by the public.

Introduction to *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is a story which is full of enthusiasm and innocence of a little country girl Tess, who survives the hardships of life until she is persecuted by social law for her desire to live. Tess is a virgin by heart but abused physically by the human beings for she is inexperienced in the lessons of life. She suffers for her innocence and purity. She moves out into the male dominated world to sustain her family but the world does everything to harm her person.

At the very beginning of the novel Hardy introduces his views on the demoralized privileges of the women of Victorian Age. Then the story reveals how a woman suffers in the society. In late 19th century many male writers came up with their works to highlight the poor condition of the women in the society. Hardy was one of them. Not all were feminists but they intended to give space for the women in the literary works. Hardy is also the first English novelist to introduce countryside landscape and his characters from such landscapes in a typical manner.

14.2 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

Tess Durbeyfield, the protagonist of the novel, is a 16-year-old simple country girl. She is the eldest daughter of John and Joan Durbeyfield. John Durbeyfield meets Parson Tringham by chance one night and discovers that he is the descendent of the d'Urbervilles, an ancient, rich family with a history as far back as William the Conqueror in 1066. This discover also discloses about a nearby relative for whom the Durbeyfield family sends Tess to "claim kin" in order to improve their poor condition. On her way to the d'Urbervilles Tess meets Alec d'Urberville. Alec is attracted to Tess and arranges for Tess to become the caretaker for his blind mother's poultry. Tess moves to the residence at The Slopes to take up the position. Alec takes advantage of Tess' loneliness and seduces and rapes her.

Tess returns home, pregnant and deprived of all joys of youth. She gives birth to a son, Sorrow. She finds work as a field worker on nearby farms. Sorrow falls ill and dies in infancy, leaving Tess distraught at this loss.

Notes

Tess moves away from home to nearby Talbothays Dairy of a gentle fellow, Mr. Crick. While working as a milkmaid she falls in love with a travelling farmer's apprentice, Angel Clare. Angel proposes her. Being conscious of her past, she tries to refuse to accept Alec's proposal but ultimately marries him. She tries before the marriage to tell about her rape and her son to Alec on several occasions, even writes a letter to him but of no help. After the wedding, Tess and Angel confess their pasts to each other. Tess forgives Angel for his past imprudence, but Angel is unable to forgive Tess for having a child with another man.

Angel advises to separate as they were not going to be happy after knowing Tess' past. Angel moves to Brazil while Tess returns to her parent's house. Again Tess find herself in critical conditions, leaves home again for work in another town at Flintcomb-Ash farm. The working conditions in Ash farm are very harsh. Here Tess finds some of her friends from Talbothays, and all settle in at Flintcomb to the hard work routine. Tess plans to see Angel's family in nearby Emminster. She visits them but is unable to confront them. On her return to Flintcomb, Tess sees Alec as an evangelical minister, preaching to the folks in the countryside. But Alec again peruses Tess and follows her to Flintcomb, asking her to marry him. Tess refuses Alec but Alec is not ready to leave her.

Tess returns home to find her mother recovering from her illness, but her father, John, dies suddenly from an unknown disease. Tess is left all alone to sustain her family, who are homeless, as they had to evict the house. Having nowhere to go Tess decides to go with Alec as she cannot resist Alec's money and the comforts her family can use. Alec insists that her husband Angel will never come back and also Tess realizes that she has to survive on her own terms and also bear the burden of her family already come to believe herself. Meanwhile Angel returns from Brazil and tries to find out Tess. He settles in England on his own farm. Angel finds Tess' family. He is informed by Joan that Tess is in Sandbourne, a fashionable seaside resort in the south of England. Angel finds Tess, now as an upper-class lady with Alec d'Urberville.

When Angel meets Tess, he accepts that he had been rude to her and now he wants her back but Tess asks him to leave and never to come back.

Tess realizes that Alec has wronged her twice by lying to her about Angel. She confronts Alec and accuses him of lying to her about Angel. She gets angry and in a fit of anger stabs Alec with a carving knife, and kills him. Tess finds Angel to tell him of the incident, who takes it hard to believe her story but finally accepts her. They decide to leave the country before the murder is detected. The two travel the countryside via back roads for a port and leave the country. They spend a week in a vacant house, reunited in bliss for a short time. However, they are discovered at Stonehenge, the ancient pagan monument. The police arrests Tess and take her away. Before her execution for her crime, Tess makes Angel promise to marry her sister Liza Lu. Angel agrees and he, beside Liza Lu, witnesses a black flag raised within the town of Wintoncester, signifying that Tess' death sentence has been dispensed. The two, Angel and Liza Lu, leave together, and the tragic tale of Tess ends.

14.3 THE PLOT OF TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

Plot is sequential development of a narrative. It defines the plan of action in the narrative. Perrine defines it as "...the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed". (1974) Force says that Tess has an epic plot in its narrative (1966). The distinct characteristic of an epic plot is episodic. It presents "...the deeds of a hero in some chronological sequence, possibly beginning with his birth, probably ending with his death" (Scholes and Kellogg, 1981). In *Tess of the Urbervilles*, chapter 1 opens when Tess is sixteen years old; it is in keeping with the structure of an epic plot in case of the ancient classics. The phrase '*possibly beginning with his birth*' illustrates that Tess and her family get their family name Durbeyfields as they - are "*the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles*". This is exceptional and crucial information for the plot to get into action. It is the birth of the real heroine of the novel, not the biological birth but a socially conditioned birth of the person that was to define her role in the total setup of the plot.

EPIC PLOT IS EPISODIC:

Tess of the Urbervilles includes seven phases that circumscribe the complete action from the birth of the protagonist to her death. These phases are denoted by phrases that actually indicate an occasion or occurrence that contributes to the account of the event that follows. They also point to the main action that determines the phase in which Tess enters for the next step to occur. These phases have been defined as follows:

Phase One: The Maiden: This is the first phase that tells about Tess in her sixteen or seventeen when her family is said to be the descendant of the d'Urbervilles. Two noteworthy incidents, the death of Tess' family's horse 'Prince' and Tess' seduction occur here. The death of the horse causes Tess to consent her mother's plan of claiming kin with the rich Mrs. d'Urberville (ch. 5). This takes her to The Slopes where she meets her cousin Alec d'Urberville who in turn rapes her.(ch. 9).

