SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SHS5014	TWENTIETH CENTURY ENGLISH LITERATURE	L	T	P	CREDIT
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Objective: To acquaint students with major trends in English during the 20th century and enable students to read and appreciate poems. To cultivate among students a sense of understanding in order to make them better human beings by the exposure to 20th century literature.

UNIT I: Poetry

Detail: 1. T.S. Eliot : The Waste Land
2. W.B Yeats : Sailing to Byzantium
3. G.M. Hopkins : Pied Beauty

Non-detail: 1. Dylan Thomas : The Hunchback in the park
2. W.H. Auden : Song
3. Philip Larkin : Church Going
4. Wilfred Owen : Strange Meeting

UNIT II: Prose

Detail: 1. E.M. Forster : What I believe

Non-detail: 1. H.G. Wells : A Modern Utopia
2. Arnold Tony bee : India's Contribution to world
3. G.K. Chesterton : 'What I found in my pocket'

UNIT III: Drama

Detail: 1. G.B. Shaw : Pygmalion
2. T.S. Eliot : Murder in the cathedral

Non-detail: 1. John Osborne : Look Back in Anger
2. Harold Pinter : The Birthday Party

UNIT IV: Fiction

1. Arthur Conan Doyle : Hound of the Baskervilles
2. George Orwell : Animal Farm
3. Kingsley Amis : Lucky Jim
4. William Golding : Lord of the Flies

UNIT V: Short Stories

1. Arthur C Clarke : The Sentinel
2. Patrick O'Brian : A Passage of the Frontier
3. John Wyndham : Random Quest

References

1. Dr.Usha Jain. Twentieth Century English Literature. Vayu publications.2007.

2. Bijay Kumar Das. Twentieth Century Literary Criticism Paperback .Atlantic publications. 2014.

3. C.N. Ramachandran. Five Centuries of Poetry. Macmillan publications. 2008.

4. English Poetry: A Kaleidoscope .Edited By A Board Of Editors. 2005.

5. M.G.Nayar. ed. A Galaxy of English Essayists from Bacon to Beerbohm. Macmillan publications. 2014.

6. David Lodge. Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, Macmillan publications. 2006.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

 Identify and describe distinct literary characteristics of contemporary literature and demonstrate an understanding of how 21st century culture, trends, and historical events affect the literature produced today.

 Identify and describe distinct literary characteristics of modern literature.

 Analyze poetic works for their structure and meaning, using correct terminology.

 Write analytically about modern literature using MLA guidelines.

 Effectively communicate ideas related to modern works during class and group activities.

UNIT – I - Twentieth Century English Literature – SHS5014

T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land

Analysis

The Waste Land, first published in 1922, is arguably the most important poem of the whole twentieth century. It remains a timely poem, even though its origins were very specifically the post-war Europe of 1918-22; nevertheless, the poem takes on a new significance in the age of Brexit. Written by T. S. Eliot, who was then beginning to make a name for himself following the publication (and modest success) of his first two volumes of poetry, The Waste Land has given rise to more critical analysis and scholarly interpretation than just about any other poem. Critics and readers are still arguing over what it means.

In this post, we plan to give a brief introduction to, and analysis of, The Waste Land in terms of its key themes and features. We will then zoom in and look at the individual five sections of the poem more closely in separate posts. (We say 'brief introduction' and 'short analysis', but even the shortest analysis of Eliot's The Waste Land is going to require a longish essay. Readers looking for a more detailed discussion of Eliot's poem, particularly in its context of modernist poetry of the 1920s, are advised to seek out Oliver Tearle's study, The Great War, The Waste Land and the Modernist Long Poem.)

The Waste Land: context

To begin to understand the cultural impact of Eliot's poem, we need to analyse The Waste Land in its literary context. (If you'd like to learn more about Eliot's life, you might find our short biography useful.) The most popular poetry in England in the second decade of the twentieth century was 'Georgian' poetry (a group of poets who named themselves after King George V, who came to the throne in 1910).

In terms of subject matter as well as poetic form, Georgian poets were working largely in a well- worn tradition they'd inherited from the Victorians. Poetry was mostly focused on nature imagery and rural settings. The Georgians hadn't really moved on from this, even though they're writing in a post-Victorian world. The world of the

early twentieth century is a world of motorcars, omnibuses, commuters on the London Underground, typists going to work in an office all day and then going home to canned food and gramophone records.

But you won't find this modern world T. S. Eliot 2reflected in Georgian poetry, which is still largely concerned with birdsong, fields and hedgerows, and village life. (Many of these features appear in one of Georgian poet Rupert Brooke's most popular poems, 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester', written a couple of years before the outbreak of WWI.)

The problem people like Eliot had with such poetry – especially as an outsider who had grown up in America – was that it had lost its ability to arrest us, to make us see the thing being described in a new way. It wasn't saying anything particularly new. As Salvador Dali once observed, 'The first man to compare the cheeks of a young woman to a rose was obviously a poet; the first to repeat it was possibly an idiot.' Once something has been said in poetry, why say it again? Images and metaphors, when overused, lose their force and vividness.

It was something that a small number of poets in England had also started to address – poets such as T. E. Hulme who rejected much of what the Georgians stood for and instead called for a 'dry, hard, classical verse' based around fresh metaphors and new images.

So how could Eliot find out how to move poetry forward? He would soon find his answer, while still an undergraduate, when he encountered the work of a number of nineteenth-century French poets, chiefly Charles Baudelaire and Jules Laforgue. Baudelaire's influence in particular can be seen in The Waste Land: rather than writing about the rural world of villages and haystacks, Baudelaire (1821-1867) had often written about the modern city, the urban world of the metropolis. In the city a poet could find a whole host of new images, a completely new language for poetry. Somebody like Baudelaire found poetry in the everyday world of the city-dweller. (Baudelaire is quoted by Eliot in the closing line of 'The Burial of the Dead', the first part of TheWaste Land.)

The other thing that French poetry showed Eliot was that it didn't have to conform to a strict rhyme scheme or metre: poetry could be 'free verse' or, as the French had it, vers

libre. Eliot uses free verse in the fifth and final section of The Waste Land, in particular. His early poems, such as 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'Preludes', and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' all show Eliot depicting cityscapes and urban scenes within his work.

How to Analyze The Waste Land

Eliot's wasn't the first long modernist poem written about the War: an intriguing poem by Ford Madox Ford, 'Antwerp', had been written in 1915 and was a poem that Eliot himself admired. In 1919, a British female poet named Hope Mirrlees wrote a remarkable avant-garde poem, Paris: APoem, which was published a year later by the Woolfs' Hogarth press and anticipated Eliot's poem in startling ways. But Eliot's poem took the techniques of modernism to new heights.

A good place to start with an analysis of The Waste Land is to examine the importance of literaryallusion. Eliot's poem draws on a vast number of literary and religious texts and traditions. In addition to this, there is what is called the 'mythic method': Eliot's use of a mythic narrative or structure. He probably borrowed this idea from James Joyce, who had used it in his novel Ulysses, which was published in book form in 1922, the same year as The Waste Land, but which had been appearing in instalments in the Little Review for several years prior to that.

Eliot wrote an essay in praise of Joyce's use of ancient myth, and borrowed this for his own poem – drawing on Arthurian legend (e.g. the Fisher King) and various other religious and literary traditions. The Fisher King myth, which helps to explain so much of the poem's imagery and themes, is summed up by Pericles Lewis on Yale's Modernisms site:

The Fisher King is impotent, his lands infertile and drought-stricken; one cause of this infertility is a crime, the rape of some maidens in the king's court. Only the arrival of a pure-hearted stranger … permits the land to become fertile again.

This is the modern world: civilisation has been reduced to a 'waste land' and the land has lost its fertility and ability to bring forth life. Even the living seem to be suffering from some kind of spiritual wound. But how can we fix this society? By regaining spiritual and psychological enlightenment and making peace with our demons. But

that's easier said than done.

The literary allusions raise all sorts of questions about The Waste Land as a work of poetry itself. How should we interpret these? The poem's use of allusion can be linked to something Eliot championed in poetry, which is the idea of impersonality. Good poetry, for Eliot, is impersonal: it's not all about the poet's own feelings and experiences.

This is a very anti-romantic position, going against the likes of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who put the self, the idea of 'I', at the centre of poetry. ('I wandered lonely as a cloud', and so on.) See Eliot's 1919 essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' for more on this. Eliot also argues in that essay that a new poet joins the poetic tradition by both being different from what has gone before, but also by suggesting a sense of continuum with the past.

So you don't disown the past, but incorporate it into your own work – and even a cursory analysis of The Waste Land shows that it is obviously full of poems-of-ts-eliot-2-vols such examples, from Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, etc.

The use of other poets' words also helps to reinforce Eliot's theory of impersonality, since his own voice (even if we could assume that the speaker of the poem is Eliot himself, which is dangerous in itself) is often interrupted by the words of others. Indeed, Eliot's original title for early drafts of the poem was 'He Do the Police in Different Voices', a line he borrowed from Dickens's novel Our Mutual Friend, about a man who reads out the newspaper reports and puts on different voices for the policemen quoted in the report.

How should we approach Eliot's poetry and the question of what The Waste Land means? How can we analyse The Waste Land and discover its true meaning? Is there a true meaning? Eliot was often notoriously unhelpful at providing clarification or elucidation to his poems. His notes to The Waste Land – added as an afterthought to the original poem – tend to confuse the reader as much as they assist. When Eliot invites us in one of the notes to see the entire poem as focalised through the figure of Tiresias (a man who is a mess of contradictions: a blind seer, a man with breasts), should we take him at his word? Or is this Eliot trying to suggest coherence and unity to a very fragmented poem, after the fact?

Similarly, Eliot later dismissed the poem as a personal 'grouse' against life – contrary to what a hundred analyses of The Waste Land argued, the poem didn't pretend to speak for a whole generation.

Eliot once protested that critic Edmund Wilson, who reviewed The Waste Land upon its publication in 1922, had 'over-understood' the poem (not 'over-interpreted', but 'over- understood', you'll note). Eliot elsewhere famously declared (in his essay on 'Dante') that genuine poetry is able to communicate something to us even before it is understood.

So one thing to bear in mind is this: even in those parts of the poem where we may think we know where the meaning of the poem lies, there may be other things going on in the background which we are at best only partly aware of. This University of Illinois page gathers together some of the most influential critical responses to The Waste Land, and gives a sense of the diverse range of analytical positions the poem invites.

We promise this would be a short analysis of Eliot's poem, so we will deal in detail with the five individual sections of the poem in five separate posts. Below, however, we offer a condensed summary and analysis of these five sections, with links to the more detailed discussions.

The Waste Land: a short introduction, section by section

'The Burial of the Dead' is the first of five sections that make up The Waste Land. The section opens with the famous declaration that April is the cruellest month because it breeds lilacs out of a land that is dead, and that the winter snows were preferable because they covered this dead land, allowing us to forget what lay beneath. (We have analysed the famous opening line of the poem in more detail here.)

Then we have a countess, Marie, recalling how she used to stay at her cousin's the archduke's, and they went sledding. Another speaker talks of a mysterious shadow rising to meet us, and then we have a woman's voice, describing herself as the Hyacinth girl. The (presumably male) speaker who answers her seems to have lost all grip on reality when confronted with the woman coming out of the garden with her

arms full of flowers and her hair wet.

Then we have a section involving Tarot cards, used to foretell the future, which are dealt out by the clairvoyante, Madame Sosostris. This first part of The Waste Land ends with a male speaker meeting Stetson, whom he fought alongside in the Battle of Mylae (one of the Punic Wars of ancient times). He asks Stetson whether the corpse he planted in his garden has begun to sprout, returning us to the imagery from the beginning of the poem. You can read our discussion of 'TheBurial of the Dead' here.

Next, we have 'A Game of Chess', the second section. The chief focus of this section is two scenes involving women: the first an upper-class woman and the second a lower-class one. Thereis a suggestion that they are both trying to cope with husbands who have served in the recent war, but are also dealing with their own issues, too. The section opens with a long and detailed description of the upper-class woman's dressing room, where she is using perfumes and other products to make herself look and smell nice. Then we have a conversation between her and (we infer) her husband, where they fail to communicate meaningfully with each other, partly because the woman is nervous and jittery, and because there is a suggestion that the man is suffering from shell-shock or PTSD.

From this scene, we move to a pub in the East End of London, where a working-class woman, Lou, is talking to Bill and some of her other friends about her friend Lil, whose husband Albert has come back from the war, wanting to have sex with his wife again. Lil's numerous children are mentioned, and we are given a grim picture of poor Lil, who has grown prematurely old, partly as a result of the numerous pregnancies and partly because she has been using abortion pills. You can read our discussion of 'A Game of Chess' here.

'The Fire Sermon', the third section of The Waste Land, focuses not on marriage (as was thecase in the previous section) but on other sexual relationships: the section opens with a euphemistic reference to nymphs (i.e. prostitutes) plying their trade on the banks of the Thames, and goes on to refer to Sweeney visiting Mrs Porter's brothel, an Australian drinking song about prostitutes, the rape of Philomela by her brother-in-law Tereus, a foreign merchant propositioning the male speaker to a dirty

weekend down in Brighton with him, and – most famously – a typist and a young estate agent's clerk engaging in mechanical lovemaking (although love is largely absent here). We then have several different female voices, the supposed Thames-daughters (as Eliot's notes call them), telling us their stories of how they were undone by men. You can read our discussion of 'The Fire Sermon' here.

'Death by Water' is a breath of fresh air (as it were) after the longer third section: a short lyric of just ten lines, it focuses on Phlebas, a Phoenician tradesman from classical times, who has drowned at sea (the title of this section takes us back to the Tarot card in the first section of The Waste Land, which warned us to fear death by water and referred to a drowned Phoenician sailor). You can read our discussion of 'Death by Water' here.

The fifth and final section of The Waste Land, 'What the Thunder Said', is overwhelming written in unpunctuated, unrhymed, irregular free verse. It is as if the lack of water has led the speaker of 'What the Thunder Said', in his desire for water, to lapse into semi-coherent snatches of speech. We find ourselves in a dry land, among people undertaking a quest to find the Holy Grail (although we need to read Eliot's notes to grasp this properly).

Much of this final section of the poem is about a desire for water: the waste land is a land of drought where little will grow. Water is needed to restore life to the earth, to return a sterile land to fertility. (Shades of the Fisher King myth here again.) Along the way, in ll. 359-65, we get a weird digression which sees the speaker asking about a hallucinated third person (s)he imagines walking alongside his (her) travelling companion, a detail that was inspired, Eliot tells us in his notes, by one of Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic expeditions, where one of the men suffered from the delusion that there was one more man among their number, an imagined extra person.

Shades of the Gothic are introduced here, which are echoed by the bats with the baby faces in the chapel. We are also in the realms of Arthurian myth here, and the Grail quest: the Chapel Perilous was the place, in Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur, where Lancelot was tempted

– as with 'The Fire Sermon', temptation re-emerges as a theme. Can one remain spiritually pure and focused, or will the lure of the body become too strong? This

section – and the poem – ends with the arrival of rain in a thunderstorm, where the DA sound of the thunderclap is interpretedin light of the Hindu Upanishads. You can read our discussion of ‘What the Thunder Said’ here.

In short, there can be no clear-cut and straightforward interpretation or analysis of The Waste Land that declares: ‘This is the true meaning of T. S. Eliot’s poem.’ But perhaps by moving in closer to the individual sections of the poem, we can shed some further light on its curious and more baffling moments. You can explore our individual summaries and analysis of the five sections of The Waste Land in these separate posts: on ‘The Burial of the Dead‘, ‘A Game of Chess‘, ‘The Fire Sermon‘, ‘Death by Water‘, and ‘What the Thunder Said‘.

Sailing to Byzantium
by
William Butler Yeats

“Sailing to Byzantium”

Stanza 1

Old men feel out of place in a land where everything heralds new life: young men with their nubile women, singing and cooing birds, spawning salmon and mackerel. Throughout the summer, animals and fish bring forth new generations. When life is busy reproducing itself, it neglects old men, whose bodies are nothing but monuments of what used to be--although their intellects do not age.

Stanza 2

An old man is little more than wrinkled, drooping skin hanging from bones unless his soul--his unaging inner self--claps its hands and sings. But even in that case, all he has to sing about is his past. There is no school to teach him a new song. Therefore, because I myself am an old man, I have come to the holy of Byzantium. (Byzantium became Constantinople, etc.)

Stanza 3

In this city are churches with mosaic images of saints on the wall, sages burning with

holy zeal. Iask these sages to come forth to teach my soul to sing a new song, one that will lift it out of my dying body and take it to an artificial--that is, manmade--eternity.

Stanza 4

Once I am free of my body, I shall not be reborn in a natural body. Instead I will take form in an artificial thing--perhaps an image forged by Grecian goldsmiths, one which can keep a drowsy emperor awake. Or one which, attached to a Golden bough made by smith, can sing of the past, present, or future to the lords and ladies of Byzantium.

"Sailing to Byzantium," by William Butler Yeats, is a lyric poem with four stanzas. The Macmillan Company published the poem in New York in 1928 as part of *The Tower*, a collectionof twenty-one of Yeats's poems.

Theme: Neglect of the Aging

The speaker, an old man, says he does not feel welcome in the land of the young. "Caught in the sensual music" (line 8) of their own existence and of reproducing themselves, the young "neglect monuments of unageing intellect" (line 8-9). In other words, they neglect old people, who remain keen and youthful intellectually though withered physically. Consequently, the speaker says (perhaps sarcastically), he would rather be an object of art--like the art objects in Byzantium. They never age. And even sleepy emperors, as well as lords and ladies, pay attention to them.

Background on Byzantium

Byzantium was a city on the site of present-day Istanbul, Turkey. Byzantium was founded in circa 600 BC by former residents of the Greek cities of Megarus and Miletus. On May 11, AD 330, the Roman ruler Constantine I, a Christian, chose the city as the new capital of his empire and renamed it Constantinople. Over time, the city became famous for the magnificence of its works of art on religious themes. Wall mosaics, like those referred to in lines 17 and 18 of "Sailing to Byzantium," were among them.

Summary

The speaker, referring to the country that he has left, says that it is "no country for old men": it is full of youth and life, with the young lying in one another's arms, birds singing in the trees, and fish swimming in the waters. There, "all summer long" the world rings with the "sensual music" that makes the young neglect the old, whom the speaker describes as "Monuments of unageing intellect."

An old man, the speaker says, is a "paltry thing," merely a tattered coat upon a stick, unless his soul can clap its hands and sing; and the only way for the soul to learn how to sing is to study "monuments of its own magnificence." Therefore, the speaker has "sailed the seas and come / Tothe holy city of Byzantium." The speaker addresses the sages "standing in God's holy fire / As inthe gold mosaic of a wall," and asks them to be his soul's "singing-masters." He hopes they will consume his heart away, for his heart "knows not what it is"—it is "sick with desire / And fastened to a dying animal," and the speaker wishes to be gathered "Into the artifice of eternity."

The speaker says that once he has been taken out of the natural world, he will no longer take his "bodily form" from any "natural thing," but rather will fashion himself as a singing bird made of hammered gold, such as Grecian goldsmiths make "To keep a drowsy Emperor awake," or set upon a tree of gold "to sing / To lords and ladies of Byzantium / Or what is past, or passing, or tocome."

Form

The four eight-line stanzas of "Sailing to Byzantium" take a very old verse form: they are metered in iambic pentameter, and rhymed ABABABCC, two trios of alternating rhyme followed by a couplet.

Commentary

"Sailing to Byzantium" is one of Yeats's most inspired works, and one of the greatest poems of the twentieth century. Written in 1926 and included in Yeats's greatest single collection, 1928's *The Tower*, "Sailing to Byzantium" is Yeats's definitive statement about the agony of old age and the imaginative and spiritual work required to remain a vital individual even when the heart is "fastened to a dying

animal" (the body). Yeats's solution is to leave the country of the young and travel to Byzantium, where the sages in the city's famous gold mosaics (completed mainly during the sixth and seventh centuries) could become the "singing-masters" of his soul. He hopes the sages will appear in fire and take him away from his body into an existence outside time, where, like a great work of art, he could exist in "the artifice of eternity." In the astonishing final stanza of the poem, he declares that once he is out of his body he will never again appear in the form of a natural thing; rather, he will become a golden bird, sitting on a golden tree, singing of the past ("what is past"), the present (that which is "passing"), and the future (that which is "to come").

A fascination with the artificial as superior to the natural is one of Yeats's most prevalentthemes. In a much earlier poem, 1899's "The Lover Tells of the Rose in His Heart," the speaker expresses a longing to re-make the world "in a casket of gold" and thereby eliminate its ugliness and imperfection. Later, in 1914's "The Dolls," the speaker writes of a group of dolls on a shelf, disgusted by the sight of a human baby. In each case, the artificial (the golden casket, the beautiful doll, the golden bird) is seen as perfect and unchanging, while the natural (the world, the human baby, the speaker's body) is prone to ugliness and decay. What is more, the speaker sees deep spiritual truth (rather than simply aesthetic escape) in his assumption of artificiality; he wishes his soul to learn to sing, and transforming into a golden bird is the way to make it capableof doing so.

"Sailing to Byzantium" is an endlessly interpretable poem, and suggests endlessly fascinating comparisons with other important poems—poems of travel, poems of age, poems of nature, poems featuring birds as symbols. (One of the most interesting is surely Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," to which this poem is in many ways a rebuttal: Keats writes of his nightingale, "Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird! / No hungry generations tread thee down"; Yeats, in the first stanza of "Sailing to Byzantium," refers to "birds in the trees" as "those dying generations.") It is important to note that the poem is not autobiographical; Yeats did not travel to Byzantium (which was renamed Constantinople in the fourth century A.D., and later renamed Istanbul), but he did argue that, in the sixth century, it offered the ideal environment for the artist. The poem is about an imaginative journey, not an actual one.

Main Ideas
Themes

The Relationship Between Art and Politics

Yeats believed that art and politics were intrinsically linked and used his writing to express his attitudes toward Irish politics, as well as to educate his readers about Irish cultural history. From an early age, Yeats felt a deep connection to Ireland and his national identity, and he thought that British rule negatively impacted Irish politics and social life. His early compilation of folklore sought to teach a literary history that had been suppressed by British rule, and his early poems were **Odes** to the beauty and mystery of the Irish countryside. This work frequently integrated references to myths and mythic figures, including Oisin and Cuchulain. As Yeats became more involved in Irish politics—through his relationships with the Irish National Theatre, the Irish Literary Society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and Maud Gonne—his poems increasingly resembled political manifestos. Yeats wrote numerous poems about Ireland's involvement in World War I ("An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" [1919], "A Meditation in Time of War" [1921]), Irish nationalists and political activists ("On a Political Prisoner" [1921], "In Memory of Eva Gore Booth and Con Markiewicz" [1933]), and the Easter Rebellion ("Easter 1916" [1916]). Yeats believed that art could serve a political function: poems could both critique and comment on political events, as well as educate and inform a population.

The Impact of Fate and the Divine on History

Yeats's devotion to mysticism led to the development of a unique spiritual and philosophical system that emphasized the role of fate and historical determinism, or the belief that events have been preordained. Yeats had rejected Christianity early in his life, but his lifelong study of mythology, Theosophy, spiritualism, philosophy, and the occult demonstrate his profound interest in the divine and how it interacts with humanity. Over the course of his life, he created a complex system of spirituality, using the image of interlocking gyres (similar to spiral cones) to map out the development and reincarnation of the soul. Yeats believed that history was determined by fate and that fate revealed its plan in moments when the human and divine interact. A **Tone** of historically determined inevitability permeates his poems, particularly in descriptions of situations of human and divine interaction. The divine takes on many

forms in Yeats's poetry, sometimes literally ("Leda and the Swan" [1923]), sometimes abstractly ("The Second Coming" [1919]). In other poems, the divine is only gestured to (as in the sense of the divine in the Byzantine mosaics in "Sailing to Byzantium" [1926]). No matter what shape it takes, the divine signals the role of fate in determining the course of history.

The Transition from Romanticism to Modernism

Yeats started his long literary career as a romantic poet and gradually evolved into a modernist poet. When he began publishing poetry in the 1880s, his poems had a lyrical, romantic style, and they focused on love, longing and loss, and Irish myths. His early writing follows the conventions of romantic verse, utilizing familiar rhyme schemes, metric patterns, and poetic structures. Although it is lighter than his later writings, his early poetry is still sophisticated and accomplished. Several factors contributed to his poetic evolution: his interest in mysticism and the occult led him to explore spiritually and philosophically complex subjects. Yeats's frustrated romantic relationship with Maud Gonne caused the starry-eyed romantic idealism of his early work to become more knowing and cynical. Additionally, his concern with Irish subjects evolved as he became more closely connected to nationalist political causes. As a result, Yeats shifted his focus from myth and folklore to contemporary politics, often linking the two to make potent statements that reflected political agitation and turbulence in Ireland and abroad. Finally, and most significantly, Yeats's connection with the changing face of literary culture in the early twentieth century led him to pick up some of the styles and conventions of the modernist poets. The modernists experimented with verse forms, aggressively engaged with contemporary politics, challenged poetic conventions and the literary tradition at large, and rejected the notion that poetry should simply be lyrical and beautiful. These influences caused his poetry to become darker, edgier, and more concise. Although he never abandoned the verse forms that provided the sounds and rhythms of his earlier poetry, there is still a noticeable shift in style and tone over the course of his career.

Analysis

The poem "Sailing to Byzantium" was written by William Butler Yeats in 1926, and it was part of a collection called Tower. The title of the poem refers to the ancient city of Byzantium in Turkey that is presently known as Istanbul. It is the first of two poems known together as the Byzantium series. The poem has four eight-line stanzas that are metered in iambic pentameter.

The poem is prismatic in nature and viewed from the right perspective, it reveals a spectrum of meanings and emotions. It is through the use of many literary devices that the poet is able to convey these multiple meanings. Yeats, drawing from his personal life experiences, effectively dwells on the themes of escape from the world's troubles and a search for immortality.

Through his meticulous choice of words Yeats brings out the frustration and intense need for escape and immortality that many people feel in their moments of desperation. In this poem, Yeats imagines himself to be a traveler leaving Ireland for sixth century Byzantium – of which he first talks about highly and then rejects.

The poem revolves around the central theme of transformation. Life ends with death and youth evolves into age. The end of youth and life is lamented by Yeats who tries to find spiritual rebirth by leaving the land he is familiar with to a new land, Byzantium. There is a blurring of the physical and spiritual rebirths as the speaker envisions himself as a work of art that can live forever.

He opens with the description of the land he has just abandoned. The opening line: "That is no country for old men." It is a land of perpetually renewed youth. The poet expresses his deep concern for 'old age' while in a subtle manner; he also implies that it is a country that is meant for the young and lively things.

