

# Literary Musings

VOLUME IV - FOURTH SEMESTER



DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC  
CORE COURSE-**ENGLISH**

PAPER VII - **BRITISH LITERATURE (19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup>) CENTURY PART-II**

PAPER VIII - **GENDER STUDIES PART-I**

(AS PER NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020)

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PRASARANGA:  
BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

## FOREWORD

**Discipline Specific Core Course-English- Text book** Literary Musings for IV Semester B.A under Bengaluru City University (BCU), has been designed with the objectives of extending multiple areas of writings in British Literature spanning 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries along with Gender studies in English. Course 7 and course 8 is intended to develop the students' ability to read, process, think critically and independently. This is the Text Book for Undergraduate students of BA, BCU, Bengaluru, prepared by the members of the Text Book Committee in accordance with NEP 2020. I congratulate the Text Book Committee's tireless task of framing and collating the materials and I am confident that these text books would further enhance their knowledge and interest in literature. The two text books indeed would facilitate teachers to interpret and improve the methods of teaching in the class room. I thank the Director of Bengaluru City University Press and their personnel for bringing out the third semester textbooks deftly and on time. I hope that both the books would enable practical and experiential learning.

**Prof. Lingaraja Gandhi**  
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## PREFACE

The Discipline Specific Core Course English Text book for IV Semester B.A, **Literary Musings**- comprising of British Literature (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century) (Part 2) – course 7 and Gender Studies (Part I)- course 8- emphasizes on a wide range of poems, essays and short stories.

**Fourth** semester students are by now acquainted with various genres and literary terms. They would find it further interesting to learn about British literature and significance of Gender as a Discourse.

**Course 7** of the syllabus introduces students to the British authors of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which includes the popular works of the writers like John Keats, Virginia Woolf and others.

**Course 8** provides an understanding of the significance of Gender studies and also to gain substantial knowledge on women writers.

This syllabus is designed and organized to abide to a greater extent to the frame work expected to achieve the desired goals of NEP 2020. I would like to thank the concerned Chairperson and her team of teachers who have worked methodically to accomplish the vested task. I thank the Vice Chancellor and Registrar of Bengaluru City University for their consistent support. I also thank the publisher, who helped us to bring out the book ontime.

**Dr. Thandava Gowda**  
**Chairman, Board of**  
**Studies, UG**

## A Note to the Teacher

Literary Musings, the Discipline Specific Core Course- English BA Text Book for the Fourth semester undergraduate Arts under Bengaluru City University is designed to develop in students a comprehensive outlook, inculcate critical thinking and aesthetic appeal. The selected areas of study in British Literature is absorbing and captivating. British literature (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century) Part-II introduces to the students an understanding of Pre Raphaelite writers, war poets, Victorian writers, etc., and also acquaints students with the popular works by eminent writers of that period. Thus students would obtain an insight into the lives of prominent writers and their popular works. In Fourth semester teachers can screen on the lives of popular writers, which would enable the students to obtain visual impact of them.

Teachers have the choice of designing the activity for awarding internal

marks. Summative Assessment                      60 marks

Formative Assessment (IA)                      40 marks

Total 100 marks

Each Course carries 3 credits, therefore for Course 5 and Course 6 it would be 3+3=6 credit

<b>A. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT – 40 marks</b>	
Internal Test	10
Assignment	10
Presentation – (Seminar/ Webinar)	10
Writing an Anthology (Group or Individual Activity) of Self Written Poems/Prose/Short Stories	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

The formative assessment should involve the following activities to provide real life experience for the students where practical learning takes place.

- The students should be made to involve in participative learning/experiential learning/ collaborative learning for formative assessment.
- Designing, developing, and completing seminars should provide a platform for encouraging students' critical thinking and cross-disciplinary connections.

- An anthology is a collection of literary works. Anthology writing would train students in character development, creating plots and subplots and in self-expression.

The Committee expresses its gratitude to Dr. Thandava Gowda, Chairman, Board of Studies, Bengaluru City University for his consistent support and direction. The Committee also thanks Prof. Lingaraja Gandhi, the Honorable Vice Chancellor of Bengaluru City University for his support in bringing out the new text book.

**Dr. PADMAVATHY. K**

**CHAIRPERSON**

**TEXT BOOK COMMITTEE**

## **Discipline Specific Core Course- BA English (Hons.)**

### **SEMESTER- IV**

**Course 7 British Literature  
(19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>) Century (Part2)**

**Course 8 Gender Studies (Part I)**

**At the end of the semester students would hone the following skills:  
(EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOME)**

- **Be enriched with the knowledge of British literature and the eminent writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**
- **Appreciate some representative texts of the prescribed period**
- **Get sensitized to issues prevalent in the given texts**
- **Develop analytical and interpretative skills**
- **Locate and contextualize texts across theoretical orientations**
- **Understand the concept of Gender studies**
- **Appreciate literature by women writers**
- **Learn the basics of patriarchy, sex and gender and gynocentrism**
- **Understand the significance of Gender as a discourse**



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COURSE 7</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TITLE - BRITISH LITERATURE (19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY) (PART2)</b></p>	<p><b>Total Hrs:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>45</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT- I</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>15 hrs</b></p>
<p>Pre-Raphaelite Poetry, Victorian Novel, 19<sup>th</sup> century Prose, War Poetry, Modern Novel, Modern Drama, Problem Plays, Modern Prose.</p> <p>Pre-Raphaelite poetry – <b>When I am dead, my dearest-</b> Christina Rossetti</p> <p>War Poetry- <b>The Send-Off-</b> Wilfred Owen</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">33</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT-II</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>REPRESENTATIVE WRITERS, WORKS, TRENDS</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>15 hrs</b></p>
<p>Jane Austen, Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, Alfred Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, T. S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats, W. H. Auden. G. B. Shaw, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence John Galsworthy etc.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">37</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT-3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>REPRESENTATIVE WORKS</b></p> <p><b>Poems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ode on Grecian Urn</i> - John Keats</li> <li>• <i>Prayer for My Daughter</i> - W. B. Yeats</li> </ul> <p><b>Essay</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>New Brave World- Revisited-What can be done?</i> - Aldous Huxley</li> <li>• <i>With the Photographer</i> - Stephen Leacock</li> </ul> <p><b>Novel</b></p> <p><i>To the Lighthouse</i> - Virginia Woolf</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>15 hrs</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">66</p> <p style="text-align: center;">71</p> <p style="text-align: center;">77</p> <p style="text-align: center;">87</p> <p style="text-align: center;">93</p>

**Teaching material**

*Note: Teachers could explore the web/online resources to access the various concepts and illustrative examples*

**Books Recommended and Suggested Reading**

1. Andrew Sanders, *English Literature*, OUP, 2005
2. Edward Albert, *History of English Literature*, OUP, 2014
3. M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, Cengage Publishers, New Delhi, 2014.

## COURSE 7

### TITLE - BRITISH LITERATURE

#### UNIT- I

##### **Pre-Raphaelite Poetry**

William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Michael Rossetti, James Collinson, Frederic George Stephens, and Thomas Woolner formed a seven-member "Brotherhood" in 1848 that was inspired in part by the Nazarene movement and later became known as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (or Pre-Raphaelites). The Brotherhood was always merely a loose organisation, and other artists of the era such as Ford Madox Brown, Arthur Hughes, and Marie Spartali Stillman shared its values. Eventually, people like Edward Burne-Jones, William Morris, and John William Waterhouse adhered to the Brotherhood's tenets.

The most major British artistic movement of the nineteenth century was the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB), which was established in September 1848. Its primary goal was to restore the purity of early Renaissance and mediaeval painting to the art of the day. Although the brotherhood only existed for a brief period of time, the Pre-Raphaelitist movement it gave rise to endured into the twentieth century and had a significant impact on symbolism, the Arts and Crafts movement, and the aesthetic movement.

First to appear was Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1849), in which passages of striking naturalism were situated within a complex symbolic composition. Already a published poet, Rossetti inscribed verse on the frame of his painting. In the following year, Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents* (1850) was exhibited at the Royal Academy to an outraged critical reception. The master of a brilliantly naturalistic technique, Millais represented Biblical figures with closely observed portrayals of the features of real, imperfect models. In 1850 the Pre-Raphaelites also produced a literary and artistic magazine, the *Germ*, which was something of a manifesto for their artistic concerns and ran for only four issues.

From the first, the Pre-Raphaelites aspired to paint subjects from modern life. In *The Awakening Conscience* (1854), Hunt represented a kept woman realizing the error of her ways, and in 1852 Madox Brown began the most ambitious of all Pre-Raphaelite scenes from modern life, *Work* (1852–1865). Although the brotherhood included no women, Christina Rossetti, sister of Dante and William,

pioneered a Pre-Raphaelite style in poetry, and Elizabeth Siddall—model, muse, and eventually wife of Dante Gabriel Rossetti—produced distinctive watercolors and drawings that went unrecognized in her lifetime but received critical attention after the advent of feminist art history in the late 1970s.

The group sought a return to the abundant detail, intense colours and complex compositions of Quattrocento Italian art. They disapproved of what they perceived to be the mechanistic methodology that Mannerist artists Raphael and Michelangelo's successors had first used. The Brotherhood believed the Classical poses and elegant compositions of Raphael in particular had been a corrupting influence on the academic teaching of art, hence the name "Pre-Raphaelite". In particular, the group objected to the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds, founder of the English Royal Academy of Arts, whom they called "Sir Sloshua". To the Pre-Raphaelites, according to William Michael Rossetti, "sloshy" meant "anything lax or scamped in the process of painting ... and hence ... anything or person of a commonplace or conventional kind". The group associated their work with John Ruskin, an English critic whose influences were driven by his religious background.

The group continued to accept the concepts of history painting and mimesis, imitation of nature, as central to the purpose of art. The Pre-Raphaelites defined themselves as a reform movement, created a distinct name for their form of art, and published a periodical, *The Germ*, to promote their ideas. The group's debates were recorded in the *Pre-Raphaelite Journal*.

### **The Characteristics of Pre-Raphaelite Poetry**

From around 1848 through the turn of the century, the Pre-Raphaelites were a loosely organized group of Victorian poets, painters, illustrators, and designers. Their work, which drew inspiration from both visual and written arts, prioritized ambience and mood above narrative while concentrating on mediaeval themes, artistic reflection, female beauty, sexual longing, and altered states of consciousness. In defiant opposition to the utilitarian ethos that formed the dominant ideology of the mid-century, the Pre-Raphaelites helped to popularize the notion of 'art for art's sake'. Generally devoid of the political edge that characterized much Victorian art and literature, Pre-Raphaelite work nevertheless incorporated elements of 19th-century realism in its attention to detail and in its close observation of the natural world. Those poets who had some connection with these artists and whose work presumably shares the characteristics of their art include Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, George Meredith, William Morris, and Algernon Charles Swinburne. They were inspired by Italian art of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, and their adoption of the name Pre-Raphaelite expressed their admiration for what they saw as the direct and uncomplicated depiction of nature typical of Italian painting before the High Renaissance and, particularly, before the time of Raphael.

The Pre-Raphaelite movement during the Victorian era was an idealistic reaction against the didacticism moral fervor, and pre-occupation of poets and novelists with contemporary society. In the reign of Queen Victoria there was a growing tendency to make literature a handmaiden social reform and an instrument for the propagation of moral and spiritual ideas. Literature became the vehicle of social, political, and moral problems confronting the Victorian age. Ruskin, Carlyle, Dickens were engaged in attacking the evils rampant in the society of their times. So the movement was against these pre-occupation of poets, prose writers, and novelists with the mundane problems of their times, that a set of high souled artists formed this group. The first characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelite Poetry is that it was a revolt and reaction against the conventionality of poetry represented by Tennyson. The poets of this school revolted against the harshening use of poetry to the service of social and political problems of the age. Tennyson concentrated on social, religious, and political life of the age. It was against this age bound poetry that the Pre-Raphaelite raised their revolt and introduced the new standard of the glorification of art rather than the glorification of fleeting and temporary values of mundane life.

The second characteristics is that the Pre-Raphaelites above all, were artists and their poetries were artistic creation. Art was their religion. They were the votaries of *art for art's sake*. The poetry of this movement had no morality to preach and no reforms to introduce to the correctness of societal life. Life of beauty was their creed, and if in glorifying beauty they had to be sensuous, they feared not the charges of the moralists and orthodox puritans. D. G. Rossetti's sonnets in *The House of Life* signalize love in its glory as well as desolation. He combines spiritual and sensuous aspects of love in his sonnets. The poets aimed both in poetry and painting at perfect form and finish.

The third characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelite Poetry is that the poets, to escape from the darkness and ugliness of contemporary society, turned their eyes to good old days of medievalism when chivalry and knighthood, adventure and heroism were in the air. D. G. Rossetti was the hero of this return back to medievalism for poetic inspiration. His poems *The Blessed Damozel* (1850) and *Sister Helen* (1853) are medieval in outlook and form. *The Blessed Damozel* is equally inspired by *The Divine Comedy* by Dante. The other members of the school Hunt and Millais were a little skeptical of the medieval tradition. There is also a note of love for the Middle Ages in Christina Rossetti's poems. Her *Goblin Market* (1862) is steeped in medievalism and supernaturalism. The poem tells the story of Laura and Lizzie who are tempted with fruit by goblin merchants, who resembles animals with faces like wombats or cats and with tails.

The poem "Eve" by Christina Rossetti (1864), which deals with the themes of repentance and



sadness, exemplifies the fourth Pre-Raphaelite poetic trait: this poetry revives the Biblical theme. The poem is set in the time of the Bible. It goes back to the period following Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. With this poem, Christina Rossetti tries to capture the agony and suffering that Eve experienced after being expelled from the Garden of Eden as a result of her sin. Christina's intellectual prowess and her in-depth understanding of Catholic doctrine are demonstrated in the poem "Eve."

The fifth characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelite Poetry is that the poets of this school use metaphors to express their feelings. Christina Rossetti's poem 'A Sketch' uses metaphor in the lines:

*The blindest buzzard that I know  
In other  
points our friend's a mole.*

In the poem she talks about her friend, terming him as 'buzzard' and 'mole'.

The Pre-Raphaelite Poetry's characteristics are very rich and very vast. It focuses on the glorification of art, escape from the darkness, and the ugliness of contemporary society, continuation of Romantic poetry, and gives a strong conception of scenes and situation, precise delineation, lavish imagery and metaphor. By these characteristics, the Pre-Raphaelite Poetry leaves a lasting impression in the English Literature.

The Brotherhood soon began to disperse. Collinson resigned in 1850, Woolner emigrated to Australia in 1852 (an event memorialized in Madox Brown's modern life painting *The Last of England*, 1852–1855), and it had effectively ceased to exist by the time of Holman Hunt's departure in search of religious subject matter in Palestine in 1854. The works produced from this trip—*The Scapegoat* (1855) and especially *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple* (1860)—established Hunt as "the painter of the Christ."

A series of criticisms are leveled against Pre Raphaelite Poetry. 'The Fleshly School of Poetry' is a fierce attack on the Pre-Raphaelite school. Written in 1871, the essay was first published in *The Contemporary Review* under the pseudonym 'Thomas Maitland'. Principally, 'Maitland' focuses on the art and poetry of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, brother to Christina Rossetti. After being publicly accused by Rossetti, the poet Robert Buchanan confirmed that he was the author.

Buchanan believed that Pre-Raphaelite art was excessively 'sensual' implying 'that the body is greater than the soul...' Buchanan declared Pre-Raphaelitism a source of moral corruption.

Furthermore, Buchanan accuses the Pre-Raphaelites of being imitators of contemporary poets such as Tennyson, and asserts that the Brotherhood's popularity has been forced by its members slyly agreeing to praise and publicize each other.

### Victorian Novel

The Victorian era encompasses the years of Queen Victoria's reign, which lasted from 1837 to 1901. It was a period of radical creative styles, literary schools, social, political, and religious movements, as well as affluence, extensive imperial expansion, and significant governmental reform. This extremely complex era, frequently referred to as the "Second English Renaissance," might be seen as the beginning of the modern era. The development of democracy, which historians frequently credit for the Victorian era's improvements and advancements, appears to be a result of the Reform Bill of 1832, which gave England's middle class political sway.

Common suffrage and mass education benefitted from the rise and development of democratic concepts in the English political environment. With an increase in reading, a great number of Victorian authors embarked on a mission to educate and enliven the general public. However, political expansionism and its attendant industrialization instilled in the people a yearning for comfort, and deep-seated materialism had a profound impact on society. Victorian writers lifted their voices in protest and warning against this modern society's viewpoint. The huge effect of Charles Darwin's seminal work *The Origin of Species* must be acknowledged when analysing the intellectual climate of the Victorian era (1859). But, fundamental beliefs in evolution and natural selection were already pervasive in society, and Darwin's theory only helped to intensify the community's sense of apprehension. As a result, the now-clichéd Victorian Faith and Doubt structure was built. It's crucial to keep in mind that our ideas are more chaotic at this time.

Civilization and progress gained prominence as a result of a well-structured system of imperial policies implemented by the government as well as commercial agencies. The impact of the Industrial Revolution, which was most powerfully felt at this time, was another key development of the period. The difference between social upheaval and change and the reinforcement of ideals and values had become a Victorianism trade mark. It was a unique belief, which finds resolution in the idea of Victorian compromise which may be viewed as a kind of double standard between exploitation (of working classes and the colonies overseas) and national triumph in terms of political and economic achievements

Characteristics of Victorian Literature:

1. The impacts of customs were a source of contention for the writers and intellectuals of this era.
2. Newer ideas taken from science, religion, and politics influenced literary works.

3. The New Education Acts made education nearly mandatory, resulting in a large reading public. Among the literary forms that flourished during the Victorian era, **the novel** was the most popular. The novel became the primary literary form, and it is possible to witness examples of it throughout this time period.

Great exponents ranging from Dickens to Hardy experimented with a range of narratives in the book. As a result, the novel became one of the most enjoyable forms of entertainment, and its ease of accessibility made it the most popular form in society at the time. The novel's appeal can be linked to realism, which, unlike previous era books, enabled the reading audience to identify with the storylines and to closely associate them with real-life stories.

The Victorian novel appeared to be a mirror of contemporary society, reflecting radical changes in the fields of transportation and communication, railways, industrialization and the resulting population shift, changes in lifestyle and manners, increased urbanization, and increased educational opportunities. These were the themes that most of the novels were based on. Another notable feature of the Victorian novel was that, while the majority of the reading population was female, there was also a boom of female writers who expanded the genre by addressing women's lives and themes such as domesticity, familial structures, marriage, and Victorian morals. Women were prominent not just as makers and consumers of novels throughout the Victorian era, but also as the subjects of the books whose lives were woven into the plots. It is important to remember, however, that women were the subjects of novelistic art not just in the hands of female writers, but they also invited narrative focus in the writings of male authors. These male writers may have contributed to the establishment of stereotypes such as "the angel of the house" and "the fallen lady," in which women were scrutinized as a result of the patriarchal mindset that pervades today's society and culture. Various genres of novels were produced during this time period, including the 'Condition of England' novel, the Gothic novel, the social novel, the regional novel, and the Historical novel, to name a few. Some of the most well-known Victorian novelists are Charles Dickens, Makepeace Thackeray, Bronte Sisters, George Eliot etc.

### **Charles Dickens: (1812-70)**

Charles Dickens is one of the most well-known novelists of the Victorian era, with works such as *The Pickwick Papers*, *Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Hard Times* among others. Dickens is renowned for his caricatures, which he does with unmatched talent, enabling him to give them life and make them seem more real. His *Pickwick Papers*, with the various attitudes and demeanors of the characters coming to life, will continue to be a magnificent example of Victoriana at its best. Dickens' ability to portray the sadness of Victorian society was another aspect of his distinctive style. He did this best in works like *Oliver Twist* and *A*

Tale of Two Cities, where we face a world of agony, despair, and wickedness that disgusts rather than amuses. You'll find juvenile characters who fall prey to terrible social practices in novels like David Copperfield, Nicholas Nickleby, Bleak House, and Oliver Twist. Dickens will be regarded as a painter who has the rare ability to depict a large and intriguing canvas. His books depict a universe full of absurd characters, bizarre and terrifying animals, and tender depictions of children.

### **William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63)**

William Makepeace Thackeray, a novelist who rose to popularity during the Victorian era, specialised in depicting modern human life and nature in his work. Thackeray's realistic tales show that he was frequently an observer rather than an analyst, which seems to have robbed his books of a rather simple framework. Instead of analysing people as isolated, individual situations, he portrays them in his books through the larger lenses of society and culture. His most well-known book, Vanity Fair, displays his talent by depicting contemporary Victorian society through the main female characters Amelia Sedley and Becky Sharp. The anti-heroic novel Vanity is subtitled "A Novel without a Hero."

Through the interweaving of the stories of its two protagonists, Fair satirizes the materialistic proclivities of the middle class. Thackeray's novel, written in the genre of domestic fiction, satirises the pursuit of crude materialism in the wake of an industrial and mechanised society and culture.

**The Bronte Sisters** lived in the 18th century. The Bronte sisters were well-known among Victorian female novelists. Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte grabs the reader's mind due of the gothic mood it conveys. The novel, which is considered one of the classics of English literature, deals with a profoundly passionate love tale that has, over time, been subjected to a number of interpretations. Wuthering Heights has also been interpreted as a revenge story, which helps to justify its gothic atmosphere. It's a novel about a one-of-a-kind love affair that calls into question the conventional wisdom about marriage and love. This novel's narrative method has received a lot of praise. Using numerous narratorial voices was a ground breaking technique at the time the work was created. For years to come, Emily Bronte's imaginative prowess was cemented. Both Emily's sisters, Charlotte and Anne Bronte, published books that primarily focused on the world of women and their relationships in a gendered environment that imposed constraints on their womanhood. You can see the romantic imagination of the authors in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and Anne Bronte's novel Agnes Grey as they deal with questions of women and femininity within the various worlds of marital experience.

### **George Eliot (1819-1880)**

The other significant female novelist of the Victorian era is George Eliot. The author's profound and ardent connection with the experiences of living in a provincial area is revealed in the universe of her works. Her notable books, such as *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Middlemarch*, and *Silas Marner*, are considered realist novels, as they centre on the issue of human activity in the backdrop of impending social change. Within a common space, such a juxtaposition of the individual and the social is possible.

Eliot's writings have an intriguing aspect of context. Eliot is frequently preoccupied with the individual personality, a concern shared by the Bronte sisters. Her characters, who are often taken from the lower echelons of society, portray the English countryside in all its glory.

### **19<sup>th</sup> century Prose**

With the introduction of romanticism, nineteenth-century prose advanced to a new level and for the first time established a distinctive literary standard. At this point, essays started to become quite personal and frequently quirky. They also included the author's ramblings on his or her preferences. This allows us to observe the expansion of well-known works that represented a different facet of the amorous discovery of personality.

One of the best essayists of the nineteenth century was **Charles Lamb**. Lamb began his writing career as a poet, but is best known for his widely read *Essays of Elia*. He is so sensitive and so strong. Besides *Essays of Elia*, other famous essays are *Dream Children* and *Tales from Shakespeare*. His sister, Mary Lamb also wrote some significant essays.

**William Hazlitt's** reputation chiefly rests on his lectures and essays on literary and general subjects. His lectures, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, *The English Poets* and *The English Comic Writers* are important.

**Thomas De Quincey's** famous work is *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. It is written in the manner of dreams. His *Reminiscences of the English Lake Poets* contain some good chapters on Wordsworth and Coleridge.

**Thomas Carlyle** is another prose writer of nineteenth century. His works consisted of translations, essays, and biographies. Of these the best are his translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, his *The Life of Schiller*, and his essays on Robert Burns and Walter Scott.

**Thomas Macaulay** (Lord Macaulay) wrote extensively. He contributed for *The Encyclopedia of Britannica* and *The Edinburgh Review*. His *History of England* is filled with numerous and picturesque details.