Phase Two: Maiden No More. This phase follows the earlier phase. She reappears with her son from Alec who dies, leaving her desperate of hers who soon dies (ch. 14). This is the real moment of anguish when Tess has to face social alienation. Her son is refused the Christian burial mark. Tess decides to seek her being "*in some nook which had no memories*". (ch. 125).

Phase Three: The Rally. In this phase Tess' begins anew as a dairymaid in Talbothays Dairy. She meets Angel Clare and falls in love with him. Her earlier anguish finds some solace in his company. But her memories still haunt her.

Phase Four: The Consequence. Angel proposes Tess but she hesitates to accept the proposal because of her past. But she finally says yes. However, the episode with a Trantridge man, who is aware of her past affair, agitates her (ch. 33). Thus, she decides to confess before Angel, which delays, until they get married. Finally, in their wedding night, they confront each other with their about their affairs. Tess takes the chance to tell him about her "*...acquaintance with Alec d'Urberville and its result*" (ch. 34).

Phase Five: The Woman Pays: With her confession, Tess of the Urbervilles' marriage breaks and they separate. She is the one to pay the price for the wrong done to her. (ch. 37). She does not let her parents know about her misfortune so leaves the place and finds a job in Flintcomb-Ash Farm, "*a starve-acre place*" in which Tess works "*in the morning frost and in the afternoon rains*". (ch.41). She comes to know about her parents-in-law's residence at Emminster and decides to meet them. However, she does not have the courage to face them and on her way home, she unfortunately meets Alec (ch. 45).

Phase Six: The Convert. This phase presents the consequences of the meeting with Alec. After her father's death the villagers refuse her family to stay in the "*weekly tenants*". They think her as "*not a proper woman*". She finds this to be a plan of Alec to force her to return to Alec (ch. 51). The family leaves the village and manage to find space in one part of a church called d'Urberville Aisle (ch. 52). Alec finds them and sways Tess to admit his help for her family. Tess' cry out in despair: "*Why am I on the wrong side of this door*". She is left with no other option but to stay with Alec (ch. 52). Alec also makes her believe that Angel will never return to her.

Phase Seven: Fulfillment. Angel returns, finds Tess, and regrets his mistake. Tess becomes aware of Alec's lie and in a fit of anger stabs him to death and runs away for Angel (ch. 56). They run away but are caught at Stonehenge where the police finally arrests Tess (ch. 58). This phase ends with Tess' execution.

The plot of the novel develops uninterrupted in an epic style. There is a sequel of episodes to maintain the interest of the reader. The action takes time to complete due to the lengthy descriptions of the scenes; still the interest is by no means lessened.

14.4 SETTING OF THE TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

The setting is generally of little importance in long narratives like a novel. However, this is true with Hardy's novels. He has his own world where he makes his characters move about, enjoying, suffering, and

Notes

expressing their desires and opinions. This is a world with a perfect setting to match the mood of the action. Hardy calls it Wessex. The action may be confined to a single location but in case of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, it takes place in Wessex, a region encompassing the southern English county of Dorset and neighboring counties Hampshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, and Devon. Tess of the Urbervilles, the protagonist, keeps moving from one place to another in Wessex. Thus, in this novel the setting consists of more than one location. Nature is a part and parcel of the Wessex, and is an essential part of the setting. Many known and unnamed characters, who directly or indirectly involved in the main action of the plot, inhabit the Wessex.

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, the characters and location reflect each other's presence. Tess moves from a beautiful world of Marlott to The Slopes to "claim kin". At The Slopes, the atmosphere is attractive and ceremonial, at the same time, unnatural because it is new to Tess where she has to discover her old lineage. The two main farms, Talbothays and Flintcomb-Ash, represent the finest and nastiest of farm life which is experienced by Tess of the Urbervilles. The lush, green, and fertile setting at Talbothays brings joy to Tess on the other hand, Flintcomb-Ash, is a barren region, reflecting the severity of the work and the unhappiness of Tess' life. The whole action takes place in a rural setting. Hardy's intimate knowledge of the inner workings of a nineteenth-century farm enhances the impact of the rural setting on the development of the action. Stonehenge, as the name indicates, end with Tess' execution.

The setting of the two farms in Tess of the d'Urbervilles' which are the main arenas of the action, present a fine contrast to each other. Talbothays is painted as a beautiful place, in a affluent rural region of southern England; it is "the valley in which milk and butter grew to rankness, and were produced more profusely, if less delicately, than at her home ... the verdant plain so well watered by the river Var or Froom." The description of the natural scenery and the life vibrating on the farm has enough scope to charm the reader and engross his attention by the life of the dairy, with milking, churning butter, and making cheeses. Mr. Click, the owner of the incharge of the farm is a gentle

heart. Besides, only positive things happen to Tess while she is there. Flintcomb-Ash, on the other hand, has the term 'ash' linked to it is stalled in mud, rocks, poor conditions, and by starvation. Marian, one of the minor characters, formerly of Talbothays, when comes to Flintcomb for work, calls the new farm "a starve-acre place. Corn and swedes [rutabagas] are all they grow." Even Tess of the Urbervilles has bad experiences when she confronts Alec. He reappears there to begin his renewed "courtship". Farmer Groby's a harsh man when compared to the sympathetic Dairyman Crick's as he tells Tess, "But we'll see which is master here."

Development in science and technology has a meager impact on the environment of Wessex. Animals are used for transportation. And their importance in life of people is visible on the death of the horse Prince. The Durbeyfields are helpless without their horse. It becomes very difficult to survive. They think for buying a new horse but their economic conditions do not allow them to do so. The entire series of chapters that follow Prince's death, with Tess going to The Slopes, is based on the economic need for a horse. The train is available at the Talbothays farm to deliver milk to London. The dairy also has modern butter churns, powered by hand and horsepower. Then there is the threshing machine, "the engine which was to act as the *primum mobile* of this world" and "it was the engine-man" (cp.47) at Flintcomb-Ash used on the farm for winnowing the harvest. But the workers find it to difficult to communicate while the machine is working. it is like a monster to be fed and tended all the time. The machine has to be controlled all the time. These are just some instances of modern machines in Wessex, otherwise, modern agricultural equipment are hardly seen in the setting.