These youthful things and abundance of life are well brought out by the poet by references to the 'the young in one anothers arms' 'birds in the trees" 'the salmon-falls' and 'the mackerel crowded seas' (Yeats 2-4). This is followed by the line "Whatever is begotten born and dies."

This shows the frustration of the poet at the inevitability of mortality. Yeats rues the fact that the society tends to focus only on the sensual things of the present world and ignores more substantial things such as wisdom and intellect: "Caught in that sensual music all neglect/Monuments of unageing intellect" (Yeats 7-8). These monuments refer probably to Yeats' own poetry and philosophy.

In the second stanza of the poem Yeats carefully asserts why he has rejected the land of eternal youth and chosen to ". come/To the holy city of Byzantium." He has grown old and nearing his death and feels very much out of place in the land he has left. The old man, according to Yeats,is "a paltry thing, / A tattered coat upon a stick" (Yeats 9-10).

These lines seem to reflect the poet's own physical inability and old age. The poet says that the only thing that can give life to such an old man is the ability to sing through his poetry. The poet holds that poetry is the magic potion that can revive him and help him to overcome the transience of time and old age. "For every tatter in its mortal dress" (Yeats 12) refers to the human body that is suffering from many physical inabilities.

The poet reflects that there is no 'singing school' implying that poetry cannot be taught. It needs to be studied and that is why the poet travels across the seas and decides to arrive at the "holy city of Byzantium": the holy city is a sort of paradise that

the poet holds in his mind. Here, the writer uses symbolism. His reference to sailing to Byzantium seems to be metaphorical voyageto a land where art and intellect are valued as things of magnificence and permanence.

The third stanza expresses the intense plea of the poet to the divine sages of Byzantium to save him from death. He calls out to them "O sages standing in God's holy fire" (Yeats 17). He wants them to come from the holy fire and allow him the gift of creating poetry. This is what the poet expresses through the lines: "Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre/And be the singing- masters of my soul" (Yeats 19-20). He wants poetry to rule his heart which has no identity of its own: "It knows not what it is;" (Yeats 23)

At this point, the poet once again refers to his aging body and his desires trapped in the aging body through the lines "sick with desire/And fastened to a dying animal. The last lines of the stanza are paradoxical. Despite his impotency, the poet is "sick with desire." Through the gift of poetry, the poet firmly believes, the sages can save him from mortality and enter the "artifice of eternity".

In the final stanza, the poet says that once he has escaped mortality, he will not desire to take anynatural form as all natural forms are bound to die one day or other. Instead he desires to be a beautiful gold bird. This gold bird would be one like those made by "Grecian goldsmiths/ Of hammered gold and gold enamelling" (Yeats 25-26).

He might in the form of this beautiful golden bird would then enjoy the power "To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;" He might also be "set upon a golden bough to sing/To lords and ladies of Byzantium/Of what is past, or passing, or to come" (Yeats 31-32). In this final stanza the poet refers to the fact that true immortality can be acquired only through an intellectual permanenceof poetry. The poet feels through his

poetry “the golden bird”, he will be able to “sing” to many people about “the past, the present and the future”.

This reference to the past, the present and the future indicates the permanence and timelessness the poet believes can come through poetry. The poet in this case symbolically transfigures himself into the very thing he creates. The bird signifies not nature but a work of art and thereby symbolizes all his poetic achievements – “the artifice of eternity” into which he wants to be gathered.

The poet uses symbolism widely in this poem. He refers to a bird in each stanza and the meaningof the bird as one that represents immortality and freedom from physical inabilities is found inthe last stanza. The bird is not a natural bird but rather a golden bird and one that is artistically made. This means that the bird is not mortal and cannot die. The fact that it is artistic shows that only through poems – considered works of art in literature- the poet can achieve that immortality.

The metaphor of singing that the poet uses throughout the poem refers to the ‘music’ in poetry. Initially, in the first stanza, he talks about the singing of the birds in the trees and in the next two stanzas, there are references to a ‘singing school’. In the last stanza, the poet talks about the songof the golden bird. Thus the poet interweaves the concept of singing throughout the poem. According to him, the world of immortality can be attained only through the intelligent act of writing and reading poems.

It has been found that Yeats has used personal experiences to color his poem in a brilliant manner. He came to know about Byzantine art two decades before writing this poem. This knowledge of Byzantine art has been used by him when he writes about the Byzantine mosaics for imagery in the third stanza. When Yeats was nearly sixty years old, he saw Mediterranean mosaic works that compared the permanence of art with the transience of nature (Allen 3728).

The impact can be felt in the lines: “Once out of nature I shall never take / My bodily form from any natural thing, / But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make” (25-27). Yeats, during that period was suffering physically and was old. His depressed feelings at home made him desire travel. It is probably this desire that is expressed through the metaphoric voyage in the poem. (Allen 3728).

Yeats refers to the words associated with mortal life in monosyllables such as “fish, flesh, fowl” and “aged man”. But he uses polysyllables to express the permanence of intellect such as “Monuments of unageing intellect” And “Of hammered gold and gold enamelling.” This technique allows an undercurrent of the superiority of art over human life to flow through the poem.

Moreover, when he is in Ireland, Yeats writes of Byzantium and when he reaches Byzantium of his imagination, he writes of nature – simultaneously rejecting and celebrating it.

The poem can be taken as a metaphor for the poet’s journey to an ideal afterlife, or as a commentary on the permanence of artistic achievement or both. However, one finds through the use of metaphors, and symbolic language, the poem “Sailing to Byzantium” is kaleidoscopic and offers multiple ways of interpretation.

Moreover, it has become a poem that can be included in comparisons with other poems in the realm of travel, age, nature, birds as symbols and afterlife. It is mostly due to its multiple interpretive capabilities that this poem has reached the permanence and timelessness the poet sought during his lifetime.

The poem opens with an offering: “Glory be to God for dappled things.” In the next five lines, Hopkins elaborates with examples of what things he means to include under this rubric of “dappled.” He includes the mottled white and blue colors of the sky, the “brinded” (brindled or streaked) hide of a cow, and the patches of contrasting color on a trout(fish). The chestnuts offera slightly more complex image: When they fall they open to reveal the meaty interior normally concealed by the hard shell; they are compared to the coals in a fire, black on the outside and glowing within. The wings of finches are multicolored, as is a patchwork of farmland in which sections look different according to whether they are planted and green, fallow, or freshly plowed. The final example is of the “trades” and activities of man, with their rich diversity of materials and equipment.

In the final five lines, Hopkins goes on to consider more closely the characteristics of these examples he has given, attaching moral qualities now to the concept of variety and diversity that he has elaborated thus far mostly in terms of physical characteristics. The poem becomes an apology for these unconventional or “strange” things, things that might not normally be valued or thought beautiful. They are all, he avers, creations of God, which, in their multiplicity, point always to the unity and permanence of His power and inspire us to “Praise Him.”

Form

This is one of Hopkins’s “curtal” (or curtailed) sonnets, in which he miniaturizes the traditionalsonnet form by reducing the eight lines of the octave to six (here two tercets rhyming *ABC ABC*) and shortening the six lines of the sestet to four and a half. This alteration of the sonnet form is quite fitting for a poem advocating originality and contrariness. The strikingly musical repetition of sounds throughout the poem (“dappled,” “stipple,” “tackle,” “fickle,” “freckled,” “adazzle,” for example) enacts the creative act the poem glorifies: the weaving together of diverse things into a pleasing and coherent whole.

Commentary

This poem is a miniature or set-piece, and a kind of ritual observance. It begins and ends with variations on the mottoes of the Jesuit order ("to the greater glory of God" and "praise to God always"), which give it a traditional flavor, tempering the unorthodoxy of its appreciations. The parallelism of the beginning and end correspond to a larger symmetry within the poem: the first part (the shortened octave) begins with God and then moves to praise his creations. The last four-and-a-half lines reverse this movement, beginning with the characteristics of things in the world and then tracing them back to a final affirmation of God. The delay of the verb in this extended sentence makes this return all the more satisfying when it comes; the long and list-like predicate, which captures the multiplicity of the created world, at last yields in the penultimate line to a striking verb of creation (fathers-forth) and then leads us to acknowledge an absolute subject, God the Creator. The poem is thus a hymn of creation, praising God by praising the created world. It expresses the theological position that the great variety in the natural world is a testimony to the perfect unity of God and the infinitude of His creative power. In the context of a Victorian age that valued uniformity, efficiency, and standardization, this theological notion takes on a tone of protest.

Why does Hopkins choose to commend "dappled things" in particular? The first stanza would lead the reader to believe that their significance is an aesthetic one: In showing how contrasts and juxtapositions increase the richness of our surroundings, Hopkins describes variations in color and texture—of the sensory. The mention of the "fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls" in the fourth line, however, introduces a moral tenor to the list. Though the description is still physical, the idea of a nugget of goodness imprisoned within a hard exterior invites a consideration of essential *value* in a way that the speckles on a cow, for example, do not. The image transcends the physical, implying how the physical links to the spiritual and meditating on the relationship between body and soul. Lines five and six then serve to connect these musings to human life and activity. Hopkins first introduces a landscape whose characteristics derive from man's alteration (the fields), and then includes "trades," "gear," "tackle," and "trim" as diverse items that are man-made. But he then goes on to include these things, along with the preceding list, as part of God's work.

Hopkins does not refer explicitly to human beings themselves, or to the variations that exist among them, in his catalogue of the dappled and diverse. But the next section opens with a list of qualities ("counter, original, spare, strange") which, though they doggedly refer to "things"rather than people, cannot but be considered in moral terms as well; Hopkins's own life, and particularly his poetry, had at the time been described in those very terms. With "fickle" and "freckled" in the eighth line, Hopkins introduces a moral and an aesthetic quality, each of which would conventionally convey a negative judgment, in order to fold even the base and the ugly back into his worshipful inventory of God's gloriously "pied" creation.

Dylan Thomas: The Hunchback in the Park

This is the poem written by Dylan Thomas. Dylan Thomas regularly visits a park in his childhood. This poem is his childhood experience. When he goes to park he recollects the childhood memories once again. He used to play in the park. He likes fountain in the park where he sets sail the paper boats. While he is remembering, he thinks of a poor hunch back in the park who resides in the park.

Life of Hunch back in the park

The Hunch back is deserted by the people. No one cares of him and Nature takes the responsibility of him. Nature plays with him. He resides between trees and roams around water bodies in the park. Nature keeps company with him. He stays with animals and birds around him. The thrown outs feed him. The buns thrown out in newspaper folding, he gathers and satiates his hunger. He drinks water from the fountain of the park. There used to be a chained cup to drink water not to be stolen by anyone. Mischievous children filled the cup which is used by hunch back with stones. He sleeps in the shelter of dog. He is assimilated by the nature. He always stays in slumber; He is referred as sleeping log by Dylan Thomas. Thus the life of Hunch back goes on. The visitors of park do not bother about him. He is not bound and escapes his presence to the park keeper. If he sees he may drive him out. The park keeper holds a stick with which he picks the leaves. The sound will alert him his arrival and stays

among trees. In the night time, he retires to his kennel and sleeps. Nature is accompanying him wherever he goes. Thus the element of nature is conspicuous. The nature follows him in the evening. The most irritating factor to the poet is that the truant children who visit to the park. They mock at the physically handicapped person. They jeered at him and call often mister, which refers to the people without little nobility. They also want to scare him by facial expressions and by eyes. On Sundays, he is left alone without any people presence in the park. Then Nature provides solace. Till here we assumethat this is a kind of pity poem to be sympathetic. This is where Dylan poems differ.

Entry of the lady

The twist comes as one day a lady visits the park. In the view of poet she is without any deformity. She stays and observes the hunch back all the time. She is tall and stayed till evening. The doors of park are locked. But this lady has not left the park. Only two people are there in the park. There are questions why lady has been there in nights. This is not answered. According to few persons, there must have been sexual activity going on after the hours of park. These raise so many doubts and left to the imagination of the reader.

Doubts about the mysterious lady

This could be the doubt Thomas might have had in his mind and posing before the readers without giving what he thinks. There are doubts when there is a keeper in the park whether it is possible to stay for a woman. Whether Dylan wants to speak of nefarious nights of society at the time of him. In the first sentences, we can realize the pity shown by poet towards the hunch back.His revelation that nobody is caring except nature and children. As nature is object of solace, children are annoying the hunchback. Rest of the world has left him to his fate. Even though children are annoying, it is not intentional. They do it as per their innocence and later they follow hunchback to his kennel out of sheer curiosity.

Positive opinion about lady

According to few, hunch back wants to escape his predicament and solitary life. Thus he imagines that there is a lady with him in the park. He may have been bent due to lump on his back and crooked ribs. But the woman is even taken out of his crooked ribs she is referred as straight elm tree in the poem. Eve is taken out of Adam from ribs of him. Then Adam refers her bones of my bones, flesh of my flesh. Thus here, he is assuming that woman is taken out of ribs. He is feeling that he has crooked ribs. But the crooked ribs have even given perfect woman for him. Like this, he forgets his pain of heart which is caused by staying lonely. This gives solace to him.

W.H. Auden: Song

W.H. Auden's poem "Song" is set in a city, and is seen from the point of view of a first person narrator describing his observations while going for a walk in the evening. Down by a river he hears a lover singing a very romantic ballad about his deep and never-ending love. Then the clocks in the city begin to ring, as if to tell the lover that time passes inexorably, whether he likes it or not. Not even love can prevent people from ageing and eventually dying, the clocks day.

In this poem there are in fact three different speakers. The first person narrator who is observing it all is like a neutral frame on both sides of the two other speakers – the lover and the clocks. These two, however, are not neutral at all, as they are stating two completely contrary ideas; whether love is stronger than time, or if time is unconquerable. (unbeatable)

The lover represents romanticism and the rather naïve idea that love can last forever. This is a sympathetic thought, but perhaps not very realistic.

In many respects the lover's song seems rather banal in its absolute declaration that love is the strongest power by far. Perhaps Auden has tried to make a little fun of earlier, romantic ballads with a similarly exaggerated faith in the power of love, using the lover's song to parody these ballads.

For instance, many of the expressions in the lover's song song remind us of the famous love poem "My Love Is Like A Red Red Rose" by Robert Burns. The lover in Auden's poem mentions events which are, to put it mildly, very unlikely to happen, and maintains that until these events have taken place his love will continue: "I'll love you till the ocean / Is folded and hung up to dry / And the seven stars go squawking / Like geese about the sky."

This might be seen as an echo of Burns' poem, where the same technique is used: "Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear / And the rocks melt wi' the sun / And I will love thee still, my dear / While the sands o' life shall run."

The lover's song might be said to be very absolute in its tribute to love, but the clocks' answer is not less categorical. They claim that nothing, neither love nor anything else, can conquer Time. Almost threateningly the clocks state that Time – or Death – will always be suspended over you like the sword of Damocles, a menace from which it is impossible to escape. No one knows when "…Time will have his fancy / To-morrow or to-day", which means that no one can foretell

* when * Death will strike. That it eventually * will * strike, however, is beyond any doubt.

According to the clocks, you never can feel safe from Time. Although you may be young and think you have a long, happy life in front of you, this is by no means a matter of course. You might just as well be very young as extremely old the day "Time will have his fancy". To support this fact the clocks say: "Into many a green valley / Drifts the appalling snow", which might symbolize young life suddenly interrupted by death.

This idea of never being safe, not even in the most "secure" surroundings, is particularly clear in the famous stanza "The glacier knocks in the cupboard / The desert sighs in the bed /And the crack in the tea-cup opens / A lane to the land of the dead". Domestic objects like cupboards, beds and cracked tea-cup, which usually connote safety, are here connected to words like "glacier" and "desert", which in their turn give connotations to unpleasant things like cold and draught. This way we once again get a feeling of something threatening, disturbing the apparent safety.

In another stanza Auden goes even further and shows that not even the old, established folk tales and nursery rhymes are reliable. The clocks describe the "land of the dead" by turning phrases from an old counting song and a fairy-tale completely upside down: "… the Giant is enchanting to Jack" (Jack the Giant-Killer), "…the Lily-white Boy is a Roarer" (the Lily-white Boy in the counting song is usually regarded as Christ. Here he is a criminal youth.) Once again we see safe, everyday things turning out not to be that safe after all.

As we have seen, Auden uses a lot of imagery to support his motif. And their common denominator has mostly something to do with water, an ancient, almost clichéed symbol of Time.

The word "snow" is used to describe the interruption of young life, the word "glacier" to symbolize the threat of Time. In a stanza the poem says "Vaguely life leaks away" as if Life were a sea or a river. And finally, in the last stanza there actually is a reference to a river. This time it is not the clocks that are using this imagery, but the neutral "I"-narrator. After the clocks have stopped ringing, he observes that "the deep river ran on". Probably this line should be interpreted as an image of Life, or Time, inexorably passing by. It is no longer the clocks that are claiming this, but instead this is being observed by the neutral observer and presented as a fact.In this way we clearly see that this is the theme, and also the point, of the poem.

This is emphasized earlier in the poem as well, with another kind of imagery. In the very first stanza the crowds upon the pavement are described as "fields of harvest wheat". This of course gives connotations to people standing or walking very close to each other, just like wheat in a field. But it also gives associations to what happens to the corn when time has come for harvesting. Just as the wheat is waiting for the reaper to come and cut it down, the crowds upon the pavement – and any human being – must also expect the eventual arrival of their reaper; the Grim Reaper… or Death!

Beside Auden's use of imagery in his poem, he also has many allusions (indirect references) to certain literary traditions, and it is interesting to see what kind of

sources he chooses to use. Many of Auden's predecessors have used lots of references to classical works, like for instance Greek and Roman literature. This might work if the readers have knowledge of these classical works, but for others such references might fall to the ground.

Auden, on the other hand, chooses references to which the common man can relate. The poem in itself is written in the same way as many old ballads. And, as mentioned before, Auden uses well-known nursery rhymes and folk tales as a basis for several allusions. This way his poem may be read by all kinds of people with a minimum of knowledge about English culture, with no risk that the allusions might escape them.

To conclude it all; by using imagery like water and rivers to symbolize Time, beside references to literary traditions the common man should be familiar with, Auden substantiates what is the moral, or conclusion, of his poem. He wants to say that Time passes – no matter what you do. According to Auden, the romantic idea that love can conquer time is a mere illusion.

Philip Larkin: Church Going

"Church Going" is one of the best of Philip Larkin's poems. The title itself is puzzling. It gives us two different meanings. One meaning is that it is a regular visit to a church. The other shows the decline of the institution because people lost faith in God and religion. His greatest virtues are clarity and close observation of social life, perfect control over feeling and tone. The language is always simple and lucid and the idiom has great variety. Through his poetry Larkin advises us not to be deceived by illusions or ideals. He asks us to have a better awareness of man's weaknesses. Larkin is called a skeptic poet. He enters the church as a skeptic who does not have any faith in the church. But he slowly realizes the truth that church fulfils a deeply felt human need and that it is "a serious house on a serious earth it is".

The speaker of the poem sneaks into a church after making sure it's empty. He lets the door thud shut behind him and glances around at all the fancy decorations, showing his ignorance of (or indifference to) how sacred all this stuff is supposed to be. After a

short pause, he walks up to thealtar and reads a few lines from the notes that are sitting on a lectern. After this, he walks back out of the church and slides an Irish sixpence into the collection box, which is basically like donating an old shirt button.

The speaker thinks that the place wasn't worth stopping to check out. But he also admits thathe *did* stop, and that this isn't the first time he's done so. He can't help but wonder what he's looking for when he keeps coming back to this place, and also asks himself about what will happen to churches when there are no more believers left in the world. He wonders if they'll make museums out of the churches, or if they'll just leave the buildings' doors open so that sheep can hang out inside them.

Nearing the end of the poem, the speaker asks what will happen to the world when religion is gone altogether. Then he wonders what the very last religious person will be like. Will they be an obsessive compulsive, who just can't stop wanting to smell incense? Or will they be more like the speaker, someone who's bored and ignorant about the church, and just passing by without knowing what they're looking for?

Finally, the speaker just comes out and admits that he's pleased by the church because it's a serious place for serious questions. Humanity, he concludes, will always have a hunger to ask those big questions like "Why are we here?" and "Where do we go when we die?" And for this reason, the kind of urge that created religion in the first place will never go away, even if organized churches do. Sorry, atheists. If you were looking for a poem that just trashes religion and calls spiritual people stupid, you'll have to look someplace else.

Wilfred Owen: Strange Meeting

“Strange Meeting” was written by the British poet Wilfred Owen. A soldier in the First World War, Owen wrote “Strange Meeting” sometime during 1918 while serving on the Western Front (though the poem was not published until 1919, after Owen had been killed in battle). The poem's speaker, who is also a solider, has descended to “Hell.” There, he meets a soldier from the opposing army—who reveals at the end of the poem that the speaker was the one who killed him. The poem is deeply pessimistic as it reflects on the shared humanity of these two men and the broader horrors of war. Though the poem suggests that human beings aren't going to stop fighting anytime soon,

it also calls for such violence to be replaced by reconciliation and solidarity.

"Strange Meeting"

- It seemed like I escaped from battle down into a very deep, dark tunnel—a tunnel thathad been carved out of the granite bedrock by some enormous wars in the past.

Even in the tunnel, I found people moaning and suffering. They were either too deeply asleep to be stirred, or they were already dead. Then, as I poked and prodded them, one of the sleepers jumped up and stared at me. He seemed to recognize me—and he pitied me. He lifted his hands sadly, as if he were going to bless me. And I could tell from his lifeless smile that the dark hall inwhich we stood was Hell itself.

You could see all the fear etched into his face—even though none of the blood or violence from the battle up above reached the hall where we stood. You couldn't hear the artillery firing down there; the guns didn't make the chimneys in the hall groan. I said to him, "Unfamiliar friend, there's no reason to be sad down here." He replied: "No reason except for all the years I'm missing out on, and the loss of hope. You and I had the same hopes. I threw myself into seeking the most beautiful thing in the world, and I'm not talking about physical beauty. This beauty makes fun of time as it steadily passes by. If this beauty is sad, its sadness is so much richer than the sadness you find down here. If I hadn't died, my happiness might have made a lot of other people happy too; and even in my sadness, I would have left something important behind, something that can't survive down here.

I'm talking about truth itself, the truth that no one talks about: the horror of war, war boiled down to its horrifying essence. Since I didn't get to tell people how horrible war is, people will be happy with the destructive things our armies have done. Or they'll be unhappy, and they'll get so angry that they'll keep fighting and killing each other. They will be as fast as tigers. No one will speak out or disagree with their governments, even though those governments are moving society away from progress rather than towards it. I was full of courage and mystery. I was fullof wisdom and

expertise. I won't have to watch the world as it moves backwards, marching into cities that, foolishly, don't have fortifications. If the wheels of their armored vehicles were to get clogged with blood, I would go wash them with water from pure wells. I would wash them with truths too profoundly true to be corrupted. I would do everything I possibly could to help— except for fighting, except for taking part in more horrible war. In war, even those who aren't physically hurt suffer from mental trauma.

“I am the enemy soldier you killed, my friend. I recognized you in the dark: you frowned when you saw me in just the same way as you frowned yesterday, when you killed with me with your bayonet. I tried to fend you off, but my hands were slow and clumsy. Let’s rest now…”

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UNIT- II - Twentieth Century English Literature – SHS5014

E.M. Forster: What I believe

Introduction to What I Believe

E. M. Forster is an individualist and liberal thinker. He is an artist, finds difficult to adjust with the changing world. He does not believe any organized religion or social or political creed. He is a democrat. He is not a hero – worshipper. He does not believe in Great Men or Gospels. Respect for the individual, love, tolerance and sympathy had been the cherished ideals of democratic principles. He observes that the world is changing from bad to worse. Violence, cruelty plus racial religious persecution dominate the world. This essay is the honest confession of the Personal Faith. It guides his life. In other words, he follows the dictates of his conscience. He is truly a secular democrat. He does not claim to be a member of any religion or sect. This essay throws light on his personality.

E. M. Forster begins 'What I Believe' with a note of clean confession. He does not believe in Belief. Most of the creeds are militant. The world is full of religious or racial persecution. He admits that Faith is a mental starch. He differs from the world.
He believes in personal relationships. The world is surrounded by violence and cruelty. We must love people and trust them. Reliability is the basis of personal relationships. It is not a matter of contract. It is a matter for the heart. without natural warmth, reliability is impossible. Most men possess this warmth. Politicians want to keep the faith.

Personal relations are despised today. We are urged to get rid of them. We are told to dedicate ourselves to some movement or cause. He halts the idea of the causes.

Democracy is not a beloved Republic really. It is less hateful than another form of government. The individual is important. All types of individuals make civilization. There is no division of people between bossers and bossed. He is the admirer of ordinary people. They get a chance in democracy. They are creative in their private lives. They are confined to their domestic work. Only democracy allows them to express themselves.

Democracy allows criticism and allows varieties of expression. Public criticism can check scandals. He believes in The Freedom of Press. (the press is not – free from lies and vulgarity)

Parliament is sneered as a Talking Shop. He values parliament because it criticises and talks. Its chatter gets wide exposure.

The police and the army represent force. They represent the Government. All society rests upon force. All the great creative actions and decent human relation occur during intervals. We need not get habituated to Force. Force or Violence is the ultimate reality on our earth.

No form of Government or Christianity will bring peace to the world. No change of heart will occur. It is a wrong presumption that we cannot improve. What is good in people is their insistence on creation. Their belief in human values and loyalty creativeness alerts the people when violence sleeps. In order to escape the trials, we need not turn to hero-worship. Hero worship is a dangerous vice. It is a minor merit of democracy. It cannot produce Great Man. Democracy can produce different kind of small men with varieties. A hero is an essential part of dictatorship.

He distrusts Great Men. They are surrounded by a desert of uniformity around them. They are deprived of ordinary pleasures of the average man. He believes in Aristocracy. It is not the Aristocracy of power. Aristocracy is based on Power and Influence. He believes in Aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky. It has a universal existence. They are found everywhere. They represent the true human tradition. It is the victory of the queer race over cruelty and chaos. They are sensitive towards the world. They are generous. They have the capacity to endure. They can take a joke. They can't give up laughter. He disapproves the public image of the Aristocrats. He declares that he would like to go with the old Scotsman. He wanted less chastity and more delicacy. He accepts his aristocrats with all their human imperfections. He doesn't reject sensuous joys or pleasures. The terminology (Phraseology) describing aristocracy is false. Authority (Political Power) can utilize them or ignore them. They are not restricted to iron bars or Holy Kingdom. Their canvas is wide open. There is complete pleasure in earthly life. One needs eyes to see and hands to feel.