**Charles Darwin** is one of the greatest names in modern science. He devoted almost wholly to biological and allied studies. His chief works are *The Voyage of the Beagle*, *Origin of Species*, and



The Descent of Man.

**John Ruskin's** works are of immense volume and complexity. His longest book is *Modern Painters*. The *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and *The Stones of Venice* expound his views on artistic matters. *Unto this Last* is a series of articles on political economy.

**Samuel Butler**, the grandson of Dr. Samuel Butler was inspired by the Darwinian theory of evolution. *Evolution Old and New*, *Unconscious Memory*, *Essays on Life, Art and Science*, *The Way of All Flesh* etc. rank him as one of the greatest prose writers of nineteenth century. He was an acute and original thinker. He exposed all kinds of religious, political, and social shams and hypocrisies of his period.

Besides being a great poet, **Mathew Arnold** also excelled as an essayist. His prose works are large in bulk and wide in range. Of them all his critical essays are probably of the greatest value. *Essays in Criticism*, *Culture and Anarchy*, and *Literature and Dogma* have permanent value.

**Lewis Carroll**, another prose writer of nineteenth century is now remembered for her immortal work, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Ever since its publication, this novel continues to be popular among both the children and adult readers.

### War Poetry

The impact of the First World War on English poetry was extensive. It gave established writers new motivation and made a lot of poets more well-known, especially those who were young men who participated in the war. It also works well as a social document. Nothing captures the shifting societal perception of the war better than war poetry. In general, there are two stages of the national mindset that can be identified in war poetry. The first was a resurgence of the ideal idea of the knight-at-arms, one of fervent patriotism, almost of revelling in the opportunity of self-sacrifice in the interest of human freedom (Albert). Many poets who lived and served throughout the war had this patriotic fervour of the early years unaffected. But as the carnage went on increasing and there was no hope of its end, other poets arose with the declared intention of blasting this romantic illusion of the glory of war by a frank realistic depiction of the horrors, savagery and futility of war. This realistic attitude to the war was at first cried down as unpatriotic, but it has stood the test of time better than the romantic attitude of the early years. The poets of the 1914-18 war divide themselves into two groups- romantic war poets and realistic war poets.

## Romantic War Poets

### Rupert Brooke

The most outstanding of the romantic (idealistic) war poets was Rupert Brooke (1887-1915). He started writing poetry in the Georgian style, finding his inspiration in nature and everyday pleasures. He was knocked out of his Georgian frame of mind by the intense feelings sparked by the growing patriotic sentiment on the verge of World War I. He gave the conflict his enthusiastic support. His desire to serve England and his patriotic fervour inspired him to write a series of battle sonnets. He rose to prominence as the representative of the English people's commitment to their nation. The Soldier is his war sonnet that is the most emblematic. It is resonant with his sense of national pride and his exaltation of the sacrifice of English troops who died fighting for England. He enlisted as a soldier and went to war to defend the honour of his motherland. As a war-poet he takes an idealistic view of war and speaks of its glory, glamour and heroism, and not its brutality and ghastliness.

"The war-time revival of English poetry," as Ward says, "had its origin in Brooke alone."

"Rupert Brooke may be styled as a twentieth century Keats, having many points in common with him. He has the same rich sensuousness, the same maturity of expression, something of the same poignant yearning for beauty."

His poetry was published in Poems (1911); 1914 and other Poems (1915) and Collected Poems (1918).

### Julian Grenfell

Another victim of the First World War, Julian Grenfell (1888–1915), maintains a spirit of tranquility and confidence not found in other war poets. In the midst of fire he can withdraw into himself and find solace in the objects of nature—trees, birds, grass, stars, etc. His famous poem Into Battle mirrors this serene attitude in which even death does not appear the horror it is.

## The Anti-War Poets

### Siegfried Sassoon

The first soldier poet to approach the conflict with terrible reality, caustic satire, and irony was Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967). He was invalided early in the war and draws on these experiences to compose his memoirs. He portrays the facts of battle as "a nasty tangle of blood and decaying bodies," in contrast to Rupert Brooke who does so. He writes about other tragedies and the nightmare of trench warfare because he is a pacifist at heart. He depicts the horrors of life and death in the trenches, dugouts, and hospitals with a deliberate bluntness and frequently a provocative coarseness of language in Counter-attack (1918), a collection of furious, embittered poems.

His other war poems are War Poems (1919), Picture-show (1920) and Satirical Poems (1926). Sassoon's work inspired the greatest of all the war poets Wilfred Owen.

### Wilfred Owen

Wilfred Owen (1893–1918) is the greatest of the war poets. He discards the usual romantic notions about war and strikes a new realistic note in his war poetry. Unlike Rupert Brooke he does not find in soldiers' exploits "a sense of new crusades and modern knightliness." He expresses in his poems the dreadful experience he underwent as a soldier. Inspired by Sassoon's war poetry he presents the cruelty and inhumanity of a soldier's doing, the reality and futility of war and the reckless wastage of nobility, youth and heroism. He looks upon war as a meaningless dance of death and an agency of great suffering to mankind. He regards it as the cruel business of the arm-chair politicians who exploit the blooming youth in the name of patriotism.

But what distinguishes Owen's war poetry is not the description of the horrors of war, but the exploration of the pity of war. As he says, in the preface to his poems (1920):

*"Above all, I am not concerned with poetry.*

*My subject is war and the pity of war,*

*The poetry is in the pity."*

War Poems by Wilfred Owen:

Strange Meeting, Futility, Spring Offensive, Dulce et Decorum est, Anthem for Doomed Youth, Insensibility, Arms and the Boy, The Dead-Beat, Soldier's Dream

### Modern Novel

#### Between 1890 and 1918:

The novel originated as a serious competitor to poetry and theatre in the 18th century, but thanks to the Bronte sisters, Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray, George Eliot, and George Meredith, its stature expanded even more in the 19th century. For the first time, the novel surpassed all other literary forms in popularity during this time period. Its increasing relevance has been matched by a rigorous examination of authors' craft. Aside from that, authors' concerns, goals, and scope are now being seriously addressed in England, possibly for the first time. These issues occupied Thomas Hardy, H.G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, Henry James, John Galsworthy, and others. They rejected the direct loose biographical style in favour of an indirect or oblique narrative, with a strong emphasis on pattern, composition, and characterization based on inner awareness research.

It's worth noting that this is how a lot of contemporary fiction is written. This was also the time when the novel ideas and social purpose was published. Novelists such as Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad advocated for the novel's purpose to be to interpret life. Others considered it as a platform for conveying their ideas on religion, evolving social values, family life, and other topics, whilst authors like Butler, Wells, and Galsworthy saw it as a method of social propaganda or as a forum for their thinking on these topics. Another underlying theme in the modern book of this era was realism. Several short story and fiction writers were influenced by the realist theory of fiction, and social purpose novelists may possibly have used it in their works. However, as the English writers learned about the art of minutely accurate portrayal of everyday life with special emphasis on the structure, pattern, style, and finish, they were influenced by French and Russian writers such as Flaubert (1821-80), Zola (1840-1902), Maupassant (1850-93), and Balzac (1799-1850). Russian authors such as Dostoevsky (1821-1881), Turgenev (1818-1883), and Tolstoy (1828-1910) developed a fresh interest in the darker aspects of human nature, which affected the style and structure of English novels. Aside from that, the growing popularity of short story writing can be noticed all over the place. Hardy, Bennett, Conrad, Gissing, Kipling, Wells, and Moore were all successful writers who utilized this medium.

### **From 1918 through 1939:**

The works during this period vividly depicts the disillusionment, cynicism, despair, and disorientation that accompanied World War II. That's why, during the inter-war period, writers gravitated to the novel as a means of interpreting current events. They attempted to depict the intricacies of interwar life without attempting to convey a higher meaning. Members of a third set of writers, on the other hand, were motivated by a concentrated focus on the impact of life on individual awareness. This group's entire focus shifted to character rather than action.

Novelists experimented with novel forms of fiction around this time. The most significant novelist before World War I was Henry James, and the most significant during the interwar period was James Joyce. These authors adopted a looser, more fluid, and less cogent style in place of Henry James' controlled, polished artistic form. Expressionism, which aimed to capture life's inner reality rather than its outward appearance, replaced Impressionism as the preferred style among painters. The main traits of novelists attempting to write from inside his character's head were the use of the interior monologue, the presentation of the "Stream of Consciousness," and an allusive style. Novelists such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Aldous Huxley, and Dorothy Miller Richardson excelled at writing this genre. One of the most notable elements of the 'modern' age is the emergence of the American novel. In terms of experimenting with fictional approaches, American writers have been among the most daring.

Ernest Hemingway (1898-1962), the most famous writer, published *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *Men Without Women* (1927), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), and *To Have and Have Not* (1930) between the wars and *Have Not* (1937) as well as *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1938). (1940). Violent action, for him, brings out the qualities of manliness, particularly comradeship, perseverance, and the acceptance of danger as a way of life; women are of little consequence in Hemingway's world. Despite his worry for reality's harshness, he was very sensitive to beauty. A entire generation of writers was impacted by his bold, assertive, and often nearly abrupt vocabulary. The most important American novelists of the time were William Faulkner (1897-1962), F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940), Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951), John Dos Passos (1896-1970), and Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945).

## Characteristics

### Realism

Modern-era literature is realistic in style. An idealist writer seeks to paint a pleasing picture, but a realistic writer believes that truth to observed realities (information about the outside world or his own sentiments) is the main thing. In this sense, the modern novelist is realistic. He makes an effort to incorporate practically everything within the parameters of the work and avoid just one viewpoint. The novel can be as adaptable as life itself, as demonstrated by Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Eliot's *Middlemarch*. The authors of contemporary novels have carried out this experiment farther and are attempting to make the novel more refined and adaptable.

Against the tendency of realism and materialism perceptible in the early years of the 20th century with an accent on the discussion of social problems, stands the tendency for the criticism of material values, and a love for sex, romance, and adventure. The note of disillusionment against the realism in fiction and too much concentration on material values of life was sounded by psychological novelists of the age like Virginia Woolf and a few critics of modern life like Samuel Butler, Huxley, Forester etc. Samuel Butler satirized the realism of modern civilization and its insistence on machinery in *Erewhon*. Virginia Woolf, too, severely criticised the Edwardian Realism.

During the Georgian Period, a new tendency began to be perceptible in English fiction, and it centred on the glorification of sex and primal human emotions and passions. The Victorian Novelists showed no interest in the naked dance of sex and their novels they preferred married love over illegal flirtation. The Victorian's anti-sexuality got a great jolt by the Georgian novelists who presented sex-relationships in their novels. Sexual frankness is used by writers like D.H. Lawrence. The result is that whereas the earlier English novel generally dealt with the theme of the relation between gentility and morality, the modern novel deals with the relationship between loneliness and love.



**Stream of Consciousness Technique:** The stream of consciousness technique is a revolutionary modern technique which had tried to transform the art of narrative almost in every respect. The first user of this technique was the French novelist Edouard Dujardin.

The phrase “Stream of Consciousness” however was coined by the psychologist William James who wrote *Principles of Psychology* (1890).

By calling consciousness a stream, James meant that human consciousness is something fluid; it is an unbroken current of feelings, impressions, fantasies, half-formed thoughts and awareness in general. Consciousness is continuity like time and is independent of time.

At any given instance of time, an individual’s consciousness may not be entirely concerned with the present. He may be living through an experience of the past or fantasies about the future.

### **Novel of Ideas**

English fiction in the early 20th century was primarily limited to discussing issues that we face in social life. The Edwardian novel was essentially a novel of ideas, with a wide range of topics covered, including social, political, economic, and other types of concepts. The Edwardian novelists believed that it was sinful to lose oneself in a world of romance and psychology when the social life was screaming out for change and proper care. Particularly focusing on the social issues of their time, H.G. Wells, Galsworthy, and Arnold Bennet turned the novel into a tool of social propaganda.

### **Modern Drama**

Drama made a comeback in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mainly through authors like Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw, and Eugene O'Neill, after a prolonged period of dormancy for much of the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that these authors had quite distinct styles, their works had elements in common with modern drama, a new genre of drama.

Modern drama has a tendency to focus less on monarchs and heroes than previous theatre like that of Shakespeare and Sophocles and more on regular people going through everyday issues. The feeling of alienation and disconnection that the majority of people experienced at this time was a recurring theme in this period's literature.

Three of the most emblematic plays of modern drama are Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Shaw's *Major Barbara*, and O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

### **History of Modern Drama**

English Drama during the Modernist Period (1845-1945) A.D. falls into three categories:

1. The first and the earliest phase of modernism in English Drama is marked by the plays of G.B. Shaw (read Summary of Candida) and John Galsworthy, which constitute the category of social drama modeled on the plays of Ibsen and.
2. The 2nd and the middle phase of Modernist English drama comprise the plays of Irish movement contributed by some elites like Yeats. In this phase, the drama contained the spirit of nationalism.
3. The 3rd and the final phase of the Modernist English Drama comprise plays of T.S. Eliot and Christopher Fry. This phase saw the composition of poetic dramas inspired by the earlier Elizabethan and Jacobean tradition.

## **Modern Drama Characteristics**

### **Realism:**

Realism is the most significant and outstanding quality of Modern English Drama. The dramatists of the earlier years of the 20th century were interested in naturalism and it was their endeavor (try) to deal with real problems of life in a realistic technique to their plays.

It was Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian dramatist who popularized realism in Modern Drama. He dealt with the problems of real life in a realistic manner of his play. His example was followed by Robertson Arthur Jones, Galsworthy and G. B. Shaw in their plays.

### **Play of Ideas:**

Modern Drama is essentially a drama of ideas rather than action. The stage is used by dramatists to give expression to certain ideas which they want to spread in society. Modern Drama dealing with the problems of life has become far more intelligent than ever it was in the history of drama before the present age. With the treatment of actual life, the drama became more and more a drama of ideas, sometimes veiled in the main action, sometimes didactically act forth.

### **Romanticism:**

The earlier dramatists of the 20th century were Realists at the core, but the passage of time brought in, a new trend in Modern Drama. Romanticism, which had been very dear to Elizabethan Dramatists found its way in Modern Drama and it was mainly due to Sir J.M. Barrie's efforts that the new wave of Romanticism swept over Modern Drama for some years of the 20th century. Barrie kept aloof from realities of life and made excursions into the world of Romance.

**History and Biographical Plays:**

Another trend, visible in the Modern English drama is in the direction of using history and biography for dramatic technique. There are many beautiful historical and biographical plays in modern dramatic literature. Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra* are historical plays of great importance. John Drink Water's *Abraham Lincoln* and *Mary Stuart* are also historical plays.

**Irish Movement:**

A new trend in the Modern English Drama was introduced by the Irish dramatists who brought about the Celtic Revival in the literature. In the hands of the Irish dramatists like Yeats, J.M. Synge, T.C. Murrey etc. drama ceased to be realistic in character and became an expression of the hopes and aspirations of the Irish people from remote ways to their own times.

**Comedy of Manners:**

There is a revival of the Comedy of Manners in modern dramatic literature. Oscar Wild, Maugham, N. Coward, etc. have done much to revive the comedy of wit in our days. The drama after the second has not exhibited a love for comedy and the social conditions of the period after the war is not very favorable for the development of the artificial comedy of the Restoration Age.

**Impressionism:**

It is a movement that shows the effects of things and events on the mind of the artist and the attempt of the artist to express his expressions. Impressionism constitutes another important feature of modern drama.

In the impressionistic plays of W.B. Yeats, the main effort is in the direction of recreating the experience of the artist and his impressions about reality rather than in presenting reality as it is. The impressionistic drama of the modern age seeks to suggest the impressions on the artist rather than making an explicit statement about the objective characteristics of things or objects.

**Expressionism:**

It is a movement that tries to express the feelings and emotions of the people rather than objects and events. Expressionism is another important feature of modern drama. It marks an extreme reaction against naturalism. The movement which had started early in Germany made its way in England drama and several modern dramatists like J.B! Priestly, Sean O' Casey, C.K. Munro, Elmer Rice have made experiments in the expressionistic tendency in modern drama.

## Writers and their works in the Modern era

Irish playwrights George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) and J.M. Synge (1871-1909) were influential in British drama. Shaw's career began in the last decade -of the 19th century, while Synge's plays belong to the first decade of the 20th century. Synge's most famous play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, "caused outrage and riots when it was first performed" in Dublin in 1907. George Bernard Shaw turned the Edwardian theatre into an arena for debate about important political and social issues, like marriage, class, "the morality of armaments and war" and the rights of women. An important dramatist in the 1920s and later, was Irishman Seán O'Casey (1880-1964). Also in the 1920s and later Noel Coward (1899–1973) achieved enduring success as a playwright, publishing more than 50 plays from his teens onwards. Many of his works, such as *Hay Fever* (1925), *Private Lives* (1930), *Design for Living* (1932), *Present Laughter* (1942) and *Blithe Spirit* (1941), have remained in the regular theatre repertoire.

During the period between the World Wars, American drama came to maturity, thanks in large part to the works of Eugene O'Neill (1888–1953). O'Neill's experiments with theatrical form and his use of both Naturalist and Expressionist techniques had a major influence on American dramatists. His best-known plays include *Anna Christie* (Pulitzer Prize 1922), *Desire under the Elms* (1924), *Strange Interlude* (Pulitzer Prize 1928), *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931).

## Problem Plays

The problem play is a type of drama that first appeared in the 19th century as a component of the larger realism in the arts movement. As the name "Problem Play" suggests, it addresses divisive social problems in order to highlight social injustices and inspire audience conversation. It is through discussions between the individuals on stage, who frequently represent opposing points of view within a realistic social environment, (Problems) are brought up. It is sometimes referred to as the Drama of Ideas or the Realistic Drama, and this style of theatre, which emphasizes facts and objective observation of particular concerns, is the outcome of the development of the scientific spirit. The problem plays are somewhat simplistic, didactic thesis plays on subjects such as prostitution, business ethics, illegitimacy, and female emancipation.

There were certain reasons which contributed to the emergence of these problem plays like rapid advancement of industrialization, science and psychology began to dominate all aspects of life and literature, fading impact of religion on human life, dominance of reason over sentiments. The play writers now dealt with contemporary situations and problems in their plays.

The Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen gave a new height to this genre whose works had artistic

merit as well as topical relevance. His first experiment in the genre was *Love's Comedy* (published 1862), a critical study of contemporary marriage. He went on to expose the hypocrisy, greed, and hidden corruption of his society in a number of masterly plays: *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *The Wild Duck*, *An Enemy of the People*. His plays became very popular in England and paved the way for the rise of the problem play.

The problem play was introduced into England towards the end of the nineteenth century by Henry Arthur Jones (1851-1929) and Sir A. W. Pinero (1855-1934). These playwrights were influenced by Ibsen but in dramatic talent were not even a patch on him.

In England, George Bernard Shaw brought the problem play to its intellectual peak, both with his plays and with their long and witty prefaces. With all his amazing originality he was highly indebted to Ibsen. In fact his adulatory book on Ibsen *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891) was published a year before the appearance of his own first play *Widowers' Houses* the first of the long series of problem plays written by him over the length of more than forty years.

GB Shaw started writing plays to demonstrate that problem plays of the type that Ibsen was writing could succeed on the stage. His plays are full of witty and intellectual discussions of problems in fine and crisp dialogues but having a little action. He was the creator of the drama of ideas. In his famous plays – *Widower's House*, *To True to be Good*, *Back to Methuselah*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *Arms and the Man*, *Man and Superman* he dealt with social problems and in a realistic manner exposed social evils and vices. Shaw's contemporary, John Galsworthy also wrote problem plays in the jeast of a social reformer. His first play *The Silver Box* exposes the pernicious problem of class distinction between the rich and the poor. *Strife* deals with the conflict between Labour and Capital. *Justice* highlighted the events in the administration of justice mismanagement in the prisons of England and the cruelty of solitary confinement. *The Skin Game* deals with the different values of the old aristocracy and the new literature business class.

Another important name in problem play writers is Harley Granville Barker who carried the pursuit of naturalism and realism further than any of his predecessors and his plays come closer to ordinary day to day existence, with the futility of which he is much concerned. His plays are discussions of contemporary problems and his themes include the marriage conventions, inheritance of tainted money, sex and the position of women. Among new plays produced at the Court Theatre were several of his own: *The Voysey Inheritance* (1905), the most famous, showing Shaw's influence; *Prunella* (1906), a charming fantasy written with Laurence Housman; *Waste* (1907); and *The Madras House* (1910).



**Questions for discussion:**

1. Discuss the characteristics of Pre-Raphaelite Poetry.
2. Write an essay on Victorian Novel and discuss any two novelists of the period.
3. What are the characteristics of Victorian novels in general?
4. Nineteenth Century Prose is “an emphasis on emotions, imagination and intuition”. Discuss.
5. Write a critical essay on Nineteenth century English prose.
6. Examine any three characteristics of War poetry.
7. What are the challenges that war poets would have faced as poets writing about the horror of war?
8. Write a short note on Anti-War Poets.
9. Attempt a critical evaluation of the literary achievements of Modern Age.
10. Critically examine the characteristic features of Modernist Drama.
11. Comment on the impact of the world war on the literature of England during 20<sup>th</sup> century.
12. What elements of modernism do you find in the British writers of the twentieth century?  
Elaborate with reference to any three writers.
13. Write a short note on Problem Plays.

## **When I am dead, my dearest**

**Christina Rossetti**

**(1830–1894)**



### **About the Poet:**

Christina Georgina Rossetti was born on December 5, 1830, in London, one of four children of Italian parents. Her father was the poet Gabriele Rossetti; her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti also became a poet and a painter. The first poems Rossetti ever wrote were published in her grandfather's small press in 1842. She published seven poems to the Pre-Raphaelite publication *The Germ* in 1850 using the alias Ellen Alleyne, which was started by her brother William Michael and his associates.

The poetry of D. H. Rossetti is characterized by symbolism and strong emotion. She is most known for her ballads and her mystic, holy lyrics. *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (Macmillan and Co.), Rossetti's best-known composition, was released in 1862. As a result of the compilation, Rossetti became an important figure in Victorian poetry. *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* by Macmillan and Co. was published in 1866, and *Sing-Song*, a book of children's poetry by George Routledge and Sons, was published in 1872. (Illustrations by Arthur Hughes). By the 1880s, recurrent bouts of Graves' disease ended Rossetti's attempts to work as a governess. While the illness restricted her social

life, she continued to write poems, compiled in later works such as *A Pageant and Other Poems* (Macmillan, 1881). Rossetti also wrote religious prose works, such as *Seek and Find: A Double Series of Short Studies of the Benedicite* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Pott, Young, & Co., 1879); *Called To Be Saints* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and E. & J. R. Young & Co., 1881) and *The Face of the Deep: A Devotional Commentary* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and E. & J. R. Young & Co., 1892).

In 1891, Rossetti developed cancer, of which she died in London on December 29, 1894. William Michael, edited her collected works in 1904, but her three-volume *Complete Poems* were published by Louisiana State University Press between 1979 and 1990.

### **About the poem:**

The whole poem consists of two stanzas and of two varying significance. The first stanza reveals the world of living and the second the poet's experience in the grave. The poet may be trying to be realistic regarding her death. She is against any sort of mourning that sings like of showing off.

They typically sing depressing tunes, plant cypress trees and rose gardens as ways to convey their grief after someone they love passes away. But, the poet believes that they are merely acting. She dislikes flashy conduct. However, she believes that if someone is sincerely sorry for the loss of a loved one, they should be humble like grass and that a few tears will suffice. Tears will make their love immortal, just as rain and dew keep the grass green forever. She doesn't make him miss her later. He will remember if he wants to and forget if he doesn't. After she passes away, she will be buried in the tomb and go to the world of the dead. She will not see the shadow of the cypress planted by her beloved. He won't experience rain or tears. Sadly, anyone can sing, but she won't pay attention to it. She won't be moved by a nightingale's beautiful but depressing singing. The remainder of her time is spent daydreaming throughout an endless night in which the sun never rises or sets. She might recall it or forget about it. The poet questions the somber rite while criticizing the demonstrative actions. She offers a few additional real methods to convey sadness. She appears to be giving life greater meaning. When their loved ones are still alive, many people don't care, but when they pass away, they spend a lot of time and money. The poet seems to be against such human attitudes and manners. She expects people to be humble in expressing their love and grief for the departed ones.