The villages of Marlott, Emminster, and Trantridge are small towns of Wessex easily handled by visitors and natives alike. Wessex is a complete venue for a plot to develop. Wessex with its vast countryside, the wealthy farmland or the poorer farm areas, outline an important part of nineteenth-century English agriculture. The influence of the Industrial Revolution is meager but a perfect framework for Hardy to writes one of his best novels.

Notes

Wessex enables Hardy to realize his imagination in concrete. He populates it with his characters from all division of the society, speaking his language and living the incidents he wishes them to survive. Hardy visualizes a way of life, a pattern of speech, and a pattern of thought to give life to Wessex. Through it, Hardy is able to record a historical account of life in southern England at the end of the 1800s. The modern reader is able to understand the type of existence that dated back several hundred years, possibly back to ancient times. Thus, *Tess*, even though it is set within a precise space and timeframe, has a mystical quality that seems to transcend time.

Kramer's *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy* notes, "He (Hardy) had begun to understand that he was the historian of a Wessex now passed, the recorder of a series of unique micro-environments, ways of life and speech, which together had formed a cultural whole." (Simon Gatrell)

CLASS STRUCTURES IN Tess Of The D'urbervilles

The first chapter introduces a comic view of class, with working class Jack's sudden pretensions to being upper class 'Sir John' (class pretensions have been a great source of comedy in British culture). However, in *Tess*, Jack's pretensions are tragic in their outworking: They expose Tess to exploitation by Alec, representative of the new landowning class (with its own social pretensions of becoming gentry, of turning new money into old titles) They mean Jack has even more excuse to be a spendthrift and idler, and so his family suffers economically.

Angel's middle class parents are shown to be compassionate towards 'the poor' but from within their own class hierarchy. Mrs. Clare is particularly class-conscious in choosing a wife for Angel (Ch 26, 49). Hardy gently points out the inconsistency of Christian charity and snobbery, but this class-consciousness runs right across all charitable efforts in Victorian England.

Angel himself sees educating Tess as a useful enterprise to make her more 'worthy' of being the wife of a middle class man. His offer to teach

her history is particularly ironic (Ch 19, 32). The one heirloom bestowed on her, the jewellery, is Tess's only excursion into middle-class gentility; yet ironically she immediately considers selling it, supposing that it is not appropriate for her to have such finery as a working-class girl (Ch 34).

The Cricks are the only people shown to transcend class boundaries in a positive way. Their rise from working class to middle class is not unlike the Hardy family's own slow rise, through sheer hard work, but not losing connections or community.

Check Your Progress-1

Q1. What is the significance of the horse 'Prince'?

Q2. Differentiate between Talbothays Dairy and Flintcomb-Ash.

Q3. How does Hardy reflect on the condition of women in the Victorian society through Tess of the Urbervilles?

14.5 MAJOR THEMES IN THE NOVEL

The novel Tess of the Urbervilles can be read from the following points of view:

14.5.1 Pessimism

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, pessimism refers to a "feeling that bad things will happen or that something will not be successful" (p.1129). A pessimistic point of view means that the worst will happen or that evil will ultimately prevail over goodness. In Tess of

the Urbervilles Hardy has swept the plot with his pessimism. Hardy considers the following point that result in pessimism in life:

ABSENCE OF THE DIVINE ORDER:

In Tess of the Urbervilles the sufferings of the Durbervilles are unending. Tess of the Urbervilles too suffers a lot and for no wrong done to others by her. Alec, on the other end, is in a safe position enjoying wealth and women. It appears as if the omnipotent and benign power is missing from the Wessex. Brennecke claims that Hardy “cannot reconcile the idea of an omnipotent and merciful Deity with the human sufferings that he witnesses daily” (79). The world is hostile and there is no for the people of the land. This viewpoint is tinted throughout the novel. For example, when Tess reveals her past to Angel, he utters the following verse to express the “anguish of his heart”

God’s *not* in his heaven –

All’s *wrong* with the world! (Hardy 272).

The verse is a variation of Browning’s in *Pippa Passes*.

ALIENATION OF MAN IN THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE:

The presence of an uncaring universe or a cosmological order that does not sympathize with the tragic predicament of humanity is another factor that contributes to pessimistic streak of the novel. This notion of human vulnerability and alienation amidst an uncaring universe is reflected in the following song chimed by Tess and her siblings during their last night at their home in Marlott:

“Here we suffer grief and pain,

Here we meet to part again;

In Heaven we part no more (Hardy 377)

SHORT LIVED JOY

Pessimism also implies that sorrow and tragedy will always outweigh happiness. This aspect of pessimism is evident in Tess of the d’Urbervilles as well since throughout the novel, moments of happiness,

serenity and contentment are short-lived. This viewpoint is highlighted by Tess prior to her getting arrested when she says: “it is as it should be...Angel, I am almost glad – yes, glad! This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much!” (Hardy 417).

DEATH BRINGS END TO ALL SUFFERINGS

The prevailing notion at the end of the novel is not that humanity will prevail but rather that death brings an end to human suffering. This dismal perspective also reinforces the pessimistic tone of the novel. Tess’s tragic plight only comes to an end through her execution. This notion of death as a promising escape to a torturous life is perhaps best conveyed through the pitiable death of Sorrow that is described as “the hour of emancipation for that little prisoner of flesh” (Hardy 108).

AUSTERITY AND SORROW

A vision of austerity and sorrow permeates Tess of the d’Urbervilles – even at the end. The final image is not one of salvation or happiness but of bleak, unmitigated suffering which is highlighted through the “pale faces” and “bowed heads” of Angel and Liza-Lu as they walk together and the “grief of sun’s rays” smile “on pitilessly” (Hardy 418). The most pessimistic aspect of the novel is the absence of divine compensation or poetic justice. Tess inhabits a society in which malevolent people like Alec are allowed to prolong their conniving schemes while the vulnerable individuals like her are forced to pay a price for their transgressions. Despite Tess’s tragic death, the chaotic, unjust force of life moves on and according to Shires, “The last chapter offers no catharsis . . .” (158).