The power makes people crooked. The man without a status symbol is happy. Member of Parliament or Government does not trust each other. Suspicion, treachery, robbery and cheating are seen in public life. This is practised in the name of decency. The primitive man restrained these elements through certain taboos. There will be no messiah to preach a new Gospel. Only good temper or goodwill can strengthen. All theological prayers are a part of wishful thinking. One must under native goodness of man to explore New Universe to make life worth living. Christianity can't answer or solve the problems before us. In modern society Money behind the spiritual institutions will influence the people. The organized religion is a failure. His faith isvery small.

As an Individualist, he fears that the dictator hero can not help the people solve their difficulties. Every human being is born separately and will die separately. Everybody is born naked and will die naked.

Forster And The Importance Of Personal Relations

Despite the title of his essay, Forster was wary of political declarations and manifestos, and begins his work with a paradoxical statement: 'I do not believe in Belief'. What Forster believes in is personal relationships, which he sees as something 'solid in a world full of violence and cruelty'. Forster stresses three values he views as fundamental: tolerance, good temper and sympathy. But 'What I Believe' also contained some controversial ideas, such as the well-knownextract below:

Personal relations are despised today. They are regarded as bourgeois luxuries, as products of a time of fair weather which is now past, and we are urged to get rid of them, and to dedicate ourselves to some movement or cause instead. I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend I hope I should have the guts to betray my country.

Forster's words were particularly divisive considering that they were written in a period in which the involvement of Britain in another world war was becoming increasingly inevitable. While Forster was not unpatriotic, he placed a greater importance on personal loyalty than on national belonging.

H.G. Wells: A Modern Utopia

A Modern Utopia (1905) is Wells' hybrid between fiction and philosophical discussion, reviewed as: *"a conscious attempt to describe a utopia that is not utopian."* Wells was unsatisfied with his earlier writings on the subject, proclaiming this as his last novel of its type,intended to *"settle accounts with a number of issues."* Don't let "Utopia" in the title fool you: *"I have written into it as well as I can the heretical metaphysical scepticism upon which all my thinking rests."*
Many of Wells' works are featured in collection of Dystopian Stories.

A Modern Utopia

- If *The Time Machine* is in some sense a metacritical commentary on utopia, it certainly isn't the only one Wells wrote. ***A Modern Utopia***, his 1905 "novel," certainly fits the bill. This is a strange book: It's not quite science fiction, not quite utopia (despite the title), and not quite a novel.
- This is a book much devoted to the concept of doubles. The book opens with a two-page segment called "The Owner of the Voice," which begins "There are works, and this is one of them, that are best begun with a portrait of the author."
- Wells goes on to say "Now this Voice … is not to be taken as the Voice of the ostensible author who fathers these pages." But then he describes the Voice's owner as a "whitish plump man" with many other features that Wells himself possesses: slight baldness on the crown, agile movements, a convex front, and blue eyes. So where does this self-portrait leave us?
- The Voice isn't just a double for the author. It's also a double for the narrator, who tells us of a utopian society with pretty typical features of a modern liberal society.
- The narrator is the one who actually visits the utopia. He visits with an acquaintance he refers to only as the Botanist. The Botanist acts as a kind of opposing double, so that each time the narrator finds a new feature of utopia, the Botanist comes in and complains about said feature.

- The utopian setting itself is based on doubling. It's set in a parallel world, on a planet just like Earth, except utopian. On this planet, there is a version—a double—of each person currently living on Earth.
- That provides the main impetus of the story: the narrator's quest for his utopian double. The Botanist, true to character, continues to pine for his true love, who had no interest in him on Earth and, the reader imagines, will be equally uninterested on utopian Earth.
- What does this doubling down on doubles accomplish? First, it speaks to late-19th-century scientific trends, especially in the fields of psychology and statistics, which were starting to set up research projects with experimental and control groups, including twin studies.
- Second, the doubling within the text speaks to the doubling within the genre, to the idea that utopia as a genre is always both fiction and philosophy. It also always contains two societies, implicitly or explicitly: the utopian society and contemporary society.
- In Wells's utopia, there's a premium on travel, and the people of the parallel planet are migratory, regularly visiting and even moving to new places on their planet.
- Women are considered equal, and motherhood is subsidized by the state. People need to earn over a specified amount in order to marry. The modern utopia is racially diverse. Residential areas are in temperate zones, with children growing up in comfortable and beautiful areas. Research is encouraged through careful organization.
- Crime is rare and the state plays a pretty small role in people's lives. The state is responsible for the well-being of children, but has absolutely no interest in regulating sexuality.
- Everyone is healthy. This is something the narrator thinks about as he seeks his double. Heassumes that his double will be healthier, more fit, with a longer life expectancy. And he's right.
- But here's the surprise: The modern utopia is not a representative democracy. A special class of people known as the Samurai makes all decisions. When the narrator meets his utopian double, the double explains all, since he is a Samurai,

part of the "voluntary nobility … [that is] essential in the scheme of the Utopian state."

- The utopians can't imagine a world in which all people are treated as equivalent, as havingthe same impact on the political system. In the modern utopia, people fall into one of four classes: the Poetic, the Kinetic, the Dull, and the Base.

The utopians can't imagine a world in which all people are treated as equivalent, as having the same impact on the political system. In the modern utopia, people fall into one of four classes:the Poetic, the Kinetic, the Dull, and the Base.

- The Poetic are creative, and they're responsible for art and for inventions. The Kinetic are energetic, and they include administrators, scientists, preachers, and actors. The Dull are the stupid and incompetent people. The Base can be poetic, kinetic, or dull, but they turn their energies inward, having no moral sense.
- With this system of broad categories in mind, the founders of the World State—which is what its inhabitants call their world— created a classification that would be unattractive for the Dull or the Base, but that would provide leadership from among the Poetic and Kinetic: the Samurai. These people are the only ones who get to vote. But they must agree to follow a very specific lifestyle in order to become Samurai.
- They live an ascetic life—no drinking or drugs. They are allowed to marry, but can spend only limited time with their family, usually sleeping alone. They must take a wilderness voyage one week of the year to push themselves.

The Impact

- Wells's *A Modern Utopia* was no *Looking Backward* in the way it activated real-world readers. But it *did* have an impact. A few small groups formed as a result of the novel and tried to live according to the precepts of the Samurai.
- Perhaps most famously—and scandalously—a Cambridge undergraduate named Amber Reeves, whose parents were both Fabians (a British socialist organization), created an all- women's club called the Utopians, who were based on Wells's book.
- The scandalous part comes when the much younger Reeves, a great admirer of Wells, became pregnant with his child.

- Several utopian groups based on the novel had rather brief flirtations with the Samurai lifestyle, and their writings on these experiences can be found among Wells's papers.

A Modern Utopia

Like much of Wells's science fiction — *The Time Machine*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *The Invisible Man* and more — *A Modern Utopia* (1905) is informed by the emerging modern world in which he lived. The mechanization of labour, acceptance of natural selection as the means of evolution, and Malthusian population theory combine with the economics of both free-market capitalism and state socialism to justify Wells's claim to a "modern" vision of an ideal society.

This is a curious kind of book, which Wells acknowledges at the start. Not quite a novel, not quite an essay, *A Modern Utopia* is the result of "a peculiar method," one which Wells believesto be "the best way to a sort of lucid vagueness which has always been my intention in this matter."

Wells identifies the key ways in which his utopia is meant to be different from the many classical and contemporary utopias to which he frequently refers. *A Modern Utopia* is to be a dynamic, not static society, one that is not a perfect and unchanging ideal but rather an evolving social organism, adjusting its character to maintain its purposes through changing times and circumstances. In one way or other, Wells's utopia must account for everyone, not just the able and admirable citizens found in other utopias. It must offer everyone maximum freedom, not maximum uniformity.

A Modern Utopia is a single world state, using modern transportation and communication technologies to make a unified, fluid citizenry possible and practical. This world state is a combination of global socialism — everyone is provided with the means to live in modest comfort — and individual liberty — few restrictions on where or how one lives, on what or how much one works, with incentives for greater industry and for other meaningful contributions to society:

The modern Utopia will give a universal security indeed, and exercise the minimumof compulsions to toil, but it will offer some acutely desirable prizes. The aim of these devices, the minimum wage, the standard of life, provision for all the feeble and unemployed and so forth, is not to rob life of incentives but to change their

nature, to make life not less energetic, but less panic-stricken and violent and base, to shift the incidence of the struggle for existence from our lower to our higher emotions, so to anticipate and neutralize the motives of the cowardly and bestial, that the ambitious and energetic imagination which is man's finest quality may become the incentive and determining factor in survival.

Few restrictions, with one crucial exception. Following Malthus, Wells sees unchecked population growth as the greatest danger to society: "a State whose population continues to increase in obedience to unchecked instinct, can progress only from bad to worse."

In *A Modern Utopia*, reproduction is strictly regulated, with the goal of improving the species by encouraging the best to have children, while keeping the worst childless:
A mere indiscriminating restriction of the birth-rate ... involves not only the cessation of distresses but stagnation, and the minor good of a sort of comfort and social stability is won at too great a sacrifice. Progress depends on competitive selection, and that we may not escape.

But it is a conceivable and possible thing that this margin of futile struggling, painand discomfort and death might be reduced to nearly nothing without checking physical and mental evolution, with indeed an acceleration of physical and mental evolution, by preventing the birth of those who would in the unrestricted interplay of natural forces be born to suffer and fail.

The detailed social mechanisms by which Wells proposes to achieve his population ends are beyond the scope of a short review, other than to note that they follow his understanding of Darwinian evolution. Wells would not attempt to engineer "compulsory pairing," but he would set up conditions and rules that operate to restrict reproduction in ways that foster the "natural selection" of the individuals most fit for the future.

In a society without poverty, with free choice of occupation and interest, a meritocracy of "voluntary noblemen," called *samurai*, assume the key leadership and administrative positions. Strictly non-hereditary, this nobility operates something like

a combination of Plato's "Guardians" and the imperial Chinese civil service.

The *samurai* are "noblemen" thanks to one area in which Wells's vision doesn't see the full future. While women in his utopia are free and officially equal, Wells can't quite bring himself todiscard the attitudes of his sex and his time. While he argues that women are inferior to men onlybecause they are kept economically inferior, which he proposes to remediate by making motherhood a paid occupation, his reasons for that economic inferiority are pure Victorian sexism:

It is a fact that almost every point in which a woman differs from a man is an economic disadvantage to her, her incapacity for great stresses of exertion, her frequent liability to slight illnesses, her weaker initiative, her inferior invention and resourcefulness, her relative incapacity for organization and combination ….

So much for an enlightened vision, at least on the feminist front!

On religion, the Utopians have repudiated "original sin," believing instead that "man, on the whole, is good….This is their cardinal belief." Individual freedom will reign here as it does in allother aspects of Utopian society:

The theology of the Utopian rules will be saturated with that same philosophy of uniqueness, that repudiation of anything beyond similarities and practical parallelisms, that saturates all their institutions…. [T]hey will have escaped the delusive simplification of God that vitiates all terrestrial theology. They will hold God to be complex and of an endless variety of aspects, to be expressed by no universal formula nor approved in any uniform manner. Just as the language of Utopia will be a synthesis, even so will its God be.

Too soon, our traveler narrator returns to his own world, where he is over-whelmed by the imperfection of its dirt and noise and unequal suffering. Yet, even here, he sees a hope for the future:

The face of a girl who is passing westward, a student girl, rather carelessly dressed,her books in a carrying-strap, comes across my field of vision. The westward sun ofLondon glows upon her face. She has eyes that dream, surely no sensuous nor personal dream. After all, after all, dispersed, hidden, disorganized, undiscovered,

unsuspected even by themselves, the samurai of Utopia are in this world, the motives that are developed and organized there stir dumbly here and stifle in ten thousand futile hearts.

In all, *A Modern Utopia* is worth the investment of the short time it takes to read, even if its depiction of a world enlightened by science and led by an altruistic intellectual and creative elite strikes me more as a rather naive curiosity than as a prescription for a real future.

But then, a skeptic like Wells may imagine an ideal society, where the pessimist or cynic may not.

Arnold Toynbee: "India's contribution to World Unity"

"India's contribution to World Unity" is a talk delivered by Arnold Toynbee, a British historian. In this talk, Toynbee explains how India has been a crucial contributor in the history of the world. He believes that India held a key position in the ancient history of the world and it is the epitome of the present day world. Toynbee elaborated how India has made valuable contributions in the fields of religion, economy, social institutions and political systems.

According to Toynbee, India has been the birth land for Hinduism and Buddhism which are the popular religions practiced by half of the world's population. Beginning from the Mouryan and Gupta rule, India has been influencing the world's economy. In setting up parliamentary form of governments, India became a role model for other countries. Toynbee praises the way India deals with the world problems such as social inequality, religious intolerance and population, etc. The essay ends with the hope that India will rise to the height of providing solutions to the world problems.

'India's Contribution to World Unity' is a short extract from a lecture by the well known British historian **Arnold J.Toynbee** on the human values that he finds characteristic of the Indian people. The historian writes that these values could very well be of great relevance to the rest of the world.

Toynbee says that Indians have a characteristic attitude towards life and towards the handling of human affairs.

Indians are free from **rancour** and do not hate their adversaries. Toynbee quotes the example of India's struggle for freedom. Once the struggle came to an end, the Indians did not brood over the past and didn't nurse any grievances against the Britishers. He also points out that he was delivering this lecture at a commemoration held in the memory of an Indian of Muslim religion. And Muslims also invaded India before the Britishers.

Toynbee's Views On Gandhi

Toynbee recollects his last visit to Delhi when he paid his respects to Gandhiji at his shrine. Standing here, he wonders whether there has ever been any leader like Gandhi, who is a successful struggle for political liberation, has been a benefactor not only to his nation but also to the nation from whose rule he helped his own people to free themselves. Gandhiji made it impossible for the Britishers to continue ruling India and he did it in such a waythat the British withdraw without any disgrace.

Toynbee praises Gandhiji because in his struggle for liberation, he not only helped the Indians but also saved the Britishers. If only the struggle had taken a violent form, neither of the nations would be happy. Several such struggles remained as commontragedies of history. Gandhiji saved Britain as well as India from such a tragedy by inspiring the people of India to carry out their struggle on a spiritual plane.

Toynbee's Views On Non-Voilence

According to Toynbee, Non-violent revolution is a characteristic Indian accomplishment. After the successful independence struggle, non- violence has found a new field of action in India's domestic life. Here Toynbee gives reference to the Bhoodan movement. He also refers to Emperor Ashoka who substituted religious propaganda for military aggressionas an instrument for unifying

the world.

Speaking on the importance of non-violence, Toynbee recalls the year 1945 when atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima & Nagasaki. He says that in this atomic age, mankind cannot save itself from self-destruction unless we all practice non-violence ignoring all provocations.

Toynbee points out **the hostile relation between India and China**. He says that the Indians should remember that it their obligation to go on setting an example of non-violence to the rest of the world. Hence a great spiritual responsibility rests on India to guide mankind towards self-preservation and not self-destruction.

The spirit of non-violence is inspired by a moral ideal. The moral ideal is bound with the intellectual belief that human beings have more than one **approach to truth and to salvation**. While 'truth' is a glimpse of absolute Spiritual Reality, 'salvation' is attaining harmony with Reality. This broad-minded approach to Reality is a characteristic of India. A devout Shaiva or a devout Vaishnava may claim that his own way is better than the others. Yet they recognize that both are seeking the same truth and salvation in their own ways and both ways are genuine. This **Indian appreciation of variety** is a good ideal for the rest ofthe world.

Toynbee reminds us that we are living in an **age of technology** where we are physically neighbours but psychologically strangers. If we need to avoid mutual destruction and to create good relationships, we should value the variety of our human heritage. This is the reason why India's achievement of **variety –in-unity** is of worldwide importance.

Lastly Toynbee points out that Gandhiji, in spite of his very busy schedule, always made some **time for contemplation**. This is also characteristic of the Indian tradition. He says that today's Indians irrespective of their urgent tasks, should take Gandhiji asan example and should not allow these tasks to disturb one's spiritual life.

Toynbee concludes that the unfortunately **the Western people** did not recognize and practice this virtue of contemplation as in the Western Middle Ages. They have almost lost this art of contemplation which is nothing but the art of living. The spiritual gift that makes man human is still alive in the Indian soul. The Indians should go on setting examples of it and save mankind from self destruction.

Human Values Chacteristic Of Indian People (main points)

1. freedom from rancour (hatred and anger towards adversaries)
2. do not brood over the past
3. do not nurse any grievances
4. spirit of non-voilence
5. belief in more than one approach to truth and salvation
6. appreciation of variety, achieving variety-in-unity
7. always making some time for contemplation

What I Found in My Pocket

G.K. Chesterton

I have only once in my life picked a pocket, and then (perhaps through some absent-mindedness)I picked my own. My act can really with some reason be so described. For in taking things out of my own pocket I had at least one of the more tense and quivering emotions of the thief; I hada complete ignorance and a profound curiosity as to what I should find there. Perhaps it would bethe exaggeration of eulogy to call me a tidy person. But I can always pretty satisfactorily accountfor all my possessions. I can always tell where they are, and what I have done with them, so longas I can keep them out of my pockets. If once anything slips into those unknown abysses, I wave it a sad Virgilian farewell. I suppose that the things that I have dropped into my pockets are still there; the same presumption applies to the things that I have dropped into the sea. But I regardthe riches stored in both these bottomless chasms with the same reverent ignorance. They tell us that on the last day the sea will give up its dead; and I suppose that on the same occasion long strings of extraordinary things will come running out of my pockets. But I have quite forgotten what any of them are; and there is really nothing (excepting the money) that I shall be at all surprised at finding among them.

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Such at least has hitherto been my state of innocence. I here only wish briefly to recall thespecial, extraordinary, and hitherto unprecedented circumstances which led me in cold blood, and being of sound mind, to turn out my pockets. I was locked up in a third-class carriage fora rather long journey. The time was towards evening, but it might have been anything, for everything resembling earth or sky or light or shade was painted out as if with a great wet brush by an unshifting sheet of quite colourless rain. I had no books or newspapers. I had not evena pencil and a scrap of paper with which to write a religious epic. There were no advertisements on the walls of the carriage, otherwise I could have plunged into the study, for any collection of printed words is quite enough to suggest infinite complexities of mental ingenuity. When I find myself opposite the words “Sunlight Soap” I can exhaust all the aspects of Sun Worship, Apollo, and Summer poetry before I go on to the less congenial subject of

soap. But there was no printed word or picture anywhere; there was nothing but blank wood inside the carriage and blank wet without. Now I deny most energetically that anything is, or can be, uninteresting. So I stared at the joints of the walls and seats, and began thinking hard on the fascinating subject of wood. Just as I had begun to realise why, perhaps, it was that Christ was a carpenter, rather than a bricklayer, or a baker, or anything else, I suddenly started upright, and remembered my pockets. I was carrying about with me an unknown treasury. I had a British Museum and a South Kensington collection of unknown curios hung all over me in different places. I began to take thethings out.

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The first thing I came upon consisted of piles and heaps of Battersea tram tickets. There were enough to equip a paper chase. They shook down in showers like confetti. Primarily, of course, they touched my patriotic emotions, and brought tears to my eyes; also they provided me withthe printed matter I required, for I found on the back of them some short but striking little scientific essays about some kind of pill. Comparatively speaking, in my then destitution, those tickets might be regarded as a small but well-chosen scientific library. Should my railway journey continue (which seemed likely at the time) for a few months longer, I could imagine myself throwing myself into the controversial aspects of the pill, composing replies and rejoinders pro and con upon the data furnished to me. But after all it was the symbolic quality of the tickets that moved me most. For as certainly as the cross of St. George means English patriotism, those scraps of paper meant all that municipal patriotism which is now, perhaps, the greatest hope of England.

The next thing that I took out was a pocket-knife. A pocket-knife, I need hardly say, would require a thick book full of moral meditations all to itself. A knife typifies one of the most primary of those practical origins upon which as upon low, thick pillows all our human civilisation reposes. Metals, the mystery of the thing called iron and of the thing called steel, led me off half-dazed into a kind of dream. I saw into the intrails of dim, damp wood, where the first man among all the common stones found the strange stone. I saw a vague and violent battle, in which stone axes broke and stone knives were splintered against something shining and new in the hand of one desperate man. I heard all the hammers on all the anvils of the earth. I saw all the swords of

Feudal and all the weals of Industrial war. For the knife is only a short sword; and the pocket-knife is a secret sword. I opened it and looked at that brilliant and terrible tongue which we call a blade; and I thought that perhaps it was the symbol of the oldest of the needs of man. The next moment I knew that I was wrong; for the thing that came next out of my pocket was a box of matches. Then I saw fire, which is stronger even than steel, the old, fierce female thing, the thing we all love, but dare not touch.

The next thing I found was a piece of chalk; and I saw in it all the art and all the frescoes of the world. The next was a coin of a very modest value; and I saw in it not only the image and superscription of our own Caesar, but all government and order since the world began. ButI have not space to say what were the items in the long and splendid procession of poetical symbols that came pouring out. I cannot tell you all the things that were in my pocket. I can tell you one thing, however, that I could not find in my pocket. I allude to my railway ticket.

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UNIT – III -Twentieth Century English Literature – SHS5014

PYGMALION

G.B. Shaw

Brief Biography of George Bernard Shaw

George Bernard Shaw was born in 1856, in Dublin. His father was a civil servant and his mother was a singer. He changed schools several times as he grew older, and developed a strong dislike of schools and formal education. When he was a teenager, his mother moved to London and he remained in Dublin with his father for some time. But in 1876, he moved to London to join his mother. There, he began writing, starting with novels (though he found no success as a novelist). He also became somewhat politically active, an ardent supporter of socialism. It was only in the 1880s that Shaw turned to drama. He finally found some writing success with his plays, which often involved social critiques. Shaw was a very prolific writer, writing over 50 plays in addition to articles, reviews, essays, and pamphlets. His popularity rose in the early 1900s and he started to become a famous, well-respected playwright. In 1925, he was recognized for his work withthe Nobel Prize in Literature and he died 25 years later, at the age of 94.

Historical Context of *Pygmalion*

The play is set in the early 20th century, at the end of the Victorian period. During this time, London was the capital of the wide-reaching, powerful British Empire. Victorian society was characterized by a rigid social hierarchy, but as the 20th century began social change was on the horizon. Importantly, women had not yet gained many basic rights and privileges. Shaw's comedy of manners, which satirizes the customs and habits of the Victorian elite, plays with and critiques the social conventions of this historical moment.

Key Facts about *Pygmalion*

- Full Title: Pygmalion
- When Written: 1912
- Where Written: London
- When Published: 1912
- Literary Period: Victorian period
- Genre: Drama, comedy, comedy of manners

- **Setting:** London
- **Climax:** In act four, after winning the bet concerning Eliza, Higgins says he has been bored with his experiment, and treats Eliza poorly. Infuriated, Eliza throws Higgins' slippers at him and argues and fights with him.
- **Antagonist:** While Eliza and Higgins argue with each other, they both cooperate in order to fool London's high society. The rigid hierarchy of social classes in Victorian England can be seen as the antagonist against which all the characters struggle, as they deal with issues of class and wealth.

In Covent Garden, the Eynsford Hills wait for a cab in the rain. When Freddy goes to hail one, heknocks Liza's flowers out of her basket. She accepts money from Freddy's mother, then Colonel Pickering. A bystander warns her that a man is writing down what she is saying, and she confronts him, saying that she has done nothing wrong. Higgins amazes the crowd by imitating her accent and guessing where they all come from. Pickering and Higgins meet and agree to have dinner, and Higgins fills Liza's basket with money before he leaves. Liza leaves in a cab. The next day, Liza intrudes upon Pickering and Higgins in Higgins's home. She wants English lessons, and Pickering bets that Higgins could not pass her off as a lady at the ambassador's ball in a month's time. Mrs. Pearce takes Liza away to bathe her and dress her more appropriately, and Liza's father arrives and demands some payment. Higgins likes him and gives him five pounds. A few months later, Mrs. Higgins is writing letters at home when she is interrupted by her son, who shocks her by telling her that he is bringing a flower-girl to his house. The EynsfordHills arrive for a visit, as does Eliza--with her newly elegant accent and manner. Freddy is infatuated right away. Eliza makes the mistake of swearing and describing her aunt's alcoholism, and she is hustled away by Higgins. Clara thinks that swearing is the new fashion and shocks hermother by saying "bloody" on the way out. Mrs. Higgins scolds Pickering and her son for not considering what is to be done with Eliza after the experiment. At midnight at Higgins's house, Eliza enters looking exhausted. Higgins ignores her, looking for his slippers and crowing overher success at fooling everyone as his own. Eliza begins to look furious. When Higgins asks where his slippers are, Eliza throws them at his face. She explains that she does not know what to do with herself now that Higgins has transformed her. He suggests that she marry, to which she responds that she used to

be something better than a prostitute when she sold flowers. She throwsthe ring that he gave her into the fireplace, and he loses his temper at her and leaves the room. She looks for the ring in the ashes. Mrs. Higgins is in her drawing room when her son comes andtells her that Eliza has run away. Doolittle arrives and announces that after he spoke with Higgins, Higgins recommended him as a speaker to an American millionaire who died and left him everything. Doolittle is now middleclass and hating every minute of it; his mistress is forcing him to marry her that afternoon. Eliza comes downstairs (she ran away to Mrs. Higgins's house), and Higgins looks flabbergasted. 63 Doolittle invites Pickering and Mrs. Higgins to the wedding, and they leave Eliza and Higgins alone to talk. Eliza says that she does not want to be treated like a pair of slippers--and Freddy writes her love letters every day. When she threatensto become a phonetics teacher herself and use Higgins's methods, he says that he likes the new, stronger version of Eliza. He wants to live with her and Pickering as "three bachelors." Mrs. Higgins returns dressed for the wedding, and she takes Eliza with her. Higgins asks her to run his errands for him, including that of buying some cheese and ham. She says a final goodbye to him,and he seems confident that she will follow his command. The onstage drama ends, and Shaw narrates, in an epilogue, that Eliza recognizes Higgins as predestined to be a bachelor; she marries Freddy instead. With a gift from Colonel Pickering, Eliza opens a flower shop. The only person truly bothered by this state of affairs is Clara, who decides that the marriage will not help her own marriage prospects. But then she begins to read H.G. Wells and travel in the circles of his fans, and she is convinced to begin working in a furniture shop herself in the hopes that she might meet Wells (because the woman who owns the shop is also a fan of his). Freddy is not very practical, and he and Eliza must take classes in bookkeeping to make their business a success. They do reach success, and they live a fairly comfortable life.