## When I am dead, my dearest

When I am dead, my dearest,  
Sing no sad songs for me;  
Plant thou no roses at my head,  
Nor shady cypress tree:  
Be the green grass above me  
With showers and dewdrops wet;  
And if thou wilt, remember,  
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,  
I shall not feel the rain;  
I shall not hear the nightingale  
Sing on, as if in pain:  
And dreaming through the twilight  
That doth not rise nor set,  
Haply I may remember,  
And haply may forget.

### Glossary:

cypress tree: Cypress is a common name for various coniferous trees

thou wilt: you will

twilight: the soft glowing light from the sky when the sun is below the horizon, caused by the reflection of the sun's rays from the atmosphere.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. What does the poet tell the dear one (a) to do (b) not to do after her death?
2. How does the poet contrast the world of the living to the world of the dead?
3. Compare and Contrast the ways in which Christina Rossetti communicates her attitudes towards death.
4. Discuss the following themes: Love, Death, and Mourning.

## **The Send-Off**

**Wilfred Owen**

**(18 March 1893 – 4 November 1918)**



### **About the Poet:**

On March 18, 1893, Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born in Shropshire, England. After the death of his grandfather in 1897, the family moved to Birkenhead, where Owen was educated at the Birkenhead Institute. After another move in 1906, he continued his studies at the technical school in Shrewsbury. Interested in the arts at a young age, Owen began writing poetry as a teenager.

In 1911 Owen matriculated at London University, but after failing to receive a scholarship, he spent a year as a lay assistant to a vicar in Oxfordshire. In 1913 he went on to teach in France at the Berlitz School of English, where he met the poet M. Laurent Tailhade. He returned from France in 1915 and enlisted in the Artists Rifles. After training in England, Owen was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment in 1916.

He was wounded in combat in 1917 and, diagnosed with shell shock, was evacuated to Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh. There he met another patient, poet Siegfried Sassoon, who served as a

mentor and introduced him to well-known literary figures such as Robert Graves and H. G. Wells. It was at this time Owen wrote many of his most important poems, including “Anthem for Doomed Youth” and “Dulce et Decorum Est.” His poetry often graphically illustrated the horrors of warfare, the physical landscapes that surrounded him, and the human body in relation to those landscapes. His verses stand in stark contrast to the patriotic poems of war written by earlier poets of Great Britain, such as Rupert Brooke. A gay man, Owen also often celebrated male beauty and comradeship in his poems.

Owen rejoined his regiment in Scarborough in June 1918, and in August, he returned to France. In October he was awarded the Military Cross for bravery at Amiens. He was killed on November 4, 1918, while attempting to lead his men across the Sambre-Oise canal at Ors. He was 25 years old. The news reached his parents on November 11, Armistice Day.

While few of Owen's poems appeared in print during his lifetime, the collected Poems of Wilfred Owen, with an introduction by Sassoon, was published in December 1920. Owen has since become one of the most admired poets of World War I.

About Owen's post-war audience, the writer Geoff Dyer said, “To a nation stunned by grief, the prophetic lag of posthumous publication made it seem that Owen was speaking from the other side of the grave. Memorials were one sign of the shadow cast by the dead over England in the twenties; another was a surge of interest in spiritualism. Owen was the medium through whom the missing spoke.”

### **About the poem:**

A squad of soldiers is described as leaving via train towards the Front in "The Send-Off." They are described as "grimly gay" men. They sang as they marched from the upland camp to the siding shed, but the word "grimly" implies that they are aware of enough of what is to come for them to be depressed and fearful. Although Owen expressly equates the "wreath and spray" to flowers for the "dead," it may have been given to them to honour their bravery and dedication to the cause.

The porter and the tramp appear to treat the send-off almost indifferently, and the narrator implies that there is something almost covert about the leaving. The lamp and anthropomorphic signs "nodded" and "winked" as though they were involved in a plot.



When the narrator mentions how the men were unknown to those who watched them go, a sense of distance enters the poem. The narrator doesn't know where they went or how they felt when they arrived, but he does know that "very few" of them will ever come back. In a manner that parallels the "wrongs hushed-up" indicated at the beginning of stanza three, they will "crawl" back to their villages.

## The Send-Off

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way  
To the siding-shed,  
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray  
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp  
Stood staring hard,  
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.  
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp  
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.  
They were not ours:  
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant  
Who gave them flowers.

Shall they return to beatings of great bells  
In wild trainloads?  
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,  
May creep back, silent, to still village wells  
Up half-known roads.

**Glossary:**

- grimly gay: highlights the contradiction between how the soldiers feel and how they act: though they put on a brave face and act cheerful, they feel grim.
- wreath: an arrangement of flowers, leaves, or stems fastened in a ring and used for decoration or for laying on a grave.
- Winked: close and open one eye quickly, typically to indicate that something is a joke or a secret or as a signal of affection or greeting.
- hushed-up: to keep from being told; suppress the report or discussion of.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. “The war gave Owen a subject matter worthy of his emotional fervour and rich poetic idiom.” Discuss
2. What is a siding-shed? Why are the soldiers walking there?
3. Why do the soldiers leave “secretly, like wrongs hushed-up”?
4. Write a critical appreciation of the poem The Send-Off.
5. “Owen’s imagery is often chosen to suggest the horrors of war, the inadequacy of religion, and the validity of love and grief.” Discuss.
6. “Wilfred Owen’s verse shows that war poetry is necessarily a poetry of horror.” Discuss.

## UNIT-II

### Representative Writers, Works, Trends

#### JANE AUSTEN



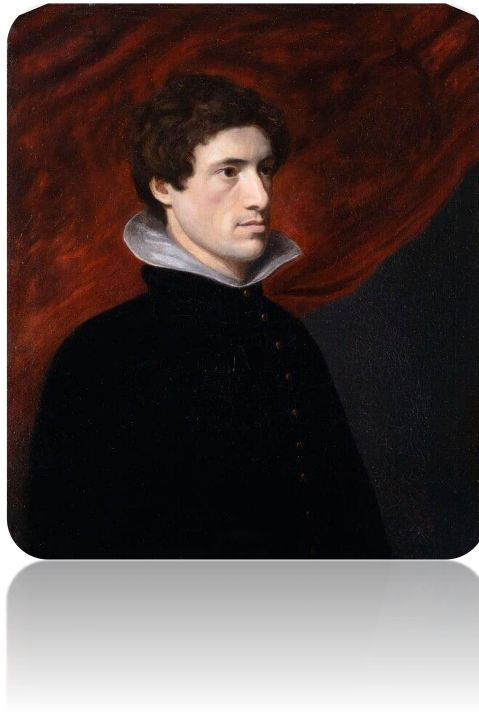
Jane Austen (1775-1817) was born on December 16, 1775, at Steventon Rectory in Hampshire, the seventh child of a country clergyman and his wife, George and Cassandra Austen. Her closest friend was her only sister, Cassandra, almost three years her senior. Jane Austen was primarily educated at home, benefiting from her father's extensive library and the schoolroom atmosphere created by Mr. Austen's live-in pupils.

Though she lived a quiet life, she had unusual access to the greater world, primarily through her brothers. Francis (Frank) and Charles, officers in the Royal Navy, served on ships around the world and saw action in the Napoleonic Wars. Henry, who eventually became a clergyman like his father and his brother James, was an officer in the militia and later a banker. Austen visited Henry in London, where she attended the theatre, art exhibitions, and social events and also corrected proofs of her novels.

As a child Austen began writing comic stories, now referred to as the *Juvenilia*. Her first mature work, composed when she was about 19, was a novella, *Lady Susan*, written in epistolary form (as a series of letters). This early fiction was preserved by her family but was not published until long after her death. In her early twenties Austen wrote the novels that later became *Sense and Sensibility* (first called "Elinor and Marianne") and *Pride and Prejudice* (originally "First Impressions"). Her father sent a letter offering the manuscript of "First Impressions" to a publisher soon after it was finished in 1797, but his offer was rejected by return post. Austen continued writing, revising "Elinor and Marianne" and completing a novel called "Susan" (later to become *Northanger Abbey*). In 1803 Austen sold

“Susan” for £10 to a publisher, who promised early publication, but the manuscript languished in his archives until it was repurchased a year before Austen’s death for the price the publisher had paid her. When Jane Austen, was 25 years old, her father retired, she and Cassandra moved with their parents to Bath. During the five years she lived in Bath (1801-1806), Austen began one novel, *The Watsons*, which she never completed. In 1809 Edward provided the women a comfortable cottage in the village of Chawton, near his Hampshire manor house. This was the beginning of Austen’s most productive period. In 1811, at the age of 35, Austen published *Sense and Sensibility*, which identified the author as “a Lady.” *Pride and Prejudice* followed in 1813, *Mansfield Park* in 1814, and *Emma* in 1815. The title page of each book referred to one or two of Austen’s earlier novels—capitalizing on her growing reputation—but did not provide her name. Austen began writing the novel that would be called *Persuasion* in 1815 and finished it the following year, by which time, however, her health was beginning to fail. The probable cause of her illness was Addison’s Disease.

During a brief period of strength early in 1817, Austen began the fragment later called *Sanditon*, but by March she was too ill to work. On April 27, 1817, she wrote her will, naming Cassandra as her heir. In May she and Cassandra moved to 8 College Street in Winchester to be near her doctor. Austen died in the early hours of July 18, 1817, and a few days later was buried in Winchester Cathedral. She was 41 years old. Interestingly, her gravestone, which is visited by hundreds of admirers each year, does not even mention that she was an author. *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* were published together in December 1817 with a “Biographical Notice” written by Henry, in which Jane Austen was, for the first time in one of her novels, identified as the author of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Emma*.

**CHARLES LAMB**

The English author, critic, and minor poet Charles Lamb (1775-1834) is best known for the essays he wrote under the name Elia. He remains one of the most loved and read of English essayists. Charles Lamb was born on Feb. 10, 1775, in London. At the age of 7 he entered Christ's Hospital, a free boarding school for sons of poor but genteel parents. After beginning a lifelong friendship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a fellow student, Lamb left school in 1789. In 1792 he was hired as a clerk in the East India Company and worked there for the next 33 years.

On Sept. 22, 1796, Lamb's sister, Mary, in a moment of anxious rage, stabbed their mother to death. An inquest found Mary temporarily insane and placed her in the custody of Charles. After the death of their father in 1799, Mary came to live with Charles for the rest of his life. This companionship was broken only at intervals when the symptoms of Mary's illness recurred so that she had to enter an asylum. This lifelong guardianship prevented Lamb from ever marrying. He himself had spent 6 weeks in an asylum during the winter of 1795, stuttered badly all his life, and became increasingly dependent on alcohol. It is quite possible that his responsibility to Mary helped him to keep a firmer grip on his own sanity.

Lamb's literary career began in 1796, when Coleridge published four of Lamb's sonnets in his own first volume, *Poems on Various Subjects*. In 1798 Lamb published his sentimental romance, *A Tale of Rosamund Gray*, and, together with Charles Lloyd, a friend of Coleridge, brought out a volume entitled *Blank Verse*. By 1801 Lamb had begun to contribute short articles to London newspapers and to write plays in an effort to relieve the poverty he and Mary endured. In 1802 he published *John Woodvil*, a blank-verse play which enjoyed no success, and on the night of Dec. 10, 1806, his two-act farce, *Mr. H.*, was greeted by "a hundred hisses" at the Drury Lane Theatre.

In 1807 Charles and Mary together brought out *Tales from Shakespeare*, a collection of prose adaptations of Shakespeare's plays intended for young readers. The book proved popular with both young and old, and the Lambs followed up this success with others in the same vein. In 1808 Charles published his own version of Homer's *Odyssey* for children, *The Adventures of Ulysses*, and in 1809 he collaborated again with Mary on *Mrs. Leicester's School*, a book of children's stories, and *Poetry for Children*.

Meanwhile Lamb began a new aspect of his career in 1808 by editing the anthology *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets Who Lived about the Time of Shakespeare*. Lamb's brilliant comments on the selections he chose began his reputation as a critic, and the entire volume was largely responsible for the revival of interest in Shakespeare's contemporaries which followed its publication. Lamb furthered his critical career with essays "On the Genius and Character of Hogarth" and "The Tragedies of Shakespeare," published in Leigh Hunt's journal, the *Reflector*, in 1811. In 1818 he brought out a two-volume collection *The Works of Charles Lamb*. Ironically, his real literary career was yet to begin.

Though Lamb was still far from famous, these years were among the happiest of his life. At their home in Inner Temple Lane, he and Mary entertained their friends at a number of late Wednesday evening gatherings. The company included many of the famous authors of the romantic period—Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey, William Hazlitt, and Hunt. Yet according to Hazlitt, Lamb "always made the best pun and the best remark" of the evening. Also, Lamb's letters to these friends during these years are among the best things he ever wrote. Filled with excellent critical comments, they also reveal much of the wistful humor of Lamb's own personality.

These letters no doubt did much to prepare Lamb for his forthcoming triumph as a familiar essayist. From 1820 through 1825 he contributed a series of essays to the *London Magazine* which were immensely popular. Though he wrote under the pseudonym Elia, these essays, like his letters, are intimate revelations of Lamb's own thoughts, emotions, and experiences of literature and life. He touches on few disturbing subjects. He prefers instead to look to the past for a sense of calm, stability, and changelessness. Yet beneath the wit, humor, and humanity of such essays as "A Dissertation upon Roast Pig," "Witches and Other Night-Fears," and "Dream Children," one finds a gentle nostalgia and melancholy. This bittersweet tone remains the hallmark of Lamb's style.

In 1823 Charles and Mary met and eventually adopted an orphan girl, Emma Isola. In August the Lambs moved from London for the first time, to Islington and then to Enfield. Charles's health was weakening, and a long illness during the winter of 1824 led him to retire permanently from the East India Company. He now occupied his time with walking trips around Hertfordshire with Emma Isola.

By 1833 the frequency and duration of Mary's attacks had increased so that she needed almost constant care, so the Lambs moved to Edmonton to be near Mary's nurse. Charles ended his literary career the same year with *Last Essays of Elia*. In July, Emma's marriage to Charles's friend Edward Moxon left him depressed and lonely. One year later the death of Coleridge made that loneliness acute. "I feel how great a part he was of me," wrote Lamb. Five weeks later, on Dec. 27, 1834, Lamb was dead.



**WILLIAM HAZLITT**

William Hazlitt, the son of an Irish Unitarian clergyman, was born in Maidstone, Kent, on 10th April, 1778. His father was a friend of Joseph Priestley and Richard Price. As a result of supporting the American Revolution, Rev. Hazlitt and his family were forced to leave Kent and live in Ireland. The family returned to England in 1787 and settled at Wem in Shropshire. At the age of fifteen William was sent to be trained for the ministry at New Unitarian College at Hackney in London. The college had been founded by Joseph Priestley and had a reputation for producing freethinkers. In 1797 Hazlitt lost his desire to become a Unitarian minister and left the college.

While in London Hazlitt became friends with a group of writers with radical political ideas. The group included Percy Bysshe Shelley, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charles Lamb, William Wordsworth, Thomas Barnes, Henry Brougham, Leigh Hunt, Robert Southey and Lord Byron. At first Hazlitt attempted to become a portrait painter but after a lack of success he turned to writing.

Charles Lamb introduced Hazlitt to William Godwin and other important literary figures in London. In 1805 Joseph Johnson published Hazlitt's first book, *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action*. The following year Hazlitt published *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*, an attack on William Pitt and his government's foreign policy. Hazlitt opposed England's war with France and its consequent heavy taxation. This was followed by a series of articles and pamphlets on political corruption and the need to reform the voting system.



Hazlitt began writing for *The Times* and in 1808 married the editor's sister, Sarah Stoddart. His friend, Thomas Barnes, was the newspaper's parliamentary reporter. Later, Barnes was to become the editor of the newspaper. In 1810 he published the *New and Improved Grammar of the English Language*.

In 1813 Hazlitt was employed as the parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, the country's leading Whig newspaper. However, in his articles, Hazlitt criticized all political parties. Hazlitt also contributed to *The Examiner*, a radical journal edited by Leigh Hunt. Later, Hazlitt wrote for the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Yellow Dwarf* and the *London Magazine*. In these journals Hazlitt produced a series of essays on art, drama, literature and politics. During this period he established himself as England's leading expert on the writings of William Shakespeare.

Hazlitt wrote several books on literature including *Characters of Shakespeare* (1817), *A View of the English Stage* (1818), *English Poets* (1818) and *English Comic Writers* (1819). In these books he urged the artist to be aware of his social and political responsibilities. Hazlitt continued to write about politics and his most important books on this subject is *Political Essays with Sketches of Public Characters* (1819). In the book Hazlitt explains how the admiration of power turns many writers into "intellectual pimps and hirelings of the press."

Hazlitt's marriage to Sarah Stoddart ended in 1823 as a result of an affair with a maid, Sarah Walker. Hazlitt wrote an account of this relationship in his book *Liber Amoris*. In 1824 Hazlitt married Isabella Bridgewater but this relationship only lasted a year.

In the *The Spirit of the Age: Contemporary Portraits* (1825) Hazlitt provides a series of contemporary portraits including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey, William Cobbett, William Godwin and William Wilberforce. This was followed by *The Plain Speaker* (1826) and *Life of Napoleon* (4 volumes, 1828-30). William Hazlitt died in poverty of stomach cancer on 18th September 1830

### ALFRED LORD TENNYSON



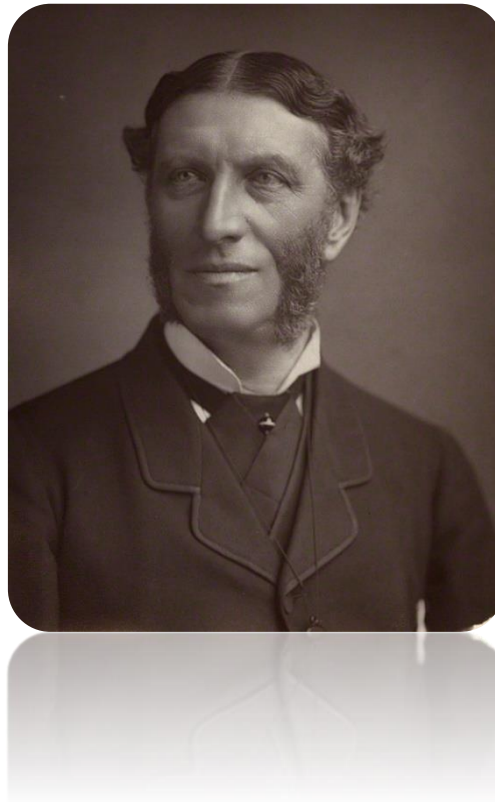
Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) Born on August 6, 1809, in Somersby, Lincolnshire, England. Alfred, Lord Tennyson is one of the well-loved Victorian poets. Tennyson, the fourth of twelve children, showed an early talent for writing. At the age of twelve he wrote a 6,000-line epic poem. His father, the Reverend George Tennyson, tutored his sons in classical and modern languages. In the 1820s, however, Tennyson's father began to suffer frequent mental breakdowns that were exacerbated by alcoholism. One of Tennyson's brothers had violent quarrels with his father, a second was later confined to an insane asylum, and another became an opium addict.

Tennyson escaped home in 1827 to attend Trinity College, Cambridge. In that same year, he and his brother Charles published *Poems by Two Brothers*. Although the poems in the book were mostly juvenilia, they attracted the attention of the "Apostles," an undergraduate literary club led by Arthur Henry Hallam. The "Apostles" provided Tennyson, who was tremendously shy, with much needed friendship and confidence as a poet. Hallam and Tennyson became the best of friends; they toured Europe together in 1830 and again in 1832. Hallam's sudden death in 1833 greatly affected the young poet. The long elegy "In Memoriam" and many of Tennyson's other poems are tributes to Hallam.

In 1830, Tennyson published *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* and in 1832 he published a second volume entitled simply *Poems*. Some reviewers condemned these books as "affected" and "obscure." Tennyson, stung by the reviews, would not publish another book for nine years. In 1836, he became engaged to Emily Sellwood. When he lost his inheritance on a bad investment in 1840, Sellwood's family called off the engagement. In 1842, however, Tennyson's *Poems* in two volumes was a tremendous critical and popular success. In 1850, with the publication of "In Memoriam," Tennyson became one of Britain's most popular poets. He was selected as poet laureate in succession to William

Wordsworth. In that same year, he married Emily Sellwood. They had two sons, Hallam and Lionel.

At the age of forty-one, Tennyson had established himself as the most popular poet of the Victorian era. The money from his poetry (at times exceeding ten thousand pounds per year) allowed him to purchase a house in the country and to write in relative seclusion. His appearance—a large and bearded man who regularly wore a cloak and a broad-brimmed hat—enhanced his notoriety. He read his poetry with a booming voice, a habit later adopted by Dylan Thomas. In 1859, Tennyson published the first poems of “*Idylls of the Kings*,” which sold more than ten thousand copies in one month. In 1884, he accepted a peerage, becoming Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Tennyson died on October 6, 1892, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

**MATTHEW ARNOLD**

Matthew Arnold was an English poet and cultural critic, whose work remains amongst the best known of 19th century British poetry. Though he wrote on a variety of subjects, he is best known for his themes of nature, modern society, and moral instruction.

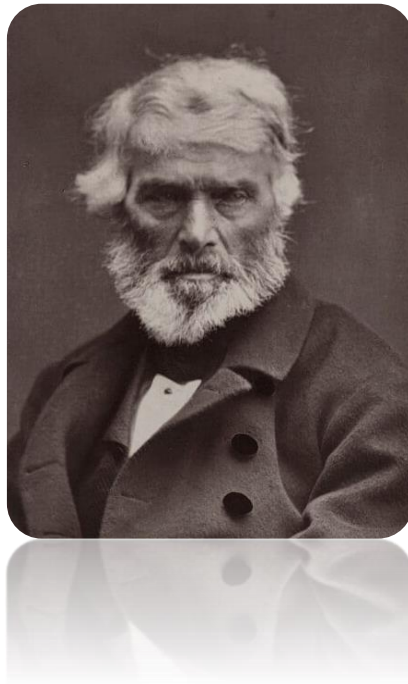
Arnold was born to Thomas and Mary Pensworth Arnold in Laleham, England. When Matthew was young, Thomas was named headmaster of the famed Rugby School, and moved his family to Rugby, England to take residence. In 1836, Arnold was sent to Winchester College, but eventually returned to the Rugby School, where he studied under his father. He won multiple prizes there, for English essay writing and for Latin and English poetry.

Arnold had a distinguished career as a student and professional. In 1841, he began studying at Balliol College, Oxford on an open scholarship. His father died in 1842 of heart disease, and his family then moved permanently to their vacation home, Fox How. He graduated from Oxford with a 2nd class honors degree in *Literae Humaniores*, or what we now know as Classics. He went on to teach briefly at Rugby, then was elected Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. In 1847, he was named Private Secretary to Lord Lansdowne, Lord President of the Council. After being appointed in 1851 as an inspector of schools, Arnold married Frances Lucy and had six children.

Though he published his first book of poetry, *The Strayed Reveler*, in 1849, his literary career really took off in 1852, when he began to publish more poetry volumes. His second volume included a verse drama, *Empedocles on Etna*, though he garnered the most attention for the poetry which he continued to write until his death. Additionally, Arnold was well known as a cultural critic, publishing volumes

like *Culture and Anarchy*, in 1869. Today, his work as critic is as well-known as his poetry is.