14.5.2 Hardy on Religion

In *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, we gain insight into Hardy's view on religion as he uses his characters to make observations that may have been quite disconcerting to his Victorian readers. This is not to say that Hardy abandoned his views on religion, instead, he "became an agnostic, [and]

Notes

he remained emotionally involved with the Church." Hardy's greatest dispute was with the dogma or beliefs of the church.

Hardy had once wanted to become a minister but abandoned that idea when he could no longer afford to attend the university. Robert Schweik, a Hardy critic, relates that Hardy became interested in religion on a personal level — that the subject of infant baptism particularly affected him. Hardy could see no harm in baptizing an infant if doing so makes the family of the child feel better about their child's salvation. This position is made clear in the scenes with Tess and Sorrow.

The scene is played out in Chapter 14 when Tess baptizes Sorrow. She learns that her own ceremony is the same as if it were performed in church; however, on the subject of a proper Christian burial, the local vicar replies, "Ah — that's another matter." In the true sense of charity, Hardy argues, Tess should have been allowed to bury Sorrow in a proper manner, not be relegated to the part of the cemetery that has unbaptized infants, drunks, and the damned. The burial is carried out under the cover of darkness, not during the daylight hours, to protect Tess and to shield her from the scorn of churchgoers. Hardy's point is that Sorrow's burial should have been treated as any other burial. The position of the church is too harsh, Hardy seems to argue, when Sorrow is christened in the proper manner, but is not given a proper Christian burial.

Also, the positioning of pagan and Christian rituals makes for an interesting look at the dichotomy that exists in the smaller rural areas. Some rituals, now obscured by the passage of time, were assimilated into Christian ceremony. The May Dance, for instance, in Chapter 1, celebrated the end of the winter and the beginning of summer. Druids and other pagans of the area would have celebrated that date with a ceremony of sorts. Also, Tess, before she is literally sacrificed for the good of society, journeys to Stonehenge, the temple of monoliths used for sun worship and possibly human sacrifice. Tess says to Angel about the pantheon, "And you used to say at Talbothays that I was a heathen. So now I am at home." Also, Hardy recollects the earlier ancient Greek tragedies by invoking the name of Aeschylus, the principal writer of Greek tragic drama, to close his work, not biblical or modern sagas, as we would have imagined a nineteenth-century writer to do.

Hardy quite possibly sees religion abandoning the people, with dogmas that do not mesh with a modern society. In *Tess*, with few exceptions, Hardy's portrayal of the "traditionally" religious people is not particularly complimentary. Take the casual remarks by Angel's brothers, Felix ("all Church") and Cuthbert ("all College"). They are quite involved in themselves, changing their beliefs and values to match the times. Both brothers are clerics without compassion, possibly in the same mold as the Vicar in Marlott.

If religion is as shallow as Hardy predicts, then the sign painter and his art are the worst form of shallowness. The sign painter who wanders the countryside uses the simplest texts he can find to put on his religious signs. When Tess asks if he believes in the text about "sin not your own seeking," he replies, "I cannot split hairs on the burning query." Essentially, he is not educated enough to think of a reasonable answer, and his perspective on religion is limited. Hardy saw this in the common folk he knew and was loathe to think that their religious beliefs were so shallow that they did not understand the deeper meanings of the texts they had read. Also, the sign painter saves the hottest sign messages for rural districts, where the ordinary folk would be frightened and cowed into submission. These seem to be "religious views on a poker chip" — philosophical entreaties to urge folks to turn to the Bible for aid. But these signs seem to miss the deeper meanings of the scriptures, which Tess seems to understand, not just the superficial meanings espoused by others. Likewise, Alec is the worst kind of convert, a sinner who renounces his former ways but becomes a sinner again at the slightest hint of temptation. The signs put up by the sign painter and Alec's conversion all point to a faith that is fleeting at best.

However, not all clergy are poor representations of religion, nor all believers false. Tess, for example, has an uncomplicated religion, a simpler and deeper understanding than her education would allow. She is as powerful as any clergyman when she baptizes Sorrow, but realistic when she realizes that she must pay for her sins when confronted by the police. Similarly, Angel's father, Reverend Clare is a good man, with good intentions, and a good message. He is part of the evangelical movement who practices what he preaches. He is described as Paulist or

Pauliad, from Paul of Tarsus, who believed that salvation came through grace and belief, which came through emotional responses rather than intellectual ones. Thus Hardy survives with two perspectives, one who uses biblical allusion with the knowledge of a believer, but the skepticism of an outsider.

14.5.3 Feminine Aspect of *The Tess Of The Urbervilles*

Undoubtedly in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Hardy creates the most profound and mature picture of a woman while raising the most controversial issues related to gender at that time - femininity, male-female relations. He describes the conservative attitudes of the male to women, the hypocrisy and two-facedness of rural communities, particularly their silent acceptance of domestic violence, disregard for women's education, intellectual development and independence, and above all, their lack of respect for female sensitivity, emotional complexity and spiritual maturity. Miles (1979) says: "A woman in Hardy's hands could be made to bear a weight of suffering whose inflictions transcend the personal and move through human to sublime; he never found the same true of a male character." (pp. 38-39). This notion of nobility of women's suffering is based on the old conventions of the moral and ethical superiority of women. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* Hardy tries to awaken the consciousness of the society towards the misery and suffering of women. From beginning to the end the novel shows that the characters of women are always misused as well as abused by men. In Hardy views, it was very important for him to champion the cause of women because women are the weaker sex.

Tess is a victim of her sex as oppressed by men and society. In Victorian period, being a woman in a male society was not easy. In Victorian era, there were noticeable double standards when it comes to men, women, and the way their action are treated upon. The novel starts with ritual where women and girls along with Tess, being dressed in white, celebrate the forthcoming spring event. Here the author for the first time introduced Tess in the following words:

"She was a fine and handsome girl- not handsome than some others, possibly-but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added

eloquence to color and shape. She wore a red ribbon in her hair, and was the only one of the white company who could boast of such a pronounced adornment”.