Social Class and Manners

Written in 1912, Pygmalion is set in the early 20th century, at the end of the Victorian period in England. Among other things, this period of history was characterized by a particularly rigid social hierarchy—but one that was beginning to decline as social mobility became increasingly possible. The wealthy, high-class characters of the play are thus especially concerned with maintaining class distinctions. This means more than a mere distinction between rich and poor. The Eynsford Hill family, for example, is wealthy, but (as **Mrs. Eynsford Hill** confesses to **Mrs. Higgins**) not wealthy enough to go to many parties. And **Higgins** wants **Eliza** to marry not **Freddy**, but someone of an even higher class. Perhaps the most important way in which these distinctions of social class are enforced is through manners, unwritten codes of proper behavior. Shaw's play displays the workings of this system of social hierarchy, but also exposes some of its problems.

For one, the play shows how the belief that one's social class and manners are natural is false. As Eliza's transformation shows, manners and nobility can be learned. One's class is formed throughperformance, learning to act in certain ways. And moreover, as Clara Eynsford Hill comments, there is nothing inherently better about one or another performance: "It's all a matter of habit. There's no right or wrong in it." Good and bad manners are just a matter of cultural habit. (This is also evidenced by the fact that different cultures have different notions of polite behavior.) Ironically, at several moments in the play, lower-class characters are better behaved than their supposedly well-mannered, upper-class counterparts. In Act Five, **Pickering** comments that Eliza played the part of a noble lady better than real noble ladies they encountered. And Higgins, while somewhat upper-class, is very rude. **Mrs. Pearce** must remind him to mind his manners in front of Eliza, and at the end of the play she has better manners than he does. There is thus no natural or inherent connection between social class and "correct" manners.

Despite the rigidities of social class in the world of the play, Eliza and her father show the possibility of social mobility. Not only is Eliza changed into a noble lady, but her father also inherits a sizable sum of money from the rich American Ezra Wannafeller.

As a counterexample to Victorian England, Wannafeller stands in for the American ideal of social mobility—that one can rise up the social ladder through hard work. By giving money to **Mr. Doolittle**, he allows Doolittle to become middle class. However, Mr. Doolittle himself challenges the assumption that such a move up the social ladder is necessarily a good thing. He continually criticizes "middle class morality" and laments all the anxieties and troubles that his new wealth brings with it. By the end of the play, Eliza also misses her prior, simpler life as a flower-girl. Thus, Shaw's play questions not only the validity of a rigid social hierarchy, but even the desirability of a high social class.

Appearance and Identity

Pygmalion explores how social identity is formed not only through patterns of speech, but also through one's general appearance. Much like speech, one's physical appearance signals social class. In the opening scene, as people from different walks of life are forced to take shelter under the same portico, characters' social class is discernible through their clothing: the poor flower- girl (later revealed to be **Eliza**) and the **gentleman**, for example, easily know each other's status through their different attire. As **Pickering** comments in Act Four, many noble people believe that one's appearance displays one's natural identity and character, thinking that "style comes by nature to people in their position." Somewhat similarly, at the end of the play, **Higgins** tells Eliza that he cannot change his nature. But the importance of appearances in the play reveals that identity often is changeable, and does not come naturally so much as it is performed or put on like a costume. Eliza is the most obvious example of this. As she wins Higgins' bet for him, she fools people into assuming that she is from a noble background by changing her appearance. Even before her complete transformation, her own father fails to recognize her in act two only because she has changed clothes and bathed.

The precise extent to which Eliza really changes, though, is highly ambiguous. By the end of the play, it is unclear whether she has really changed her nature or whether she has merely learned to pretend to be someone else. As Eliza tells Higgins and Pickering in Act Five, she believes that she has entirely forgotten her original way of speaking and behaving: she thinks that she has really transformed and cannot return to her old life. Higgins, on the other hand, is skeptical of this. He is confident that Eliza will "relapse" into her old ways. The play thus raises (but doesn't completely answer) a

number of questions about the stability of identity. Has Eliza reallychanged, or can she not escape the identity she was born into? Has she become noble, or is she naturally lower-class? Moreover, is there anything natural about class identity at all? Shaw's play takes its title from the myth of Pygmalion, famously told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* (In it, Pygmalion sculpts a beautiful statue that transforms into a real woman.) Ovid's work is a poem about numerous mythical metamorphoses. But Shaw's play of transformation asks: however much one changes one's appearance, can anyone really ever change?

Symbol Analysis

Clothing

In *Pygmalion*, clothing is an important part (perhaps the most important part) of characters' appearances and how they display their identity and social standing. In the opening scene, the different people under the church portico are able to discern each other's social class particularly by their clothes. **Pickering** is easily recognizable as a gentleman, whereas **Eliza** is easily identifiable as a poor flower-girl. Because of this, clothing is naturally an important part of Eliza's transformation. In Act Two, after she changes clothes, her own father doesn't even recognize her at first—and this is before she even begins to act or talk differently. Mr. Doolittle's own social transformation is also symbolized by clothing. He arrives at Mrs. Higgins' house in Act Five dressed like a gentleman, and Higgins assumes that this cannot be Eliza's father, whom he met earlier. The importance of clothes in the formation of one's social identity suggests that such identity is rather shallow. Indeed, a central ambiguity in the play is whether one's identity can really be changed by learning to speak differently or putting on a different outfit, or whether this is merely a façade that covers up one's true, unchanging identity. This tension comes to the forefront in Act Four when Eliza asks Higgins whether her new, expensive clothes actually belong to her now. Behind the question of whether she is or isn't the owner of the clothes, Eliza also wants to know whether her new, upper-class identity is really hers, or whether it is just a role she is playing, a costume she is wearing but will have to give up eventually. Clothes thus symbolize the importance of appearances in establishing one's identity and class, while also questioning how deep this kind of social identity goes.

T.S. Eliot: Murder in the Cathedral

Brief Biography of T. S. Eliot

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, T.S. Eliot grew up to become arguably the most prominent poet and literary critic in the nineteenth-century English-speaking world. Known widely for such poems as "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Waste Land," and "The Hollow Men," Eliot was a pioneer of the Modernist movement in literature. He received his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Harvard University in 1909, and, after a period of travel and attending graduate school at Harvard, Eliot settled in England in 1914. There, he encountered the poetry of fellow literary giant Ezra Pound, who encouraged and helped him to publish his poems in several magazines. By 1930, Eliot had achieved his own fame as a poetic genius, and would remain in the literary spotlight for the following thirty years, writing poems as well as seven works for the theatre, and winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948. He died on January 4, 1965, in London.

Historical Context of *Murder in the Cathedral*

The play is based on the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket by four knights under King Henry II in Canterbury, England, 1170. At the time, the Catholic Church was experiencing significant growth in power in comparison to the English crown, and Becket rigorously defended its rights as a political institution, refusing to budge under Henry II's authority. A substantial feud began between the two almost immediately after Becket was (warily, since he knew his policies as Archbishop would clash with Henry's views about the relation between church and state) appointed to the position of Chancellor by Henry. The feud started when Becket tried to take back land that Henry had possessed from the public of Canterbury—and evolved to disputesover whether the Church or the Crown had the power to punish clergymen found guilty of committing crimes, and over money that Becket refused to hand over to the King. Eventually, Beckett left England discreetly and headed to France, only to return seven years later, when the play begins. Becket and Henry had reached an agreement, and they were to resume a peaceful relationship—however, Becket and the Pope disagreed with the King's decision to have his son coronated by a church other than Canterbury

Cathedral (which was the traditional venue for coronation). The Pope therefore suspended the bishops responsible for the coronation—these are the bishops the knights in the play order Becket to absolve.

Key Facts about *Murder in the Cathedral*

- **Full Title:** Murder in the Cathedral
- **When Written:** 1935
- **Where Written:** Cambridge, Massachusetts
- When Published: 1935
- Literary Period: Modernism
- Genre: Drama, Christian Tragedy
- Setting: Canterbury, England, in December of 1170, when Archbishop Thomas Becket of Canterbury returned after spending seven years in France
- Climax: The four knights enter the cathedral and murder Becket
- Antagonist: The four knights who murder Becket are the play's antagonists; though technically they serve King Henry II, he never actually appears in the play. (Further, it's never explicitly confirmed that Henry II ordered Becket's assassination, or whether the knights were acting on their own intentions.)

Murder in the Cathedral is divided into two parts, with an interlude separating them. The play begins with the thoughts of the Chorus, a group of common women of Canterbury. They say that Archbishop Thomas Becket has been away from his Canterbury congregation (of which they're members) for seven years. Becket has been away because of religious and political conflicts he came to have with King Henry II. While they miss his presence, the Chorus does not wish for Becket to come back, as they fear his return would stir up old conflicts which might get him killed. Three priests who served the Archbishop in the past then enter the scene, as well as a herald who informs them and the Chorus that Becket is in England, back from France. The Chorus is dismayed, worried that Becket's return will lead to his death, and therefore their own religious turmoil (they'll lose their spiritual leader). The priests, on the other hand, readily welcome Becket back to Canterbury.

Becket enters the scene, and is shortly accosted by four "tempters"—four people who,

one-by- one, try to persuade or tempt Becket into adopting certain views on how he should balance his religious power as Archbishop with its associated political power—political power which could either supplement his religious authority or replace it altogether. Becket discounts all the tempters' proposals, thinking that none of their visions for his future are sourced in the higher, spiritual dimension of fate or God's plan. He decides that martyrdom—sacrificing his life in devotion to God—is his fate, and refuses to be tempted by other, more earthly pursuits of political power or worldly, secular desires.

In the interlude, Becket gives a sermon to the congregation of Canterbury Cathedral. He asks his audience to think about sainthood from a divine perspective and reconsider the conventional, human understanding of saintliness as pure, peaceful and gained without torturous hardship, adding that Jesus's disciples became saints only after experiencing great suffering. He ends the sermon by saying that it may be the last time he stands before the congregation, foreshadowing his martyrdom.

In the second part of the play, four knights serving Henry II arrive at Canterbury Cathedral and accost Becket, calling him a traitor to the crown. Before Becket left, the king appointed him to be the Chancellor of England as well as Archbishop. After initially accepting both positions, however, Becket immediately dropped the chancellorship. Further, the knights say Becket then began to abandon all the king's policies which he had formerly supported. Claiming they've been sent by the king, the knights ask Becket if he'll agree to appear before Henry II and speak for his actions. Becket responds by saying that, if the king has ordered such an appearance, then the public ought to be allowed to know Henry II's charges against him and personally witness his defense against them. The knights disregard this response and move to attack Becket, but the priests and some attendants enter the scene before they get a chance to. The knights leave, promising to return for Becket.

Knowing that the knights will be returning to murder the Archbishop, the priests try to persuade him to go into hiding, but Becket refuses, fully committed to his martyrdom. When the knights come back to

the cathedral, the priests bar its front doors, preventing them from entering. Becket, however, demands that the priests open the doors, thereby offering his life up to the swords of the knights and to his own martyrdom, saying it's against the Church's

policy to exclude anyone from entering one of its cathedrals. The priests unbar the doors, and the knights enter and kill Becket.

Devastated by Becket's death, the Chorus cries out in painful desperation that the sky and air be cleansed of the death newly sprung upon Canterbury. The priests, however, conclude that Becket's death was a manifestation of fate, and that the Church is stronger for it. The four knights then turn towards the audience and offer arguments in defense of their decision to murder Becket. They describe why they think he was a traitor to the king and also largely responsible for his own death. The play ends with the Chorus asking God to forgive them and have mercy on them for not seeing—at first—Becket's martyrdom as having incredible spiritual significance beyond their own personal concerns. Following the priests, the Chorus evolves to see Becket's death as something caused by a divine source which they cannot understand but which nonetheless merits their faith and devotion.

Theme Analysis

Worldly Power vs. Spiritual Power

As a play based on the actual historical conflict between the Archbishop **Thomas Becket** of Canterbury and the English King Henry II, *Murder in the Cathedral* explores the relationship between two forms of power: worldly and spiritual. Worldly power refers to any power that is wielded over the everyday world of human affairs, particularly political power. The play refers to this power as "temporal," highlighting its fleeting nature and the fact that it is completely subject to the passage of time. Worldly power is therefore open to change, and the effectiveness of its laws is never guaranteed. In contrast, spiritual power in the play refers to a code of laws that spring from God, are eternal, and to a significant degree are beyond human comprehension. From the beginning to the end, *Murder in the Cathedral* explores how people should navigate between these two powers, through Becket's interactions with the four tempters, the four knights, and in Becket's own evolving understanding of his **martyrdom**—his willingness to die for God.

The four tempters' dialogues with Becket may be interpreted as attempts to persuade

him to adopt certain conceptions of how temporal and spiritual power should be balanced. The **first tempter** treats spirituality as a kind of decoration on worldly power—as something that can inspire joy and merriment by bringing happiness to the state and, in the process, fix Becket's conflicted relationship with the king. The **second tempter**, however, sees spiritual power as utterly ineffectual, and argues that to truly effect change Becket should focus less on religion and return to his former political role as Chancellor. The **third tempter** sees spiritual power as basically just another form of worldly power—or something that can be put to work to achieve worldly ends that have no spiritual grounding. He argues that Becket should use his role as Archbishop to help empower the lower class of country lords to overthrow the king. The **fourth tempter** has the opposite opinion of the second: he argues that Becket should devote himself solely to the realm of spiritual power, and shirk the temporal, through martyrdom. Thus, the four tempters all argue for certain ways of how the two forms of power should be thought together or apart.

In the second part of the play, the four knights—representatives of the king and therefore of the king's worldly power—confront Becket. The knights' conception of the relationship between worldly and temporal power leads them to call Becket a traitor: they think he's betrayed the worldly authority of the English crown through an overzealous loyalty to the spiritual authority of the Pope (who has condemned the king). The knights therefore see worldly and temporal power as separate entities that exist in a kind of natural opposition, an opposition where both powers to some extent restrict one another. The knights (and, by extension, the king) believe that Becket has pushed too far in supporting the Pope's condemnation of the English king; they thus believe he has become a traitor.

Becket's own view about the relationship between the two powers is revealed by his reply to the knights. He responds by declaring that there is a higher order responsible for the king's condemnation: "It is not Becket who pronounces doom, / But the Law of Christ's Church, the judgment of Rome." This Law, applied by the Pope, is believed by Becket to stem wholly from God (the Pope was believed to be God's mouthpiece). Becket therefore appeals to the realm of spiritual power as if it had absolute priority over the dimension of worldly authority. To Becket, worldly power is a puny, false conception of power; real power stems from a higher source, beyond human comprehension, and based in God.

John Osborne: Look Back in Anger

Brief Biography of John Osborne

John Osborne was born in southwest London to lower middle class parents, a barmaid and an advertising copywriter. His father died in 1941, when Osborne was twelve. Osborne briefly attended a public (non state-run) high school, but was expelled after two years when he struck a school administrator who had tried to discipline him. He wrote his first play at the age of twenty-one, in 1950. Around that time, Osborne also married his first wife, the actress Pamela Lane. Look Back in Anger is loosely based on their tumultuous relationship. Osborne wrote it in 17 days while on vacation, and it was first produced in 1956. The production catapulted the 26-year-old Osborne to fame, and ushered in a new era of British theater showcasing working class protagonists in the contemporary, post-World War 2, era. Osborne went on to write many more plays and a two-volume autobiography (in which he reveals a vehement dislike for his mother). Osborne married five times, ending his life happily married to the art critic Helen Dawson. He died in 1994 due to complications from diabetes. His last word, to Dawson, is said to have been "sorry." Look Back in Anger remains by far his most famous work.

Historical Context of *Look Back in Anger*

World War 2 ended in 1945, and Britain faced the task of rebuilding their infrastructure, which had been decimated by German bombs, and propping up a struggling economy. Partly as a result of these difficulties, Britain withdrew from their colonies in India, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar in 1947. The 1956 Suez Crisis, in which Britain invaded Egypt and eventually withdrew due to political and economic pressure, led to a humiliating recognition that the country was no longer aworld power. Further changing the social context in the country, the 1944 Mass Education Act in Britain had made secondary education free, opening of the possibility of higher education to the working classes. This created more class mobility in the post-war era than had existed before it, and economic recovery in the 1950s furthered this trend. At the same time, British class structure remained somewhat static, resulting in a generation of educated children of the working class who found it difficult to put the education they had received to good use.

Key Facts about *Look Back in Anger*

- **Full Title:** Look Back in Anger
- **When Written:** 1955
- **Where Written:** Osborne wrote much of the play in the beach town of Morcambe inLancashire, England. He was living in London at the time.
- **When Published:** The play premiered on May 8, 1956 at the Royal Court Theater inLondon. It was first published in 1957 by Faber and Faber.
- **Literary Period:** Theatrical realism. The play kicked off British theater's "Angry YoungMen" movement.
- **Genre:** Dramatic stage play
- **Setting:** A working class apartment in the Midlands, a region in the center of Britainsometime during the early 1950s.
- **Climax:** Alison loses her baby to a miscarriage and returns to her husband, Jimmy.
- **Antagonist:** Both Jimmy and Alison can be considered antagonists, as they fight withand antagonize each other. A broader thematic antagonist is post-war malaise in Britain.

Look Back in Anger follows a young husband and wife, **Alison** and **Jimmy Porter**, as they attempt to navigate class conflict and deal with a deteriorating marriage in 1950s England. Alison comes from a traditional upper class background. Jimmy comes from a working class background, though he is highly educated. The couple lives with **Cliff Lewis**, an affable workingclass man and Jimmy's longtime friend. The scene opens on a Sunday morning in the apartment. Alison irons clothes while Cliff and Jimmy read the **newspaper**.

The play's first act largely consists of Jimmy's angry tirades against upper class complacency and his wife's lack of "enthusiasm." Jimmy thinks that suffering is the only way to experience true human emotion, and that Alison and other upper class people are therefore less "alive" than he is. He also seems to have some nostalgia for a past age in Britain when the country had more power. Jimmy's attempts to shock his wife into some display of emotion escalate as the act progresses—he insults her family and complains that all women are out to destroy men. Cliff, attempting to cheer Jimmy up, begins to banter and roughhouse with his friend. The two fall against

Alison's ironing board, and she burns her arm. Jimmy apologizes, but she yells at him toleave, and he exits.

Cliff helps Alison treat the burn, and she reveals to him that she is pregnant with Jimmy's child. She hasn't told Jimmy yet, because she is afraid that he'll feel trapped and angry. Cliff comforts Alison, and tells her that Jimmy loves her. He kisses her. Jimmy enters while they are kissing,but doesn't acknowledge or object (the three live in a non-traditional set-up that would have been shocking to audiences at the time). Soon after, Cliff leaves to get some cigarettes, and Alison and Jimmy share a tender moment. They play their "**bear and squirrel**" game, which allows them to escape into affection while pretending to be animals. Then Cliff returns and says that Helena Charles, one of Alison's upper class friends, is on the phone. Jimmy's mood immediately darkens. When Alison says that Helena wants to stay with them, Jimmy explodes. He says he wishes that Alison would have a baby that would die so that she could experience true suffering.

The second act begins with Helena and Alison sharing the womanly duties of the home while Jimmy plays his **trumpet** off stage. Alison tells Helena about her first months with Jimmy. They lived with his working class friend **Hugh Tanner**, and spent time going on "raids" to parties of Alison's upper class friends. She says that she felt like "a hostage from those sections of society they had declared war on." Helena asks why they got married, and Alison says that it seemed to be largely because **Alison's mother** and her father **Colonel Redfern** disapproved. That made Jimmy want to marry her no matter what.

Jimmy and Cliff come in to eat. When he hears that Helena and Alison are going to church together later that day, Jimmy also becomes convinced that Helena is out to take Alison away from him. He lets fly a series of outrageous insults against Alison's mother. Helena tries, and fails, to reason with him, and Jimmy asks whether she has ever watched someone die. He tellsthe story of watching his father die from wounds received fighting in the Spanish Civil war whenhe was ten years old, and claims that this taught him more about life than Helena and Alison know even now. Near the end of the scene, Jimmy leaves to go get the telephone. While he's gone, Helena tells Alison that she has sent a message to Colonel Redfern asking him to come pick Alison up. Alison doesn't protest. When Jimmy returns, he says that **Hugh's mum**, the

working class woman who set him up in his candy stall and for whom he harbors deep affection, is dying of a stroke. He asks Alison to come to the hospital with him. Instead, she goes to church.Jimmy is left alone on stage.

In the next scene, Colonel Redfern helps Alison pack to leave. He reveals that he thinks he and Alison's mother reacted too strongly to her marriage with Jimmy, and that Jimmy might have been right to be angry with them. He says he thinks that Jimmy could be right that he, Redfern, isa relic of an old version of England that has ceased to exist. He also says that he and Alison have a tendency to stay neutral and not take a strong stand on things. She is surprised to hear this from him, and as she finishes packing she briefly re-considers her move. Then Helena enters, and Alison decides to go. She says goodbye to Cliff. Helena stays behind because she has a work meeting the following day. Alison and Colonel Redfern exit, and Cliff, angry that Helena has disrupted their life, leaves before Jimmy comes back. Jimmy returns a few moments later, furious, having seen Alison leaving with her father on his way home. Helena gives him a letter that Alison wrote explaining her decision. Jimmy is angry at her polite, restrained language. Helena tells him that Alison is going to have a baby. He says that he is not overcome with emotion at this news, and insults Helena, who slaps him. This causes Jimmy to collapse in despair. Then Helena "kisses him passionately," and the act ends.

The scene opens several months later, looking very similar to the beginning of Act 1, except that it is now Helena who is ironing. Jimmy and Cliff joke and discuss newspaper articles. They roughhouse, and Cliff dirties his shirt. Helena leaves to clean it, and while she is off stage, Cliff tells Jimmy that he is moving out. Jimmy wonders why he always chooses women over male friendship, even though he value's Cliff's company more highly than he values Helena's. Helenacomes back with the shirt, and Cliff leaves to dry it in his room. Helena tells Jimmy that sheloves him, and he asks her desperately to never leave him. Then Alison appears at the door, looking sick and disheveled.

The next scene opens a few minutes later, with Jimmy playing his trumpet off stage. Alison tells Helena that she is not angry with her, and is not trying to break up the new couple. Helena, however, says that Alison's presence has reminded her that what she is doing is wrong. Alison has also had a miscarriage, and Helena considers this a

"judgment" on her relationship. She calls Jimmy back, and tells him that she is leaving. Jimmy says that he always knew Helena wasn't strong enough for true love, which requires "muscle and guts." Helena leaves.

Alison apologizes, and Jimmy says that she should have sent flowers to Hugh's mum, and remembers his first meeting with her, when he thought that she had a "wonderful relaxation of spirit." This turned out to be just complacency, he says. Alison lets out a cry, and tells him that the loss of their child has made her understand the depth of emotion that he wanted her to have all this time. She tells him that she wants to be "corrupt and futile," and collapses at his feet. Jimmy can't bear to see her this way, and kneels to help her. Then, "with a kind of mocking, tender irony," he launches into their bear and squirrel imaginary game. "Poor squirrels," he says to Alison, and she responds, "poor, poor, bears."

Theme Analysis

Class and Education

Look Back in Anger was published in the post World War II period in England, in 1956. In 1944, The British Mass Education Act had made secondary education free for everyone in the country. This meant that whole new swaths of British society were now equipped to write about their lives. John Osborne was one of these. His play broke into a world of British theater that had previously been a polite, upper class environment, and brought a new angry energy and previously unencountered point-of-view to the stage that startled some theatergoers. We see evidence of that new class mobility, and the new reality it created, in the play. **Jimmy Porter** comes from a working class background, but has been highly educated. He went to a university (though not one of Britain's finest— his upper class wife, **Alison**, notes that it was "not even red brick, but white tile.") And though Jimmy went to a university, he is still stuck running a sweet stall. He has in some ways left his background behind, but he also doesn't feel fully comfortable and hasn't been accepted into the upper classes. He uses big words and reads the **newspaper**, but he sometimes has to look those words up in a dictionary, and he says that the Sunday papers make him feel ignorant.

Alison and Jimmy's relationship is the main place where class tension unfolds. Alison comes from an upper class background very different from Jimmy's. Both portray the

struggle between the classes in military terms, focusing on the ways that these two sectors of society fail to blend. Jimmy and his friend **Hugh** see her as a "hostage," and they spend time in the early years of Alison and Jimmy's marriage going to upper class parties to "plunder" food and drink. Though Alison and Jimmy try to make their relationship work in the end, we get the sense that it's built on shaky ground, and that they might fall back into the cycle of anger and fighting that they enact throughout the play. Alison and Jimmy may make their relationship work for now, but the divisions between them run too deep to ever fully heal. In Look Back in Anger, truces across class boundaries are ultimately brief and inadequate.

Harold Pinter: The Birthday Party

Brief Biography of Harold Pinter

Harold Pinter was raised in London, the only son of Jewish parents of Polish origin. After the German bombardment of the city in 1940 and '41, the Pinters fled London, an experience that the playwright's biographer claims profoundly affected his later work. In 1948, Pinter attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art for just two terms before leaving to work as a professional actor touring the United Kingdom. After several years of doing this, he began to write plays in the mid-fifties, eventually penning *The Room*, which premiered as his first piece in 1957. Only a year later, he produced his first full-length play, *The Birthday Party*, and though it originally confounded audiences, it was well-reviewed and has gone down in history as a successful and influential work. Since then, he established himself as one of the critical writers associated with the Theatre of the Absurd, and eventually won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2005. He died of liver cancer three years later, shortly after acting in a production of Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*.

Historical Context of *The Birthday Party*

Since *The Birthday Party* is intentionally set in an isolated and self-contained world, the play itself doesn't reference any specific historical events. Rather, Pinter focuses on charting the deterioration of an individual in isolation while also showing the dangers of giving oneself over to people like Goldberg and McCann, who have come to collect Stanley on behalf of anunnamed "organization." This plot enables Pinter to subtly comment on the hysteria that besieged the United States during the 1950s—a

hysteria that came to be known as McCarthyism. This term refers to the republican senator Joseph McCarthy, who incited widespread fear in the US regarding the possibility of communist subversion, despite the fact that there was little evidence suggesting this might happen. As such, Goldberg and McCann's insistence upon taking Stanley away for an unspecified crime echoes the accusations of treason that ran rampant throughout the '50s.

Key Facts about The Birthday Party

- **Full Title:** The Birthday Party
- **When Published:** *The Birthday Party* was published in 1957 and premiered in 1958.
- **Literary Period:** Modernism, Postmodernism
- **Genre:** Drama, "Comedy of Menace," Theatre of the Absurd
- **Setting:** A rundown boarding house in a coastal English resort town
- **Climax:** Stanley has a mental breakdown at his own birthday party, revealing dark and violent predilections.
- **Antagonist:** From Stanley's perspective, Goldberg and McCann are the antagonists of *The Birthday Party*, but some readers or audience members might reasonably argue that Stanley himself is the true antagonist.