Throughout this phase of his life, Arnold found great success as a writer. He was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1857, and re-elected in 1862. Further, he toured both the United States and Canada on the lecture circuit. In 1883, he was elected as a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Arnold died suddenly in 1888 of heart failure, while rushing to catch a tram. His work has remained popular and loved since his death.

**THOMAS CARLYLE**

Thomas Carlyle, Scottish historian, critic, and sociological writer was born in the village of Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, eldest child of James Carlyle, stone mason, and Margaret (Aitken) Carlyle. The father was stern, short-tempered, a puritan of the puritans, but withal a man of rigid probity and strength of character. The mother, too, was of the Scottish soil, and Thomas' education was begun at home by both the parents.

From the age of five to nine he was at the village school; from nine to fourteen at Annan Grammar School, where he showed proficiency in mathematics and was well grounded in French and Latin. In November 1809 he walked to Edinburgh, and attended courses at the University till 1814, with the ultimate aim of becoming a minister. He left without a degree, became a mathematical tutor at Annan Academy in 1814, and three years later abandoned all thoughts of entering the Kirk, having reached a theological position incompatible with its teachings. He had begun to learn German in Edinburgh, and had done much independent reading outside the regular curriculum.

Late in 1816 he moved to a school in Kirkcaldy, where he became the intimate associate of Edward Irving, an old boy of Annan School, and now also a schoolmaster. This contact was Carlyle's first experience of true intellectual companionship, and the two men became lifelong friends. He remained there two years, was attracted by Margaret Gordon, a lady of good family (whose friends vetoed an engagement), and in October 1818 gave up school mastering and went to Edinburgh, where he took mathematical pupils and made some show of reading law.

During this period in the Scottish capital he began to suffer agonies from a gastric complaint which continued to torment him all his life, and may well have played a large part in shaping the rugged, rude fabric of his philosophy. In literature he had at first little success, a series of articles for the Edinburgh

Encyclopaedia bringing in little money and no special credit. In 1820 and 1821 he visited Irving in Glasgow and made long stays at his father's new farm, Mainhill; and in June 1821, in Leith Walk, Edinburgh, he experienced a striking spiritual rebirth which is related in *Sartor Resartus*. Put briefly and prosaically, it consisted in a sudden clearing away of doubts as to the beneficent organization of the universe; a semi-mystical conviction that he was free to think and work, and that honest effort and striving would not be thwarted by what he called the "Everlasting No."

In 1821 Irving had gone to London, and in June 1821 Carlyle followed, in the train of his employers, the Bullers. But he soon resigned his tutorship, and, after a few weeks at Birmingham, trying a dyspepsia cure, he lived with Irving at Pentonville, London, and paid a short visit to Paris. March 1825 saw him back; in Scotland, on his brother's farm, Hoddam Hill, near the Solway. Here for a year he worked hard at German translations, perhaps more serenely than before or after and free from that noise which was always a curse to his sensitive ear and which later caused him to build a sound-proof room in his Chelsea home.

Before leaving for London, Irving had introduced Carlyle to Jane Baillie, Welsh daughter of the surgeon, John Welsh, and descended from John Knox. She was beautiful, precociously learned, talented, and a brilliant mistress of cynical satire. Among her numerous suitors, the rough, uncouth Carlyle at first made an ill impression; but a literary correspondence was begun, and on October 17, 1826, after a courtship that was in some sort a battle of strong wills, the two were married and went to live at Comely Bank, Edinburgh starting with a capital of £200. Francis Jeffrey, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, was a cousin of the Welshes. He accepted Carlyle as a contributor, and during 1827 printed two important articles — on "Richter" and "The State of German Literature."

The *Foreign Review* published two penetrating essays on Goethe; and in 1827 a cordial correspondence was begun with the great German writer, who backed Carlyle (unsuccessfully) for the vacant Chair of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews. Another application for a university chair, this time at the new University of London, failed equally. An attempt at a novel was destroyed.

In May 1828 the Carlyles moved to Craigenputtock, an isolated farm belonging to the Welsh family, which was their permanent home until 1834. Carlyle lived the life of a recluse and scholar, and his clever wife, immersed in household duties and immured in solitude, led a dull and empty existence.

*At Craigenputtock* was written the first of Carlyle's great commentaries on life in general, *Sartor Resartus*, which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* between November 1833 and August 1834. The idea of a philosophy of clothes was not new; there are debts to Swift, Jean Paul Richter, and others; but what were new were the amazing, humorous energy, the moral force, the resourceful (if eccentric) command over English. It was damned by the press, and was not issued in book-form until 1838; but it is now numbered among his most significant works. Other notable writings of this time were essays on Voltaire, Novalis, and Richter (a new paper) in the *Foreign Review*.

After visits to Edinburgh and London, and an unsuccessful application for a professorship of astronomy at Edinburgh in January 1834, Carlyle decided to set up house in London, settling at 5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea. His struggle to live was made more severe by his refusal to engage in journalism: even an offer of work on *The Times* was rejected; and instead a grandiose history of the

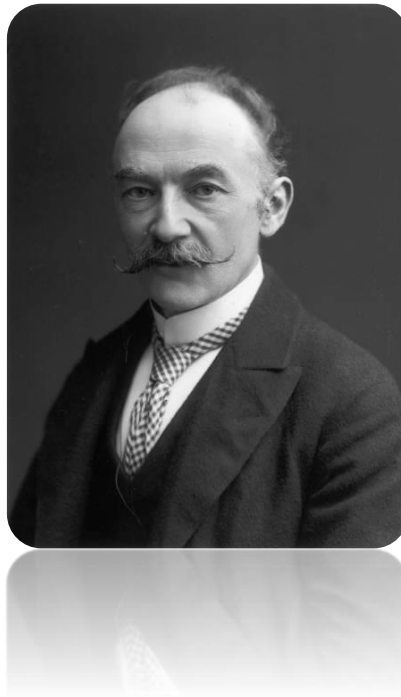


French Revolution was begun. In the spring of 1835 occurred one of the great heroisms of literature. The manuscript of the first volume of the new work had been lent to the philosopher, J. S. Mill, who in his turn had lent it to a Mrs. Taylor. An illiterate housekeeper took it for waste paper, and it was burnt. Mill was inconsolable; Carlyle behaved with the utmost stoicism and nobility, and was only with difficulty induced to accept £ 100 as a slight pecuniary compensation.

The French Revolution was re-written, and its publication in January 1837 brought the praise of Thackeray, Southey, Hallam, and others of weight, and consolidated Carlyle's reputation as one of the foremost men of letters of the day. Even so, it sold slowly, and he had to resort to public lecturing (arranged by Harriet Martineau) to raise funds; and it was only in 1842, when Mrs. Welsh died and left them an annuity, that the Carlyles were able to rid themselves of financial worry.

Of outward event Carlyle's life contains little. From his establishment in London his history was one of enormous work and the gradual building up of a literary fame that became world-wide. He became more and more sought after by men of letters, statesmen and the aristocracy, and his friends included such names as Monckton Milnes, Tyndall, Peel, Froude, Grote, Browning, and Ruskin. One friendship, with the clergyman, John Sterling, was close and warm, and left its record in the *Life* published in 1851. Another, with Lady Harriet Ashburton, caused grave dissension in the Carlyle home, being strongly disapproved by Mrs. Carlyle, though there was no suggestion of anything more than high mutual regard.

In literature Carlyle moved more and more away from democratic ideas. *Chartism*, *On Heroes Past and Present*, and *Cromwell* all developed his thesis that the people need a strong and ruthless ruler and should obey him. *Latter-day Pamphlets*, which includes "Hudson's Statue," poured out all his contempt on the philanthropic and humanitarian tendencies of the day. His last monumental exaltation of strength was a six-volume history of Friedrich II of Prussia: Called Fredrick the Great. Following his custom, he paid two visits to Germany to survey the scene (in 1852 and 1858), and turned over great masses of material. The first two volumes appeared in the autumn of 1858, were at once translated into German, and were hailed as a masterpiece. The remaining volumes appeared in 1862, 1864, and 1865. In this last year Carlyle was made Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh. While he was still in the north, after delivering his inaugural address, he learned of the sudden death of his wife, from heart disease, and was thereby plunged into the deepest distress. Thenceforward a gradual decadence supervened. He died on February 4, 1881, and was buried at Ecclefechan.

**THOMAS HARDY**

Thomas Hardy, the son of a stonemason, was born in Dorset, England, on June 2, 1840. He was trained as an architect and worked in London and Dorset for ten years.

Hardy began his writing career as a novelist, publishing *Desperate Remedies* in 1871, and was soon successful enough to leave the field of architecture for writing. His novels *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* which are considered literary classics today, received negative reviews upon publication. He left fiction writing for poetry and published eight collections, including *Poems of the Past and the Present* and *Satires of Circumstance*.

Throughout his works Hardy develops two main themes: the difficulty of being alive, because it involves being in a place and in an environment, surrounded by a set of circumstances which modify the individual existence. The Nature, which can be considered as a co-protagonist and it is indifferent to man's destiny. He is perhaps most famous for his powerfully visual novels, concerned with the inexorability of human destiny. His works unfold against a rural background drawn as an elegy for vanishing country ways, but which also provides much-needed comic relief.

Hardy's poetry explores a fatalist outlook against the dark, rugged landscape of his native Dorset. He rejected the Victorian belief in a benevolent God, and much of his poetry reads as a sardonic lament on the bleakness of the human condition. A traditionalist in technique, he nevertheless forged a highly original style, combining rough-hewn rhythms and colloquial diction with a variety of meters and stanzaic forms. A significant influence on later poets (including Robert Frost, Wystan Hugh Auden, Dylan Thomas, and Philip Larkin), his influence has increased over the course of the twentieth century, offering a more down-to-earth, less rhetorical alternative to the more mystical and aristocratic precedent of William Butler Yeats. Thomas Hardy died on January 11, 1928.

## CHARLES DICKENS



Charles John Huffam Dickens was a writer and social critic who created some of the world's best-known fictional characters and is regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. His works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime, and by the twentieth century critics and scholars had recognised him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories enjoy lasting popularity.

Dickens left school to work in a factory when his father was incarcerated in a debtors' prison. Despite his lack of formal education, he edited a weekly journal for 20 years, wrote 15 novels, five novellas, hundreds of short stories and non-fiction articles, lectured and performed extensively, was an indefatigable letter writer, and campaigned vigorously for children's rights, education, and other social reforms.

Dickens was regarded as the literary colossus of his age. His 1843 novella, *A Christmas Carol*, remains popular and continues to inspire adaptations in every artistic genre. *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations* are also frequently adapted, and, like many of his novels, evoke images of early Victorian London. His 1859 novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, set in London and Paris, is his best-known work of historical fiction. Dickens's creative genius has been praised by fellow writers—from Leo Tolstoy to George Orwell and G. K. Chesterton—for its realism, comedy, prose style, unique characterisations, and social criticism. On the other hand, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, and Virginia Woolf complained of a lack of psychological depth, loose writing, and a vein of saccharine sentimentalism. The term Dickensian is used to describe something that is reminiscent of Dickens and his writings, such as poor social conditions or comically repulsive characters.

On 8 June 1870, Dickens suffered another stroke at his home after a full day's work on *Edwin Drood*. He never regained consciousness, and the next day he died at Gad's Hill Place. Contrary to his wish to

be buried at Rochester Cathedral "in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner," he was laid to rest in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey. A printed epitaph circulated at the time of the funeral reads: "To the Memory of Charles Dickens (England's most popular author) who died at his residence, Higham, near Rochester, Kent, 9 June 1870, aged 58 years. He was a sympathiser with the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England's greatest writers is lost to the world." His last words were: "On the ground", in response to his sister-in-law Georgina's request that he lie down.

**T.S. ELIOT**

Thomas Stearns Eliot was born in St. Louis on September 26, 1888, and lived there during the first eighteen years of his life. He attended Harvard University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in three years and contributed several poems to the *Harvard Advocate*. From 1910–11, he studied at the Sorbonne, and then returned to Harvard to pursue a doctorate in philosophy. After graduating, he moved back to Europe and settled in England in 1914. The following year, he married Vivienne Haigh-Wood and began working in London, first as a teacher, and later for Lloyd's Bank.

It was in London that Eliot came under the influence of his contemporary Ezra Pound, who recognized his poetic genius at once, and assisted in the publication of his work in a number of magazines, most notably *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, which appeared in *Poetry magazine* in 1915. Eliot's first book of poems, *Prufrock and Other Observations*, was published in London in 1917 by The Egoist, and immediately established him as a leading poet of the avant-garde. With the publication of *The Waste Land* in 1922, now considered by many to be the single most influential poetic work of the twentieth century, Eliot's reputation began to grow to nearly mythic proportions. By 1930, and for the next thirty years, he was the most dominant figure in poetry and literary criticism in the English-speaking world.

As a poet, Eliot transmuted his affinity for the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century (notably, John Donne) and the nineteenth-century French Symbolist poets (including Charles Baudelaire and Jules Laforgue) into radical innovations in poetic technique and subject matter. His poems, in many respects, articulated the disillusionment of a younger post-World War I generation with the values and conventions—both literary and social—of the Victorian era. As a critic, he had an enormous impact on contemporary literary taste, propounding views that, after his conversion to orthodox Christianity in the late 1930s, were increasingly based in social and religious conservatism.

His major later poetry publications include *Four Quartets* and *Ash Wednesday*. His books of literary and social criticism include *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*; *After Strange Gods*, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* and *The Sacred Wood*. Eliot was also an important playwright, whose verse dramas include the comedy *The Cocktail Party*, *The Family Reunion*, a drama written partly in blank verse and influenced by Greek tragedy; and *Murder in the Cathedral*. Eliot became a British citizen in 1927. In 1948, he received the Nobel Prize for Literature. Long associated with the publishing house of Faber & Faber, he published many younger poets, and eventually became director of the firm. After a notoriously unhappy first marriage, Eliot separated from his first wife in 1933 and married Valerie Fletcher in 1956. T. S. Eliot died in London on January 4, 1965.

**W.B YEATS**

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) stands at the turning point between the Victorian period and Modernism, the conflicting currents of which affected his poetry. Born in Dublin, Yeats' family moved to London when he was two and he lived there until he was sixteen. His mother's traditional Irish songs and stories and holiday visits to Co. Sligo, a country in Ireland kept the connection to Ireland strong. Yeats studied at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, his first collection of poetry being published in 1889. *The Wanderings of Oisín and other poems* already showed concerns that were to remain central to his writing – Ireland, spiritualism and love. His earliest books draw on the romantics and pre-Raphaelite ideals and mythologise a 'Celtic Twilight'.

However, increased involvement with nationalist politics was to have a significant impact on his poetic style: his diction grew plainer, the syntax tighter and the verse structures, whilst retaining their traditional form, more muscular. To this middle period belongs his failed courtship of the beautiful nationalist, Maud Gonne and his founding in 1899 of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin which became a focus for many of the writers of the Irish Revival of which Yeats was a key figure. Yeats wrote prolifically for the stage but also continued with his poetry. Another important influence at this time was Modernism, Ezra Pound in particular, who introduced Yeats to the principles of Japanese Noh theatre.

As events in Ireland began to take a bloody turn, Yeats' poems increasingly addressed public themes as in 'Easter 1916', his troubled commemoration of the Easter uprising. He entered official political life when he was elected to the Senate, the upper house of the new Free State, in 1922. His personal life was also changing: after a final rejection from Maud Gonne and then from her daughter, Yeats married Georgie Hyde Lees with whom he was very happy. Her interest in spiritualism echoed Yeats' and his explorations in this area informed some of his powerful visionary poems. Yeats' was now entering his poetic maturity in which he developed a symbolism to mediate between the demands of



art and life. Later collections *The Tower and The Winding Stair* are often considered his best. His reputation by this time was secure – he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923. He died in France in 1939 and was buried in Drumcliffe Church, Co. Sligo as he'd requested.

**W.H. AUDEN**

Wystan Hugh Auden was born in York, England on February 21, 1907. He moved to Birmingham during childhood and was educated at Christ Church, Oxford. As a young man he was influenced by the poetry of Thomas Hardy and Robert Frost, as well as William Blake, Emily Dickinson, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Old English verse. At Oxford, his precocity as a poet was immediately apparent, and he formed lifelong friendships with two fellow writers, Stephen Spender and Christopher Isherwood.

In 1928, Auden's collection, *Poems*, was privately printed, but it wasn't until 1930, when another collection titled *Poems* (though its contents were different) was published, that Auden was established as the leading voice of a new generation.

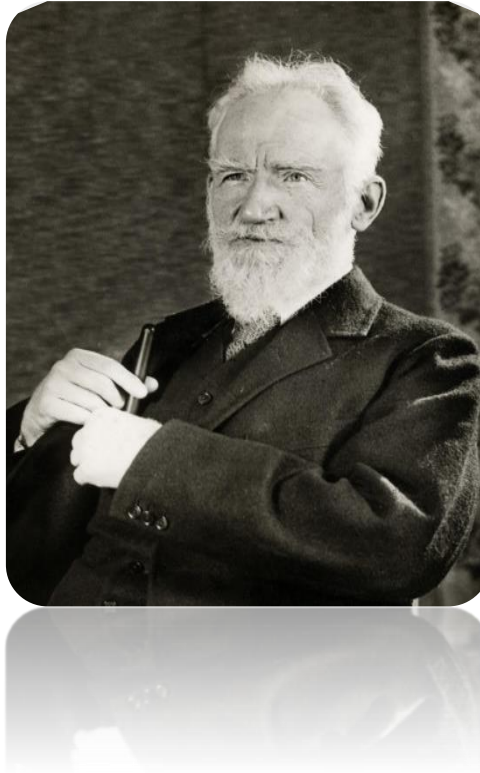
Ever since, Auden has been admired for his unsurpassed technical virtuosity and an ability to write poems in nearly every imaginable verse form; the incorporation in his work of popular culture, current events, and vernacular speech; and also for the vast range of his intellect, which drew easily from an extraordinary variety of literatures, art forms, social and political theories, and scientific and technical information. He had a remarkable wit, and often mimicked the writing styles of other poets such as Dickinson, W. B. Yeats, and Henry James. His poetry frequently recounts, literally or metaphorically, a journey or quest, and his travels provided rich material for his verse.

Auden visited Germany, Iceland, and China, served in the Spanish Civil War, and, in 1939, moved to

the United States, where he met his lover, Chester Kallman, and became an American citizen. His own beliefs changed radically between his youthful career in England, when he was an ardent advocate of socialism and Freudian psychoanalysis, and his later phase in America, when his central preoccupation became Christianity and the theology of modern Protestant theologians. A prolific writer, Auden was also a noted playwright, librettist, editor, and essayist. Generally considered the greatest English poet of the twentieth century, his work has exerted a major influence on succeeding generations of poets on both sides of the Atlantic.

W. H. Auden served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 1954 to 1973, and divided most of the second half of his life between residences in New York City and Austria. He died in Vienna on September 29, 1973.

## GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



The Irish legend, George Bernard Shaw was a dramatist and a literary critic in addition to being a socialist spokesman. His valuable contributions to literature won him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1925. While Shaw accepted the honor, he refused the money. George Bernard Shaw was a free spirit and a freethinker who advocated women's rights and equality on income.

George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin on July 26, 1856. His father, George Carr Shaw was in the wholesale grain trading business and his mother, Lucinda Elisabeth Shaw was the daughter of an impoverished landowner. A young George led a distressed childhood. His alcoholic father remained drunk most of the time. It was due to this that Shaw abstained from alcohol throughout his lifetime. During the course of schooling Shaw attended Wesleyan Connexional School, Dublin's Central Model School and Dublin English Scientific and Commercial Day School where he ended his education. He first began working as a junior clerk at the age of 15. In 1876, Shaw went to live with his mother and sister in London. He did not return to Ireland for almost 30 years.

Shaw turned to literature and began his career by writing theatre, criticism, music and novels one of which was the semi-autobiographical, *Immaturity*. However, his early efforts gained neither recognition nor success. From 1885 to 1911, Shaw served on the executive committee of the Fabian Society, a middle-class socialist group. 1895 onwards, Shaw's work began appearing in significant publications. He wrote drama criticism for the *Saturday Review*. These pieces were later compiled in the collection *Our Theatres In The Nineties* published in 1932. In addition to being a drama critic, George Bernard Shaw also wrote criticism on music, drama and art in various publications such as

*Dramatic Review* (1885-1886), *Our Corner* (1885-1886), *The Pall Mall Gazette* (1885-1888), *The World* (1886-1894), and *The Star* (1888-1890). His criticism on music has been compiled in a number of collections such as Shaw's Music appearing in 1981, *The Perfect Wagnerite* (1898) and *Caesar and Cleopatra* published in 1901.

George Bernard Shaw married Charlotte Payne-Townshend in 1898. Charlotte was a wealthy woman from an upper class background. The couple settled in Hertfordshire village of Ayot St. Lawrence in 1906. Although Shaw was occasionally linked with other women, he remained with Charlotte until her death. One of Shaw's known linkage to other women include a series of passionate correspondences with the widowed actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

Most of Shaw's early plays described the problems of capitalism and explored existing moral and social problems. One of these plays is the *Widower's Houses* (1892). Unfortunately, these early efforts were not very well received. Some later following works such as *Candida* and *John Bull's Other Island* (1904) and *Major Barbara* proved to be in better interest of Shaw. His much famous work, *Pygmalion* was originally written for Mrs. Patrick Campbell. *Pygmalion* was later adapted into two films and a musical.

In 1914, Shaw's popularity declined significantly when he wrote the essay *Common Sense about The War* which was considered unpatriotic. However, he was accepted once again with the publication of *Saint Joan* in 1924. An author to more than 50 plays, George Bernard Shaw died on November 2, 1950 in Ayot St. Lawrence, Hertfordshire.

## VIRGINIA WOOLF



Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) is recognized as one of the most innovative writers of the 20th century. Perhaps best known as the author of *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927), she was also a prolific writer of essays, diaries, letters and biographies. Both in style and subject matter, Woolf's work captures the fast-changing world in which she was working, from transformations in gender roles, sexuality and class to technologies such as cars, airplanes and cinema. Influenced by seminal writers and artists of the period such as Marcel Proust, Igor Stravinsky and the Post-Impressionists, Woolf's work explores the key motifs of modernism, including the subconscious, time, perception, the city and the impact of war. Her 'stream of consciousness' technique enabled her to portray the interior lives of her characters and to depict the montage-like imprint of memory.

Woolf's work often explored her fascination with the marginal and overlooked: of 'an ordinary mind on an ordinary day', as she put in her essay 'Modern Fiction' (1919/25). In 'The Art of Biography' (1939), she argued that 'The question now inevitably asks itself, whether the lives of great men only should be recorded. Is not anyone who has lived a life, and left a record of that life, worthy of biography – the failures as well as the successes, the humble as well as the illustrious...'

She refused patriarchal honours like the Companion of Honour (1935) and honorary degrees from Manchester and Liverpool (1933 and 1939), and wrote polemical works about the position of women in society, such as *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938). In *Flush* (1933) she wrote of the life of the spaniel owned by the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in *Orlando* (1928), she fictionalized the life of her friend Vita Sackville-West into that of a man-woman, born in the Renaissance but surviving till the present day.