The “Red ribbon” indicates that love is coming to Tess as red is the color of love and it also indicates blood. Tess’ situations in her society has been given by the Hardy in the following words:

“Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience. The dialect was on her tongue to some extent, despite the village school: the characteristic intonation of that dialect for this district being the voicing approximately rendered by the syllable UR, probably as rich an utterance as any to be found in human speech”.

The above passage describes Tess as a young naive countryside girl with a traditional way of speaking. However, to be successful in life and to get married she has to learn the language of her masters (male) Hardy criticizes the male dominated society in such words when the people call that it was Tess’ fate; when she is raped. He says:

As Tess’s own people down in those retreats are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic way:

“It was to be.” There lay the pity of it.”

Tess of the Urbervilles becomes a victim to the passions of the man. She is described as an innocent pure woman, in the following phrase:

“Beautiful famine tissue, sensitive as gossamer and practically blank as snow.....”

In this phrase, Hardy has made it clear that Tess is a victim of her sex, being oppressed by Alec, the man who is supposed to be her kin. Hardy further describes Tess love for Angel Clare which after their marriage, immediately subsides when she discloses her past to him. She forgives him for his indecencies but she is rejected by Angel. This again proves that Tess is a victim of her sex. And at the end, Tess is being sacrificial victim.

INSIGNIFICANCE OF MANKIND

Tess is versatile and unique not only because of her skills but also because of her ability to recognize the insignificance of mankind in the larger scheme of things. This is why she is able to understand that man

Notes

is insignificant or trivial when it comes to our bigger concerns, especially things like pondering our final destiny in life. She is so because she understands on a deep level that everything is not insignificant despite man's insignificant nature in the larger scheme of time and space. This awareness is what gives her the power to endure, the desire to love and the ability to make the best of a bad situation within the scope and parameters of her own unique character.

Through his depictions of the setting and surroundings, Hardy brings to light the fact that man is temporary while nature is permanent. The moralities, beliefs, oppression, and industry that come to define mankind throughout the novel are but temporary social inventions that are as man-made as machinery. Throughout time, these aspects of humanity are worn away by nature—the power that dictates the man's desires as well as the ever-changing elements of season, weather, and landscape. Hardy's use of many images and aspects of nature contextualizes the passage of one era into the next, contrasts social constructs against the natural course of human intent, and juxtaposes pastoral scenery with the ache of modern industrialization. These pairings help to convey his idea that humans are in no position to judge each other when the natural universe is a much more powerful force.

Tess is universal in that she shares the lot of all mankind, but she is also able to transcend this condition by being able to rise above it while alive, albeit for brief moments. She is able to experience a transcendental moment in the here-and-now, like when she explains how she has the ability to allow her soul to move outside of her physical body, "A very easy way to fell 'em go', continued Tess, 'is to lie on the grass at night and look straight up at some big bright star; and, by fixing your mind upon it, you will soon find that you are hundreds and hundreds o' miles away from your body, which you don't seem to want at all'" (Hardy 75).

14.6 CHARACTER SKETCHES

Hardy has a deliberate skill at creating character. He creates types and individuals.

14.6.1 Teresa Tess'' Durbeyfield''

‘She can flirt, she can listen, she can sympathize, she can work with her hands.’ (Hardy, p.131)

The above line from Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* demonstrates a great deal about the themes of the novel as well as the character of Tess. Tess is one of Hardy's most sympathetic protagonists. She is as likeable as a literary character found altogether of English literature. Tess is the archetypal anti-heroine. That is, she does not win major battles or influence political decisions; instead, she inhabits her own small world and tries to cope with the fate that life has dealt her. By the end of the novel, she is a complete, whole character, but the scale of her influence in her own world, Wessex, is small indeed. These qualities are most evident in the following scenes: when she baptizes her infant son, Sorrow; when she endures the tortures of Alec's violation and Angel's abandonment; and when she finally and irrevocably rids herself of Alec's influence.

Thus, Tess is a heroine, but on an everyday, ordinary scale. Tess is a simple country girl/woman who had a basic education growing up, but had little exposure to the wiles of the world outside Marlott. She has curiosity that goes beyond her basic education, as demonstrated when she debates religious and moral issues with both Angel and Alec. Her weakness is her innocence; she is uneducated "in the ways that of the world" and thus unable to shield herself.

Tess chides her mother for not telling her full truth about a less-than-kind world: "Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk?"

Throughout the novel, Hardy develops Tess' character and keeps describing her simple beauty. She is enticing to any or all men, and even he, tries to vary her look don't seem to be enough to cover her natural beauty.

Further, in the story, Tess is depicted as a person of near divine qualities when she baptizes Sorrow before he dies.

Hardy calls the impact on her siblings as a "transfiguring effect" which she looked "with slightly of dignity that was virtually royal." Tess' beauty is balanced by her

Notes

earthy magnificence, and this is especially evident when she is being courted by Angel at Talbothays:

Minute diamonds of moisture from the mist adorned, too, upon Tess' eyelashes, and drops upon her hair, like seed pearls. When the day grew quite robust and commonplace these dried off her; furthermore, Tess then lost her strange and ethereal beauty; her teeth, lips, and eyes scintillated in the sunbeams and she was again the dazzlingly fair dairymaid only, who had to hold her own against the other women of the world. However, behind that beauty Hardy paints an image of a tortured mind.

Tess could not be described as an exuberant person, she seems to border between marginal happiness to deep depression. And her personality is hidden, like an enigma, even from those close to her. Joan, her mother, says in response to a question Angel asks, ". . . I have never really known her." Early in the novel, we see that this statement is foreshadowed when John remarks about Tess, "Tess is queer." Fate plays a predominate role in whatever happens to Tess. The acknowledgement of the role of fate is summed up by the locals in the small town as "It was to be." Even Tess realizes that she and her family are in a tough spot when Prince, the family horse, is killed and she must go to the Stoke-d'Urbervilles for financial recovery.