Stanley Webber is the only guest staying in Meg and Petey Boles's boarding house in a coastal resort town in England, where he has been holed up for the past year and has essentially no contact with the outside world. One morning, Meg and Petey sit at the breakfast table and make small talk. As Petey reads the newspaper, Meg repeatedly asks him if he's enjoying his cornflakes and fried toast. Before long, she remarks that Stanley should be downstairs by now. She then decides to "fetch" him, finally drawing him from his room and getting him to the breakfast table, where she presents him with cornflakes and fried toast.

After Petey leaves for work, Stanley tells Meg she's a "bad wife" for not giving her husband a fresh cup of tea. This conversation eventually turns into a back-and-forth in which Meg fluctuates between acting like Stanley's caretaker and his lover. They switch between flirting and arguing until Meg mentions that two new guests will be arriving soon. "What are you talking about?" Stanley asks, unsettled, and Meg tells him that Petey encountered two men on the beach the night before. "Two gentlemen asked Petey if they could come and stay for a

couple of nights.I'm expecting them," she says, but Stanley claims he doesn't believe her, since no one has evervisited the boarding house the whole time he's been a resident.

Changing the topic, Stanley says, "When you address yourself to me, do you ever ask yourself who exactly you are talking to?" Then he groans and puts his head in his hands, but Meg fails to understand his question, instead asking if he enjoyed his breakfast. She says she used to like watching him play piano when he used to play as a professional. Urging him to get out of the house, she suggests that he get a job playing at the pier, and he unconvincingly insists that he's been offered a job playing at a night club in Berlin. As he explains this prospect, he adds that he would actually travel the world. Talking about his past life as a professional musician, he says, "I've played the piano all over the world. All over the country." Then he describes a concert he played where celebrated for his performance and his "unique touch," though when he went to give a second concert, the performance hall was locked. "They pulled a fast one," he says.

A knock sounds on the door, and Meg goes offstage to answer it, having a whispered conversation in which a voice says, "What shall I do with it?" Without identifying what "it" is, Meg gives this person instructions and then goes on her way. At this point, the person ventures into the living room. Her name is **Lulu**, and she's carrying a parcel, which she sets down on the sideboard and tells Stanley that he's "not to touch it." They then have a conversation about how "stuffy" it is inside, and Lulu encourages Stanley to go outside. Stanley lies and says that he went to the ocean early that morning, but Lulu hands him a compact mirror and points out that hedoesn't look like a man who has been outside in a long time. Looking at himself, Stanley is visibly stricken, suddenly withdrawing from his reflection. He then asks Lulu if she'd like to "go away" with him, but when she asks where they'd go, he simply says, "Nowhere," and when she asks if he'd like to go for a walk, he says, "I can't at the moment." Lulu departs.

When the two new guests finally knock on the boarding house's door, Stanley turns out the light and quickly exits before they come inside. Their names are **Goldberg** and **McCann**, and theytalk about the "job" they have to do. Goldberg is clearly the boss, and he tells McCann that their task is "quite distinct" from their "previous work." It all depends, he upholds, on the "attitude" oftheir "subject." At this point, Meg enters and introduces herself, telling Goldberg and McCann about Stanley and

saying that today is his birthday. Insisting that they refrain from mentioning anything, she says that they will have a party tonight in Stanley's honor, and Goldberg expresses thanks for being invited. She then shows them to their room, and when she returns, Stanley is inthe living room.

Stanley asks Meg about Goldberg and McCann, pressing her for details until she cuts him off and gives him his birthday present—the package Lulu placed on the sideboard. It is a small **drum**. Slinging it around his neck, Stanley walks around the living room table beating the drum, much to Meg's satisfaction. As he keeps circling the table, though, his drumming becomes increasingly erratic, until the beat is "savage and possessed."

That evening, Stanley meets McCann in the living room. Suspicious of this newcomer, he tries to discern why he's come to the boarding house and begins asking questions about Goldberg, whom he hasn't met yet. "Has he told you anything? Do you know what you're here for?" he says, but McCann denies that he knows what Stanley's talking about, instead focusing on Stanley's birthday party until Goldberg himself enters and introduces himself. Desperate to keep Goldberg and McCann from staying in the house, Stanley pretends he's the manager and tells them there's no room, but they don't listen to him, instead insisting that he sit down. When they finally force him into a chair, they start asking him strange questions, which become increasinglyinscrutable. They ask why he came to the boarding house in the first place, whether or not he properly stirs his headache medication, and when he last took a bath. They then accuse him of betraying "the organization," though they never specify what organization they're referring to. Later in the conversation, they ask why he killed his wife, and he says that he doesn't *have* awife, but they hardly listen, moving on to ask if he recognizes "an external force." "What?" Stanley replies, but they don't make themselves clear, instead pushing on and asking him— among other things—if the number 846 is "possible or necessary." Finally, in response to a question about whether the chicken or the egg came first, Stanley screams, and their conversation is interrupted by the sound of a drumbeat as Meg enters wearing her evening dress and playing Stanley's drum.

Before long, Lulu arrives and Stanley's party begins without Petey, who's unable to attend. Pouring drinks, Goldberg suggests that Meg make a toast to Stanley. When she

does, Goldberg and McCann turn out the lights and shine a flashlight in Stanley's face. In her toast, Meg hardly says anything about Stanley himself, instead focusing on how happy she is to be having a partyin her home. Despite the impersonality of this speech, Goldberg upholds that he's quite moved by Meg's words, and then he delivers his own toast. Next the group decides to play a game, though Stanley himself has yet to say a word, still reeling from Goldberg and McCann's strange interrogation.

Producing a blindfold, the group decides to play "blind man's buff," a game in which one person has a scarf tied over their eyes and tries to find the other players, who are scattered throughout the room. As the game progresses, Goldberg and Lulu fondle one another while McCann and Meg flirt and Stanley stands catatonic on his own. When it's Stanley's turn to play the blind man, McCann puts the drum in his way and his foot breaks through it. Dragging the instrument on his foot, he falls over and Meg makes a noise. When he rises, he advances toward her, and then the lights suddenly cut out and he begins to strangle her. After great commotion, the others separate him from her, but he slips away. Then everyone hears Lulu scream and fall to the floor, having fainted as Stanley approaches. In silence, Stanley lifts her onto the table, and when McCann finally finds the flashlight, the audience sees that Stanley is about to rape Lulu. Goldberg and McCann wrest him away and back him against the wall as he lets out a psychopathic laugh before the curtain closes.

When the curtain opens again, it is the next morning and Meg and Petey are having breakfast asif nothing has happened. Meg claims to not remember anything about the party and focuses on serving breakfast, but there aren't any cornflakes. Finding the broken drum on the floor, she hits it and says, "It still makes a noise." She remarks that Stanley should be awake because he's going to miss breakfast, and Petey says, "There isn't any breakfast," to which she responds, "Yes, but he doesn't know that." She tells Petey she went upstairs to check on Stanley, but McCann and Goldberg were in his room having an intense conversation with him. She then leaves the house to get food for lunch, and Goldberg comes downstairs and talks about the party to Petey, who asks him "what came over" Stanley. "Nervous breakdown," Goldberg says. He then explains that these kinds of breakdowns sometimes brew "day by day" before erupting, though for some people there are no warning signs because their spiraling mental health is a "foregone conclusion."

When Stanley finally comes downstairs, he's completely incapable of speaking. As he spews gibberish, Goldberg tells Petey that he and McCann are taking him to a doctor, though it's clear from his tone that this isn't the case. Petey is suspicious, but he finds himself unable to do anything as they escort Stanley out the door. When they turn to go, Petey calls after them, saying, "Stan, don't let them tell you what to do!" When Meg returns, Petey tells her that Stanley is still asleep upstairs, and she says he'll be late for breakfast. She then talks about how "lovely" the party was the night before, insisting that everyone told her she was "the belle of the ball." "Oh, it's true," she says, though nobody actually told her this. After a slight pause, she says, "I know I was," and then the curtain falls.

Theme Analysis

Ambiguity, Meaninglessness, and Absurdity

Very few details are straightforward or verifiable in Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, a play about a spontaneous birthday party that quickly turns dark. In fact, most of what the characters present as fact is later contradicted or ignored. For instance, personal histories are frequently ambiguous, as characters like **Goldberg** and Stanley Webber tell conflicting stories about their own pasts. Indeed, there is so much flexibility in *The Birthday Party* that even the names of certain characters sometimes change. And yet, nobody in the play seems to notice or care about these fluctuations. Rather, the play simply moves on as if these details are arbitrary, failing to adhere to the conventions most authors employ in order to firmly ground the audience in the world of the story. Indeed, Pinter isn't interested in making sure his viewers understand the exact details of his narrative. Instead, he intentionally destabilizes the audience's understanding of his characters and their motivations, obscures what is happening in the plot, and manipulates the dialogue so that it's often difficult to understand a conversation's underlying structure. In this way, he encourages the audience to simply experience each moment on an emotional level, forcing them to take cues from the interactions between the actors rather than the scaffolding of any kind of overarching plot or meaning. In other words, Pinter uses ambiguity and even nonsense to elicit a visceral response from his audience, one that has more to

do with the *feeling* of the play than anything else. Oddly enough, this ends up representing the characters and their emotions better than any kind of standard expository technique.

Throughout the play, the simplest details are often the most ambiguous. Personal histories are especially fraught in this regard, as made evident by Goldberg's ever-changing assertions about his profession. At one point, for instance, he tells **Meg** to spin around in her evening dress, praising how she looks and claiming that he knows about fashion because he "used to be in the business." Then, later in that very same scene, he references toiling in a "greenhouse" (though it's unclear whether or not he worked as a professional gardener). Later still, he boasts to **Lulu**—whom he's clearly attracted to—that he once delivered a "lecture at the Ethical Hall," presenting himself as some kind of public intellectual. What's more, even his name changes depending on the story he's telling. Although he introduces himself as Nat, he refers to himself as Simey when telling stories about his mother or his late wife, and in one instance he calls himself Benny. He even gives **McCann** a different name in a conversation in the play's final act. "Anyway, Dermot's with [Stanley] at the moment," Goldberg says (referring to McCann), and when **Petey** says, "Dermot?" he merely replies, "Yes." Shortly thereafter, Petey takes Goldberg's lead and also calls McCann "Dermot," but Goldberg says, "Who?" The fact that Goldberg can't even remember the name by which he called McCann only moments earlier suggests that he thinks such details are fluid and unimportant. Understandably, Petey is confused by this sudden change, and this confusion represents just how little he knows about the people staying in his boarding house. In turn, Pinter invites the audience to feel Petey's bewilderment alongside him.

Pinter's audience is subject to even more nonsense when Goldberg and McCann interrogate Stanley before throwing him a birthday party. Sitting him in a chair and bombarding him with foreboding questions that are unrelated and have seemingly no bearing on the play's plot, Goldberg eventually barks, "Is the number 846 possible or necessary?" Stanley answers by saying, "Neither," and Goldberg responds by telling him this is wrong and then repeating the question. Eventually, Goldberg declares: "It's only necessarily necessary!" He then launches into a dizzying explanation that makes very little sense. McCann says, "Right!" when his partner finishes this ridiculous explanation, and then Goldberg adds, "Right? Of course right!

We'reright and you're wrong, Webber, all along the line!" In this moment, it becomes clear that Pinter doesn't expect the audience to understand what Goldberg and McCann are talking about. He does, however, want the audience to understand and experience firsthand the feeling of disorientation that Goldberg and McCann's words inspire in Stanley. Through increasingly absurd questions, they completely unhinge Stanley, who finally screams when they ask him to tell them if the chicken or the egg came first—a mundane and unanswerable question that reinforces the idea that Pinter cares first and foremost about enabling the audience to empathize with Stanley's confusion.

Pinter's decision to destabilize the expository details of *The Birthday Party* while giving privilege to ludicrous notions makes sense when one considers the fact that he is one of the first playwrights to produce work in a genre known as the Theatre of the Absurd. This genre is, according to *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, "theater that seeks to represent the absurdity of human existence in a meaningless universe." By rendering his characters' backstories and personal details difficult to understand, Pinter puts audience members in the position of having to accept that these kinds of details are "meaningless," at least in the context of the play itself. What's left, then, are the ways in which the characters interact with one another. During the actual birthday party, for example, McCann and Meg have a conversation while Goldberg and Lulu have their own discussion, but there's very little in the way of true give-and-take. Instead, everyone but Stanley simply lists off memories, telling each other about their childhoods or repeating anecdotes about their lives without fully establishing why they're telling such stories. And all the while, Stanley sits in utter silence at his own birthday party. This, it seems, is what Pinter is most interested in establishing: the ways in which Stanley exists in a "meaningless universe." By flooding the plot with non-sequiturs and contradictions, he makes his characters' lives seem unimportant and random, manufacturing a nonsensical environment so that the audience can better understand Stanley's estranged perspective. Simply put, then, the lack of exposition in *The Birthday Party* becomes expository in and of itself, since it ultimately helps audience members relate to the protagonist.

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UNIT – IV - Twentieth Century English Literature – SHS5014

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Study Guide

The Hound of the Baskervilles was written in 1901, eight years after Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had already 'killed off' Sherlock Holmes in his story, "The Final Problem." However, the novel was not a sequel - the events of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* take place before those of "The Final Problem."

When Doyle killed Sherlock Holmes, there was much public outrage and grief. More than twentythousand people quit their subscription to the *Strand*, the magazine which had popularized the stories. After of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* proved such a great success, though, Doyle decided to bring the character back to life in 1903, with the story "The Adventure of the Empty House." Luckily, "The Final Problem" contained enough gaps that Doyle could plausibly claim that Sherlock Holmes had faked his own death.

The novel was published in serial form from 1901 to 1902, in the *Strand*. It is the third out offour novels which Doyle would write about Holmes. It continues to enjoy much success today, and is considered by some Sherlock Holmes scholars to be Doyle's best work. It has inspired over twenty film and television reinterpretations, made in places as diverse as Germany, Australia, the USSR, Canada, the United States, and of course, the United Kingdom. The most recent such reinvention of this story can be seen in the BBC series *Sherlock*, although this retelling very much differs from the original novel.

Doyle was inspired to write the novel after staying with his friend, Bertram Fletcher Robinson, in 1901. He named the character Sir Henry Baskerville after Robinson's gardener, named Harry Baskerville. Doyle had met Robinson on a return voyage from South Africa, and Robinson, a correspondent for the *Daily Express*, told him about a legend from his home region of Devon, England. Later, Doyle would write to his publisher that he felt he needed Robinson's name to appear next to his own. "I can answer for the yarn being all my own in my own style without dilution, since your readers like that. But he gave me the central idea and the local colour, and so I feel his name must appear," Doyle wrote.

Robinson showed Doyle the moor, know as Dartmooor, upon which the story is based. It is the largest open space in the southern region of England. In a letter to his mother,

Mary, Doyle commented that the moor was "a great place, very sad & wild, dotted with the dwellings of prehistoric man, strange monoliths and huts and graves." The atmosphere of a place uninhabited by man is pervasive in the story, and marks a difference from many of Doyle's other Sherlock Holmes stories, insofar as it is set in the country rather than in London.

Summary

This adventure concerns the mysterious death of Sir Charles Baskerville, and the possibility that the heir to his fortune might be the object of murder. Before the novel begins, Sir Charles Baskerville had died suddenly, perhaps the victim of a ghostly hound believed to haunt his family because of an age-old curse. The Baskerville estate is located out in the remote moor of Devonshire.

Holmes and Watson are introduced to the case by Dr. Mortimer, a friend of Sir Charles Baskerville. Mortimer believes that a hound has in fact killed Sir Charles, because he found a paw print near Sir Charles's corpse. He is worried that there may be some truth to the superstitious legend, which is detailed in an old manuscript, and thus approaches Holmes in hopes that the detective can protect Sir Henry, who is soon to arrive to claim the family estate and fortune.

When Sir Henry arrives in London, he exhibits no fear of the old legend. Instead, he insists on leaving soon for Baskerville Hall. However, several strange things happen while he is in London: an anonymous letter arrives, warning him to stay away from the moor; two boots are stolen from his hotel, each from a different pair; and Holmes observes a bearded man following him around the city. Certain that something insidious is afoot, Holmes sends Watson to Devonshire, where he is to accompany and protect Sir Henry while Holmes wraps up some business in London.

Upon his arrival in Baskerville Hall, Watson begins his detective work. He discovers several mysterious circumstances. There is an escaped convict, Selden, wandering the moor. Barrymore, the butler, frequently awakes in the middle of the night and shines a light from an empty room in the house. Mrs. Barrymore is constantly in tears.

Watson also meets the Stapletons, a brother and sister who are friendly neighbors of the Baskerville estate. However, Miss Stapleton is clearly anxious, since she secretly warns Watson to leave the moor immediately, before learning he is not actually Sir Henry.

Watson learns from Mr. Stapleton about the existence of Grimpen Mire, a part of the moor which is too dangerous to pass. On several occasions, he hears the frightening howl of a hound coming from this area of the moor.
One night, Watson and Sir Henry follow Barrymore, and discover that he and his wife are secretly feeding Selden, who is actually Mrs. Barrymore's brother. Watson and Sir Henry try to capture Selden, but fail. However, that night, Watson sees a mysterious figure standing alone up in the hills.

The next morning, the men promise Barrymore not to report Selden, and he in turn tells them how his wife found a letter that was sent to Sir Charles on the day he died. Apparently, the man was outside that night to meet a woman with the initials L.L. Watson investigates to discover that this woman is Laura Lyons, who lives in the nearby Coombe Tracey. He visits her to learn that Sir Charles was going to give her money to secure a divorce, but that she did not keep her appointment that night because someone else offered her the money.
Watson then tries to track down the mysterious man on the moor, and discovers that it is actually Sherlock Holmes, who has been living secretly on the moor to observe the mystery from a distance. He explains that his open presence would have compromised his investigation. While there, Holmes has learned that Mr. Stapleton is in fact married to Miss Stapleton; they are not brother and sister, but have instead assumed fake identities. He believes Stapleton is responsible for Sir Charles's death, but he does not have the proof yet.

Suddenly, Watson and Holmes hear the same cry Watson heard earlier, and they rush to find a corpse out on the moor. Though they initially believe it is Sir Henry's body - since the figure is dressed in the man's clothes - they soon discover it is actually Selden's corpse. He had clearly been fleeing something, and had fallen from a cliff in the process. As they debate what to do with the body, Stapleton arrives. Though surprised, he quickly recovers his composure and easily identifies Sherlock Holmes.

Holmes accompanies Watson to Baskerville Hall, and has dinner with Sir Henry. During dinner, they learn that Stapleton had invited Sir Henry to dinner, and hence had been expecting him, not Selden, to be out on the moor that night. Selden was dressed in Sir Henry's clothes because Barrymore had given them to the convict.

Holmes notices a portrait of Hugo Baskerville, and secretly indicates to Watson that the face bears a striking similarity to Stapleton's. He thereby realizes that Stapleton must be a Baskerville, who hopes to kill off the surviving family members so that he will inherit the fortune.

However, Holmes does not tell Sir Henry the truth. Instead, he claims that he and Watson are returning to London, and instructs Sir Henry to join Stapleton for dinner the following night. Though it requires him walking alone across the moor, Sir Henry agrees.

That night, Holmes, Watson, and the London policeman Lestrade - who joined Holmes via train - stake out Stapleton's house. Watson sneaks close to spy Stapleton dining alone with Sir Henry; Miss Stapleton is absent. A fog compromises visibility, so the party has to retreat a bit. It is from this vantage that they soon see Sir Henry stroll past, and then a savage hound, flames seemingly leaping from its mouth, fly after the man. They are able to kill it only with several shots, right before it is prepared to rip out Sir Henry's throat.

Holmes studies the hound's corpse to discover that its mouth has been lined with phosphorus, thereby creating the image of flames, and its fur covered with a glitter. They try to pursue Stapleton, but only find Miss Stapleton, who has been tied up, gagged, and locked away in the house. She tells them that Stapleton had restrained her, and likely fled out into Grimpen Mire, which is where he kept the hound locked away.

The next morning, they search Grimpen Mire, but find only Stapleton's boot. They assume he has died. They also find evidence of where he kept the hound, and that Stapleton had been feeding the beast with other animals.

A month later, Sir Henry and Dr. Mortimer embark on a trip around the world, so that Sir Henry can recover from his shock. One day, Watson questions Holmes about the case, and the detective provides all the missing pieces. Stapleton's actual name was Rodger Baskerville; he is the son of Sir Charles's youngest brother, who had long before moved to South America. After his father's death, Stapleton fled to England, changed his identity, and set out to construct a means to claim the Baskerville fortune. His wife had eventually tried to stop him, which is why he locked her away.

The details provided, Holmes invites Watson to join him for dinner and a show.

Themes

Rationalism v. Superstition

One of the novel's primary themes is the conflict between rationalism and superstition. Much about the hound case suggest occult explanations, but Holmes steadfastly refuses to consider such possibilities. It is easy to understand why many turn to such explanations. It is not only that the people of the moor are primitive, tied to a folk religion. It is also that there is so little evidence with which to construct a rational explanation, other than the myth of the hound. Even a man of science - Dr. Mortimer - is driven to consider such occult possibilities.

But Holmes represents the power of the intellect: he possesses sound reasoning abilities and sharp observation skills. He tends to approach problems from a scientific standpoint, avoiding religion or superstition as causes. Instead of turning to implausible possibilities, Holmes seeks for clues where others have not looked. The idea seems to be that there is *always* a rational explanation; the evidence just might not always be easily observable. But the first step towards finding that evidence is to prize the power of the rational mind, and refuse to consider irrational possibilities.

Objects as Historical Artifacts

In many Sherlock Holmes adventures, objects play a significant role, since Holmes uses them to deduce truths not immediately observable to others. In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, this theme is clear from the first chapter, in which Watson and Holmes each work to interpret Dr. Mortimer's walking stick. What Holmes illustrates is that every object has a history, which can be used to construct a story of its life. The larger implication of this approach is that humans *always* leave traces behind; one must simply know how to read those traces.

In context, this approach is particularly relevant since Scotland Yard (London's police) had recently begun using fingerprints in its criminal investigations. Obviously, the assumption with such technology is similar to Holmes's: people leave their unique marks everywhere. By learning to identify what is unique about an object (or the person who used it), one can eventually find a criminal from a crime scene.

The Holmesian methodology

Largely because of his singular detective method, Sherlock Holmes has remained a popular figure even today. That method is central to the story of *Baskervilles*. In interpreting it, one is lead to many questions: How does Holmes actually solve his

cases? Is there a single method which he applies in all instances? Is it realistic? Is it replicable? Because he does not narrate the novel himself, Holmes does not exactly illustrate his approach to us, and we are left in large part to interpret it. There are two important elements to consider. The first is his method of observation, detailed in the "Objects as Historical Artifacts" theme section. The second is that Holmes considers multiple possibilities at once. Occasionally in this novel, he gives us an indication that he had to consider and then dismiss dead ends. Therefore, one could say that Holmes's approach is not as clean-cut as it seems at the end of the story, but instead is built of several guesses and false starts. In other words, it is arguably less scientific - making a hypothesis and then testing it - and more medical - diagnosing a problem by eliminating possibilities based on symptoms. No matter how one articulates the nature of Holmes's method,it remains one of the enduring themes of this novel and of Doyle's other Holmes stories.

Facts and Assumptions

Perhaps the greatest antagonist to Holmes's method is the human tendency towards assumptions. What most people do is study a scene in its entirety and then interpret its basic type. However, Holmes assumes nothing; he might identify the 'type' of scene he is studying, but then spends his energy looking for the particulars that make the scene unique.

The problem is that appearances can initially be deceptive, as a person might too quickly jump to conclusions. For example, Dr. Mortimer sees a paw print near Sir Charles's corpse, and concludes that there is truth to the hound legend. When Holmes instructs Watson to report *only* the facts of the moor, he is attempting to stop the man from integrating assumptions into his observations. Though this is almost impossible advice to follow - since Watson is naturally influenced by the atmosphere and his conjectures - he does use this understanding to conduct his own detective work, which yields dividends like the information about Laura Lyons. Holmes's suggestion seems to be that one must study the fact in itself, and then conduct guesswork based on it.

Urban life v. country life

The Hound of the Baskervilles explores on several occasions the distinctions between city and country lifestyles. In particular, one can observe the conflict in Watson himself. Whereas he is easily able to eschew supernatural explanations while in

London, he finds himself more driven towards those possibilities when isolated in the country. Whereas the bustle of the city allows fora scientific approach, the atmosphere of the country dissuades it. In no uncertain terms, Watson calls the people of Devonshire primitive, and Baskerville Hall an evil place. Though certainly not a nuanced portrayal, Doyle's picture of country life is provocative and clear.

Moral, legal, and social order

The novel's story is largely contingent on the existence and legitimacy of established order. It is important to note that professional police forces did not exist in London until the 19th century.As the city grew, crime became more concentrated, and citizens needed better protection. Holmes takes the importance of such protection for granted. However, it is important to note thatthe law is rarely capable of the actual detective work in Holmes stories; that is certainly the case here. What drives Holmes, then, is a basic sense of morality. Even when he uses deceit, he does so for the ultimate good of catching the criminal. No matter which type of order Holmes employs, it is clear that he believes in the inherent value of such order.

Genius

Though it is hardly central to the story, the novel does explore the nature of genius. In particular, Holmes's attitude towards Watson suggests the idea that genius does not empathize with others. Not only does he use Watson as his pawn - sending him out to Devonshire as part of a ruse - but he also shows little sensitivity towards Watson's offense when he finds out. Instead, Holmes expects Watson to accept the intellectual necessity of that ruse. Holmes's lack of friends, his obsessive nature, and his general emotional distance all suggest that a true genius has little use for the trappings of ordinary life.

Animal Farm

Study Guide

Animal Farm was published on the heels of World War II, in England in 1945 and in the United States in 1946. George Orwell wrote the book during the war as a cautionary fable in order to expose the seriousness of the dangers posed by Stalinism and totalitarian government. Orwell faced several obstacles in getting the novel published. First, he was putting forward an anti-Stalin book during a time when

Western support for the Soviet Union was still high due to its support in Allied victories against Germany. Second, Orwell was not yet the literary star he would quickly become. For those reasons, Animal Farm appeared only at the war's end, during the same month that the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The tragically violent events of the war set the stage well for Orwell's fictional manifesto against totalitarianism.