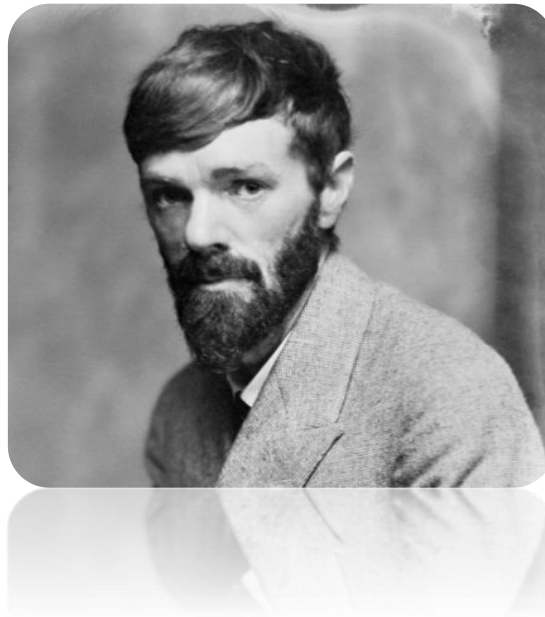
Besides her writing, Woolf had a considerable impact on the cultural life around her. The publishing house she ran with her husband Leonard Woolf, the Hogarth Press, was originally established in Richmond and then in London's Bloomsbury, an area after which the 'Bloomsbury Set' of artists, writers and intellectuals is named. Woolf's house was a hub for some of the most interesting cultural activity of the time, and Hogarth Press publications included books by writers such as T S Eliot,

Sigmund Freud, Katherine Mansfield, E M Forster, and the Woolfs themselves.

Born Virginia Adeline Stephen in 1882, her parents were Leslie Stephen (1832–1904), the founder of the Oxford Dictionary of Biography, and his second wife, Julia Duckworth (1846–1895). Woolf's father – who was later knighted for services to literature – gave her the run of his substantial library. Her mother, father and brother died in quick succession, and she suffered from poor mental health for much of her life, committing suicide in 1941.



## D.H. LAWRENCE



David Herbert Lawrence, novelist, short-story writer, poet, and essayist, was born in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, England, on September 11, 1885. Though better known as a novelist, Lawrence's first-published works (in 1909) were poems, and his poetry, especially his evocations of the natural world, have since had a significant influence on many poets on both sides of the Atlantic. His early poems reflect the influence of Ezra Pound and Imagist movement, which reached its peak in the early teens of the twentieth century. When Pound attempted to draw Lawrence into his circle of writer-followers, however, Lawrence decided to pursue a more independent path.

He believed in writing poetry that was stark, immediate and true to the mysterious inner force which motivated it. Many of his best-loved poems treat the physical and inner life of plants and animals; others are bitterly satiric and express his outrage at the puritanism and hypocrisy of conventional Anglo-Saxon society. Lawrence was a rebellious and profoundly polemical writer with radical views, who regarded sex, the primitive subconscious, and nature as cures to what he considered the evils of modern industrialized society. Tremendously prolific, his work was often uneven in quality, and he was a continual source of controversy, often involved in widely-publicized censorship cases, most famously for his novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). His collections of poetry include *Look! We Have Come Through* (1917), a collection of poems about his wife; *Birds, Beasts, and Flowers* (1923); and *Pansies* (1929), which was banned on publication in England.

Besides his troubles with the censors, Lawrence was persecuted as well during World War I, for the supposed pro-German sympathies of his wife, Frieda. As a consequence, the Lawrences left England and travelled restlessly to Italy, Germany, Ceylon, Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, the French Riviera, Mexico and the United States, unsuccessfully searching for a new homeland. In Taos, New Mexico, he became the center of a group of female admirers who considered themselves his disciples, and whose quarrels for his attention became a literary legend. A lifelong sufferer from tuberculosis, Lawrence died in 1930 in France, at the age of forty-four.

## JOHN GALSWORTHY



The English novelist and playwright John Galsworthy (1867-1933) was one of the most popular writers of the early 20th century. His work explores the transitions and contrasts between pre-and post-World War I England.

Born on Aug. 14, 1867, in Coombe, Surrey, at the height of the Victorian era, John Galsworthy was educated at Harrow and New College, Oxford. He was admitted to the bar in 1890, and 8 years later, after his first novel *Jocelyn* appeared, he left law to continue writing. *The Island Pharisees* (1904) and *The Man of Property* (1906), which became the first novel in *The Forsyte Saga*, expanded his audience and his reputation.

As his popularity increased, Galsworthy published other novels of the Forsyte series: *Indian Summer of a Forsyte* (1918), *In Chancery* (1920), *Awakening* (1920), and *To Let* (1921). In *The Forsyte Saga* late Victorian and Edwardian England's upper-middle-class society is portrayed, dissected, and criticized. Although *The Man of Property* and *To Let* are widely separated in time, the Saga's theme and structure form a unit wherein three generations of the large, clannish Forsyte family rise and decay on realistic and symbolic levels.

*The Country House* (1907), *Fraternity* (1909), *The Patrician* (1911), and *The Dark Flower* (1913) are not novels in the sequence, but they are related to it in place and time. Galsworthy wove social history into his novels: he reproduced the values, classes, hierarchy, stability, and smugness of the Edwardian era.

After World War I, Galsworthy produced another less successful, cycle of novels about the Forsyte family in post-war England. *The White Monkey* (1924), *The Silver Spoon* (1926), and *Swan Song* (1928) were collectively published in 1929 as *A Modern Comedy*. This series is less firm than *The Forsyte Saga*, its characterizations are weaker, and its architectural quality is disjunctive. It reflects Galsworthy's own uncertainty about the years after the war, which were marked by a revolution in

values whose out-come was uncertain. After the second cycle was completed, Galsworthy published two more novels, *Maid in Waiting* (1931) and *Flowering Wilderness* (1932).

Although Galsworthy is best known for his novels, he was also a successful playwright. He constructed his drama on a legalistic basis, and the plays typically start from a social or ethical impulse and reach a resolution after different viewpoints have been expressed. Like *The Silver Box* (1906) and *Strife* (1909), *Justice* (1910) is realistic, particularly in the use of dialogue that is direct and uninflated. Part of the realism is an awareness of detail and the minute symbol. That awareness is clear in the intricate symbols of *The Forsyte Saga*; it is less successful in the drama and his later novels because it tends to be overstated.

In *Justice* Galsworthy revealed himself as something of a propagandist or, according to Joseph Conrad, "a moralist." Galsworthy selected detail and character to isolate a belief or a judgment; he said, "Selection, conscious or unconscious, is the secret of art." The protagonists in his drama and his prose fiction generally typify particular viewpoints or beliefs. Explaining his method of characterization, he wrote, "In the greatest fiction the characters, or some of them, should sum up and symbolize whole streaks of human nature in a way that our friends, however well known to us, do not.... Within their belts are cinctured not only individuals but sections of mankind." He also stated that his aim was to create a fictional world that was richer than life itself.

John Galsworthy was awarded the Order of Merit in 1929 and the Nobel Prize for literature in 1932. He died at Hampstead on Jan. 31, 1933.

### **Write short notes on**

1. Jane Austen
2. Charles Lamb
3. Charles Dickens
4. T.S. Eliot
5. Thomas Hardy
6. D.H. Lawrence

## **UNIT-III**

### **Representative Works**

#### **Ode on a Grecian Urn**

##### **John Keats**



**John Keats (1795-1821)**

#### **About the Poet:**

English Romantic poet John Keats was born on October 31, 1795, in London. The oldest of four children, he lost both his parents at a young age. His father, a livery-stable keeper, died when Keats was eight; his mother died of tuberculosis six years later. After his mother's death, Keats's maternal grandmother appointed two London merchants, Richard Abbey and John Rowland Sandell, as guardians. Abbey, a prosperous tea broker, assumed the bulk of this responsibility, while Sandell played only a minor role. When Keats was fifteen, Abbey withdrew him from the Clarke School, Enfield, to apprentice with an apothecary-surgeon and study medicine in a London hospital. In 1816

Keats became a licensed apothecary, but he never practiced his profession, deciding instead to write poetry.

Around this time, Keats met Leigh Hunt, an influential editor of the *Examiner*, who published his sonnets “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” and “O Solitude.” Hunt also introduced Keats to a circle of literary men, including the poets Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Wordsworth. The group’s influence enabled Keats to see his first volume, *Poems by John Keats*, published in 1817. *Endymion*, a four-thousand-line erotic/allegorical romance based on the Greek myth of the same name, appeared the following year. Writing some of his finest poetry between 1818 and 1819, Keats mainly worked on “Hyperion,” a Miltonic blank-verse epic of the Greek creation myth. In July 1820, he published his third and best volume of poetry, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems*. The volume also contains the unfinished “Hyperion,” and three poems considered among the finest in the English language, “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” “Ode on Melancholy,” and “Ode to a Nightingale.” Keats contracted tuberculosis. He went to Rome with his friend, the painter Joseph Severn. He died there on February 23, 1821, at the age of twenty-five, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery.

### About the poem:

The Ode on a Grecian Urn was composed in the spring of 1819 and published in 1820. The Greek vase which inspired Keats was no figment of his imagination, but has a real existence. This vase is still preserved in the garden at Holland House, Kensington.

‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ is John Keats’ attempt to engage with the beauty of art and nature, addressing a piece of pottery from ancient Greece. Keats is perhaps most famous for his odes such as this one as well as ‘Ode to a Nightingale,’ in which the poet deals with the expressive nature of music. The urn itself is ancient. It’s been passed down over the millennia to finally reach Keats’s presence and, to him, seems to exist outside of the traditional sense of time. Ageless, immortal, it’s almost alien in its distance from the current age.

‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ represents three attempts at engaging with the urn and its scenes. Across the stanzas, Keats tries to wonder about who the figures are, what they’re doing, what they represent, and what the underlying meaning of their images might be. But by the end of the poem, he realizes that the entire process of questioning is fairly redundant.

## Ode on a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
    Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
    A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:  
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape  
    Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
    What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
    Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
    Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
    Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
    Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal yet, do not grieve;  
    She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
    For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
    Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
    For ever piping songs for ever new;  
More happy love! more happy, happy love!  
    For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
    For ever panting, and for ever young;  
All breathing human passion far above,  
    That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,

A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,

And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?

What little town by river or sea shore,

Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore

Will silent be; and not a soul to tell

Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede

Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed;

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

### **Glossary:**

Unravish'd: unravished, not sexually assaulted or violated

Sylvan – inhabitant of forest and familiar with the woods

Deities – a God or Goddess

Dales of Arcady – valleys in the ancient Greek state of Arcadia

Ditties – short, simple songs

Parching – causing dryness due to excess heat



Heifer – a cow that has not borne a calf

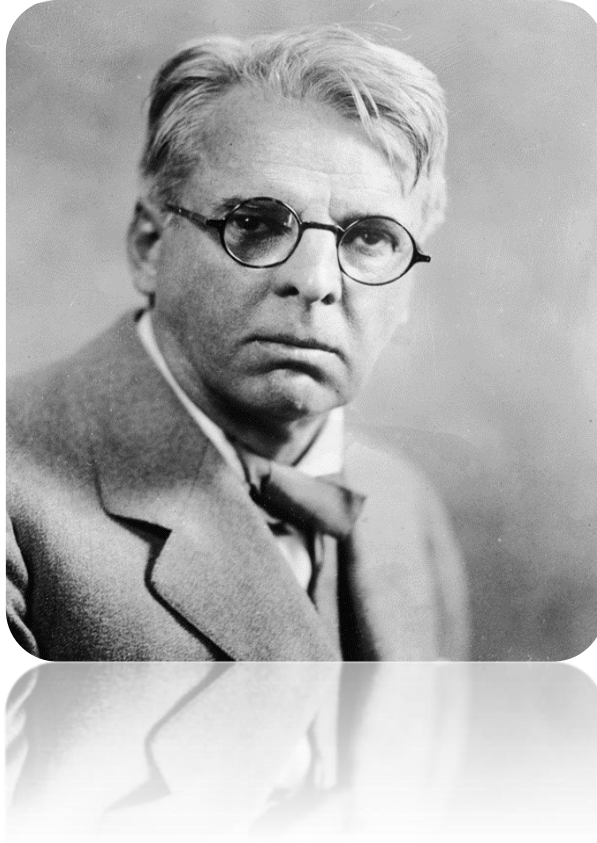
Citadel – a fortress on a high ground

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Why is the urn addressed as ‘Cold Pastoral’ in ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’?
2. Discuss the theme of transience and permanence described in the poem.
3. How does the poem bring about the perfection of art in the poem?
4. Elaborate the power of imagination as described in the poem.
5. Why does the poet refer to art as immortal?

## A PRAYER FOR MY DAUGHTER

W.B. Yeats



**William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)**

### **About the Poet:**

Born in Dublin, Ireland on June 13, 1865, William Butler Yeats was the son of the well-known Irish painter, John Butler Yeats. He spent his childhood in County Sligo, where his parents were raised, and in London. He returned to Dublin at the age of fifteen to continue his education and to study painting, but quickly discovered that he preferred poetry. Though Yeats never learned Irish Gaelic himself, his writing at the turn of the century drew extensively from sources in Irish mythology and folklore. Also a potent influence on his poetry was the Irish revolutionary, Maud Gonne, whom he met in 1889, a woman equally famous for her passionate nationalist politics and her beauty. Though she married another man in 1903 and grew apart from Yeats (and Yeats himself was eventually married to another woman, Georgie Hyde Lees), she remained a powerful figure in his poetry. His work after 1910 was strongly influenced by Pound, becoming more modern in its concision and imagery. Appointed a senator of the Irish Free State in 1922, he is remembered as an important cultural leader, a major

playwright (he was one of the founders of the famous Abbey Theatre in Dublin), and as one of the greatest poets in any language of the twentieth century.

W. B. Yeats was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1923 and died in 1939 at the age of seventy-three.

His poetry, especially the volumes *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919), *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (1921), *The Tower* (1928), *The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933), and *Last Poems and Plays* (1940), made him one of the outstanding and most influential twentieth-century poets writing in English. His recurrent themes are the contrast of art and life, masks, cyclical theories of life (the symbol of the winding stairs), and the ideal of beauty and ceremony contrasting with the hubbub of modern life.

### **About the poem:**

Yeats wrote 'A Prayer for my Daughter' in 1919, shortly after his daughter's birth and World War II. So the ongoing unsettling feel is visible in the background and in the poet's mind. The poem appeared for the first time in his poetry collection, *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* in 1921. 'A Prayer for my Daughter' by William Butler Yeats speaks about the poet's family. It demonstrates his concern and anxiety over the future wellbeing and prospects of his daughter, Anne.

Though by 1919, the war was over, in Ireland it yet turned normal. So, he ponders how she will survive the difficult times ahead, in the politically turbulent times. The poem not only expresses the helplessness of Yeats as a father but all fathers who had to walk through this situation. He wants to give his daughter a life of beauty and innocence, safety, and security. He further wants her to be well-mannered and full of humility free from intellectual hatred and being strongly opinionated. Finally, he wants her to get married into an aristocratic family which is rooted in spirituality and traditional values.

### A Prayer for My Daughter

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid  
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid  
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle  
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill  
Whereby the haystack- and roof-levelling wind,  
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;  
And for an hour I have walked and prayed  
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour  
And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,  
And under the arches of the bridge, and scream  
In the elms above the flooded stream;  
Imagining in excited reverie  
That the future years had come,  
Dancing to a frenzied drum,  
Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

May she be granted beauty and yet not  
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,  
Or hers before a looking-glass, for such,  
Being made beautiful overmuch,  
Consider beauty a sufficient end,  
Lose natural kindness and maybe  
The heart-revealing intimacy  
That chooses right, and never find a friend.

Helen being chosen found life flat and dull  
And later had much trouble from a fool,  
While that great Queen, that rose out of the spray,  
Being fatherless could have her way  
Yet chose a bandy-leggèd smith for man.

It's certain that fine women eat  
A crazy salad with their meat  
Whereby the Horn of Plenty is undone.

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;  
Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are earned  
By those that are not entirely beautiful;  
Yet many, that have played the fool  
For beauty's very self, has charm made wise,  
And many a poor man that has roved,  
Loved and thought himself beloved,  
From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes.

May she become a flourishing hidden tree  
That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,  
And have no business but dispensing round  
Their magnanimities of sound,  
Nor but in merriment begin a chase,  
Nor but in merriment a quarrel.  
O may she live like some green laurel  
Rooted in one dear perpetual place.

My mind, because the minds that I have loved,  
The sort of beauty that I have approved,  
Prosper but little, has dried up of late,  
Yet knows that to be choked with hate  
May well be of all evil chances chief.  
If there's no hatred in a mind  
Assault and battery of the wind  
Can never tear the linnet from the leaf.

An intellectual hatred is the worst,  
So let her think opinions are accursed.  
Have I not seen the loveliest woman born

Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn,  
 Because of her opinionated mind  
 Barter that horn and every good  
 By quiet natures understood  
 For an old bellows full of angry wind?

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,  
 The soul recovers radical innocence  
 And learns at last that it is self-delighting,  
 Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,  
 And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will;  
 She can, though every face should scowl  
 And every windy quarter howl  
 Or every bellows burst, be happy still.

And may her bridegroom bring her to a house  
 Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;  
 For arrogance and hatred are the wares  
 Peddled in the thoroughfares.  
 How but in custom and in ceremony  
 Are innocence and beauty born?  
 Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,  
 And custom for the spreading laurel tree.

### **Glossary:**

Haystack: a packed pile of hay

Elms: tall deciduous trees with serrated leaves and propagates from root suckers

Reverie: a state of being lost in thoughts

Bandy-legged: curved outwards so that the knees are wide apart

Horn of Plenty: symbolizing prosperity

Magnanimities: being generous

Perpetual: never ending

Linnet: a finch with a reddish breast and forehead

Scowl: an angry expression

### **Questions for discussion:**

1. Discuss the speaker's anxiety about the well-being of his daughter.
2. Does the speaker resonate feminine traits propounded by patriarchal society? Discuss.
3. What are the qualities the speaker seeks in his daughter?
4. Elaborate on the speaker's thoughts about beauty.
5. Identify the symbols and their significance in the poem.



## ESSAY

### **Brave New World Revisited**

**Aldous Huxley**

**(1894- 1963)**



#### **About the author:**

Aldous Huxley was a prominent novelist and essayist of his time. His works are wide-ranging as he had all significant literary genres to his credit- novels, non-fiction, essays, narratives and poems. He was nominated for Nobel Prize in literature seven times and was elected companion of literature by the Royal Society of literature in 1962.

There are many different essayists in English literature, and each of them has a unique style that sets them apart from one another. Bacon's essays were succinct, to the point, and packed with distilled knowledge. In an Addison article, the ideas are occasionally diluted and shallow with a leaning towards personal gossip. The essay by Charles Lamb is made up of a variety of reflections, queries, and first-

person stories. Huxley's writings, in contrast, focus on contemporary issues and are laced with the author's wit and intelligence. Essays have "three poles of reference," according to Huxley, who mentions this in the introduction to his *Collected Essays*. The first one is personal and autobiographical; the second is the objective, the concrete one based on facts; the third one deals with the abstract universal. Huxley didn't use autobiographical details much in his essays but a reader would see some snippets of his life here and there lending grace to his essays. In the second category, Huxley has written essays on bombs, drugs and different cultures of the world. The third kind of essays, he rather wrote late in his life.

Huxley amassed a vast body of knowledge through his travels, intense reading, and interactions with other intellectuals of the time. He was filled with knowledge and possessed an endless curiosity. His essays provide us with an accurate picture of the intellectual life of the Western man at the time they were written and are pertinent to both his time and our own. Huxley held that truth existed beyond all outward manifestations, and that this reality was the unitive knowledge of God. His articles document the quest and the affirmation, and all of his works lead to that conclusion. Huxley is almost always simple to read, yet occasionally he calls for careful attention to an abstract point.

### **About the Book:**

In 1932, *Brave New World*, a novel by the English author Aldous Huxley, was published. Contemporary events inspired this influential fantasy novel, which depicted a future society governed by totalitarianism. In 1958, a full twenty-seven years later, Huxley wrote *Brave New World Revisited*, a short nonfiction book which reexamines the novel's ideas and predictions in light of events that had happened since the publication of *Brave New World*. Huxley argues that the world is accelerating toward the dystopia he foretold in *Brave New World* much faster than he had anticipated. The book diagnoses many problems at the foreground of speculation in mid-20th-century society, most of which endure today in ever more pressing forms.

The twelve chapters of *Brave New World Revisited*, which Huxley originally wrote as *Newsday* pieces, are all devoted to various societal issues or themes. Huxley begins by addressing the "fundamental problem" of humanity, which is overpopulation. Huxley asserts that the population of the globe has been increasing at an alarming rate to the point where births vastly outnumber deaths. This occurrence places a tremendous demand on resources, which will only get worse with time. Huxley also underlines the perils of "hyper-organization," or the concentrated rule of a class of "Big Government" and "Big Business" over society. He believes that this centralization is a threat to

democracy and individual freedom, and that it will inevitably lead to standardisation and conformity in daily life.

In the central portion of the book, Huxley examines mass media and its effect on society in the form of propaganda—a force whose reach has expanded enormously since World War II. In light of recent scientific experiments in subliminal messaging, hypnopedia and synthetic drugs, Huxley speculates that future governments will use brainwashing techniques to influence people to conform to approved ways of thinking. This trend is already underway in some democratic countries via advertising, which often appeals to human desires using irrational language and thought. Huxley argues that rulers of the future will try to manipulate people on a subconscious level and thus make them compliant with the removal of their personal freedom. The new society will be characterized by a “non-violent totalitarianism” (115), which is all the more insidious because it wears a benign face.

Huxley ends the book with a call to re-educate ourselves in the lessons of individual liberty and democracy and instil them in the next generation; without these processes, we will all too easily yield to the power of propaganda and dictatorship. Huxley outlines his ideal society, one that enables people to reach their full potential as social beings, as well as to live happy, fulfilling lives.

What Can Be Done?, the final chapter, addresses this. Huxley reiterates the danger to freedom before offering suggestions about how to deal with it and transform society.

According to Huxley, our legal system has always valued individual liberty. The sole type of freedom, however, is not that which is free from physical restraint. Also crucial is the freedom of the thought, which is currently under attack. Because its victims have been numb and are ignorant of their situation, mental slavery is very insidious.

## **Brave New World Revisited (Extract)**

### **Chapter 12: What Can Be Done?**

We can be educated for freedom—much better educated for it than we are at present. But freedom, as I have tried to show, is threatened from many directions, and these threats are of many different kinds—demographic, social, political, psychological. Our disease has a multiplicity of co-operating causes and is not to be cured except by a multiplicity of co-operating remedies. In coping with any complex human situation, we must take account of all the relevant factors, not merely of a single factor. Nothing short of everything is ever really enough. Freedom is menaced, and education for freedom is

urgently needed. But so are many other things—for example, social organization for freedom, birth control for freedom, legislation for freedom. Let us begin with the last of these items.

From the time of Magna Carta and even earlier, the makers of English law have been concerned to protect the physical freedom of the individual. A person who is being kept in prison on grounds of doubtful legality has the right, under the Common Law as clarified by the statute of 1679, to appeal to one of the higher courts of justice for a writ of habeas corpus. This writ is addressed by a judge of the high court to a sheriff or jailer, and commands him, within a specified period of time, to bring the person he is holding in custody to the court for an examination of his case—to bring, be it noted, not the person's written complaint, nor his legal representatives, but his corpus, his body, the too too solid flesh which has been made to sleep on boards, to smell the fetid prison air, to eat the revolting prison food. This concern with the basic condition of freedom—the absence of physical constraint—is unquestionably necessary, but is not all that is necessary. It is perfectly possible for a man to be out of prison, and yet not free—to be under no physical constraint and yet to be a psychological captive, compelled to think, feel and act as the representatives of the national State, or of some private interest within the nation, want him to think, feel and act. There will never be such a thing as a writ of habeas mentem; for no sheriff or jailer can bring an illegally imprisoned mind into court, and no person whose mind had been made captive by the methods outlined in earlier articles would be in a position to complain of his captivity. The nature of psychological compulsion is such that those who act under constraint remain under the impression that they are acting on their own initiative. The victim of mind-manipulation does not know that he is a victim. To him, the walls of his prison are invisible, and he believes himself to be free. That he is not free is apparent only to other people. His servitude is strictly objective.