Joan, Tess' mother, realizing that her daughter has suffered several devastating blows by Alec says, "Well, we must make the best of it, I suppose." Tess is resigned to accept Alec's proposal close to the top of the novel once she tells Angel, "I don't care what he [Alec] did wi' me!

"Her own safety and happiness is of no consequence to her.

Even once she should make amends for murdering Alec, she accepts the inevitable as she is arrested for Alec's death- "It is as it should be." That is, she knows her attempt to avoid prosecution and ultimate death are futile, and she must accept her fate. She does so willingly. Tess is able to bear great burdens placed upon her at a young age.

She is between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three when the story is circumscribed. Yet she endures a lot of sufferings that she becomes a powerful force in the novel. She accepts blame for Prince's death; the death of her baby son, Sorrow; the loss of Angel and the destruction of

her marriage; as well as her killing Alec with her own hands and leaving home three times in her life to "test the waters of the world" outside her village. She is unselfish in her actions towards others, as when she suggests to the other milkmaids at Talbothays and Angel, that Izz, Retty, and Marian are all more acceptable for marriage to Angel than she is. The other milkmaids at Talbothays cannot harbor any unwell feelings toward Tess, as she is that the one absolute to marry Angel.

Thus, she becomes a character with no discernable negative qualities. Also, Tess is passionate in her love for Angel and her hatred of Alec. She strays from her marriage only when it appears that Angel may not return to her from South America and when there is no other way to help her destitute family. When she discovers Alec's duplicity, she makes her mind up that this will be his final deception of her.

The martyr-like passion of Tess engenders the readers' sympathy. She makes several attempts to rectify her "mistakes": the vow to Angel to end their marriage; her offer to kill herself to free Angel from their marriage; and, her refusal to raise Angel's parents for any extra cash throughout Angel's sojourn to Brazil. She is determined to be self-sufficient and willing to sacrifice her well being for the good of others. This makes her selfless and on a morally higher ground than other characters in the novel. Tess' greatest weakness is for her family, particularly her brothers and sisters, and for this weakness Alec exploits to great effect.

Her journey to The Slopes, at the beginning of the novel, and her subsequent return to Alec near the novel's end, is all predicated on her willingness to undergo great pains to make her family's life better.

Alec guarantees aid to the Durbeyfield family many times, to which Tess cannot object. He has ulterior motives, however: to subdue Tess and make her his own. In the end, Alec fails. Thus, Hardy paints a grand portrait of a well-rounded character in Teresa Durbeyfield.

14.6.2 Angel Clare

Angel Clare is that the youngest son of the Reverend and Mrs. Clare.

He goes against what the family had intended for him, a career in the ministry, like his father and brothers. Instead, Angel pursues a career that seems opposite of what his family would like for him — farming. His

Notes

education comes from his schooling and from his personal experiences. He seems more in tune to the true nature of religion, but in a more practical sense, unlike his university-educated brothers. Farming puts Angel on a level with the common folk who inhabit the rural English countryside. He even rejects the popular notion of farm folk as "Hodge," or — as Hardy describes it — "the pitiable dummy" portrayed in the newspapers. Angel arrives at Talbothays to teach himself within the workings of a farm and falls for an unpretentious fieldhand, Tess.

Angel enters the novel at the very starting, as the nameless young man who dances with the girls of Marlott and then disappears, nameless to the girls and readers. He reappears at Talbothays, when he is 26 and Tess is 20.

Angel is a good man. He begins his relationship with Tess by offering to tutor her in history or any subject of her choosing, to make up for her lack of higher education. She gently refuses, but he cannot help but fall in love with a gentle girl. His gentlemanly ways also come to the fore when he offers to carry all four dairymaids over a swollen creek when the girls are on their way to church. It is a perfect excuse for all of the girls -Izz, Retty, Marian, and Tess - to get closer to their desire, Angel Clare himself. He is sincere in his search for a good, hard working woman who will be a help to him on his own farm. His choice of Tess seems an obvious one to him. However, his family has chosen Mercy Chant, a fine lady and woman, to be his bride. He is disappointed in their choice because he has no need for a frilly lady on a farm; instead, he must have a wife willing to work the same jobs and hours as himself. Angel chooses Tess while not ever having his family meet her.

Angel detests old families and makes his views known to others. Tess hears of his views and thinks that her future with Angel may be restrained if he learns of her ancient lineage. When he does learn of her family history, he does not make a big issue of her heritage. He seems likely to have more of an issue with his own views of love and marriage. Angel adheres to Tess' wishes when she asks him to leave her. He observes her from a distance, not making any overtures that could be misleading. He waits several chapters to proclaim his love for Tess and waits for her response. He finally convinces her of his intentions to

marry her, but his views of love and marriage seem to have very little flexibility: "Yet Clare's love was doubtless ethereal to a fault, creative to inutility."

His weakness is his impractical, idealistic love of Tess. He later regrets his rashness and quick decisions and strives to make up to Tess. Like Tess, Angel has a past, when he was nearly lead into a relationship with a woman in London. When Tess relates her own tale, he seems to have forgotten his own lurid tale and denies Tess the forgiveness that she so willingly grants him, thus indicating a flaw in Angel's character: his intractability. This flaw sets up the reason for Angel to reject Tess as a wife and begin his excursion to Brazil. Angel's life is characterized by quick decisions that are not well thought out. He seems reasonable but makes decisions based on impulse, not rational thinking: his quick proclamation of love for Tess, his intent to go to Brazil, and his asking Izz to accompany him to South America. He sees the errors of his ways and regrets his past declarations: "Viewing her [Tess] in these lights, a regret for his hasty judgment began to oppress him." He seems to have thought out the association with Tess, and the loss of a future life with Mercy Chant. He later asks Tess for forgiveness- "Tess! Can you forgive me for going away?" But he exhibits the kind of decisions that ordinary people make in everyday situations. He promises to take care of Tess after she kills Alec and to make Liza-Lu as his wife after Tess is gone and he lives up to that promise. Thus, Angel is a character likeable to most readers.

Angel is Hardy's voice of agnosticism and the views of religious "freethinkers," those who reject of "the tenets and traditions of formal religion as incompatible with reason." The movement looks to go with faith however while not its formal ties to a church intrinsically.