Animal Farm was Orwell's first highly successful novel (the second being 1984), and it helped launch him out of the minor fame of an essayist into the stratosphere of acclaimed fiction. Despite publishers' initial hesitance toward the book, the public in both Britain and the United States met it with enthusiasm. In the United States alone, it sold 600,000 copies in four years. Animal Farm was translated into many languages, proving its universal reach.

Animal Farm is an allegory or fable, a fairy tale for adults. Orwell uses animal characters in order to draw the reader away from the world of current events into a fantasy space where the reader can grasp ideas and principles more crisply. At the same time, Orwell personifies the animals in the tradition of allegory so that they symbolize real historical figures. In their own universe, people can become desensitized even to terrible things like deception, mistreatment, and violence. By demonstrating how these things occur in an allegorical world, Orwell makes them more clearly understood in the real world. For instance, in Animal Farm's public execution, Orwell lays bare the matter of execution by having the dogs rip out the supposed traitors' throats. In this scene, the reader is led to focus not as much on the means of execution as on the animalistic, atrocious reality of execution itself.

Animal Farm is also a powerful satire. Orwell uses irony to undermine the tenets of totalitarianism, specifically that of Stalinism.

Almost instantly after the novel's publication, it became the subject of revisionism. In one instance, the CIA made an animated film version of the book in which they eliminated the final scene and replaced it with a new revolution in which the animals overthrow the pigs (see the1999 Hallmark film version for another change in ending). They distributed the film as anti- communist propaganda, which is ironic when one considers the novel's own censure of the propagandist rewriting of history. This revision and others over the years (whether in changing the story or interpreting

it) contributed to the public's general misunderstanding of Orwell. Though he was staunchly anti-Stalinist, he was certainly not a capitalist. In fact, he was a revolutionary socialist. During his lifetime, Orwell did little to detract from his skewed public image. He was a man of contradictions--Louis Menand calls him "a middle-class intellectual who despised the middle class and was contemptuous of intellectuals, a Socialist whose abuse of Socialists ... was as vicious as any Tory's."

Animal Farm is universally appealing for both the obvious and the subtle messages of the fable. While the allegory's characters and events are deeply or specifically symbolic, Orwell's narrator softens some of the punches by including a gentle and un-opinionated narrator. The third-person narrator is outside the animals' world, so he does not relate any of the lies, hardships, or atrocities firsthand. Rather, he is a quiet observer.

Moreover, the narrator relates the tale from the perspective of the animals other than the dogs and pigs. In this way, the narrator's approach to the story resembles Orwell's approach to life. That is, just as Orwell developed empathy for the working class by experiencing working-class life firsthand, the narrator's tale is based on the experience of someone who is not quite an insider but no longer just an outsider. The narrator's animal perspective, as well as his reluctance to opine, fits well with the naivete of the animal characters.

One example of the narrator's indifferent approach to the tale is evident when the pigs use the money from Boxer's slaughter to buy a case of whisky. Rather than relating this event in stark terms, the narrator states impartially that on the day appointed for Boxer's memorial banquet, a carton arrives at the farmhouse followed by loud singing and "the word went round that from somewhere or other the pigs had acquired the money to buy themselves another case of whisky" (126). The scene also exemplifies how the narrator's naïve perspective produces an drily ironic effect.

Here are two other examples of ironic humor in the novel. In Chapter I, the narrator describes "Beasts of England" as "a stirring tune, something between 'Clementine' and 'La Cucaracha'" (32). Anyone familiar with those two songs knows that they are childish ditties. In Chapter IX, the narrator reports that the pigs find "a large bottle of pink medicine" in the farmhouse's medicine cabinet. They send it out to Boxer, who is deathly ill. We can assume that the medicine, being pink, is the antacid Pepto-Bismol,

hardly useful to someone on his deathbed. By lightening his allegory with ironic humor, Orwell makes the story more palatable without taking away from his message.

Summary

Animal Farm is a satirical fable set on Manor Farm, a typical English farm. Orwell employs a third-person narrator, who reports events without commenting on them directly. The narrator describes things as the animals perceive them.

Old Major calls a meeting of all the animals in the big barn. He announces that he may die soon and relates to them the insights he has gathered in his life. Old Major tells the animals thathuman beings are the sole reason that "No animal in England is free" and that "The life of an animal is misery and slavery." Therefore the animals must take charge of their destiny by overthrowing Man in a great Rebellion. He relates his dream of rebellion.

Old Major dies soon after the meeting and the other animals prepare for the Rebellion under Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer's leadership. One night, Mr. Jones passes out drunk, creating the perfect opportunity for the animals to rebel. They are so hungry that they break into the store-shed. When Jones and his men try to whip them into submission, the animals run them off the farm. The animals burn all reminders of their former bondage but agree to preserve the farmhouse "as a museum." Snowball changes the name of the farm to "Animal Farm" and comes up with Seven Commandments, which are to form the basis of Animalism. They are:

1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.

2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.

3. No animal shall wear clothes.

4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.

5. No animals shall drink alcohol.

6. No animal shall kill any other animal.

7. All animals are equal.

The pigs milk the cows, and then the animals go out to begin the harvest. When they return, the milk has disappeared mysteriously. The first harvest is a great success. The animals adhere to thetenets of Animalism happily, and with good result. Each animal works according to his ability and gets a fair share of food.

Every Sunday, Snowball and Napoleon lead a meeting of all the animals in the big barn. The pigs are the most intelligent animals, so they think up resolutions for the

other animals to debate. Soon after, the pigs set up a study-center for themselves in the harness-room. Snowball embarks on various campaigns for social and economic improvement. Napoleon opposes whatever Snowball does. Because most of the animals lack the intelligence to memorize the Seven Commandments, Snowball reduces them to the single maxim, "Four legs good, two legs bad." The sheep take to chanting this at meetings.

As time goes by, the pigs increase their control over the animals and award themselves increasing privileges. They quell the animals' questions and protests by threatening Mr. Jones's return. During this time, Napoleon also confiscates nine newborn puppies and secludes them in a loft in order to "educate" them.

By late summer, Snowball's and Napoleon's pigeon-messengers have spread news of the Rebellion across half of England. Animals on other farms have begun lashing out against their human masters and singing the revolutionary song "Beasts of England." Jones and other farmers try to recapture Animal Farm but fail. The animals celebrate their victory in what they call "The Battle of the Cowshed."

The animals agree to let the pigs make all the resolutions. Snowball and Napoleon continue to beat odds and eventually clash over the windmill. Snowball wants to build a windmill in order to shorten the work week and provide the farm electricity, but Napoleon opposes it. Napoleon summons nine fierce dogs (the puppies he trained) to run Snowball off the farm. Napoleon announces that Sunday meetings will cease and that the pigs will make all the decisions in the animals' best interest. At this point, Boxer takes on his own personal maxims, "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right." In the spring, Napoleon announces plans to build the windmill, claiming that it was his idea all along—rewriting history.

Building the windmill forces the animals to work harder and on Sundays. Shortages begin to occur, so Napoleon opens up trade with the human world. Through Squealer, he lies that no resolutions against interaction with humans or the use of money had ever been passed. Napoleon enlists Whymper to be his intermediary, and the pigs move into the farmhouse. Squealer assures the animals that there is no resolution against this, but Clover and Muriel discovers that one of the resolutions has been changed to: "No animal shall sleep in a bed *with sheets*." Squealer convinces her that there was never a resolution against beds at all.

One night, strong winds shake the farm and the animals awake to discover the windmill destroyed. Napoleon blames Snowball and sentences the expelled pig to death.

In the winter, as conditions become worse on Animal Farm, Napoleon deceives the human worldinto thinking Animal Farm is prospering. He signs a contract for a quota of four hundred eggs per week, inciting a hen rebellion that results in several deaths. Around the same time, Napoleon begins negotiating with Frederick and Pilkington to sell Animal Farm's store of timber. He also spreads propaganda against Snowball, claiming that Snowball was always a spy and a collaborator while Napoleon was the true hero of the Battle of the Cowshed, and Squealer warns against Snowball's secret agents.

Four days later, Napoleon holds an assembly in which he makes several animals confess to treachery and then has the dogs execute them. The dogs try to get Boxer to confess but leave himalone when they cannot overpower him. Afterwards, Clover and some other animals huddle together on a hill overlooking the farm. They reminisce about Animalism's ideals and consider how much they differ from the violence and terror of Napoleon's reign. They sing "Beasts of England," but Squealer informs them that the song is useless now that the Rebellion is completed and that it is now forbidden. The new anthem begins with the lyrics: "Animal Farm, Animal Farm, / Never through me shalt thou come to harm!"

Another commandment is changed to read: "No animal shall kill any other animal *without cause*." Clover and Muriel convince themselves that the commandment has always been this way. Squealer begins reading the animals statistics regularly to convince them that production is increasing. Napoleon seldom appears in public. The animals now call him "our Leader, ComradeNapoleon." They attribute all misfortunes to Snowball and all success and luck to Napoleon.

Napoleon continues to negotiate with the farmers and eventually decides to sell the timber to Mr.Pilkington. At last, the windmill is finished and named "Napoleon Mill." Soon after, Napoleon announces that he will sell the timber to Frederick, quickly changing his allegiance and disavowing his earlier vilification of Frederick. Napoleon says that Pilkington and Snowball have been collaborating. Frederick pays for the timber in fake cash, and the next morning, Frederick and his men invade the farm and

blow up the windmill. The animals manage to chase the humans off, though many die or are injured in what they call "The Battle of the Windmill." After the battle, the pigs discover a case of whisky in the farmhouse. They drink to excess and soon, Squealer reports that Napoleon is dying and, as his last action, has made the consumption of alcohol punishable by death. But Napoleon recovers quickly and then sends Whymper to procure manuals on brewing alcohol. Squealer changes another commandment to "No animal shall drink alcohol *to excess*."

Napoleon plans to build a schoolhouse for the thirty-one young pigs he has parented. Towards the end of the winter, Napoleon begins increasing propaganda to distract the animals from inequality and hardship. He creates special "Spontaneous Demonstrations" in which the animals march around and celebrate their triumphs.

In April, Napoleon declares the farm a Republic and is elected unanimously as President. The animals continue to work feverishly, most of all Boxer. One day, Boxer collapses while overexerting himself. Napoleon promises to send him to the veterinarian in Willingdon. A few days later, a horse-slaughterer takes Boxer away in his van. The animals are none the wiser until Benjamin reads the lettering on the side of the van. A few days later, Squealer reports that Boxer died in the hospital despite receiving the best possible care. He claims that Boxer's last words glorified Animal Farm and Napoleon. He also claims that the van belongs to the veterinarian, who recently bought it from the horse slaughterer and had not yet managed to paint over the lettering. Napoleon promises to honor Boxer with a special banquet. But the pigs use the money from his slaughter to buy a case of whisky, which they drink on the day appointed for the banquet.

Years go by, and though Animal Farm's population has increased, only a few animals that remember the Rebellion remain. Conditions are still harsh despite technological improvements. The pigs and dogs continue to do no manual labor, instead devoting themselves to organizational work. One day, Squealer takes the sheep out to a deserted pasture where, he says, he is teaching them a song. On the day the sheep return, the pigs walk around the yard on their hind legs as the sheep chant, "Four legs good, two legs *better*." The other animals are horrified. Clover consults the barn wall again. This time Benjamin reads to her. The Seven Commandments have been replaced with a single maxim: "All animals are equal / But some animals are more equal than others."

The pigs continue the longstanding pattern of awarding themselves more and more

privileges. They buy a telephone and subscribe to magazines. They even wear Jones's clothing. One night, Napoleon holds a conciliatory banquet for the farmers. Pilkington makes a speech in which he says he wants to emulate Animal Farm's long work hours and low rations. Napoleon announces that the farm will be called "Manor Farm" again, the animals will call each other "Comrade" no longer, and they no longer will march ceremoniously past Old Major's skull (a practice he deniesunderstanding). He also declares that the farm's flag will be plain green, devoid of the symbolsof the Rebellion. As the animals peer through the windows to watch the humans and pigs play poker, they cannot distinguish between them.

Themes

The Soviet Union under Stalinism

Animal Farm is a satire of totalitarian governments in their many guises. But Orwell composed the book for a more specific purpose: to serve as a cautionary tale about Stalinism. It was for this reason that he faced such difficulty in getting the book published; by the time *Animal Farm* was ready to meet its readers, the Allies were cooperating with the Soviet Union. The allegorical characters of the novel represent specific historical figures and different factions of Imperial Russian and Soviet society. These include Karl Marx (Major), Vladimir Lenin (Major), Leon Trotsky (Snowball), Joseph Stalin (Napoleon), Adolf Hitler (Frederick), the Allies (Pilkington), the peasants (Boxer), the elite (Mollie), and the church (Moses).

The resemblance of some of the novel's events to events in Soviet history is indubitable. For example, Snowball's and Napoleon's power struggle is a direct allegory of Trotsky's and Stalin's. Frederick's trade agreement with Napoleon, and his subsequent breaking of the agreement, represents the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact that preceded World War II. The following Battle of the Windmill represents World War II itself.

Despite his fairy-tale clarity in satirizing some historical events, Orwell is less specific about others. For example, the executions in Chapter VII conflate the Red Terror with the Great Purge. The executions themselves bear resemblance to both events, although their details connect them more to the Moscow Trials than to the Red Terror. Squealer's subsequent announcement that the executions have ended the Rebellion connects them to the period of the Red Terror, however. Orwell leaves some

ambiguity in the identities of the Rebellion and the Battle of the Cowshed. These ambiguities help the reader focus on the overall satire of Stalinism and the broader warning about the evils of totalitarian government.

The Inevitability of Totalitarianism

Orwell held the pessimistic belief that totalitarianism was inevitable, even in the West. According to Russell Baker, who wrote the preface to *Animal Farm*'s 1996 Signet Classics version, Orwell's pessimism stemmed from his having grown up in an age of dictatorship. Witnessing Hitler's and Stalin's movements from afar, as well as fighting totalitarianism in the Spanish Civil War, Orwell came to believe in the rise of a new species of autocrat, worse even than the tyrants of old. This cynicism is reflected in both of his highly successful novels, *Animal Farm* and *1984*. Orwell emphasizes the insidiousness of totalitarianism early in the novel, when the pigs take the fresh milk and apples. The pigs justify their actions on the basis of their superiority; they are smart and need more nutrition than the other animals to fuel their brainpower. There is no scientific basis for the pigs' claim—in fact, if anyone needs more food to fuel their labor, it is the manual laborers—but they can count on the animals' being too ignorant to realize that. In this way, Orwell makes the point that totalitarianism need not be blatant in order to be operating. It can hide under the guise of the "greater good" as it did in the Soviet Union before the totalitarianism became obvious.

Orwell uses a cyclical structure in *Animal Farm*, which helps advance the idea of totalitarianism's predictability. The novel begins with Jones as autocratic tyrant and ends with Napoleon not only in Jones's position, but in his clothes as well. Over the course of the novel, Napoleon essentially becomes Jones just as Stalin becomes an autocrat after pretending to espouse equality and freedom. Orwell cements this idea in the book's final scene, where he writes, "Twelve voices were shouting in anger, and they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which" (139). The circularity of Orwell's story prevents the reader from imagining a better future for Animal Farm. After all, even if another Rebellion were to take place, its leaders would eventually come to emulate Napoleon.

According to Baker, technology turned out to be the force freeing people from

Orwell's age of dictators. But "technology" can be just another banner under which to rally the people. While Orwell does portray technology as a source of progress in *Animal Farm*, he points out that it is useless unless it is in the people's hands. Most notably, even when the windmill is finished it is used for milling corn instead of its original purpose of supplying the animals with electricity in their stalls.

Intelligence and Education as Tools of Oppression

From the very beginning of the novel, we become aware of education's role in stratifying Animal Farm's population. Following Major's death, the pigs are the ones that take on the task of organizing and mobilizing the other animals because they are "generally recognized as being the cleverest of the animals" (35). At first, the pigs are loyal to their fellow animals and to the revolutionary cause. They translate Major's vision of the future faithfully into the Seven Commandments of Animalism. However, it is not long before the pigs' intelligence and education turn from tools of enlightenment to implements of oppression. The moment the pigs are faced with something material that they want—the fresh milk—they abandon their morals and use their superior intellect and knowledge to deceive the other animals.

The pigs also limit the other animals' opportunities to gain intelligence and education early on. They teach themselves to read and write from a children's book but destroy it before the other animals can have the same chance. Indeed, most of the animals never learn more than a few letters of the alphabet. Once the pigs cement their status as the educated elite, they use their mental advantage to manipulate the other animals. For example, knowing that the other animals cannot read the Seven Commandments, they revise them whenever they like. The pigs also use their literacy to learn trades from manuals, giving them an opportunity for economic specialization and advancement. Content in the role of the intelligentsia, the pigs forgo manual labor in favor of bookkeeping and organizing. This shows that the pigs have not only the advantage of opportunity, but also the opportunity to reject whatever opportunities they like. The pigs' intelligence and education allow them to bring the other animals into submission through the use of propaganda and revisionism. At the book's end, we witness Napoleon's preparationsto educate a new generation of pigs and indoctrinate them into the code of oppression.

Propaganda and Duplicity

Working as a propagandist during World War II, Orwell experienced firsthand both the immense power and the dishonesty of propaganda. Many types of governments make use of propaganda, not only totalitarian ones. Consider, for instance, the arguments that led many United States citizens to go along with the idea of invading Iraq after the September 11, 2001, terror attacks. Propaganda serves the positive task of uniting the people, sometimes at the cost of misleading them. Orwell takes a firm stance on the harmfulness of propaganda in *Animal Farm* while acknowledging its value for rallying a mistreated and disillusioned populace.

In Chapter IX, Orwell demonstrates the positive value of propaganda. By this point, the animals are so downtrodden that they are desperate for something in which to believe. (Note the irony, though: it is Napoleon who has robbed them of their belief in the original version of Animalism.) The falsely optimistic statistics, the songs, and especially the Spontaneous Demonstrations give the animals something to live for. This chapter is an exception in terms of portraying propaganda in a positive light. For the majority of *Animal Farm*, Orwell skewers propaganda and exposes its nature as deception.

Squealer represents a totalitarian government's propaganda machine. Eloquent to a fault, he can make the animals believe almost anything. This fact is especially clear in Squealer's interactions with Clover and Muriel. Each time Clover suspects that the Seven Commandments have been changed, Squealer manages to convince her that she is wrong. After the executions, Napoleon abolishes the singing of "Beasts of England" in favor of a new anthem, the lyrics of which contain a promise never to harm Animal Farm. In this propagandist maneuver, Napoleon replaces the revolutionary spirit of "Beasts of England" with the exact opposite, a promise not to rebel. In addition to being a source of manipulation, propaganda is an agent of fear and terror. Orwell demonstrates this quite clearly with Napoleon's vilification of Snowball and his assurances that Snowball could attack the animals at any minute. He uses similar fear tactics regarding Frederick and Pilkington. The most egregious example of propaganda in the novel is the maxim that replaces the Seven Commandments: "All animals are

equal / But some animals are more equal than others." The idea of "more equal" is mathematically improbable and a nonsensical manipulation of language, but by this time, the animals are too brainwashed to notice.

Violence and Terror as Means of Control

In *Animal Farm*, Orwell criticizes the ways that dictators use violence and terror to frighten their populaces into submission. Violence is one of the yokes from which the animals wish to free themselves when they prepare for the Rebellion. Not only does Jones overwork the animals and steal the products of their labor, but he can whip or slaughter them at his discretion. Once thepigs gain control of the animals, they, like Jones, discover how useful violence and terror can be. They use this knowledge to their full advantage. The foremost example of violence and terror in the novel is the pattern of public executions. The executions can be said to represent both the Red Terror and the Great Purge, but they stand more broadly for the abuse of power. For example, they are also similar to the Taliban's public executions in Kabul's soccer stadium in modern Afghanistan.

Capital punishment for criminals is a hotly debated issue. Killing *suspected* criminals, as Napoleon does, is quite another issue. The executions perhaps best symbolize the Moscow Trials, which were show trials that Stalin arranged to instill fear in the Soviet people. To witnesses at the time, the accused traitors' confessions seemed to be given freely. In fact, they were coerced. Napoleon likely coerces confessions from many of the animals that he executes. Orwell's use of the allegory genre serves him well in the execution scene. Execution with weapons is a violent and horrifying act, but many people have become desensitized to it.Orwell's allegorical executioners, the dogs that kill cruelly, portray the bloody and inescapably animalistic side of execution.

Terror comes also in threats and propaganda. Each time the animals dare to question an aspect ofNapoleon's regime, Squealer threatens them with Jones's return. This is doubly threatening to the animals because it would mean another battle that, if lost, would result in a return to their former lifestyle of submission. Jones's return is such a serious threat that it quashes the animals' curiosity without fail. The other major example of fear tactics in the novel is the threat of Snowball and his collaborators. Napoleon is able to vilify Snowball in the latter's absence and to

make the animals believe that his return, like Jones's, is imminent. Snowball is a worse threat than Jones, because Jones is at least safely out of Animal Farm. Snowball is "proved" to be not only lurking along Animal Farm's borders but infiltrating the farm. Napoleon's public investigation of Snowball's whereabouts cements the animals' fear of Snowball's influence. In modern language, Snowball is pegged as the terrorist responsible for the infringements on the rights and liberties instigated by the pigs.

Exploitation and the Need for Human Rights

Exploitation is the issue around which the animals unite. Initially, the animals do not realize Jones is exploiting them. For this reason, Old Major's speech is a revelation of momentous proportions. Major explains to the animals that they are enslaved and exploited and that Man isto blame. He teaches them not only what exploitation means, but also the fact that it is not inevitable. Orwell suggests that exploitation is, in fact, bound to happen when one class of society has an advantage over another. The opposite of exploitation, according to Major, is the state of being "rich and free." Major's ideas about animal rights symbolize the importance—and scarcity—of human rights in an oppressive regime. Gaining freedom does not necessarily lead people also to become rich, but it is better to be poor and free than poor and exploited.

All the animals on Animal Farm are exploited under Napoleon's control, save the pigs. Even the dogs, which work closely with the pigs, are exploited. The dogs face perhaps even a worse form of exploitation than the other animals, because they are made into agents of intimidation and death. Whereas Napoleon exploits the other animals' physical strength and their ignorance, he exploits the dogs' viciousness and turns them into villains against their parents' wishes.

Boxer's life is a particularly sad example of exploitation because he exploits himself, believing wholeheartedly in Napoleon's goodness. In the end, Napoleon turns the tables and exploits Boxer, having him slaughtered for profit. By the end of the novel, we see clearly how the animals participate in their own exploitation. They are beginning to build a schoolhouse for the thirty-one young pigs Napoleon has fathered (perhaps an oblique reference to the "Thirty Tyrants" of ancient Greece). That schoolhouse will never benefit the animals that build it; rather, it will be used to

educate the pigs and indoctrinate them into the cycle of exploiting others. Throughout the novel, Orwell shows us how the lack of human rights results in total helplessness. However, though it underscores the need for human rights, the novel does not suggest how to achieve them. After all, once the animals expel Jones and gain rights for themselves, the pigs take those rights away and the cycle of exploitation continues with new players.

Apathy and Acceptance

In the beginning of *Animal Farm*, the idea of freedom rouses the animals as if from a long slumber. Immediately following Major's death, the animals begin preparing themselves for the Rebellion; just the idea of revolution is enough to motivate them, since they do not expect it to happen in their lifetimes. By the book's end, the animals have become as apathetic as Benjamin always was. Despite the many hardships and injustices they face, the animals' pride as well as Napoleon's propaganda keep them invested in the "greater good" and the illusion of freedom. If Benjamin is the harbinger of apathy, Boxer is its antithesis. Strong not only in body but also in spirit, Boxer will make any sacrifice for the benefit of Animal Farm. With Boxer's eventual betrayal by the leaders he served so unconditionally, Orwell lays bare another type of apathy—theirs. Far from truly considering Boxer a loyal comrade, the pigs treat him as apathetically as they would a mere object. Symbolically, they even make a profit by having him turned into literal objects—glue and bone meal.
Boxer's enthusiasm does not give him an advantage, but the other animals' eventual apathy gives them a defense mechanism against the painful reality of their lives. It is no coincidence that Animal Farm's most apathetic and cynical animal, Benjamin, is one of those that survives the longest. Benjamin's emotional detachment from situations, whether they are good or bad, keeps him from being disappointed. In his apathy and cynicism, Benjamin represents the stereotypical "gloomy" Russian and also the perennially pessimistic Orwell himself.

Lucky Jim

Background

Lucky Jim is a novel written by Kingsley Amins in 1954. The novel mainly revolves around the story of Jim Dixon, who is a history lecturer at a university in England. He is a middle-class man who is grammar school-educated who has just started out in the history department at the university where he is teaching and he tries his best to impress the Head of Department, Professor Welch. Jim Dixon struggles with an on-again off-again "girlfriend" by the name of Margaret Peel who uses emotional blackmail to keep him in the relationship. Jim later meets Christine, who is the girlfriend of Professor Welch's son, Bertrand. However, after Bertrand treats her badly, Christine and Jim kiss. Jim later delivers a public lecture but turns up drunk and mocks Professor Welch, who terminates his employment. However, Christine's uncle offers Jim an assistant job in London and Christine agrees to pursue a relationship with Jim. The two walk past the Welchs on the street, with Jim having the last laugh.

The book was written by the author to explore the lives of academics and how they attempt to build their careers by establishing good relationships with their fellow peers. The author also wrote the book to indicate how academics do not always lead the most straightforward lives and may decide upon a different path once into their career. This can be seen by way of Jim's actions of becoming drunk and losing his job as a lecturer.

The book was received well by critics and fans alike. In fact, Helen Dunmore of *The Times* commented that the book was 'a flawless comic novel' and '*The Guardian'* newspaper stated that Lucky Jim was 'a brilliantly and preposterously funny book'.

Summary

Jim Dixon, the protagonist of the novel, works as a teacher of history at English provincial university. He teaches there the first year and may not be credited to the constant position, and passes at the moment a probationary period. But he makes a bad impression on his colleagues from the very beginning. On the first days of his stay at the faculty, he manages to injure the Professor of English. Coming out of the library, Dixon sees a small round pebble lying on the sidewalk, and he kicks it, and it, of

course, meets on its way a knee of a professor. Dixon should apologize, but he instead is watching the flight of the stone, and then slowly walks away. He has no guts to apologize - as always in such cases. It does not take more than two days after the incident, as at the first meeting of the faculty, passing the chair of the archivist, he stumbles and knocks the chair just at the moment when the old man was about to sit on it. Then Dixon criticizes the work of one of the students, and then he finds out that this study was written with the blessing and on the advice of Professor Welch, who determines Dixon's fate, for it is Welch to decide to remain Dixon to teach at the university or not.