No, I repeat, there can never be such a thing as a writ of habeas mentem. But there can be preventive legislation—an outlawing of the psychological slave trade, a statute for the protection of minds against the unscrupulous purveyors of poisonous propaganda, modeled on the statutes for the protection of bodies against the unscrupulous purveyors of adulterated food and dangerous drugs. For example, there could and, I think, there should be legislation limiting the right of public officials, civil or military, to subject the captive audiences under their command or in their custody to sleep-teaching. There could and, I think, there should be legislation prohibiting the use of subliminal projection in public places or on television screens. There could and, I think, there should be legislation to prevent political candidates not merely from spending more than a certain amount of money on their election campaigns, but also to prevent them from resorting to the kind of anti-rational propaganda that makes nonsense of the whole democratic process.

Such preventive legislation might do some good; but if the great impersonal forces now menacing freedom continue to gather momentum, they cannot do much good for very long. The best of constitutions and preventive laws will be powerless against the steadily increasing pressures of over-population and of the over-organization imposed by growing numbers and advancing technology. The constitutions will not be abrogated and the good laws will remain on the statute book; but these liberal forms will merely serve to mask and adorn a profoundly illiberal substance. Given unchecked over-population and over-organization, we may expect to see in the democratic countries a reversal of the process which transformed England into a democracy, while retaining all the outward forms of a monarchy. Under the relentless thrust of accelerating over-population and increasing over-organization, and by means of ever more effective methods of mind-manipulation, the democracies will change their nature; the quaint old forms—elections, parliaments, Supreme Courts and all the rest—will remain. The underlying substance will be a new kind of non-violent totalitarianism. All the traditional names, all the hallowed slogans will remain exactly what they were in the good old days. Democracy and freedom will be the theme of every broadcast and editorial—but democracy and freedom in a strictly Pickwickian sense. Meanwhile the ruling oligarchy and its highly trained elite of soldiers, policemen, thought-manufacturers and mind-manipulators will quietly run the show as they see fit.

How can we control the vast impersonal forces that now menace our hard-won freedoms? On the verbal level and in general terms, the question may be answered with the utmost ease. Consider the problem of over-population. Rapidly mounting human numbers are pressing ever more heavily on natural resources. What is to be done? Obviously we must, with all possible speed, reduce the birth rate to the point where it does not exceed the death rate. At the same time we must, with all possible speed, increase food production, we must institute and implement a world-wide policy for conserving our soils and our forests, we must develop practical substitutes, preferably less dangerous and less rapidly exhaustible than uranium, for our present fuels; and, while husbanding our dwindling resources of easily available minerals, we must work out new and not too costly methods for extracting these minerals from ever poorer and poorer ores—the poorest ore of all being sea water. But all this, needless to say, is almost infinitely easier said than done. The annual increase of numbers should be reduced. But how? We are given two choices—famine, pestilence and war on the one hand, birth control on the other. Most of us choose birth control—and immediately find ourselves confronted by a problem that is simultaneously a puzzle in physiology, pharmacology, sociology, psychology and even theology. "The Pill" has not yet been invented. When and if it is invented, how can it be distributed to the many hundreds of millions of potential mothers (or, if it is a pill that works upon the male, potential fathers)

who will have to take it if the birth rate of the species is to be reduced? And, given existing social customs and the forces of cultural and psychological inertia, how can those who ought to take the pill, but don't want to, be persuaded to change their minds? And what about the objections on the part of the Roman Catholic Church, to any form of birth control except the so-called Rhythm Method—a method, incidentally, which has proved, hitherto, to be almost completely ineffective in reducing the birth rate of those industrially backward societies where such a reduction is most urgently necessary? And these questions about the future, hypothetical Pill must be asked, with as little prospect of eliciting satisfactory answers, about the chemical and mechanical methods of birth control already available.

When we pass from the problems of birth control to the problems of increasing the available food supply and conserving our natural resources, we find ourselves confronted by difficulties not perhaps quite so great, but still enormous. There is the problem, first of all, of education. How soon can the innumerable peasants and farmers, who are now responsible for raising most of the world's supply of food, be educated into improving their methods? And when and if they are educated, where will they find the capital to provide them with the machines, the fuel and lubricants, the electric power, the fertilizers and the improved strains of food plants and domestic animals, without which the best agricultural education is useless? Similarly, who is going to educate the human race in the principles and practice of conservation? And how are the hungry peasant-citizens of a country whose population and demands for food are rapidly rising to be prevented from "mining the soil"? And, if they can be prevented, who will pay for their support while the wounded and exhausted earth is being gradually nursed back, if that is still feasible, to health and restored fertility? Or consider the backward societies that are now trying to industrialize. If they succeed, who is to prevent them, in their desperate efforts to catch up and keep up, from squandering the planet's irreplaceable resources as stupidly and wantonly as was done, and is still being done, by their forerunners in the race? And when the day of reckoning comes, where, in the poorer countries, will anyone find the scientific manpower and the huge amounts of capital that will be required to extract the indispensable minerals from ores in which their concentration is too low, under existing circumstances, to make extraction technically feasible or economically justifiable? It may be that, in time, a practical answer to all these questions can be found. But in how much time? In any race between human numbers and natural resources, time is against us. By the end of the present century, there may, if we try very hard, be twice as much food on the world's markets as there is today. But there will also be about twice as many people, and several billions of these people will be living in partially industrialized countries and consuming ten times as much power, water, timber and irreplaceable minerals as they are consuming now. In a word, the food situation will be as bad as it is today, and the raw materials situation will be considerably worse.

To find a solution to the problem of over-organization is hardly less difficult than to find a solution to the problem of natural resources and increasing numbers. On the verbal level and in general terms the answer is perfectly simple. Thus, it is a political axiom that power follows property. But it is now a historical fact that the means of production are fast becoming the monopolistic property of Big Business and Big Government. Therefore, if you believe in democracy, make arrangements to distribute property as widely as possible.

Or take the right to vote. In principle, it is a great privilege. In practice, as recent history has repeatedly shown, the right to vote, by itself, is no guarantee of liberty. Therefore, if you wish to avoid dictatorship by referendum, break up modern society's merely functional collectives into self-governing, voluntarily co-operating groups, capable of functioning outside the bureaucratic systems of Big Business and Big Government.

Over-population and over-organization have produced the modern metropolis, in which a fully human life of multiple personal relationships has become almost impossible. Therefore, if you wish to avoid the spiritual impoverishment of individuals and whole societies, leave the metropolis and revive the small country community, or alternatively humanize the metropolis by creating within its network of mechanical organization the urban equivalents of small country communities, in which individuals can meet and co-operate as complete persons, not as the mere embodiments of specialized functions.

All this is obvious today and, indeed, was obvious fifty years ago. From Hilaire Belloc to Mr. Mortimer Adler, from the early apostles of co-operative credit unions to the land reformers of modern Italy and Japan, men of good will have for generations been advocating the decentralization of economic power and the widespread distribution of property. And how many ingenious schemes have been propounded for the dispersal of production, for a return to small-scale "village industry." And then there were Dubreuil's elaborate plans for giving a measure of autonomy and initiative to the various departments of a single large industrial organization. There were the Syndicalists, with their blueprints for a stateless society organized as a federation of productive groups under the auspices of the trade unions. In America, Arthur Morgan and Baker Brownell have set forth the theory and described the practice of a new kind of community living on the village and small-town level.

Professor Skinner of Harvard has set forth a psychologist's view of the problem in his *Walden Two*, a Utopian novel about a self-sustaining and autonomous community, so scientifically organized that nobody is ever led into anti-social temptation and, without resort to coercion or undesirable



propaganda, everyone does what he or she ought to do, and everyone is happy and creative. In France, during and after the Second World War, Marcel Barbu and his followers set up a number of self-governing, non-hierarchical communities of production, which were also communities for mutual aid and fully human living. And meanwhile, in London, the Peckham Experiment has demonstrated that it is possible, by co-ordinating health services with the wider interests of the group, to create a true community even in a metropolis.

We see, then, that the disease of over-organization has been clearly recognized, that various comprehensive remedies have been prescribed and that experimental treatments of symptoms have been attempted here and there, often with considerable success. And yet, in spite of all this preaching and this exemplary practice, the disease grows steadily worse. We know that it is unsafe to allow power to be concentrated in the hands of a ruling oligarchy; nevertheless power is in fact being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. We know that, for most people, life in a huge modern city is anonymous, atomic, less than fully human; nevertheless the huge cities grow steadily huger and the pattern of urban-industrial living remains unchanged. We know that, in a very large and complex society, democracy is almost meaningless except in relation to autonomous groups of manageable size; nevertheless more and more of every nation's affairs are managed by the bureaucrats of Big Government and Big Business. It is only too evident that, in practice, the problem of over-organization is almost as hard to solve as the problem of over-population. In both cases we know what ought to be done; but in neither case have we been able, as yet, to act effectively upon our knowledge.

At this point we find ourselves confronted by a very disquieting question: Do we really wish to act upon our knowledge? Does a majority of the population think it worth while to take a good deal of trouble, in order to halt and, if possible, reverse the current drift toward totalitarian control of everything? In the United States—and America is the prophetic image of the rest of the urban-industrial world as it will be a few years from now—recent public opinion polls have revealed that an actual majority of young people in their teens, the voters of tomorrow, have no faith in democratic institutions, see no objection to the censorship of unpopular ideas, do not believe that government of the people by the people is possible and would be perfectly content, if they can continue to live in the style to which the boom has accustomed them, to be ruled, from above, by an oligarchy of assorted experts. That so many of the well-fed young television-watchers in the world's most powerful democracy should be so completely indifferent to the idea of self-government, so blankly uninterested in freedom of thought and the right to dissent, is distressing, but not too surprising. "Free as a bird," we say, and envy the winged creatures for their power of unrestricted movement in all the three dimensions. But, alas, we forget the dodo. Any bird that has learned how to grub up a good living

without being compelled to use its wings will soon renounce the privilege of flight and remain forever grounded. Something analogous is true of human beings. If the bread is supplied regularly and copiously three times a day, many of them will be perfectly content to live by bread alone—or at least by bread and circuses alone. "In the end," says the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's parable, "in the end they will lay their freedom at our feet and say to us, 'make us your slaves, but feed us.'" And when Alyosha Karamazov asks his brother, the teller of the story, if the Grand Inquisitor is speaking ironically, Ivan answers, "Not a bit of it! He claims it as a merit for himself and his Church that they have vanquished freedom and done so to make men happy." Yes, to make men happy; "for nothing," the Inquisitor insists, "has ever been more insupportable for a man or a human society than freedom." Nothing, except the absence of freedom; for when things go badly, and the rations are reduced, the grounded dodos will clamor again for their wings—only to renounce them, yet once more, when times grow better and the dodo-farmers become more lenient and generous. The young people who now think so poorly of democracy may grow up to become fighters for freedom. The cry of "Give me television and hamburgers, but don't bother me with the responsibilities of liberty," may give place, under altered circumstances, to the cry of "Give me liberty or give me death." If such a revolution takes place, it will be due in part to the operation of forces over which even the most powerful rulers have very little control, in part to the incompetence of those rulers, their inability to make effective use of the mind-manipulating instruments with which science and technology have supplied, and will go on supplying, the would-be tyrant. Considering how little they knew and how poorly they were equipped, the Grand Inquisitors of earlier times did remarkably well. But their successors, the well-informed, thoroughly scientific dictators of the future will undoubtedly be able to do a great deal better. The Grand Inquisitor reproaches Christ with having called upon men to be free and tells Him that "we have corrected Thy work and founded it upon miracle, mystery and authority." But miracle, mystery and authority are not enough to guarantee the indefinite survival of a dictatorship. In my fable of Brave New World, the dictators had added science to the list and thus were able to enforce their authority by manipulating the bodies of embryos, the reflexes of infants and the minds of children and adults. And, instead of merely talking about miracles and hinting symbolically at mysteries, they were able, by means of drugs, to give their subjects the direct experience of mysteries and miracles—to transform mere faith into ecstatic knowledge. The older dictators fell because they could never supply their subjects with enough bread, enough circuses, enough miracles and mysteries. Nor did they possess a really effective system of mind-manipulation. In the past free-thinkers and revolutionaries were often the products of the most piously orthodox education. This is not surprising. The methods employed by orthodox educators were and still are extremely inefficient. Under a scientific dictator education will really work—with the result that most men and women will grow up to love their servitude and will

never dream of revolution. There seems to be no good reason why a thoroughly scientific dictatorship should ever be overthrown.

Meanwhile there is still some freedom left in the world. Many young people, it is true, do not seem to value freedom. But some of us still believe that, without freedom, human beings cannot become fully human and that freedom is therefore supremely valuable. Perhaps the forces that now menace freedom are too strong to be resisted for very long. It is still our duty to do whatever we can to resist them.

### **Questions for discussion:**

- a) Elaborate on psychological compulsion with reference to physical freedom.
- b) How does the author present over-population as a threat to any kind of reforms?
- c) What are the hindrances to the birth control measures presented in the extract?
- d) Present the author's views on education and the problem of natural resources.
- e) Discuss the freedom of thought in an ideal democratic state.

## WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER

**Stephen Leacock**



**Stephen P.H. Butler Leacock (1869-1944)**

### **About the author:**

Stephen Butler Leacock, FRSC, humorist, author, academic (born 30 December 1869 in Swanmore, England; died 28 March 1944 in Toronto, ON). Stephen Butler Leacock (December 1869 – March 1944) was born in England and moved to Canada when he was six years old. He became a Canadian teacher, political scientist, writer, and humorist.

He was politically active in the Conservative Party in both his home riding in Orillia, Ontario, and nationally. In the 1911 general election, his writings and public addresses on the issue of reciprocity helped defeat Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal government. Although he was not an original or particularly

incisive political economist, Leacock's professional opinions on matters such as the need for a gold standard have proved prophetic in their common sense approach to what he considered a jungle of statistics. *Elements of Political Science* became a widely read university textbook for 20 years after its publication. It was Leacock's best-selling book in his lifetime.

He was the English-speaking world's best-known humorist between 1915 and 1925. He was awarded the Mark Twain Medal for humour, the Royal Society of Canada's Lorne Pierce Medal and the Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction. Trained as an economist, historian and political scientist, he served as a professor in the Department of Economics and Political Science at McGill University from 1903 to 1936. The Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour was established in his honour in 1947. He was designated a National Historic Person of Canada in 1968.

**About the story:**

"With the Photographer" is a short story by Stephen Leacock, which has been taken from his book "Behind the Beyond". The story is all about the author's encounter with a rigid photographer. The whole story pivots around the experience of a customer through the process of getting his photograph taken by a photographer.

The photographer tries desperately to take a perfect photograph of his customer but he is not satisfied with his customer's face. He tries to get it right anyhow. At last the photograph is taken. Then he retouches it to give it a more perfect look. The customer is not satisfied with the editing. Finally, he gets angry and is utterly disappointed.

## With the Photographer

“I WANT my photograph taken”, I said. The photographer looked at me without enthusiasm. He was a drooping man in a gray suit, with the dim eye of a natural scientist. But there is no need to describe him. Everybody knows what a photographer is like.

“Sit there,” he said, “and wait.”

I waited an hour. I read the Ladies Companion for 1912, the Girls Magazine for 1902 and the infants Journal for 1888. I began to see that I had done an unwarrantable thing in breaking in on the privacy of this man’s scientific pursuits with a face like mine.

After an hour the photographer opened the inner door.

“Come in,” he said severely.

I went into the studio.

“Sit down,” said the photographer.

I sat down in a beam of sunlight filtered through a sheet of factory cotton hung against a frosted skylight.

The photographer rolled a machine into the middle of the room and crawled into it from behind.

He was only in it a second, – just time enough for one look at me, – and then he was out again, tearing at the cotton sheet and the window panes with a hooked stick, apparently frantic for light and air.

Then he crawled back into the machine again and drew a little black cloth over himself. This time he was very quiet in there. I knew that he was praying and I kept still.

When the photographer came out at last, he looked very grave and shook his head.

“The face is quite wrong,” he said.

“I know,” I answered quietly; “I have always known it.”

He sighed.

“I think,” He said, “the face would be better three-quarters full.”

“I’m sure it would,” I said enthusiastically, for I was glad to find that the man had such a human side to him. “So would yours. In fact,” I continued, “how many faces one sees that are apparently hard, narrow, limited, but the minute you get them three-quarters full they get wide, large, almost boundless in —”

But the photographer had ceased to listen. He came over and took my head in his hands and twisted it sideways. I thought he meant to kiss me, and I closed my eyes.

But I was wrong.

He twisted my face as far as it would go and then stood looking at it.

He sighed again.

“I don’t like the head,” he said.

Then he went back to the machine and took another look.

“Open the mouth a little,” he said.

I started to do so.

“Close it,” he added quickly.

Then he looked again.

“The ears are bad,” he said; “droop them a little more. Thank you. Now the eyes. Roll them in under the lids. Put the hands on the knees, please, and turn the face just a little upward. Yes, that’s better. Now just expand the lungs! So! And hump the neck—that’s it – and just contract the waist –ha!—and twist the hip up towards the elbow—now! I still don’t quite like the face, it’s just a trifle too full, but – \_\_\_\_”

I swung myself round on the stool.

“Stop,” I said with emotion but, I think, with dignity. “This face is my face. It is not yours, it is mine. I’ve lived with it for forty years and I know its faults. I know it’s out of drawing. I know it wasn’t made for me, but it’s my face, the only one I have –” I was conscious of a break in my voice but I went on – “such as it is, I’ve learned to love it. And this is my mouth, not yours. These ears are mine, and if your machine is too narrow –” Here I started to rise from the seat.

Snick!

The photographer had pulled a string. The photograph taken. I could see the machine still staggering from the shock

“I think,” said the photographer, pursing his lips in a pleased smile, “that I caught the features just in a moment of animation.”

“So!” I said biting, – “features, eh? You didn’t think I could animate them, I suppose? But let me see the picture.”

“Oh, there’s nothing to see yet,” he said, “I have to develop the negative first. Come back on Saturday and I’ll let you see a proof of it.”

On Saturday, I went back.

The photographer beckoned me in. I thought he seemed quieter and graver than before. I think, too, there was a certain pride in his manner.

He unfolded the proof of a large photograph, and we both looked at it in silence.

“Is it me?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said quietly, “it is you,” and we went on looking at it.

“The eyes,” I said hesitatingly, “don’t look very much like mine.”



“Oh, no,” he answered, “I’ve retouched them. They come out splendidly, don’t they?”

“Fine,” I said, “but surely my eyebrows are not like that?”

“No,” said the photographer, with a momentary glance at my face, “the eyebrows are removed. We have a process now—the Delphide—for putting in new ones. You’ll notice here where we’ve applied it to carry the hair away from the brow. I don’t like the hair low on the skull.”

“Oh, you don’t, don’t you?” I said.

“No,” he went on, “I don’t care for it. I like to get the hair clear back to the superficies and make out a new brow line.”

“What about the mouth?” I said with a bitterness that was lost on the photographer; “Is that mine?”

“It’s adjusted a little,” he said, “Yours is too low. I found I couldn’t use it.”

“The ears, though,” I said, “strike me as a good likeness; they’re just like mine.”

“Yes.” said the photographer thoughtfully, “that’s so; but I can fix that all right in the print. We have a process now—the Sulphide—for removing the ears entirely. I’ll see if —”

“Listen!” I interrupted, drawing myself up and animating my features to their full extent and speaking with a withering scorn that should have blasted the man on the spot. “Listen! I came here for a photograph—a picture—something which (mad though it seems) would have looked like me. I wanted something that would depict my face as Heaven gave it to me, humble though the gift may have been. I want something that my friends might keep after my death, to reconcile them to my loss. It seems that I was mistaken. What I wanted is no longer done. Go on, then, with your brutal work. Take your negative, or whatever it is you call it, — dip it in sulphide, bromide, oxide, cowhide, —anything you like, — remove the eyes, correct the mouth, adjust the face, restore the lips, reanimate the necktie and reconstruct the waistcoat. Coat it with an inch of gloss, shade it, emboss it gild it, till even you acknowledge that it is finished. Then when you have done all that — keep it for yourself and your friends. They may value it. To me it is but a worthless bauble.”

I broke into tears and left.

### **Glossary:**

pursuit: occupation, the act of pursuing

beam: a line of light coming from a source

pane : a sheet of glass in a window or door

grave: serious

cease: to stop happening, end

stagger: to shock or surprise someone very much

animation: liveliness

bitingly: unpleasantly and critically

beckon: to signal someone with arm or hand in order to tell the person to come closer

momentary: lasting a very short time

superficies: a surface of a body

withering: very harsh, severe or damaging

scorn: a feeling that something or someone is not worthy of any respect or approval

brutal: extremely cruel or harsh

emboss: to put a raised design or piece of writing on paper, leather etc.

gild: to cover something with a thin layer of gold

bauble: an inexpensive piece of jewellery which has a little artistic value

### **Questions for discussion:**

1. How does the story delve into acceptance of self and insecurities?
2. Give a brief account of the photographer's studio.
3. What was the narrator's thoughts on his appearance in the beginning of the story?
4. Why was the narrator angry with the photographer?
5. Discuss the contemporary relevance of the story.

## NOVEL

## TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

Virginia Woolf



Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)

**About the author:**

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) was an English novelist, essayist, biographer, and feminist. Virginia Adeline Stephen was the third child of Leslie Stephen, a Victorian man of letters, and Julia Duckworth. The Stephen family lived at Hyde Park Gate in Kensington, a respectable English middle class neighborhood. While her brothers Thoby and Adrian were sent to Cambridge, Virginia was educated by private tutors and copiously read from her father's vast library of literary classics. She later resented the degradation of women in a patriarchal society, rebuking her own father for automatically sending her brothers to schools and university, while she was never offered a formal education.

Woolf was a prolific writer, whose modernist style changed with each new novel. Her letters and memoirs reveal glimpses of Woolf at the center of English literary culture during the Bloomsbury era. She is recognised as one of the most innovative writers of the 20th century. Perhaps best known as the

author of *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927), she was also a prolific writer of essays, diaries, letters and biographies. Both in style and subject matter, Woolf's work captures the fast-changing world in which she was working, from transformations in gender roles, sexuality and class to technologies such as cars, airplanes and cinema. Influenced by seminal writers and artists of the period such as Marcel Proust, Igor Stravinsky and the Post-Impressionists, Woolf's work explores the key motifs of modernism, including the subconscious, time, perception, the city and the impact of war. Her 'stream of consciousness' technique enabled her to portray the interior lives of her characters and to depict the montage-like imprint of memory.

### **About the Novel:**

*To the Lighthouse* was first published in 1927. The novel's main characters are the members of the Ramsay family, which is comprised of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, plus their eight children. The novel spans a decade in time, but the entire decade is not narrated in detail; rather, the novel zooms in on moments the family spends vacationing on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. Rather than being narrated by a single person, the novel switches back and forth between a varieties of characters' perspectives, showing the internal monologues of multiple characters. In fact, most of the novel is comprised of various characters' private thoughts, observations, and memories during family vacation.

The story begins in early 1900s Scotland, just before World War I, as the Ramsays and company travel to their vacation home in the Hebrides. "The Window" covers about seven hours during an afternoon and evening but spans nearly half the novel. Mrs. Ramsay tells her six-year-old son, James, he can go to the lighthouse if the weather permits. Her husband, a metaphysician who made a significant contribution to the field early in his career, and his brash "admirer" Charles Tansley extinguish James's hopes by saying the weather will make it impossible. Later in the afternoon the Ramsays argue over the weather.