Angel could be construed as a deist; that is, he sees God as a creative, living force, but he rejects formal religion. We see this when Hardy writes, "Angel preferred sermons in stones to sermons in churches and chapels on fine summer days." He chose Tess for her ability to be a good married woman for a farmer, not for her religious views.

Says Hardy, "Angel never would have made orthodoxy a condition of his choice." When describing Tess to his parents, Angel makes a point to tell

Notes

his parents that Tess is a good Christian woman. Angel waxed quite earnest thereon rather automatic orthodoxy in his beloved Tess that he had been liable to slight once perceptive it practiced by her and also the different milkmaids, because of its obvious unreality amid beliefs basically realistic.

Angel has cleared the last obstacle along with his parents and returns to Talbothays to convert Tess to marry him. Thus, Angel represents the sensible, direct aspect of faith that Hardy himself would have championed.

14.7.3 Alec Stoke-D'urberville

In reality, Alec isn't a d'Urberville at all; instead, his family was named Stoke, then Stoke-d'Urberville, and later simply d'Urberville.

His father had made a fortune in north England and had settled in the southern region of the island. He adopted a local name to blend in with the historical association of place. Alec woos Tess together with his suave speak and conspicuous wealth. Alec's motives are clear from the beginning: to seduce Tess for his own gain. It could be argued that even after seducing Tess, Alec does indeed fall in love with her and makes his plans to have her as his own a second time.

Alec is friendly at first, using his charms to lure Tess back to The Slopes for a second visit. When she returns to become the keeper of Mrs.d'Urberville's poultry collection, Alec uses scare tactics to force Tess to plead to him for relief. The wild ride to Trantridge in the cart is indicative that he will use any means to convince her of his power.

The scene of Tess' first visit, with Alec feeding Tess strawberries (Chapter 5) is very sensual and suggestive. A scene like this may have caused quite many Victorian eyebrows to be raised. Hardy made a point to include such a scene early in the novel to pique the reader's response to the novel. Sex wasn't a usual subject for a book, and Hardy delivers in his initial section lust, sex, and seduction.

Tess is no match for Alec. Whereas she is naïve and inexperienced, he is worldly and sophisticated. While she is burdened with the responsibility of providing for her family, he feels an obligation to no one but himself. Alec wears the young girl down to take advantage of her, but she

continues to rebuff his advances at every opportunity. It is not till he rescues her from a fight, in Chapter ten, with alternative Trantridge staff that her fate is sealed. Sensing an opportunity to own Tess, Alec purposefully becomes lost in a trek through the woods. He rapes Tess whereas she sleeps awaiting his come.

Alec does not appear in Chapters 12-43. Nevertheless, we cannot say that he doesn't impact the story during these chapters. First, his earlier actions (specifically the rape) impact everything that follows. But his impact is not simply confined to the readers' understanding of the part he has played in Tess' current situation.

Hardy brings Alec back to the story through Reverend Clare, who shares with his son (who later shares with Tess) Alec's conversion and ministry. Alec returns physically to the book in Chapter 44 as a street minister. Alec is a "sunshine convert," renouncing his newfound faith as soon as he sees Tess again. Using twisted logic, Alec accuses Tess of causing him to stray from his ministry, "But you have been the means — the innocent means — of my backsliding, as they call it." He soon cannot suppress his passion for Tess, calling her a "temptress." Hardy notes that "The corpses of those old fitful passions which had lain inanimate amid the lines of his face ever since his reformation gave the impression to wake and are available along as during a resurrection." Tess feels some guilt for Alec's plight, and he uses the situation to his advantage again, making her swear to leave him alone at a place called "Cross-in-Hand," the scene not of religious conversion, but of conversion to the ways of the dark side, with Satan. Cross-in-Hand may be an image of evil, not good, "'Tis a thing of ill-omen," Tess is warned.

Alec lures the unsuspecting Tess by talking her out of remaining faithful her wedding to Angel. He will not accept her rejection of him. He is relentless, and in Chapter 50, he is able to finally sway Tess by catering to her poor family. Alec takes full advantage of Tess at this point, and he convinces her to live with him as a d'Urberville.

Thus, Alec has persuaded Tess to measure a lifetime of sin. This deception ends up in his death once Tess, enraged, stabs him.

Check Your Progress-2

Q4. Discuss the differences found in Angel Clare and Alec d'Urberville.

Q5. How far is fate responsible for the plight of Tess of the Urbervilles?

14.7 LET US SUM UP

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is generally regarded as Hardy's masterpiece, and certainly it is his most ambitious tragic novel. It is a story of innocence and sophistication, of man and nature, and of history and its relation to the present, concentrated on the fate of a simple country girl whose parents' chance discovery of their descent from a once noble line sends her to seek the assistance of a degenerate supposed relative to whom she surrenders before parting from him in disgust. Tess is no paragon of chastity overborne by force or cunning, but a girl simple, sensuous and passionate who has never been able to come to terms with the world as she finds it and whose strong intelligence keeps her aware of the fact. She has her baby which eventually dies and she goes to work as a dairy-maid in an environment of agricultural richness and peace in which she finds at last a satisfying rhythm of life. Her courtship by Angel Clare, her final acceptance of him are described by Hardy with considerable awkwardness, Angel's horror at learning the truth at last, his desertation of Tess, and at last her discovery of Alec's deceive and her murder of Alec in the end, all this is forced with along with a certain grim relish. Tess's move from one occurrence to another, from one situation to other, one incident to other, from low experience to high, from one event to another gives her the lesson of life but not the solace, so from the outset of the novel she moves in a circle of life which has its centre point, that is the tragical death of Tess.

The novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as an exemplification of Thomas Hardy's enunciation of a pessimistic perspective of life and vocalization of this growing chance and co-incidence through the protagonists in his novels.

Pessimism plays an important role in the lives of Hardy's protagonists.