It should be said that colleagues make on Dixon not the best impression as well. But there is nothing to do. Everyone wants to get into the staff. Therefore, mentally drawing caricatures of his colleagues and building funny faces, Dixon gives a considerable tribute to hypocrisy and tries to look like everyone else. And even trying to smooth out the bad impression of his own person, engages in scientific work, and writes an article entitled "The impact of economic factors on the development of shipbuilding handicraft in the period from 1450 to 1485". However, Dixon realizes the senselessness of this scientific study and notes himself that the article does not deserve anything, except a few strong and foul expressions.

Once Welch invites Dixon to join him for the weekend and to help in organizing a musical evening. And he gives him the task to prepare for the end of the semester a lecture on "Good old England". In the Welches' hous Dixon meets Margaret, who also teaches at the university. Three weeks ago, she tried to commit suicide because of failed love affair. After Margaret left the hospital, she lives in the house of the professor and his wife. Dixon started dating Margaret soon after he began teaching at the University. At first he just out of courtesy accepted Margaret's invitation to come to her for a cup of coffee, and then he suddenly became a man thet is seen with Margaret everywhere. However, he is not a lover of Margaret, but just plays a role of a comforter, which he wants to escape as soon as possible.

Dixon visits the musical evening only because he depends on the professor and wants to make a good impression. There also comes professor's son Bertrand, accompanied by Christina Kellegen, a niece of a certain Julius Gore Erkvart, who Bertrand hopes to work with. Dixon takes her for another woman, for the former fiancee of Bertrand.

That is again an unpleasant misunderstanding, which caused from the beginning in an awkward relationship with the son of the professor. Enraged and frustrated, Jim quietly leaves the house and goes to the bar. He returns back late at night, pretty drunk. He enters Margaret's room and tries to molest her. Margaret throws Dixon away, and he goes down to the first floor to the bar, where half a bottleof portwein adds more. As a result, he fell asleep with a lit cigarette that burns bedding, carpet and nightstand. In the morning Dixon comes down to the dining room, there meets Christina and tells her about a small fire in his bedroom. Christina rises with Dixon up and helps him to cover up the traces of fire. Then Jim informs the owners that his parents came suddenly, and that he must leave.

The second time Dixon meets Christina is at the summer ball at the university, where he came together with Margaret. And Christina is there in the company of Bertrand and his uncle, Julius Gore Erkvarta. Throughout the evening, Bertrand talks only with the uncle of Christina. Margaret is also trying to attract the attention of Gore-Erkvarta. Dixon sees Christine, as well as him, is bored at this ball, and he asks her to leave with him. On the way to the taxi they have a sincere conversation, and Cristina asks Dixon whether she should marry Bertrand. Dixon gives a negative answer, stating that he likes Christine. When they drove up to the Welch's home, where she is a guest, Jim asks the chauffeur to wait while he goes to see off Christina home. They get into the house through the window. Once inside the room, the young people kiss, then Dixon admits that he is in love with Christina. Before leaving, Jim agrees with Christine about the next meeting.

A few days later professor Welch again invites Dixon to his dinner. However, when Jim comes to the professor, he, apologizing, says that there was a misunderstanding and that he this evening goes to the theater. Jim meets Bertrand. Young people seriously quarrel because Dixon had at that time taken away Christina from the summer ball. Returning home, Dickson reflects on the futility of his meetings with Christine, and even tries to cancel a meeting. They neverthelessmeet, and Christina says Jim, that they must not see each other anymore, because she is bound with Bertrand. However, some time later, at the moment when Jim is preparing for a lecture on "good old England" Bertrand enters his room and rudely tells him to keep away from Christina. Then Dixon, who has already decided himself not to meet with the girl, in order to hurt Bertrand,said that he had serious intentions. Bertrand beats Dixon

in the face, and a brawl starts in which Jim eventually wins by knocking the opponent down, and then packs him off from the room.

That day, when Dickson had to read his lecture, he drinks in the morning half a dozen of whiskey with his neighbor Bill Atkinson. Then, before the lecture, he drinks several glasses of sherry. And just before the exit to the platform Jim meets Julius Gore Erkvart and the last treats himwith neat Scotch whiskey. As a result Jim Dixon tries to read the lecture being completely drunk. But it does not work. He only amuses the audience, exactly repeating intonation of professor Welch and the dean. In the end, drunk alcohol, excitement and heat take their, and he loses consciousness. The next morning he receives a letter from Professor Welch, where he advises Dixon to leave. And in the afternoon Julius Gore Erkvart calls him and offers a place of his personal secretary, the place Bertrand was after. Jim is happy. The same day, Dixon meets Margaret's exboyfriend, and in conversation with him, it turns out that Margaret just played the scene of a suicide by taking a safe dose of sleeping pills. And then Jim returns, where Bill Atkinson is waiting to tell: he had just had a telephone conversation with Christine, she leaves and she needs to say Dixon something very important. Jim rushes to the train station, where Christine informs him that he broke with Bertrand: it turns out, Bertrand continues to meet with his longtime mistress. Dixon tells her the news, he says, he will now be working for her uncleand is ready to go after Christine to London. Arm in arm, young people proudly pass by dumbfounded family of Welches.

Themes

Art

Art in general is criticized in the novel by the main character. Jim believes art and culture in general to be pretentious, pointless, and devoid of any practical value whatsoever. This type of thinking can be considered as being typical in the society after the Second World War who began to thinks about what is important or not in a man's life. Apart from not appreciating art, Jim also criticizes it harshly and expresses his opinion to those around him, making himself be even more unpopular among his well-educated peers.

Women

The novel was written in a period when women had growing rights, yet society still harbored prejudices about them and about their capabilities. In this sense, the novel

may seem to be misogynist because it portrays women as being dependent on men despite them being paid more than their male counterparts or being better educated than them. A woman's role in the society and her dreams continue to be tied to the idea of getting married and having children and so a women's role did not changed much from what it was before the World Wars.

Not what they seem

Another major theme in the novel is the idea that a person is not always what he or she seems. Many characters put on masks when they are with other people, but their thoughts do not always match with their actions; instead, such characters do certain things just because they feel compelled to do them. Jim for example, continues to write papers about the subject he teaches in college even though he believes that what he does is worthless and that his papers have no value. Christine is another character who feels compelled to behave posed and lady-like in social gatherings but behaves in a complete opposite way when she is alone or when she is surrounded by those she feels comfortable with.

Analysis

This novel satirizes elements of academia that are arguably still problems in many institutions, but none come through quite as clearly as the competitive nature of tenure at a university. Dixon is a man with many flaws who makes mistakes constantly, which stands at odds with his desire to have tenure, but as he approaches tenure, he comments more and more on hypocrisy. Is he the only flawed person on the faculty? Hardly. Many of these people struggle with their identity while projecting confidence.

The question on the table is about validation. The university has an official feeling that makes tenure feel like personal accomplishment. But, at the same institution where Dixon writes about the humanities, he attempts to violate the humanity of Margaret by sexually assaulting her in his drunken stupor. His drunkenness is a sign of his frustration and his urgent need to be understood,and the reader should wonder if this is perhaps a sign for a deeper need for approval.

Given that satirical lens, the prospect of academy seems less official than the

professors want to admit. They hope for establishment, and the university has that for them, and tenure means stability, typically speaking. But that is most attractive to those people for whom stability and accomplishment mean the most. The joke is that perhaps the most competent people are those who do not compete. The aggressiveness of the whole academic endeavor is brought under an interrogation light of comedy.

Symbols, Allegory and Motifs Looked doors

After the disastrous party where Jim embarrassed himself because of his behavior, Jim returns home from a night of drinking. He soon finds that the doors he wants to open to get to his room are all locked and this is one of the main reasons why he sees Bertrand Welch embracing Carol Goldsmith. Later, Jim runs into Margaret and they start kissing, something that Jim will regret later. The locked doors are used here as a symbol to show that Jim has little to no control overhis life. Even though he wants to do something, he is not let to do it by fate that pushes him into another direction.

Perfect place

While the location where the action takes place is not clearly stated, it is suggested that the college where Jim teaches is in the Southern part of England. Whenever Jim feels sad and disappointed, he dreams about going to London to start over. Thus, it is clear that for him, London is a symbol and it represents the life he wants to have and it is also used to symbolize a perfect place where every dream can come true.

Welch

Welch is an important character in the novel because of what it represents. Welch is among the only characters that was born before the beginning of the World Wars and was old enough to remember how it was before them. Welch is thus used here as a symbol for the old times that passed and this is clearly understood from the idea that he has. Welch continues to cling to the way the world used to be and seems to be reluctant to accept change and to accept that the world changed.

Burns

Usually in literature, fire is a metaphor for cleansing and for returning to a pure, primordial state. Here however, fire is destructive and damaging without helping the main character be cleansed from the sins from their past. In one instance, Jim falls asleep with a cigarette lit up and when he wakes up, the bead sheets and the table are badly burnt, putting him in the position to ask someone else for help to hide what had happened. The burns symbolize the damage done by Jim in various social contexts when he behaves in ways he should have not and thus ended up offending those around him.

Syllabi

Jim never believed his work to be important, and thus he never put too much effort in teaching his students and writing his papers. For him, his classes became the way through which he could meet with three beautiful girls instead of being the way through which he teaches his students and passes on information. Because of this, his syllabi and the lack of commitment and willingness to make the syllabi attractive to his students symbolize his lack of interest for the subjects he teaches.

Lord of the Flies

Study Guide

Sir William Golding composed Lord of the Flies shortly after the end of WWII. At the time of the novel's composition, Golding, who had published an anthology of poetry nearly two decades earlier, had been working for a number of years as a teacher and training as a scientist. Golding drew extensively on his scientific background for his first narrative work. The novel's plot, in which a group of English boys stranded on a deserted island struggle to develop their own society, is a social and political thought-experiment using fiction. The story of their attempts at civilization and devolution into savagery and violence puts the relationship between human nature and society under a literary microscope. Golding's allusions to human evolution also reflect his scientific training. The characters discover fire, craft tools, and form political and social systems in a process that recalls theories of the development of early man, a topic of much

interest among many peoples including the mid-century Western public. The culmination of the plot in war and murder suggests that Golding's overarching hypothesis about humanity is pessimistic, that is, there are anarchic and brutal instincts in human nature. Ordered democracy or some other regime is necessary to contain these instincts.

As an allegory about human nature and society, Lord of the Flies draws upon Judeo-Christian mythology to elaborate on the novel's sociological and political hypothesis. The title has two meanings, both charged with religious significance. The first is a reference to a line from King Lear, "As flies to wanton boys, are we to gods." The second is a reference to the Hebrew name Ba'alzevuv, or in its Greek form Beelzebub, which translates to "God of the Flies" and is synonymous with Satan. For Golding however, the satanic forces that compel the shocking events on the island come from within the human psyche rather than from an external, supernatural realm as they do in Judeo-Christian mythology. Golding thus employs a religious reference to illustrate a Freudian concept: the Id, the amoral instinct that governs the individual's sense of sheer survival, is by nature evil in its amoral pursuit of its own goals. The Lord of the Flies, that is, the pig's head on a stick, directly challenges the most spiritually motivated character on the island, Simon, who functions as a prophet-martyr for the other boys.

Published in 1954 early in the Cold War, Lord of the Flies is firmly rooted in the sociopolitical concerns of its era. The novel alludes to the Cold War conflict between liberal democracy and totalitarian communism. Ralph represents the liberal tradition, while Jack, before he succumbs to total anarchy, represents the kind of military dictatorship that, for mid-century America and Great Britain, characterized the communist system. It is also notable that Golding sets the novel in what appears to be a future human reality, one that is in crisis after atomic war. Golding's novel capitalizes on public paranoia surrounding the atom bomb which, due to the arms race of the Cold War, was at a high. Golding's negative depiction of Jack, who represents an anti- democratic political system, and his suggestion of the reality of atomic war, present the novel asa gesture of support for the Western position in the Cold War.

In addition to science, mythology, and the sociopolitical context of the Cold War, Lord of the Flies was heavily influenced by previous works of speculative fiction. In particular, Golding's novel alludes to R. M. Ballantyne's 1857 *The Coral Island*, which

tells the story of three boys stranded on a desert island. Golding, who found Ballantyne's interpretation of the situation naive and improbable, likely intended Lord of the Flies to be an indirect critique of *The Coral Island*.

Golding preserves the names of two of Ballantyne's characters, Ralph and Jack, to force the two texts into deeper comparison. While the boys of Coral Island spend their time having pleasant adventures, Golding's characters battle hunger, loneliness, and the deadly consequences of political conflict after they are deserted. The pessimistic character of Golding's story reflects the author's emphasis on the necessity of democratic civilization. Critics also have noted the relationship between Lord of the Flies and Joseph Conrad's canonical 1902 Heart of Darkness, which follows a soldier's excursion into marginal African civilizations. Reflecting some biases, Heart of Darkness depicts these parts of Africa as places where social order is absent and anarchy rules, breeding death and disorder; the novel sees the same problem as an issue within the individual human soul. Like Conrad's work, Golding's novel emphasizes the brutal and violent human impulses that arise in the absence of political order.

Lord of the Flies, with its dystopian and speculative characteristics, established Golding as asolid author with an interest in the science-fiction literary genre that was popular in the 1950s. The novel depicts ostensibly realistic characters, but the plot, which follows a small group of humans isolated within an alien landscape, employs or alludes to the conventions of popular science fiction novels of the time. Golding's subsequent works saw him moving even further into the science fiction genre. *The Inheritors*, heavily influenced by H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*, imagines life during the dawn of man and is considered a modern classic of speculative fiction.

Lord of the Flies was not an instant success, selling fewer than 3,000 copies before going out ofprint in 1955. Shortly thereafter, however, the novel became a bestseller among American and British readers who, as the arms race intensified, likely saw in Golding's wartime dystopia a grim prediction of their own future. By the 1960s the novel was required reading for many high school and college courses, where it has remained to the present day. The enduring popularity of thenovel inspired two film adaptations, one by Peter Brook in 1963, and the second by Harry Hook in 1990. Golding's original novel, however, remains the best-known version of the tale. In2005, *Time Magazine* named the novel one of the 100 best English-language novels

since 1923. A continuing controversy surrounding the political message of the novel and its view of human nature has led some readers to challenge its status as a book suitable for children. The American Library Association thus positioned Lord of the Flies at number 70 on its list of the 100 most challenged books of 1990-2000. Among literary critics of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, however, Lord of the Flies has been revisited less as an allegory of human evil than as a literary expression of Cold War ideology. This historicizing does not do justice to the novel. But in terms of reception history, contemporary critics are right to note that the novel's position at the center of many English curricula across America and Great Britain during the Cold War illustrates how the pedagogy of literature has been used to bolster national identity and ideology.

Summary

During an unnamed time of war, a plane carrying a group of British schoolboys is shot down over the Pacific. The pilot of the plane is killed, but many of the boys survive the crash and find themselves deserted on an uninhabited island, where they are alone without adult supervision. The first two boys introduced are the main protagonists of the story: Ralph is among the oldest of the boys, handsome and confident, while Piggy, as he is derisively called, is a pudgy asthmatic boy with glasses who nevertheless possesses a keen intelligence. Ralph finds a conch shell, and when he blows it the other boys gather together. Among these boys is Jack Merridew, an aggressive boy who marches at the head of his choir. Ralph, whom the other boys choose as chief, leads Jack and another boy, Simon, on an expedition to explore the island. On their expedition they determine that they are, in fact, on a deserted island and decide that they need to find food. The three boys find a pig, which Jack prepares to kill but finally balks before he can actually stab it.

When the boys return from their expedition, Ralph calls a meeting and attempts to set rules of order for the island. Jack agrees with Ralph, for the existence of rules means the existence of punishment for those who break them, but Piggy reprimands Jack for his lack of concern over long-term issues of survival. Ralph proposes that they build a fire on the mountain which could signal their presence to any passing ships. The boys start building the fire, but the younger boys lose interest when the task proves too difficult for them. Piggy proves essential to the process: the boys use his glasses to start the fire. After they start the fire, Piggy loses his temper and criticizes the other

boys for not building shelters first. He worries that they still do not know how many boys there are, and he believes that one of them is already missing.

While Jack tries to hunt pigs, Ralph orchestrates the building of shelters for the boys. The smallest boys have not helped at all, while the boys in Jack's choir, whose duty is to hunt for food, have spent the day swimming. Jack tells Ralph that he feels as if he is being hunted himself when he hunts for pigs. When Simon, the only boy who has consistently helped Ralph, leaves presumably to take a bath, Ralph and Jack go to find him at the bathing pool. But Simon instead is walking around the jungle alone. He finds a serene open space with aromatic bushes and flowers.

The boys soon settle into a daily pattern on the island. The youngest of the boys, known generally as the "littluns," spend most of the day searching for fruit to eat. When the boys play, they still obey some sense of decency toward one another, despite the lack of parental authority. Jack continues to hunt, while Piggy, who is accepted as an outsider among the boys, considers building a sundial. A ship passes by the island but does not stop, perhaps because the fire has burned out. Piggy blames Jack for letting the fire die, for he and his hunters have been preoccupied with killing a pig at the expense of their duty, and Jack punches Piggy, breaking one lens of his glasses. Jack and the hunters chant, "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in" in celebration of the kill, and they perform a dance in which Maurice pretends to be a pig and the others pretend to attack him.

Ralph becomes concerned by the behavior of Jack and the hunters and begins to appreciate Piggy's maturity. He calls an assembly in which he criticizes the boys for not assisting with the fire or the building of the shelters. He insists that the fire is the most important thing on the island, for it is their one chance for rescue, and declares that the only place where they should have a fire is on the mountaintop. Ralph admits that he is frightened but says that there is no legitimate reason to be afraid. Jack then yells at the littluns for their fear and for not helping with hunting or building shelters. He proclaims that there is no beast on the island, as some of the boys believe, but then a littlun, Phil, tells that he had a nightmare and when he awoke saw something moving among the trees. Simon says that Phil probably saw Simon, for he was walking in the jungle that night. But the littluns begin to worry about the beast, which they conceive as a ghost or a squid. Piggy and Ralph fight once more, and when Ralph

attempts to assert the rules of order, Jack asks rhetorically whether anyone cares about the rules. Ralph in turn insists that the rules are all that they have. Jack then decides to lead an expedition to hunt the beast, leaving only Ralph, Piggy and Simon behind. Piggy warns Ralph that if Jack becomes chief, the boys will never be rescued.

That night, during an aerial battle, a pilot parachutes down the island. The pilot dies, possibly on impact. The next morning, as the twins Sam and Eric are adding kindling to the fire, they spotthe pilot and mistake him for the beast. They scramble down the mountain and wake up Ralph. Jack calls for a hunt, but Piggy insists that they should stay together, for the beast may not come near them. Jack claims that the conch is now irrelevant. He takes a swing at Ralph when Ralph accuses Jack of not wanting to be rescued. Ralph decides to join the hunters on their expeditionto find the beast, despite his wish to rekindle the fire on the mountain. When they reach the otherside of the island, Jack expresses his wish to build a fort near the sea.

The hunters, while searching for the beast, find a boar that attacks Jack, but Jack stabs it and it runs away. The hunters go into a frenzy, lapsing into their "kill the pig" chant once again. Ralph realizes that Piggy remains with the littluns back on the other side of the island, and Simon offersto go back and tell Piggy that the other boys will not be back that night. Ralph realizes that Jack hates him and confronts him about that fact. Jack mocks Ralph for not wanting to hunt, claiming that it stems from cowardice, but when the boys see what they believe to be the beast they run away.

Ralph returns to the shelters to find Piggy and tells him that they saw the beast, but Piggyremains skeptical. Ralph dismisses the hunters as boys with sticks, but Jack accuses him of calling his hunters cowards. Jack attempts to assert control over the other boys, calling for Ralph's removal as chief, but when Ralph retains the support of the other boys Jack runs away, crying. Piggy suggests that, if the beast prevents them from getting to the mountaintop, they should build a fire on the beach, and reassures them that they will survive if they behave with common sense. Simon leaves to sit in the open space that he found earlier. Jack claims that he will be the chief of the hunters and that they will go to the castle rock where they plan to build a fort and have a feast. The hunters kill a pig, and Jack smears the blood over Maurice's face. Theythen cut off the head and leave it on a stake as an offering for the beast. Jack brings several hunters back to the shelters, where he invites the other boys to join his tribe and offers them meat and the opportunity to hunt and have fun. All of the boys,

except for Ralph and Piggy, join Jack.

Meanwhile, Simon finds the pig's head that the hunters had left. He dubs it The Lord of theFlies because of the insects that swarm around it. He believes that it speaks to him, telling him how foolish he is and that the other boys think he is insane. The pig's head claims that it is the beast, and it mocks the idea that the beast could be hunted and killed. Simon falls down and loses consciousness. After he regains consciousness and wanders around, he sees the dead pilot thatthe boys perceived to be the beast and realizes what it actually is. He rushes down the mountain to alert the other boys about what he has found.

Ralph and Piggy, who are playing at the lagoon alone, decide to find the other boys to make sure that nothing unfortunate happens while they are pretending to be hunters. When they find Jack, Ralph and Jack argue over who will be chief. When Piggy claims that he gets to speak becausehe has the conch, Jack tells him that the conch does not count on his side of the island. The boys panic when Ralph warns them that a storm is coming. As the storm begins, Simon rushes from the forest, telling about the dead body on the mountain. Under the impression that he is the beast,the boys descend on Simon and kill him.

Back on the other side of the island, Ralph and Piggy discuss Simon's death. They both took part in the murder, but they attempt to justify their behavior as motivated by fear and instinct. The only four boys who are not part of Jack's tribe are Ralph and Piggy and the twins, Sam and Eric, who help tend to the fire. At Castle Rock, Jack rules over the boys with the trappings of an idol. He has kept one boy tied up, and he instills fear in the other boys by warning them about thebeast and the intruders. When Bill asks Jack how they will start a fire, Jack claims that they will steal the fire from the other boys. Meanwhile, Ralph, Piggy and the twins work on keeping the fire going but find that it is too difficult to do by themselves. They return to the shelters to sleep. During the night, the hunters attack the four boys, who fight them off but suffer considerable injuries. Piggy learns the purpose of the attack: they came to steal his glasses.

After the attack, the four boys decide to go to the castle rock to appeal to Jack as civilized people. They groom themselves to appear presentable and dress themselves in normal schoolboy clothes. When they reach Castle Rock, Ralph

summons the other boys with the conch. Jack arrives from hunting and tells Ralph and Piggy to leave them alone. When Jack refuses to listen to Ralph's appeals to justice, Ralph calls the boys painted fools. Jack takes Sam and Eric as prisoners and orders them to be tied up. Piggy asks Jack and his hunters whether it is better to be a pack of painted Indians or sensible like Ralph, but Roger tips a rock over on Piggy, causing him to fall down the mountain to the beach. The impact kills him and, to the delight of Jack, shatters the conch shell. Jack declares himself chief and hurls his spear at Ralph, who runs away.

Ralph hides near Castle Rock, where he can see the other boys, whom he no longer recognizes ascivilized English boys but as savages. He crawls to the entrance of Jack's camp, where Sam and Eric are now stationed as guards, and they give him some meat and urge him to leave. While Ralph hides, he realizes that the other boys are rolling rocks down the mountain. Ralph evades the other boys who are hunting for him, then realizes that they are setting the forest on fire in order to smoke him out-and thus will destroy whatever fruit is left on the island.

Running for his life, Ralph finally collapses on the beach, where a naval officer has arrived with his ship. He thinks that the boys have only been playing games, and he scolds them for not behaving in a more organized and responsible manner as is the British custom. As the boys prepare to leave the island for home, Ralph weeps for the death of Piggy and for the end of the boys' innocence.

Themes

Civilization vs. Savagery

The overarching theme of *Lord of the Flies* is the conflict between the human impulse towards savagery and the rules of civilization which are designed to contain and minimize it. Throughout the novel, the conflict is dramatized by the clash between Ralph and Jack, who respectively represent civilization and savagery. The differing ideologies are expressed by each boy's distinct attitudes towards authority. While Ralph uses his authority to establish rules, protect the good of the group, and enforce the moral and ethical codes of the English society the boys were raised in, Jack is interested in gaining power over the other boys to gratify his most primal impulses. WhenJack assumes leadership of his own tribe, he demands the complete subservience

of the other boys, who not only serve him but worship him as an idol. Jack's hunger for power suggests that savagery does not resemble anarchy so much as a totalitarian system of exploitation and illicit power.

Golding's emphasis on the negative consequences of savagery can be read as a clear endorsementof civilization. In the early chapters of the novel, he suggests that one of the important functions of civilized society is to provide an outlet for the savage impulses that reside inside each individual. Jack's initial desire to kill pigs to demonstrate his bravery, for example, is channeled into the hunt, which provides needed food for the entire group. As long as he lives within the rules of civilization, Jack is not a threat to the other boys; his impulses are being re-directed into a productive task. Rather, it is when Jack refuses to recognize the validity of society and rejects Ralph's authority that the dangerous aspects of his character truly emerge. Golding suggests that while savagery is perhaps an inescapable fact of human existence, civilization can mitigate its full expression.

The rift between civilization and savagery is also communicated through the novel's major symbols: the conch shell, which is associated with Ralph, and The Lord of the Flies, which is associated with Jack. The conch shell is a powerful marker of democratic order on the island, confirming both Ralph's leadership-determined by election-and the power of assembly among the boys. Yet, as the conflict between Ralph and Jack deepens, the conch shell loses symbolic importance. Jack declares that the conch is meaningless as a symbol of authority and order, and its decline in importance signals the decline of civilization on the island. At the same time, The Lord of the Flies, which is an offering to the mythical "beast" on the island, is increasingly invested with significance as a symbol of the dominance of savagery on the island, and of Jack's authority over the other boys. The Lord of the Flies represents the unification of the boys under Jack's rule as motivated by fear of "outsiders": the beast and those who refuse to accept Jack's authority. The destruction of the conch shell at the scene of Piggy's murder signifies the complete eradication of civilization on the island, while Ralph's demolition of The Lord of the Flies-he intends to use the stick as a spear-signals his own descent into savagery and violence. By the final scene, savagery has completely displaced civilization as the prevailing system on the island.