Family friend Lily Briscoe is attempting to paint a portrait of Mrs. Ramsay and James. William Bankes, another friend, living in the village, has agreed to stay for dinner. Mrs. Ramsay dedicates much of the day to protecting James's "fleeting" innocence and arranging a dinner party. Mr. Ramsay behaves boorishly, demanding female praise and reassurance. Throughout the day Mrs. Ramsay worries over the whereabouts of her daughter Nancy (who she thinks may be out walking with Minta Doyle, Paul Rayley, and Andrew Ramsay) and thinks about matchmaking and domestic issues like the greenhouse repair bill. Intermittently posing for Lily Briscoe's painting, Mrs. Ramsay devotes most of her time to

ensuring the comfort of others, particularly her husband, within the house and in the community (the lighthouse keeper's ill son and poor Elsie in town).

The day culminates in the *bœuf en daube* supper for a group of 15 that includes newly engaged Minta Doyle and Paul Rayley. Mrs. Ramsay dedicates great effort to create a peaceful meal and thinks the event memorable, with Mr. Ramsay, despite his earlier ill temper, reciting a poem for her. This first part of the novel ends with Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay reading and talking quietly. She tells him he was right about the weather, her way of affirming her love.

### **Time Passes**

The second part, "Time Passes," covers about 10 years in the span of a mere 10 to 20 pages or so. William Bankes, Lily Briscoe, Augustus Carmichael, and Andrew and Prue Ramsay arrive somberly at the summer house, as war begins across Europe. During one night Mrs. Ramsay dies unexpectedly. Prue Ramsay marries and dies from childbirth complications. At war, Andrew Ramsay is killed instantly by a shell.

The house sits abandoned. Mrs. McNab cleans and tends to the house but during World War I closes it. After a decade the Ramsays write Mrs. McNab asking her to ready the house. She, along with Mrs. Bast, her son, and contractors, restore the summer home in time for the guests' arrival.

### **The Lighthouse**

"The Lighthouse" covers only a few hours in one morning, focusing on the home's current state after a tumultuous decade. Lily Briscoe is unable to process all that has happened. Mr. Ramsay has planned a trip to the lighthouse and is angry his children have made them late for the trip. Lily recalls the painting of Mrs. Ramsay and James and decides to paint the scene again. When she sets up her easel outside, Mr. Ramsay interrupts her, seeking sympathy. Unable to comfort him, she remains silent until she notices his shoes. James and Cam Ramsay arrive, and the family leaves, while Lily feels remorse.

In the boat James and Cam are forced to confront their anger with Mr. Ramsay. On the lawn Lily is forced to confront her repressed emotions over the loss of her friend. After intense introspection, and Cam's change of heart, Cam and James reach the lighthouse together with their father; Lily finishes her painting.

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. Elaborate on the theme of love and loss in *To the Lighthouse*.
2. Bring out the significance of the Mrs. Ramsay's story.
3. Comment on Lily Briscoe's painting in the novel.
4. Discuss the consistent growth of Augustus Carmichael in *To the Lighthouse*.
5. How do Nancy and Andrew Ramsay mirror their parents on the beach trip?

**Course 7 – British Literature (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century) Part II****Summative Assessment – 60 Marks****General Pattern of Theory Question Paper****Time: 2 1/2 Hours****Total: 60 Marks****Part-A (Unit I)****1. A. Answer any one of the following****1x5 = 5**

3 questions to be given from Introduction

**B. Answer any one of the following****1x5 = 5**

Internal choice between the two poems in Unit 1

**Part-B (Unit II)****2. A. Write Short Notes on any two authors****2x5 = 10**

Four 5 Marks question to be given from representative writers

**Part-C (Representative Works)****3. A. Answer any one of the following****1x10 = 10**

Internal Choice between the two poems

**B. Answer any one of the following****1x10 = 10**

Internal Choice between the two essays

**C. Answer any one of the following****1x10 = 10**

Three 10 Marks questions to be given from the Novel

**D. Write Short Notes on any two of the following****2x5 = 10**

Four 5 Marks question to be given from the Novel



**Course 7 – British Literature (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century) Part II**  
**Summative Assessment**  
**Model Question Paper**

**Time: 2 1/2 Hours**

**Total: 60 Marks**

**Part-A (Unit I)**

**1. A. Answer any one of the following**

**1x5 = 5**

1. How does nineteenth century prose lay emphasis on emotions, imagination and intuition?
2. Discuss the characteristic features of Modernist Drama.
3. What is a Problem Play?

**B. Answer any one of the following**

**1x5 = 5**

1. Discuss the themes of Love and Death in the poem 'When I am dead, my dearest'
2. 'Wilfred Owen's verse shows that war poetry is necessarily poetry of horror.' Substantiate.

**Part-B (Unit II)**

**2. A. Write Short Notes on any two authors**

**2x5 = 10**

1. Jane Austen
2. William Hazlitt
3. Thomas Hardy
4. D. H. Lawrence

**Part-C (Unit-III)**

**3. A. Answer any one of the following**

**1x10 = 10**

6. Discuss the themes of transience and permanence described in the poem 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'
2. 'A Prayer for My Daughter' brings out the poet's desire for his child's future'. Elucidate

**B. Answer any one of the following**

**1x10 = 10**

1. Elaborate on psychological compulsion to physical freedom as brought out in the essay 'What Can Be Done?'
2. What is the contemporary relevance of the story 'With the Photographer'?

**C. Answer any one of the following**

**1x10 = 10**

6. Discuss the theme of love and loss in 'To the Lighthouse.'
7. How do Nancy and Andrew Ramsay mirror their parents on the beach trip?
8. How is 'Time' dealt with, in the novel 'To the Lighthouse?'

**D. Write Short Notes on any two of the following****2x5 = 10**

1. Significance of the Mrs. Ramsay's story
2. Lily Briscoe's painting
3. Consistent growth of Augustus Carmichael
4. Lighthouse

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## **COURSE 8-GENDER STUDIES (Part-1)**

<b>COURSE 8: GENDER STUDIES (PART 1)</b>	<b>Total Hrs: 45</b>
<b>UNIT-I</b> <b>INTRODUCTION TO GENDER STUDIES</b>	<b>15 hrs</b>
Concepts and trends: Sex and Gender, Feminity, Feminist Politics, Patriarchy, Masculinity, Discrimination, Gyno-centrism, Dichotomy, Third Gender, Queer Studies etc.	103
<b>Essays</b>	
• <i>Sexual Politics</i> - Kate Millet (Extract)	107
• <i>The Second Sex</i> - Simone De Beauvoir (Extract)	119
<b>UNIT-II</b> <b>REPRESENTATIVE WRITERS</b>	<b>15 hrs</b>
<b>Short Stories of Representative Writers</b>	
• <i>The Quilt</i> - Ismat Chughtai	124
• <i>Open It</i> – Manto	134
• <i>The Good Mother</i> - Mridula Koshy	139
• <i>Bayen</i> - Mahashweta Devi	145
<b>UNIT-III</b> <b>REPRESENTATIVE TEXTS</b>	<b>15 hrs</b>
<b><i>Nine Indian Women Poets: An Anthology</i> - Eunice D'Souza (Four Poems) -</b>	160
• Anonymous - Mamta Kalia	162
• Autobiographical - Eunice de Souza	163
• A Grass Widow's Prayer - Smitha Agarwal	165
• Woman - Tara Patel	167
<b>Biography sketches</b>	169
M. S.- A Life in Music- T. J .S George	

*Note: Teachers should explore the web/online resources to access the various concepts and illustrative examples*

**Books Recommended and Suggested Reading**

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.

Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*. University of California Press, 1995.

## Unit -1

### Introduction to Gender Studies

#### Gender Studies

**Gender Studies** is dedicated to the study of feminine, masculine and LGBT identity. An interdisciplinary approach is used for the study of gender and the intersection of gender with other categories of identity such as ethnicity, sexuality, class, and nationality. Although some of the major methodologies adopted in gender studies are inspired by feminist criticism, a wide array of theoretical approaches are brought into play to study the categories of gender.

#### Concepts and Trends

**Sex and Gender:** The terms 'gender' and 'sex' are used synonymously and they are often used interchangeably. Modern-day theorists use these as distinct concepts. 'Gender' is a social construction while 'sex' refers to the physical and biological and physical variations amidst men and women. Sex refers to biological characteristics such as physiology, hormones, anatomy, and genetics, while gender refers to non-biological characteristics that distinguish males and females, such as clothing, hobbies, interests, lifestyles, aptitudes, attitudes, and behaviour. Gender is not determined solely by one's biological sex, but rather by a complex interaction of social, cultural, and historical factors and can vary across different societies and time periods. Culture controls how gender is constructed and has imposed a binary structure. People are forced by the binary system to fit into either the masculine or feminine categories. This classification is pervasive and ingrained in social and cultural norms. Judith Butler defined gender as a social role performed by individuals and validated and accepted by society.

**Femininity** (also called womanliness) is a set of attributes, behaviours, and roles generally associated with women and girls. Femininity can be understood as socially constructed, and there is also some evidence that some behaviours considered feminine are influenced by both cultural factors and biological factors. Femininity is the dynamic sociocultural, psychological, and visible traits and characteristics that are traditionally associated with the birth sex of girls/women in a given culture and

are informed by sociocultural contexts. Traits such as nurturance, sensitivity, sweetness, supportiveness, gentleness, warmth, passivity, cooperativeness, expressiveness, modesty, humility, empathy, affection, tenderness, and being emotional, kind, helpful, devoted, and understanding have been cited as stereotypically feminine.

**Feminist Politics:** Feminist political theory is an area of philosophy that focuses on understanding and critiquing the way political philosophy is usually construed and on articulating how political theory might be reconstructed in a way that advances feminist concerns.

Feminism in India is a set of movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and opportunities for women in India. It is the pursuit of women's rights within the society of India. A feminist Government works to combat inhibitive gender roles and structures and to let gender equality have a formative impact on policy choices and priorities, and in the allocation of resources.

**Patriarchy:** Patriarchy literally means the ‘rule of the father’. Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power and authority, both in terms of political leadership and in personal relationships. It is characterized by the dominance of men over women and other marginalized genders, and the prioritization of male interests, values, and perspectives. Patriarchy takes different forms in different social and historical contexts. This is because patriarchy is a system that interacts with other social systems. It is shaped by and shapes the many social systems and institutions. It operates differently in different communities, economic systems, countries, etc. Patriarchy is deeply ingrained in many societies and manifests in various ways, including gender-based violence, unequal access to resources and opportunities, and the devaluation of femininity.

**Masculinity:** Masculinity is a set of socially constructed norms and behaviors that are traditionally associated with men and boys. These norms often include traits such as strength, courage, self-reliance, competitiveness, assertiveness, and emotional control. However, the specific characteristics that are considered masculine vary across cultures and can also change over time. Masculinity is not innate or biologically determined but is shaped by societal expectations and cultural values. ). Masculinity is an area of interest of recent origin and has been a part of academic circles since 1990 in universities in Britain and the United States.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination refers to the unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on their personal characteristics such as race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation,



nationality, or any other distinguishing feature. Discrimination can take various forms such as denial of opportunities, rights, and services, unfair treatment, unequal pay, harassment, or exclusion. Discrimination is a violation of basic human rights and can have negative impacts on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

**Gyno-centrism:** The word is derived from the Greek *gyno*, meaning ‘woman’ and *kentron*, meaning ‘center’ is a radical feminist discourse that champions woman-centered beliefs, identities, and social organization. Gyno-centrism is a social, cultural, and political system that places women's needs, desires, and perspectives at the center of attention. It is often associated with feminist movements and the goal of achieving gender equality. It also challenges the androcentric promotion of masculine standards as normative, and the presentation of those standards as neutral rather than gendered. Consequently, from a gyno-centric perspective, the assumption of masculine-neutral norms has meant that femininity has traditionally been presented as deficient, secondary, and lacking. Gyno-centric feminism is concerned, therefore, to revalue sexual difference and femininity positively.

**Dichotomy:** In gender studies, the term "dichotomy" refers to the binary division of people into two different and opposing genders, male and female. This binary concept of gender, which pre-supposes that biological sex and gender are interchangeable, has gained widespread acceptance and support from cultural and societal conventions. However, gender studies scholars have challenged this dichotomous view of gender, arguing that gender is a social construct that is more fluid and complex than a simple binary. They suggest that gender is not simply a matter of biology, but rather a complex interplay of social, cultural, and psychological factors.

In recent years, there has been growing awareness and acceptance of non-binary genders, which do not fit into the traditional binary categories of male and female. This has led to increased interest and research in the study of non-binary genders, including gender queer, gender fluid, and agender individuals. The dichotomy in gender studies is an important issue because it has real-world implications for individuals who do not fit into traditional gender categories. It can lead to discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion of individuals who identify as non-binary or gender non-conforming. By challenging the binary view of gender and recognizing the diversity and complexity of gender identity, gender studies scholars seek to promote greater inclusivity and equality for all individuals.

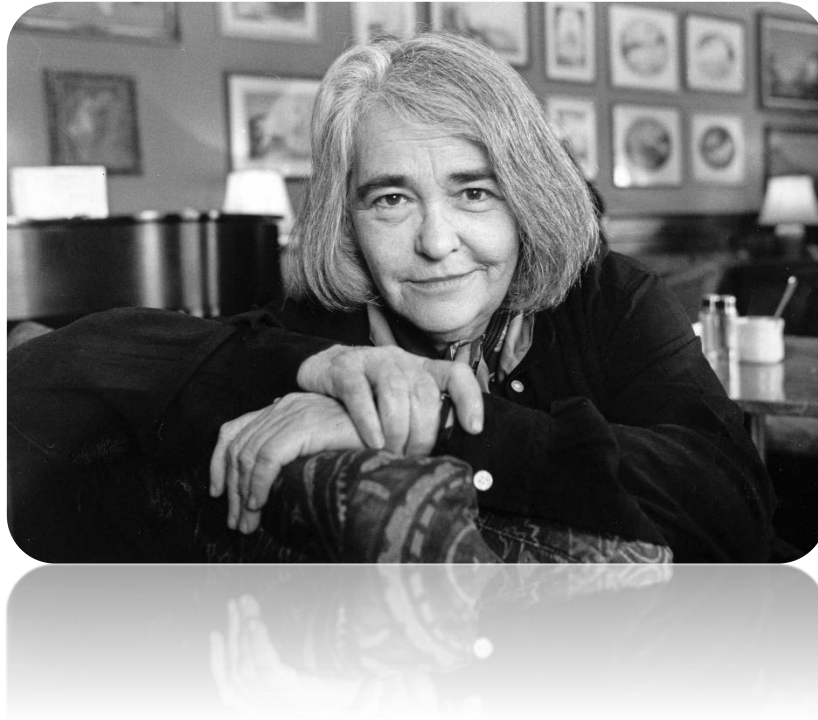
**Third Gender:** The concept of a third gender refers to the recognition and acceptance of individuals who do not identify as either male or female. It is an umbrella term that can include a variety of gender identities, including non-binary, gender queer, and gender non-conforming. The third gender is gaining acceptance and legal recognition in some countries, like India, Australia, Nepal, New Zealand, etc. In these countries, individuals can legally identify as a third gender on official documents such as passports and birth certificates.

**Queer Studies:** Also known as LGBTQ+ studies, is an interdisciplinary field of study that examines the experiences, cultures, histories, and politics of LGBTQ+ individuals and communities. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including gender identity, sexuality, social and political movements, literature, media, art, and popular culture. Queer studies emerged as a distinct academic discipline in the 1990s, building on earlier scholarship in women's studies, gender studies, and LGBTQ+ activism. It seeks to challenge and disrupt traditional ideas about gender and sexuality and to explore the diverse experiences and perspectives of LGBTQ+ individuals and communities.

## ESSAYS

**Sexual Politics**

(Extract)

**Kate Millet**

Katherine Murray Millett, popularly known as Kate Millett (14, September 1934 – 1936, September 2017) was an American feminist writer, filmmaker, artist, and activist. She was a leading figure in the second-wave feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and is best known for her book *Sexual Politics*, which is considered a classic of feminist literature.

Millett was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, and grew up in a middle-class family. She earned a degree in English literature from the University of Minnesota and later studied at Oxford University in England. After returning to the United States, Millett became involved in the feminist movement and began writing about gender and sexuality. Millett was also a visual artist and worked in a variety of media, including sculpture, painting, and photography. Her art often reflected her feminist beliefs and explored themes related to gender and sexuality.

Millett began her academic career as an English instructor at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. As a political activist, Millett fought for the rights of women, gay liberation, mentally disabled patients, and the elderly. Her first significant contribution came in 196 when she was named the first Chair of the Education Committee of the newly formed National Organization for Women (NOW).

Throughout her life, Millett remained an active advocate for feminist causes and continued to write and speak about gender, sexuality, and social justice. She died in 2017 at the age of 82.

In addition to *Sexual Politics*, she wrote several other books, including *The Prostitution Papers* and *Flying*, a memoir about her experiences as a pilot.

### About the Book

*Sexual Politics* was published in 1970. The book is considered a classic of feminist literature and a landmark in the history of the feminist movement. Millett critiques patriarchal power structures and their effect on women's lives. She argues that gender is a social construct that has been used to justify male dominance and control over women's bodies and sexuality.

Millett also analyzes the works of several prominent male writers, including D. H. Lawrence, Norman Mailer, and Henry Miller, to illustrate how their depictions of women reinforce and perpetuate gendered power imbalances. The book sparked widespread debate and controversy, both within feminist circles and in the broader society. It is credited with helping to popularize feminist theory and inspiring a new wave of feminist activism in the United States and beyond.

The basis of *Sexual Politics* (1970) was an analysis of patriarchal power. Millett developed the notion that men have institutionalized power over women, and that this power is socially constructed as opposed to biological or innate. This theory was the foundation for a new approach to feminist thinking that became known as radical feminism.

### Introduction

*Sexual Politics* was published at the time of an emerging women's liberation movement, and an emerging politics that began to define male dominance as a political and institutional form of oppression. Millett's work articulated this theory to the wider world, and in particular to the intellectual liberal establishment, thereby launching radical feminism as a significant new political theory and movement. In her book, Millett explained women's complicity in male domination by analyzing the

way in which females are socialized into accepting patriarchal values and norms, which challenged the notion that female subservience is somehow natural.

One of the key ideological aspects of patriarchy that Millett discusses is the idea of male superiority and female inferiority. This belief is perpetuated through various cultural institutions such as religion, education, and the media, and is reinforced by social norms and expectations that assign different roles and behaviors to men and women.

She argued that capitalism created economic inequalities that were particularly damaging to women, who were more likely to be in low-paying jobs and experience poverty. Millett was also concerned about educational inequality, particularly in terms of how women were treated within the educational system. She argued that women had historically been excluded from education or given limited opportunities, which had a detrimental effect on their lives and opportunities. Millett believed that education was essential for women's empowerment and that the educational system needed to be reformed to be more inclusive and accessible. Millett's work highlighted the inter-sectionality of various forms of inequality and oppression, including economic and educational inequality, and how they were interconnected with gender inequality

### **Extract**

In introducing the term “sexual politics,” one must first answer the inevitable question “Can the relationship between the sexes be viewed in a political light at all?”. The answer depends on how one defines politics. This essay does not define the political as that relatively narrow and exclusive world of meetings, chairmen, and parties. The term “politics” shall refer to power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another. By way of parenthesis, one might add that although an ideal politics might simply be conceived of as the arrangement of human life on agreeable and rational principles from whence the entire notion of power over others should be banished, one must confess that this is not what constitutes the political as we know it, and it is to this that we must address ourselves.

The following sketch, which might be described as “notes toward a theory of patriarchy,” will attempt to prove that sex is a status category with political implications. Something of a pioneering effort, it must perforce be both tentative and imperfect. Because the intention is to provide an overall

description, statements must be generalized, exceptions neglected, and subheadings overlapping and, to some degree, arbitrary as well.

The word “politics” is enlisted here when speaking of the sexes primarily because such a word is eminently useful in outlining the real nature of their relative status, historically and at the present. It is opportune, perhaps today even mandatory, that we develop a more relevant psychology and philosophy of power relationships beyond the simple conceptual framework provided by our traditional formal politics. Indeed, it may be imperative that we give some attention to defining a theory of politics which treats of power relationships on grounds less conventional than those to which we are accustomed. I have therefore found it pertinent to define them on grounds of personal contact and interaction between members of well-defined and coherent groups: races, castes, classes, and sexes. For, it is precisely because certain groups have no representation in a number of recognized political structures that their position tends to be so stable, their oppression so continuous.

In America, recent events have forced us to acknowledge at last that the relationship between the races is indeed a political one which involves the general control of one collectivity, defined by birth, over another collectivity, also defined by birth. Groups who rule by birthright are fast disappearing, yet there remains one ancient and universal scheme for the domination of one birth group by another—the scheme that prevails in the area of sex. The study of racism has convinced us that a truly political state of affairs operates between the races to perpetuate a series of oppressive circumstances. The subordinated group has inadequate redress through existing political institutions, and is deterred thereby from organizing into conventional political struggle and opposition.

Quite in the same manner, a disinterested examination of our system of sexual relationship must point out that the situation between the sexes now, and throughout history, is a case of that phenomenon Max Weber defined as *herrschaft*, a relationship of dominance and subordination. What goes largely unexamined, often even unacknowledged (yet is institutionalized nonetheless) in our social order, is the birthright priority whereby males rule females. Through this system a most ingenious form of “interior colonization” has been achieved. It is one which tends moreover to be sturdier than any form of segregation, and more rigorous than class stratification, more uniform, certainly more enduring. However, muted its present appearance may be, sexual dominion obtains nevertheless as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power.

This is so because our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a patriarchy. The fact is evident

at once if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance—in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands. As the essence of politics is power, such realization cannot fail to carry impact. What lingers of supernatural authority, the Deity, “His” ministry, together with the ethics and values, the philosophy and art of our culture—its very civilization—as T. S. Eliot once observed, is of male manufacture.

If one takes patriarchal government to be the institution whereby that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male, the principles of patriarchy appear to be twofold: male shall dominate female, elder male shall dominate younger. However, just as with any human institution, there is frequently a distance between the real and the ideal; contradictions and exceptions do exist within the system. While patriarchy as an institution is a social constant so deeply entrenched as to run through all other political, social, or economic forms, whether of caste or class, feudality or bureaucracy, just as it pervades all major religions, it also exhibits great variety in history and locale. In democracies, for example, females have often held no office or do so (as now) in such minuscule numbers as to be below even token representation. Aristocracy, on the other hand, with its emphasis upon the magic and dynastic properties of blood, may at times permit women to hold power. The principle of rule by elder males is violated even more frequently. Bearing in mind the variation and degree in patriarchy—as say between Saudi Arabia and Sweden, Indonesia and Red China—we also recognize our own form in the U.S. and Europe to be much altered and attenuated by the reforms described in the next chapter.

### **Ideological**

Hannah Arendt has observed that government is upheld by power supported either through consent or imposed through violence. Conditioning to an ideology amounts to the former. Sexual politics obtains consent through the “socialization” of both sexes to basic patriarchal polities with regard to temperament, role, and status. As to status, a pervasive assent to the prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male, inferior in the female. The first item, temperament, involves the formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category (“masculine” and “feminine”), based on the needs and values of the dominant group and dictated by what its members cherish in themselves and find convenient in subordinates: aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, “virtue,” and ineffectuality in the female. This is complemented by a second factor, sex role, which decrees a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct, gesture and attitude for each sex. In terms of activity, sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon



infants to the female, the rest of human achievement, interest, and ambition to the male. The limited role allotted the female tends to arrest her at the level of biological experience. Therefore, nearly all that can be described as distinctly human rather than animal activity (in their own way animals also give birth and care for their young) is largely reserved for the male. Of course, status again follows from such an assignment. Were one to analyze the three categories one might designate status as the political component, role as the sociological, and temperament as the psychological—yet their interdependence is unquestionable and they form a chain. Those awarded higher status tend to adopt roles of mastery, largely because they are first encouraged to develop temperaments of dominance. That this is true of caste and class as well is self-evident.