It manifests itself through chance, co-incidence, nature, fate, circumstances. Mostly it is fate that brings pessimism and never ending misery or gloom in their lives. It changes the entire lives of all the main characters of the novels.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is considered a novel centered on feminist ideals as Tess represents a digression from the social stereotypes that have held back equality. His women are at the bottom of patriarchal hierarchy with a male master at the top, hawk-like looking for any transgression of authority. He places more emphasis on female characters in most of his novels.

14.8 KEYWORDS

- Protagonist – main character of the story
- Feminine –related to females
- Stereotypes –a particular process which has been followed from years.
- Digression –a passage or section that deviates from the central theme.
- Stonehenge –a prehistoric monument on Salisbury Plain
- Sorrow –pain
- Circumstances- situations that come in life.
- Transgression- violation of a law.
- Authority- power
- Emphasis –to focus on a point.

14.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the plot of *Tess of the Urbervilles* .
2. Do you consider Tess a 'Pure Woman'. Discuss

3. How far is Hardy successful in reflecting the Victorian society through Tess of the Urbervilles ? Discuss
4. Hardy has worked upon many major themes in Tess of the Urbervilles. Discuss.

14.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. PictureBS English University of Educationlish University of Education
2. <http://bsenglishstudies.blogspot.com/2019/02/pessimism-in-tess-of-durbervilles.html>
3. Miles, R. (1979). “The Women of Wessex”. Ann. Smith ed. London: Vision.
4. Bloom, H. (2010). Bloom’s Modern Critical Views: Thomas Hardy—New Edition. New York: Infobase Publishing.
5. Subbamma, M. (1985). Women: Tradition
6. Allingham, Philip. V. 2000. “The Novels of Thomas Hardy: An Introduction.” in
7. The Victorian Web. Literature, History & Culture in the Age of Victoria. Ed. Philip V.
8. Brussat, Frederic and Mary Ann. “Tess directed by Roman Polański.” 2012.
9. Garson, Marjorie. 1991. Hardy’s Fables of Integrity: Woman, Body, Text. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
10. Hardy, Thomas. 1994. Tess of the d’Urbervilles. London: Penguin Books.
11. Online Refrences:
12. Sufi Ikrima Sa’adah. Epic Plot In Hardy’s Tess Of The D’urbervilles
13. https://www.academia.edu/Epic_Plot_in_Hardys_Tess
- Hardy on Religion
15. www.victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/intro.html (29.08.2013)
16. <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/films/films.php?id=7662> (30.08.2013)

14.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The death of the horse, 'Prince' initiates the action of the plot. It is the backbone of the family income. With its death Tess' has to accept her mother's plan to go to the d'Urberville's to 'claim kin' with the rich Mrs. d'Urberville. This takes her to The Slopes where she meets her cousin Alec d'Urberville who in turn rapes her.

2. The two main farms, Talbothays and Flintcomb-Ash, represent the finest and nastiest of farm life which is experienced by Tess of the Urbervilles. The lush, green, and fertile setting at Talbothays brings joy to Tess on the other hand, Flintcomb-Ash, is a barren region, reflecting the severity of the work and the unhappiness of Tess' life.

3. In Tess of the d'Urbervilles Hardy tries to awaken the consciousness of the society towards the misery and suffering of women. From beginning to the end the novel shows that the characters of women are always misused as well as abused by men. In Hardy views, it was very important for him to champion the cause of women because women are the weaker sex.

Tess is a victim of her sex as oppressed by men and society. In Victorian period, being a woman in a male society was not easy. In Victorian era, there were noticeable double standards when it comes to men, women, and the way their action are treated upon.

4. Angel Clare is that the youngest son of the Reverend and Mrs. Clare. Angel pursues a career that seems opposite of what his family would like for him - farming. His education comes from his schooling and from his personal experiences. He seems more in tune to the true nature of religion, but in a more practical sense, unlike his university-educated brothers. Farming puts Angel on a level with the common folk who inhabit the rural English countryside.

Angel is a good man. He begins his relationship with Tess by offering to tutor her in history or any subject of her choosing, to make up for her lack of higher education. He is sincere in his search for a good, hard

Notes

working woman who will be a help to him on his own farm instead of a fine lady and woman, to be his bride.

Angel detests old families and makes his views known to others. His weakness is his impractical, idealistic love of Tess. He later regrets his rashness and quick decisions and strives to make up to Tess. He seems reasonable but makes decisions based on impulse, not rational thinking: his quick proclamation of love for Tess, his intent to go to Brazil, and his asking Izz to accompany him to South America. He seems to have thought out the association with Tess, and the loss of a future life with Mercy Chant. He later asks Tess for forgiveness — "Tess! Can you forgive me for going away?" But he exhibits the kind of decisions that ordinary people make in everyday situations. He promises to take care of Tess after she kills Alec and to make Liza-Lu as his wife after Tess is gone, and he lives up to that promise. Thus, Angel represents the sensible, direct aspect of faith that Hardy himself would have championed.

In reality, Alec isn't a d'Urberville at all; instead, his family was named Stoke, then Stoke-d'Urberville, and later simply d'Urberville. His father had made a fortune in north England and had settled in the southern region of the island. He adopted a local name to blend in with the historical association of place. Alec woos Tess together with his suave speak and conspicuous wealth. Alec's motives are clear from the beginning: to seduce Tess for his own gain. It could be argued that even after seducing Tess, Alec does indeed fall in love with her and makes his plans to have her as his own a second time.

5. Fate plays a predominate role in whatever happens to Tess. The acknowledgement of the role of fate is summed up by the locals in the small town as "It was to be." Even Tess realizes that she and her family are in a tough spot when Prince, the family horse, is killed and she must go to the Stoke-d'Urbervilles for financial recovery.

Joan, Tess' mother, realizing that her daughter has suffered several devastating blows by Alec says, "Well, we must make the best of it, I suppose." Tess is resigned to accept Alec's proposal close to the top of the novel once she tells Angel, "I don't care what he [Alec] did wi' me!

"Her own safety and happiness is of no consequence to her. Even once she should make amends for murdering Alec, she accepts the inevitable as she is arrested for Alec's death — "It is as it should be." That is, she knows her attempt to avoid prosecution and ultimate death are futile, and she must accept her fate. She does so willingly. Tess is able to bear great burdens placed upon her at a young age.