Individualism vs. Community

One of the key concerns of *Lord of the Flies* is the role of the individual in society. Many of the problems on the island-the extinguishing of the signal fire, the lack of shelters, the mass abandonment of Ralph's camp, and the murder of Piggy-stem from the boys' implicit commitment to a principle of self-interest over the principle of community. That is, the boys would rather fulfill their individual desires than cooperate as a coherent society, which would require that each one act for the good of the group. Accordingly, the principles of individualism and community are symbolized by Jack and Ralph, respectively. Jack wants to "have fun" on the island and satisfy his bloodlust, while Ralph wants to secure the group's rescue, a goal they can achieve only by cooperating. Yet, while Ralph's vision is the most reasonable, it requires work and sacrifice on the part of the other boys, so they quickly shirk their societal duties in favor of fulfilling their individual desires. The shelters do not get built because the boys would rather play; the signal fire is extinguished when Jack's hunters fail to tend to it on schedule.

The boys' self-interestedness culminates, of course, when they decide to join Jack's tribe, a society without communal values whose appeal is that Jack will offer them total freedom. The popularity of his tribe reflects the enormous appeal of a society based on individual freedom and self-interest, but as the reader soon learns, the freedom Jack offers his tribe is illusory. Jack implements punitive and irrational rules and restricts his boys' behavior far more than Ralph did. Golding thus suggests not only that some level of communal system is superior to one based on pure self-interest, but also that pure individual freedom is an impossible value to sustain within a group dynamic, which will always tend towards societal organization. The difficult question, of course, is what individuals are willing to give up to gain the benefits of being in the group.

The Nature of Evil

Is evil innate within the human spirit, or is it an influence from an external source? What role do societal rules and institutions play in the existence of human evil? Does the capacity for evil varyfrom person to person, or does it depend on the circumstances

each individual faces? These questions are at the heart of *Lord of the Flies* which, through detailed depictions of the boys' different responses to their situation, presents a complex articulation of humanity's potential for evil.

It is important to note that Golding's novel rejects supernatural or religious accounts of the origin of human evil. While the boys fear the "beast" as an embodiment of evil similar to the Christian concept of Satan, the novel emphasizes that this interpretation is not only mistaken but also, ironically, the motivation for the boys' increasingly cruel and violent behavior. It is their irrational fear of the beast that informs the boys' paranoia and leads to the fatal schism between Jack and Ralph and their respective followers, and this is what prevents them from recognizing and addressing their responsibility for their own impulses. Rather, as The Lord of the Flies communicates to Simon in the forest glade, the "beast" is an internal force, present in every individual, and is thus incapable of being truly defeated. That the most ethical characters on the island-Simon and Ralph-each come to recognize his own capacity for evil indicates the novel's emphasis on evil's universality among humans.

Even so, the novel is not entirely pessimistic about the human capacity for good. While evil impulses may lurk in every human psyche, the intensity of these impulses-and the ability to control them-appear to vary from individual to individual. Through the different characters, the novel presents a continuum of evil, ranging from Jack and Roger, who are eager to engage in violence and cruelty, to Ralph and Simon, who struggle to contain their brutal instincts. We may note that the characters who struggle most successfully against their evil instincts do so by appealing to ethical or social codes of behavior. For example, Ralph and Piggy demand the return of Piggy's glasses because it is the "right thing to do." Golding suggests that while evil may be present in us all, it can be successfully suppressed by the social norms that are imposed on our behavior from without or by the moral norms we decide are inherently "good," which we can internalize within our wills.

The ambiguous and deeply ironic conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, however, calls into question society's role in shaping human evil. The naval officer, who repeats Jack's rhetoric of nationalismand militarism, is engaged in a bloody war that is responsible for the boys' aircraft crash on the island and that is mirrored by the civil war among the survivors. In this sense, much of the evilon the island is a result not of the boys' distance from society, but of their internalization of the norms and ideals of that society-norms and ideals that justify and even thrive on war. Are the boys corrupted by

the internal pressures of an essentially violent human nature, or have they been corrupted by the environment of war they were raised in? *Lord of the Flies* offers no clear solution to this question, provoking readers to contemplate the complex relationships among society, morality, and human nature.

Man vs. Nature

Lord of the Flies introduces the question of man's ideal relationship with the natural world. Thrust into the completely natural environment of the island, in which no humans exist or have existed, the boys express different attitudes towards nature that reflect their distinct personalities and ideological leanings. The boys' relationships to the natural world generally fall into one of three categories: subjugation of nature, harmony with nature, and subservience to nature. The first category, subjugation of nature, is embodied by Jack, whose first impulse on the island is to track, hunt, and kill pigs. He seeks to impose his human will on the natural world, subjugating it to his desires. Jack's later actions, in particular setting the forest fire, reflect his deepening contempt for nature and demonstrate his militaristic, violent character. The second category, harmony with nature, is embodied by Simon, who finds beauty and peace in the natural environment as exemplified by his initial retreat to the isolated forest glade. For Simon, nature is not man's enemy but is part of the human experience. The third category, subservience to nature, is embodied by Ralph and is the opposite position from Jack's. Unlike Simon, Ralph does not find peaceful harmony with the natural world; like Jack, he understands it as an obstacle to human life on the island. But while Jack responds to this perceived conflict by acting destructively towards animals and plant life, Ralph responds by retreating from the natural world. He does not participate in hunting or in Simon's excursions to the deep wilderness of the forest; rather, he stays on the beach, the most humanized part of the island. As Jack's hunting expresses his violent nature to the other boys and to the reader, Ralph's desire to stay separate from the natural world emphasizes both his reluctance to tempt danger and his affinity for civilization.

Dehumanization of Relationships

In *Lord of the Flies*, one of the effects of the boys' descent into savagery is their increasing inability to recognize each other's humanity. Throughout the novel, Golding uses imagery to imply that the boys are no longer able to distinguish between themselves and the pigs they are hunting and killing for food and sport. In Chapter Four, after the first successful pig hunt, the hunters re-enact the hunt in a ritual dance, using Maurice as a stand-in for the doomed pig. This episode is only a dramatization, but as the boys' collective impulse towards complete savagery grows stronger, the parallels between human and animal intensify. In Chapter Seven, as several of the boys are hunting the beast, they repeat the ritual with Robert as a stand-in for the pig; this time, however, they get consumed by a kind of "frenzy" and come close to actually killing him.

In the same scene, Jack jokes that if they do not kill a pig next time, they can kill a littlun in its place. The repeated substitution of boy for pig in the childrens' ritual games, and in their conversation, calls attention to the consequences of their self-gratifying behavior: concerned only with their own base desires, the boys have become unable to see each other as anything more than objects subject to their individual wills. The more pigs the boys kill, the easier it becomes for them to harm and kill each other. Mistreating the pigs facilitates this process of dehumanization.

The early episodes in which boys are substituted for pigs, either verbally or in the hunting dance, also foreshadow the tragic events of the novel's later chapters, notably the murders of Simon and Piggy and the attempt on Ralph's life. Simon, a character who from the outset of the novel is associated with the natural landscape he has an affinity for, is murdered when the other children mistake him for "the beast"-a mythical inhuman creature that serves as an outlet for the children's fear and sadness. Piggy's name links him symbolically to the wild pigs on the island, the immediate target for Jack's violent impulses; from the outset, when the other boys refuse to call him anything but "Piggy," Golding establishes the character as one whose humanity is, in the eyes of the other boys, ambiguous. The murders of Simon and Piggy demonstrate the boys' complete descent into savagery. Both literally (Simon) and symbolically (Piggy), the boys have become indistinguishable from the animals that they stalk and kill.

The Loss of Innocence

At the end of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph weeps "for the end of innocence," a lament that retroactively makes explicit one of the novel's major concerns, namely, the loss of innocence. When the boys are first deserted on the island, they behave like children, alternating between enjoying their freedom and expressing profound homesickness and fear. By the end of the novel, however, they mirror the warlike behavior of the adults of the Home Counties: they attack, torture, and even murder one another without hesitation or regret. The loss of the boys' innocenceon the island runs parallel to, and informs their descent into savagery, and it recalls the Bible's narrative of the Fall of Man from paradise.

Accordingly, the island is coded in the early chapters as a kind of paradise, with idyllic scenery, fresh fruit, and glorious weather. Yet, as in the Biblical Eden, the temptation toward corruption is present: the younger boys fear a "snake-thing." The "snake-thing" is the earliest incarnation ofthe "beast" that, eventually, will provoke paranoia and division among the group. It also explicitly recalls the snake from the Garden of Eden, the embodiment of Satan who causes Adamand Eve's fall from grace. The boys' increasing belief in the beast indicates their gradual loss of innocence, a descent that culminates in tragedy. We may also note that the landscape of the island itself shifts from an Edenic space to a hellish one, as marked by Ralph's observation of the ocean tide as an impenetrable wall, and by the storm that follows Simon's murder.

The forest glade that Simon retreats to in Chapter Three is another example of how the boys' lossof innocence is registered on the natural landscape of the island. Simon first appreciates the clearing as peaceful and beautiful, but when he returns, he finds The Lord of the Flies impaled at its center, a powerful symbol of how the innocence of childhood has been corrupted by fear and savagery.

Even the most sympathetic boys develop along a character arc that traces a fall from innocence (or, as we might euphemize, a journey into maturity). When Ralph is first introduced, he is acting like a child, splashing in the water, mocking Piggy, and laughing. He tells Piggy that he is certain that his father, a naval commander, will rescue him, a conviction that the reader understands as the wishful thinking of a little

boy. Ralph repeats his belief in their rescue throughout the novel, shifting his hope that his own father will discover them to the far more realistic premise that a passing ship will be attracted by the signal fire on the island. By the end of the novel, he has lost hope in the boys' rescue altogether. The progression of Ralph's character from idealism to pessimistic realism expresses the extent to which life on the island has eradicated his childhood.

The Negative Consequences of War

In addition to its other resonances, *Lord of the Flies* is in part an allegory of the Cold War. Thus, it is deeply concerned with the negative effects of war on individuals and for social relationships. Composed during the Cold War, the novel's action unfolds from a hypothetical atomic war between England and "the Reds," which was a clear word for communists. Golding thus presents the non-violent tensions that were unfolding during the 1950s as culminating into a fatal conflict-a narrative strategy that establishes the novel as a cautionary tale against the dangers of ideological, or "cold," warfare, becoming hot. Moreover, we may understand the conflict among the boys on the island as a reflection of the conflict between the democratic powers of the West and the communist presence throughout China, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union. (China's cultural revolution had not yet occurred, but its communist revolution was fresh in Western memory.) Ralph, an embodiment of democracy, clashes tragically with Jack, a character who represents a style of military dictatorship similar to the West's perception of communist leaders such as Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong. Dressed in a black cape and cap, with flaming red hair, Jack also visually evokes the "Reds" in the fictional world of the novel and the historical U.S.S.R., whose signature colors were red and black. As the tension between the boys comes to abloody head, the reader sees the dangerous consequences of ideological conflict.

The arrival of the naval officer at the conclusion of the narrative underscores these allegorical points. The officer embodies war and militaristic thinking, and as such, he is symbolically linked to the brutal Jack. The officer is also English and thus linked to the democratic side of the Cold War, which the novel vehemently defends. The implications of the officer's presence are provocative: Golding suggests that even a war waged in the name of civilization can reduce humanity to a state of barbarism.

The ultimate scene of the novel, in which the boys weep with grief for the loss of their innocence, implicates contemporary readers in the boys' tragedy. The boys are representatives, however immature and untutored, of the wartime impulses of the period.

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UNIT – V - Twentieth Century English Literature – SHS5014

Arthur C Clarke: The Sentinel

Biography of Arthur Clarke

Arthur C. Clarke was one the most revered science fiction writers of the 20th century. He was born in 1917 in Somersetshire, England to Charles Clarke, a farmer, and his wife Nora. Olaf Stapledon's *Last and First Man* (1930), a science fiction classic, heavily influenced Clarke in his youth. After Clarke's father died when he was 13, he focused on school and worked with his mother on the farm. He was interested in astronomy and collected American science fiction periodicals. In 1936 he moved to London and took a civil service post in lieu of attending university, which he could not afford. During WWII he worked as a radar technician in the Royal Air Force, and following the war did finally take a degree in mathematics and physics at King's College.

Clarke was chairman of the British Interplanetary Society from 1946-47 and again in 1950-53. He was writing speculative fiction during this time, which was characterized by a degree of realism alongside its imaginative centre. His first published story was "Loophole" (1946), appearing in *Astounding Science Fiction.* His short story "The Sentinel" was rejected for publication in a BBC competition, but nonetheless became one of his most famous works and one that would evolve into *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

From the early 1950s onward he wrote consistently, both fiction and nonfiction. He married a young woman after three weeks and divorced six months later; he then moved to Sri Lanka where he remained until the rest of his life. There he took up diving; he even wrote of work of nonfiction about communication between humans and dolphins (*Dolphin Island [1963]).*

His most famous novels consist of *Childhood's End* (1953), *The City and the Stars* (1956), *Rendezvous with Rama* (1973), and the *Odyssey* series (*2001: A Space Odyssey* [1968], *2010: Odyssey Two* [1982], *2061: Odyssey Three* [1988], and *3001: The Final Odyssey* [1997]. Scholars Geoff Hamilton and Brian Jones offer this analysis of Clarke's major works: In some ways Clarke's work is the epitome of the "hard," realistic, technically feasible, technologically savvy and methodically extrapolated science fiction…his scientific backgroundis clearly apparent within even his most imaginative pieces... Paradoxically, however, Clarke's fiction also reflects an obsession with the paranormal, the metaphysical, and the mystical, with several of the novels depicting scientific progress and alien intervention as parallel with human

advancement or even transcendence. In Clarke's work—particularly *Childhood's End* and the *Odyssey* series—advanced alien races appear as benign father figures (perhaps reflecting Clarke's own loss as a boy), next to whom humanity is little more than a curious, shortsighted, and occasionally petulant child. For many, this pseudo-religious allegorical aspect of Clarke's fiction sits uneasily with the scientific rationalism he displays elsewhere.

Clarke attained a great deal of fame for his collaboration with Stanley Kubrick on the scriptfor *2001.*

Alongside his fiction were notable works of nonfiction on space and the sea, such as *TheExploration of Space* (1951), winner of the 1952 International Fantasy Award; *The Promise of Space* (1968); *The Challenge of the Sea* (1960); and *Indian Ocean Treasure* (1964). He won the 1962 UNESCO Kalinga Prize for science writing and was knighted in 2000. He was recognized by the United Nations, and nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994. A European communication satellite was also named after him.

Clarke died in 2008 at the age of ninety.

Narrative Point of View

First Person Narrator. Wilson, a geologist exploring the Moon, tells of the experience of discovering a pyramid shaped object that indicates the presence of extra-terrestial intelligence. He describes the experience of discovery and creates a story that reflects on the meaning of the object.

Plot

The story of the accidental discovery on the moon of a beautiful pyramid--a sign of intelligent life somewhere in the universe. It's a First Contact story. Recounts the discovery of the object and the realization that it's not natural, but the creation of intelligence; then twenty years later when they crack the invisible shield and see the machinery; then the narrator creates a story to explain its meaning.

The narrator creates a plot to explain the pyramid: Millions of years ago some intelligent life came looking for other intelligent life (like man). Left this pyramid on the moon, which was emitting signals. It was a sentinel (one of million throughout

the universe) to watch for signs of intelligent life. It's uninterrupted beams indicated no contact. When the men discovered it and then destroyed it by examining it (took 20 years), the signals were interrupted, thereby indicating to its makers that there was intelligent life on earth. The Sentinel was placed on the moon, notthe earth, because only when man had progressed far enough in intelligence to escape his earth cradle and had reached the moon, would he have evolved far enough in intelligence to be of any interest to the obviously superior form of life that had set up the Sentinel. Now the alarm has been set off and humanity will not have to wait long for a visit--which may be good or bad.

Setting

The moon in 1996 and on earth twenty years later.

Character

The narrator, Wilson, is a geologist who makes the discovery on the moon, and then back on earth twenty years later tells about the examination of the pyramid. The story is not about character. There is no focus on him or any change in him. He is simply a narrative voice laying out the ideas about intelligent life in the universe. The character is a vehicle for the expression of ideas about the evolutionary nature of man and speculation about the possibilities of "contact."

Symbols

- The Sentinel.

This is the narrator's interpretation of the meaning of the pyramid-like object he discovers. It's a metaphor. The object is like a sentinel--a guard that is on the lookout for intelligent life on earth. It is a symbol of a superior form of intelligence watching over the earth. One element of suspense in the story is that it could be either a friendly or hostile lookout.

- "Our cradle."

A metaphor for earth. Man is only an infant in terms of the development of intelligence and the earth is our cradle. It's a symbol of our beginning stages of evolutionary

intelligence. Our leaving the earth--our cradle--and travelling to themoon is a sign that we are growing up--maturing in our intelligence.

Theme

The most important theme is not the assertion that there is intelligent life somewhere in the universe, but assertions about the nature of man. Man is essentially evolutionary intelligence. The earth is our "cradle"--we are in the infant stages of intelligent life. Only when we are able to make it to the moon will we demonstrate that we have reached a new stage of intelligence. Manis destined to evolve beyond the earth--to transcend the limits of earthly life and our "infant civilization." Therefore space exploration and travel is essential to human development--the sign that we are evolving into higher forms of intelligent life. The fantasy of some vastly superior form of intelligence--as represented by the Sentinel--is the fantasy about the real nature and future of humanity. "They" represent our possible future if we keep evolving, keep doing the space thing.

A sub-theme is the moment of speculation about "contact" with alien forms of life. These forms are clearly intellectually superior--but will they be benevolent or hostile? Part of the pleasure of this kind of story is the feeling that we will very soon find out.

Part of the rhetoric of space exploration and travel is that there is surely intelligence out there. Otherwise, the enterprise seems quite dull. If there are no alien life forms--no other worlds and cultures to explore (like Star Trek), then the whole space mission is banal and a dead end. There is no adventure out there--only the emptiness of silent space. 2001 shows how dull the space trip is--no encounters--only the drama created by lying to Hal, which could have been done on earth. The real moon trips, which came around 15 years after Clarke's story were the antithesis of the story: what we found was nothing of any significance. Getting there was not an evolutionary advance--no giant leap for mankind--which was, of course, the Clarkeian rhetoric that legitimated the journey. Not even a small step. We haven't been back since. We're still stuck in the "cradle" of earth.

The Sentinel

Even more understated, "The Sentinel" is allegedly told by an eyewitness who begins by directing the reader to locate on the Moon the Mare Crisium (Sea of Crises), where the discoverytook place. Part of a large 1996 expedition, he recalls fixing breakfast when a glint of light in the mountains caught his eye; staring through a telescope so fascinated him that he burned the sausages. From such homey touches, he led the climb to "Wilson's Folly," a plateau artificially leveled for a twelve-foot crystal pyramid "machine." Its force field gave way, after twenty years of frustrated investigation, to an atomic assault which reduced the mystery to fragments. The restof the story is speculation, successive stages of Wilson's inferences.

Not a relic of lunar civilization, the artifact, half the age of Earth, was left by visitors: Wilson imagines it saying "I'm a stranger here myself." After its destruction, he "guesses" it must have been a beacon; interrupting its signal has triggered a "fire alarm." Lacking explicit alien intent, the pyramid emblemizes the unknown. Although such a potentially multivalent symbol invites other interpretations, Wilson's is supported by 2001, in which a rectangular slab under the lunar surface signals after being exposed to sunlight. The final savage attack on the pyramid also seems significant to the narrator, although the pyramid might have been programmed to selfdestruct.

The quasi-religious awe, tinged with fear as well as positive expectation, with which Wilson awaits the aliens' return has echoes elsewhere in Clarke. This story, moreover, with its judgment of space travel as a first step toward an incalculable destiny, many readers see as an article of faith in a grand design of a creator god. Such a pattern may lie beneath some of his work, but Clarke has also taken pains to discourage conventional religious interpretations.

Patrick O'Brian: A Passage of the Frontier

Collected Short Stories is a 1994 collection of stories by the English author Patrick O'Brian. It was published in the US under the title *The Rendezvous and Other Stories*.[2]

The collection consists of 27 stories which, according to the book's first edition dust jacket, represent "all the stories which O'Brian wishes to preserve". All had previously appeared in one of his earlier collections *The Last Pool* (1950), *The Walker* (1953), *Lying in the Sun* (1956) and *The Chian Wine* (1974), and some had also been published individually.

Dean King's 2000 biography includes comments on many of the stories,[3] as do the two volumesof biography (2004 and 2019) by O'Brian's step-son Nikolai Tolstoy.[4][5]

"A Passage of the Frontier"
A fugitive escapes on foot south across the Pyrenees from a military threat emanating the north (the Nazis during World War II in Tolstoy's reading).[30] He eventually reaches the safety of a shepherd's hut, and is asked if he is the Christ. On being told he is not, the shepherd replies thatin that case he will not have to kill the lamb.

An "exciting and terrifying" tale according to Ollard's 1973 assessment.[27] Tolstoy considered the story to be a paradigm of the Passion of Christ, "although its cryptic ending leaves one guessing at some of the symbolism."[30]

John Wyndham: Random Quest

"Random Quest" is an Alternate History Romance Novelette written by John Wyndham, firstpublished in his 1961 collection *Consider Her Ways*.
The story concerns a physicist named Colin Trafford who, as a result of a failed experiment, finds himself in an Alternate Universe in which World War II never happened. He has switched bodies with his counterpart, a successful author and a thoroughly disreputable man who is neglectful and emotional abusive towards his beautiful wife Ottilie Harshom, flaunting his frequent adultery. Colin falls in love

with Ottilie almost immediately. He does not tell her the truth about himself but he is nevertheless able to create a bond of trust between them. After he returns to his own universe just as suddenly as he arrived, Colin endeavours to find Ottilie's counterpart, something which proves very difficult.

It has been adapted for the screen three times: as an episode of the BBC science fiction anthology series *Out of the Unknown* in 1969 (now a Missing Episode), the 1971 film *Quest For Love*, and a 2006 BBC television film.

John wyndham random quest

The seeds of time ebooks read ebooks online free ebooks. Bbc fours anthropology season is all about us looking at. John wyndham was a favourite of mine as a teenager and it has been an unexpected treat to read his works again thirty years later. Consider her ways odd how do i do stitch in time random quest time out accessrestricteditem true addeddate 20100203 19. Resortquest by wyndham vacation rentals perdido key. The sorcerers ring has all the ingredients for an instant success. Workshops warhammer quest roleplay book as much as possible this electronic version resembles the original, though colour depths and the resolution of the images has been reduced where possible in order to produce a smaller file size. Earn up to 30,000 bonus points with the wyndham rewards visa cardenough for up to 4 free nights. The sound of a crash somewhere outside arrived just in time to drown the noise of the breaking glass.

This world exists in john wyndhams novel, the chrysalids. John wyndham parkes lucas beynon harris was the son of a barrister. A surprisingly commercial mix of sci fi and love story, quest forlove was based on a john wyndham story called random quest, and was a nonportmanteau product of the wonderful amicus studios. Graham toffts put his drink down carefully, and wiped the spilt sherry from his fingers. Open library is an initiative of the internet archive, a 501c3 nonprofit, building a digital library of internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Rent philosophy the quest for truth 10th edition 9780190254773 and save up to 80% on textbookrentals and 90% on used textbooks. It was in the spring of the year that matthew reached twelve that i first became aware of chocky. It was included in his 1961 collection consider her ways and others. Random quest by john wyndham is a short and engaging take on parallel universe and alternative history. This panoramic vision was given to the author over a

period of one year. It includes an unfolding of the last battle between light and darkness. The title is presumably from macbeth, act i scene iii. Rayners chapter, like the others in this collection, is an excellent counterexample. The day of the triffids is a 1951 postapocalyptic novel about a plague of blindness that befalls the entire world, allowing the rise of an aggressive species of plant. John wyndham parkes lucas benyon harris was the son of a barrister. Imagine living in a world where an extra toe on a newborn will automatically result in the death of the baby, a pig with more hair than normal will be put down, and corn kernels that are not in perfectly formed rows will necessitate burning an entire field. Creation story in words and sign language, by john audia gr. At the centre of the science fiction britannia season is a new science fiction drama, random quest, based on a john wyndham short story. Carlstrom is the beloved author of the jesse bear series. Workbook pdf download book in this website in format pdf, kindle, epub, ebook, dan mobi. Wyndhams shortish story random quest has been filmed on three separate occasions.

London, flood, wyneham, country house s 15 37 jan 20, without wishing to spoil the plot too much it is hinted at in the opening waeksthe ever prescient wyndham then brings icecap melting into the scenario, which does not bode well for mankind. It will keep you entertained for hours, and will satisfy all ages. Consider her ways john wyndhamfree downloadpdf epub. Search results for john wyndham find thousands of ebooks on. Having seen both film versions, finally read this in the vintage anthology of science fiction, if anyones curious. My words did little to disperse that random suspicion which makes the. To properly use the quests here generated, one must have a copy of the adventure book that came with the warhammer quest game.

No place like earth john wyndham page 1 of 1 previous next page. The day of the triffids read ebooks online free ebooks. Lady wyndhams return wikisource, the free online library. The man from beyond and other stories 1975 wanderers of time 1973 also appeared as. Consider her ways and others by john wyndham, 1985, penguin books edition, in english.

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Random quest deals with issues surrounding loneliness and the human condition. Most of his books are set in the 1950s and brian aldiss. Streamliners locomotives and trains in the age of speed and style books pdf file. Consider her ways and others 1985 edition open library. Located directly on the gulf of mexico, palacio features a hot tub, gazebo with beach walkover, and meeting space. This random generator is provided as a means of selecting random adventures from the adventure book. Therefore, only the objective room name, the adventure number, and the adventure title are given. Oct 28, 2014 consider her ways and others is another collection of short stories by john wyndham. Nov 14, 2016 relates in verse the story of the miraculous rising from the dead of florence wyndham 15381597, nee wadham a sister and coheiress of nicholas wadham d. The seeds of time is a collection of science fiction short stories by john wyndham, published in 1956 by michael joseph. Adopting the name john wyndham, he started writing a form. John wyndham parkes lucas benyon harris was born in 1903.

Random quest is a science fiction short story, which is also a love story, by john wyndham. Millions of gossamerslung triffid seeds, free now to drift wherever the winds of the. Some of his works were set in postapocalyptic landscapes. John wyndham random quest pdf download16 chesssalea. Although wyndham had already published other novels using other penname combinations drawn from his. The day of the triffids is the first book in triffids series by john. It was written by the english

science fiction author john wyndham parkes lucas beynon harris, under the pen name john wyndham. Adopting the name john wyndham, he started writing a formof science fiction that he called logical fantasy. Many of his works were set in postapocalyptic landscapes. Author john wyndhams complete list of books and series in order, with the latest releases, covers, descriptions and availability.

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introduction with a biographical sketch of the philosopher, study. Theres also a modern feel to many of the messages wrapped up in the dialogue. Wyndham s shortish story random quest has been filmed on three separate occasions.

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