### **Sociological**

Patriarchy's chief institution is the family. It is both a mirror of and a connection with the larger society; a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole. Mediating between the individual and the social structure, the family effects control and conformity where political and other authorities are insufficient. As the fundamental instrument and the foundation unit of patriarchal society the family and its roles are prototypical. Serving as an agent of the larger society, the family not only encourages its own members to adjust and conform, but acts as a unit in the government of the patriarchal state which rules its citizens through its family heads. Even in patriarchal societies where they are granted legal citizenship, women tend to be ruled through the family alone and have little or no formal relation to the state.

As co-operation between the family and the larger society is essential, else both would fall apart, the fate of three patriarchal institutions, the family, society, and the state are interrelated. In most forms of patriarchy this has generally led to the granting of religious support in statements such as the Catholic precept that "the father is head of the family," or Judaism's delegation of quasi-priestly authority to the male parent. Secular governments today also confirm this, as in census practices of designating the male as head of household, taxation, passports etc. Female heads of household tend to be regarded as undesirable; the phenomenon is a trait of poverty or misfortune. The Confucian prescription that the relationship between ruler and subject is parallel to that of father and children points to the essentially feudal character of the patriarchal family (and conversely, the familial character of feudalism) even in modern democracies.

Traditionally, patriarchy granted the father nearly total ownership over wife or wives and children, including the powers of physical abuse and often even those of murder and sale. Classically, as head

of the family the father is both begetter and owner in a system in which kinship is property. Yet in strict patriarchy, kinship is acknowledged only through association with the male line. Agnation excludes the descendants of the female line from property right and often even from recognition. The first formulation of the patriarchal family was made by Sir Henry Maine, a nineteenth-century historian of ancient jurisprudence. Maine argues that the patriarchal basis of kinship is put in terms of dominion rather than blood; wives, though outsiders, are assimilated into the line, while sister's sons are excluded. Basing his definition of the family upon the *patria potestas* of Rome, Maine defined it as follows: "The eldest male parent is absolutely supreme in his household. His dominion extends to life and death and is as unqualified over his children and their houses as over his slaves." In the archaic patriarchal family "the group consists of animate and inanimate property, of wife, children, slaves, land and goods, all held together by subjection to the despotic authority of the eldest male."

McLennan's rebuttal to Maine argued that the Roman *patria potestas* was an extreme form of patriarchy and by no means, as Maine had imagined, universal. Evidence of matrilineal societies (preliterate societies in Africa and elsewhere) refute Maine's assumption of the universality of agnation. Certainly Maine's central argument, as to the primeval or state of nature character of patriarchy is but a rather naïf rationalization of an institution Maine tended to exalt. The assumption of patriarchy's primeval character is contradicted by much evidence which points to the conclusion that full patriarchal authority, particularly that of the *patria potestas* is a late development and the total erosion of female status was likely to be gradual as has been its recovery.

In contemporary patriarchies the male's *de jure* priority has recently been modified through the granting of divorce protection, citizenship, and property to women. Their chattel status continues in their loss of name, their obligation to adopt the husband's domicile, and the general legal assumption that marriage involves an exchange of the female's domestic service and (sexual) consortium in return for financial support.

The chief contribution of the family in patriarchy is the socialization of the young (largely through the example and admonition of their parents) into patriarchal ideology's prescribed attitudes toward the categories of role, temperament, and status. Although slight differences of definition depend here upon the parents' grasp of cultural values, the general effect of uniformity is achieved, to be further reinforced through peers, schools, media, and other learning sources, formal and informal. While we may niggle over the balance of authority between the personalities of various households, one must remember that the entire culture supports masculine authority in all areas of life and-outside of the

home-permits the female none at all.

To ensure that its crucial functions of reproduction and socialization of the young take place only within its confines, the patriarchal family insists upon legitimacy. Bronislaw Malinowski describes this as “the principle of legitimacy” formulating it as an insistence that “no child should be brought into the world without a man—and one man at that—assuming the role of sociological father.” By this apparently consistent and universal prohibition (whose penalties vary by class and in accord with the expected operations of the double standard) patriarchy decrees that the status of both child and mother is primarily or ultimately dependent upon the male. And since it is not only his social status, but even his economic power upon which his dependents generally rely, the position of the masculine figure within the family—as without—is materially, as well as ideologically, extremely strong.

Although there is no biological reason why the two central functions of the family (socialization and reproduction) need be inseparable from or even take place within it, revolutionary or utopian efforts to remove these functions from the family have been so frustrated, so beset by difficulties, that most experiments so far have involved a gradual return to tradition. This is strong evidence of how basic a form patriarchy is within all societies, and of how pervasive its effects upon family members. It is perhaps also an admonition that change undertaken without a thorough understanding of the sociopolitical institution to be changed is hardly productive. And yet radical social change cannot take place without having an effect upon patriarchy. And, not simply because it is the political form which subordinates such a large percentage of the population (women and youth) but because it serves as a citadel of property and traditional interests. Marriages are financial alliances, and each household operates as an economic entity much like a corporation. As one student of the family states it, “the family is the keystone of the stratification system, the social mechanism by which it is maintained.”

### **Economic and Educational**

One of the most efficient branches of patriarchal government lies in the agency of its economic hold over its female subjects. In traditional patriarchy, women, as non-persons without legal standing, were permitted no actual economic existence as they could neither own nor earn in their own right. Since women have always worked in patriarchal societies, often at the most routine or strenuous tasks, what is at issue here is not labor but economic reward. In modern reformed patriarchal societies, women have certain economic rights, yet the “woman’s work” in which some two thirds of the female population in most developed countries are engaged is work that is not paid for. In a money economy where autonomy and prestige depend upon currency, this is a fact of great importance. In general, the

position of women in patriarchy is a continuous function of their economic dependence. Just as their social position is vicarious and achieved (often on a temporary or marginal basis) through males, their relation to the economy is also typically vicarious or tangential.

Of that third of women who are employed, their average wages represent only half of the average income enjoyed by men. These are the U. S. Department of Labor statistics for average year-round income: white male, \$6704, non-white male \$4277, white female, \$3991, and non-white female \$2816.40 The disparity is made somewhat more remarkable because the educational level of women is generally higher than that of men in comparable income brackets. Further, the kinds of employment open to women in modern patriarchies are, with few exceptions, menial, ill paid and without status.

In modern capitalist countries women also function as a reserve labor force, enlisted in times of war and expansion and discharged in times of peace and recession. In this role American women have replaced immigrant labor and now compete with the racial minorities. In socialist countries the female labor force is generally in the lower ranks as well, despite a high incidence of women in certain professions such as medicine. The status and rewards of such professions have declined as women enter them, and they are permitted to enter such areas under a rationale that society or the state (and socialist countries are also patriarchal) rather than woman is served by such activity.

Since woman's independence in economic life is viewed with distrust, prescriptive agencies of all kinds (religion, psychology, advertising, etc.) continuously admonish or even inveigh against the employment of middleclass women, particularly mothers. The toil of working-class women is more readily accepted as "need," if not always by the working-class itself, at least by the middle-class. And to be sure, it serves the purpose of making available cheap labor in factory and lower-grade service and clerical positions. Its wages and tasks are so unremunerative that, unlike more prestigious employment for women, it fails to threaten patriarchy financially or psychologically. Women who are employed have two jobs since the burden of domestic service and child care is unrelieved either by day care or other social agencies, or by the co-operation of husbands. The invention of labor-saving devices has had no appreciable effect on the duration, even if it has affected the quality of their drudgery. Discrimination in matters of hiring, maternity, wages and hours is very great. In the U.S. a recent law forbidding discrimination in employment, the first and only federal legislative guarantee of rights granted to American women since the vote, is not enforced, has not been enforced since its passage, and was not enacted to be enforced.

In terms of industry and production, the situation of women is in many ways comparable both to colonial and to pre-industrial peoples. Although they achieved their first economic autonomy in the industrial revolution and now constitute a large and underpaid factory population, women do not participate directly in technology or in production. What they customarily produce (domestic and personal service) has no market value and is, as it were, pre-capital. Nor, where they do participate in production of commodities through employment, do they own or control or even comprehend the process in which they participate. An example might make this clearer: the refrigerator is a machine all women use, some assemble it in factories, and a very few with scientific education understand its principles of operation. Yet the heavy industries which roll its steel and produce the dies for its parts are in male hands. The same is true of the typewriter, the auto, etc. Now, while knowledge is fragmented even among the male population, collectively they could reconstruct any technological device. But in the absence of males, women's distance from technology today is sufficiently great that it is doubtful that they could replace or repair such machines on any significant scale. Woman's distance from higher technology is even greater: large-scale building construction; the development of computers; the moon shot, occur as further examples. If knowledge is power, power is also knowledge, and a large factor in their subordinate position is the fairly systematic ignorance patriarchy imposes upon women.

Since education and economy are so closely related in the advanced nations, it is significant that the general level and style of higher education for women, particularly in their many remaining segregated institutions, is closer to that of Renaissance humanism than to the skills of mid-twentieth-century scientific and technological society. Traditionally patriarchy permitted occasional minimal literacy to women while higher education was closed to them. While modern patriarchies have, fairly recently, opened all educational levels to women, the kind and quality of education is not the same for each sex. This difference is of course apparent in early socialization, but it persists and enters into higher education as well. Universities, once places of scholarship and the training of a few professionals, now also produce the personnel of a technocracy. This is not the case with regard to women. Their own colleges typically produce neither scholars nor professionals nor technocrats. Nor are they funded by government and corporations as are male colleges and those co-educational colleges and universities whose primary function is the education of males.

As patriarchy enforces a temperamental imbalance of personality traits between the sexes, its educational institutions, segregated or co-educational, accept a cultural programming toward the generally operative division between "masculine" and "feminine" subject matter, assigning the

humanities and certain social sciences (at least in their lower or marginal branches) to the female—and science and technology, the professions, business and engineering to the male. Of course the balance of employment, prestige and reward at present lie with the latter. Control of these fields is very eminently a matter of political power. One might also point out how the exclusive dominance of males in the more prestigious fields directly serves the interests of patriarchal power in industry, government, and the military. And since patriarchy encourages an imbalance in human temperament along sex lines, both divisions of learning (science and the humanities) reflect this imbalance. The humanities, because not exclusively male, suffer in prestige: the sciences, technology, and business, because they are nearly exclusively male reflect the deformation of the “masculine” personality, e.g., a certain predatory or aggressive character.

In keeping with the inferior sphere of culture to which women in patriarchy have always been restricted, the present encouragement of their “artistic” interests through study of the humanities is hardly more than an extension of the “accomplishments” they once cultivated in preparation for the marriage market. Achievement in the arts and humanities is reserved, now, as it has been historically, for males. Token representation, be it Susan Sontag’s or Lady Murasaki’s, does not vitiate this rule.

## Glossary

*Herrschaft* (origin, German): exercise power over. reign, dominion

*Interior colonisation*: women have been misrepresented and underrepresented. They have been treated (mistreated) as subalterns

*Hannah Arendt*: a German-born American historian and political philosopher

*Naïf*: naïve, naïve person

*Henry Maine*: British jurist, historian, and anthropologist

*Bronislaw Malinowski*: social anthropologist, writer, traveller, ethnologist, religion scholar and sociologist

*Patria potestas*: the power of the head of a Roman family over his wife, children, slaves etc. Had the right to punish by death and had complete control over the limited personal and private rights and duties of all members of the family

*De jure*: by right

*Chattel*: personal possession

*Susan Sontag*: American writer

*Lady Murasaki*: Japanese novelist

*Vitiate*: spoil or impair the quality or efficiency of

### Questions for Discussion

1. What is the generic meaning of the word politics and how has Kate Millet used the word politics in the given extract from “Sexual Politics”?
2. How does the political state of affairs operate between the sexes to perpetuate a series of oppressive circumstances?
3. The prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male and inferiority in the female. Explain.
4. How is the family both a mirror of and a connection with the larger society?
5. What are the two main functions of a family?
6. The impact of patriarchy in the economic and educational sphere?
7. Write about the status of working women in modern capitalist countries.
8. Knowledge is power, power is also knowledge. Substantiate with reference to the educational opportunities available to women.
9. What are the ideological implications of the masculine figure in a family?
10. How is economic and educational inequality interconnected with gender inequality?

## Second Sex

(Extract)

### Simone de Beauvoir



**Simone de Beauvoir** (9 January, 1908- 14 April 1986): French writer, intellectual, feminist, existentialist philosopher and political activist was born Simone Lucie-Ernestine-Marie-Bertrand de Beauvoir in Paris and. Beauvoir wrote novels, essays, biographies, autobiographies and monographs on philosophy, politics, and social issues. Her father, Georges Bertrand de Beauvoir studied law and worked as a civil servant, contenting himself instead with the profession of legal secretary. Her father, lost most of his fortune after World War I, and without dowries Simone and her sister, H  l  ne, had little hope of being married within their class. Fran  oise (n  e) Brasseur, her mother was a very religious woman who devoted herself to raising her children in the Catholic faith. Her religious, bourgeois orientation was a source of serious conflict between her and Simone. Beauvoir had been a deeply religious child as a result of her education and her mother's training; when she was 14, she had a crisis



of faith and decided that there was no God. Her rejection of religion was followed by her decision to pursue and teach philosophy. She remained an atheist till the end.

Beauvoir's father encouraged her to read and write from an early age, he gave edited selections from great works of literature. and who encouraged her to read and write from an early age. Beauvoir began her education in a private Catholic school for girls, until the age of 17. She studied mathematics at the Institut Catholique de Paris and literature/languages at the Institut Sainte-Marie. In 1925 she passed her Baccalaureate exams in Mathematics and Philosophy. In 1926, De Beauvoir left home to attend the prestigious Sorbonne, where she studied philosophy, she completed her exams and a thesis on German Mathematician and Philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in 1929. In 1926 she met existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, with whom she formed a lasting bond that would deeply influence their personal and professional lives.

*The Second Sex* published in 1949 is Simone de Beauvoir's masterwork is a powerful analysis of the Western notion of "woman," and a revolutionary exploration of inequality and otherness. It is a revolutionary work of feminism in which she examines the limits of female freedom and busts the deeply ingrained beliefs about femininity. Originally written in French text it was later translated into English. The book is vital and pioneering, remains as pertinent as when it was first published, and will continue to provoke and inspire generations to come. The Second Sex gave us the vocabulary for analyzing the social constructions of femininity and a method for critiquing these constructions.

Works:

*She Came to Stay* written in 1943 was De Beauvoir's first major published work. *'The Second Sex'*, *'The Prime of Life'*, *The Mandarins*, travel books *America Day by Day* and *The Long March* and four autobiographies: *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, *The Prime of Life*, *Force of Circumstance* and *All Said and Done*.

Beauvoir bases her idea of the 'Other' on Hegel's account of the master-slave dialectic. Instead of the terms "master" and "slave", she uses the terms "Subject" and "Other", the Subject is Man and the Other is Woman. The Subject is the absolute, the Other is the inessential. In the first case those marked as Other experience their oppression as a communal reality. They see themselves as part of an oppressed group. The oppressed Others may call on the resources of a common history and a shared abusive situation to assert their subjectivity and demand recognition and reciprocity.

Beauvoir describes the process of constructing the “Other” as something fundamental to human consciousness and selfhood. She gives a historical perspective to explain why women occupy the position of Other, and also to explore how this position is to be changed. The structures of the One and the Other may be universal, but women positioned as the Other is historically contingent.

The Othering process is, universal and takes place not only within groups but also between social groups differing on the basis of class, race, age and gender.

**Extract:**

She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other.

The category of Other is as original as consciousness itself. The duality between Self and Other can be found in the most primitive societies, in the most ancient mythologies; this division did not always fall into the category of the division of the sexes, it was not based on any empirical given: this comes out in works like Granet’s on Chinese thought, and Dumézil’s on India and Rome. In couples such as Varuna—Mitra, Uranus—Zeus, Sun—Moon, Day—Night, no feminine element is involved at the outset; neither in Good—Evil, auspicious and inauspicious, left and right, God and Lucifer; alterity is the fundamental category of human thought. No group ever defines itself as One without immediately setting up the Other opposite itself. It only takes three travelers brought together by chance in the same train compartment for the rest of the travelers to become vaguely hostile “others.” Village people view anyone not belonging to the village as suspicious “others.” For the native of country inhabitants of other countries are viewed as “foreigners”; Jews are the “others” for anti-Semites, blacks for racist Americans, indigenous people for colonists, proletarians for the propertied classes. After studying the diverse forms of primitive society in depth, Lévi-Strauss could conclude: “The passage from the state of Nature to the state of Culture is defined by man’s ability to think biological relations as systems of oppositions; duality, alternation, opposition, and symmetry, whether occurring in defined or less clear form, are not so much phenomena to explain as fundamental and immediate givens of social reality.”

These phenomena could not be understood if human reality were solely a *Mitsein* \* based on solidarity and friendship. On the contrary, they become clear if, following Hegel, a fundamental hostility to any other consciousness is found in consciousness itself; the subject posits itself only in opposition; it asserts itself as the essential and sets up the other as inessential, as the object. But the other consciousness has an opposing reciprocal claim: traveling, a local is shocked to realize that in

neighboring countries locals view him as a foreigner; between villages, clans, nations, and classes there are wars, potlatches, agreements, treaties, and struggles that remove the absolute meaning from the idea of the Other and bring out its relativity; whether one likes it or not, individuals and groups have no choice but to recognize the reciprocity of their relation. How is it, then, that between the sexes this reciprocity has not been put forward, that one of the terms has been asserted as the only essential one, denying any relativity in regard to its correlative, defining the latter as pure alterity? Why do women not contest male sovereignty? No subject posits itself spontaneously and at once as the inessential from the outset; it is not the Other who, defining itself as Other, defines the One; the Other is posited as Other by the One positing itself as One. But in order for the Other not to turn into the One, the Other has to submit to this foreign point of view. Where does this submission in woman come from? There are other cases where, for a shorter or longer time, one category has managed to dominate another absolutely. It is often numerical inequality that confers this privilege: the majority imposes its law on or persecutes the minority. But women are not a minority like American blacks, or like Jews: there are as many women as men on the earth. Often, the two opposing groups concerned were once independent of each other; either they were not aware of each other in the past, or they accepted each other's autonomy; and some historical event subordinated the weaker to the stronger: the Jewish Diaspora, slavery in America, and the colonial conquests are facts with dates. In these cases, for the oppressed there was a before: they share a past, a tradition, sometimes a religion, or a culture. In this sense, the parallel Bebel draws between women and the proletariat would be the best founded: proletarians are not a numerical minority either, and yet they have never formed a separate group. However, not one event but a whole historical development explains their existence as a class and 27 accounts for the distribution of these individuals in this class. There have not always been proletarians: there have always been women; they are women by their physiological structure; as far back as history can be traced, they have always been subordinate to men; their dependence is not the consequence of an event or a becoming, it did not happen. Alterity here appears to be an absolute, partly because it falls outside the accidental nature of historical fact. A situation created over time can come undone at another time—blacks in Haiti for one are a good example; on the contrary, a natural condition seems to defy change. In truth, nature is no more an immutable given than is historical reality. If woman discovers herself as the inessential and never turns into the essential, it is because she does not bring about this transformation herself. Proletarians say “we.” So do blacks. Positing themselves as subjects, they thus transform the bourgeois or whites into “others.” Women—except in certain abstract gatherings such as conferences—do not use “we”; men say “women,” and women adopt this word to refer to themselves; but they do not posit themselves authentically as Subjects. The proletarians made the revolution in Russia, the blacks in Haiti, the Indo-Chinese are fighting in Indochina. Women's

actions have never been more than symbolic agitation; they have won only what men have been willing to concede to them; they have taken nothing; they have received. It is that they lack the concrete means to organize themselves into a unit that could posit itself in opposition. They have no past, no history, no religion of their own; and unlike the proletariat, they have no solidarity of labor or interests; they even lack their own space that makes communities of American blacks, the Jews in ghettos, or the workers in Saint-Denis or Renault factories. They live dispersed among men, tied by homes, work, economic interests, and social conditions to certain men— fathers or husbands—more closely than to other women. As bourgeois women, they are in solidarity with bourgeois men and not with women proletarians; as white women, they are in solidarity with white men and not with black women. The proletariat could plan to massacre the whole ruling class; a fanatic Jew or black could dream of seizing the secret of the atomic bomb and turning all of humanity entirely Jewish or entirely black: but a woman could not even dream of exterminating males.

### **Glossary:**

Posit: To dispose or set firmly

Alterity: otherness

Poltatches: social event/celebration

Proletarian: labouring class

Bourgeois: working class

Ghetto: a part of the city occupied by a minority group/s

Mitsein: Human existence in so far as it is constituted by relationship or community with others

Answer the following:

1. Simone de Beauvoir's views on 'otherness'
2. How does Beauvoir analyze the oppressions of colonized, enslaved and other exploited people?
3. How does Beauvoir bring in the concept of Marxism in the discussion of 'otherness'?

**Unit –II**  
**REPRESENTATIVE WRITERS**  
**Short Stories**

**The Quilt - Ismat Chughtai**



**The Author-Ismat Chughtai**

Ismat Chughtai was born on August 21, 1915, in Badaun, Uttar Pradesh. Her father, Mirza Qasim Beg Chughtai, was a high-ranking government official. She was the youngest of nine siblings, all her sisters

had been married until she gained awareness, thus, in her childhood, she only had the company of her brothers, and she continuously challenged their supremacy. Whether it was playing street football or horseback riding and climbing trees, she did everything that girls were forbidden to do. She studied up to the fourth standard in Agra, and till the eighth standard in Aligarh, but her parents were not in favour of her higher education, instead, they wanted to train her to become a decent housewife. But Ismat wanted to get further educated at any cost, she threatened to run away from home and become a Christian and enter into a missionary school if her education was not continued. Eventually, her father had to kneel in front of her stubbornness and she went to Aligarh and got admission in the tenth standard. After FA, she enrolled in an IT college in Lucknow where her subjects were English, Polity, and Economics. After arriving there, she got the opportunity to breathe in the open air for the first time and was freed from all the shackles of middle-class Muslim society.

Ismat Chughtai started writing stories at the age of eleven or twelve but did not publish them under her own name. Ismat had met Shahid in Aligarh while he was doing his MA. Arriving in Bombay, and they got married. Ismat received many important awards and prizes from government and non-government organizations. In 1975, she was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India. In 1990, the Madhya Pradesh government awarded her the Iqbal Samman, the Ghalib Award, and the Film fare Award. After illuminating the realm of literature for half a century, she left the world on October 24, 1991, and according to her will, her body was cremated at Chandanwari Electric Crematorium.

### **About the short story**

The short story Lihaaf (The Quilt) deals with idea of homosexuality. The story sheds light on the homosexual aspect of both men and women. A child narrative is used to elaborate the entire story of a violation of patriarchal social norms. 'The Quilt' is the story of a forty-two-year-old lesbian, Begum Jan, who tried to seduce the narrator of this palpitating yet unnerving story. Begum Jan is housing the tomboy for a week. The girl is the narrator of this story. She states boldly in this story that it is because her mother wanted her to be away from being with her brothers and getting into fights with them that she had sent her to live with Begum Jan. The mother of the narrator was probably unaware of Begum

Jan's depraved sexuality, and uncontrollable sexual urges and so left the narrator alone in a mansion with her. From lesbian sexuality to the hypocrisy of arranged marriages in India, from boy prostitutes to orgasms in women, from the sexism of society with regards to manly women to the abuse of children in the confines of domesticity – Ismat Chughtai tells all in this highly corrosive-to-the-touch story. Though the narrative is masked with a child's voice, the message is clear. The sexual acts represented in this story are beyond social yardsticks of patriarchy thus blurring the gender roles. The gender roles of the key characters constantly change. The change is for existence, liberation and for the sake of identity.

### **The Quilt**

In winter when I put a quilt over myself its shadows on the wall seem to sway like an elephant. That sets my mind racing into the labyrinth of times past. Memories come crowding in. Sorry. I'm not going to regale you with any romantic tale about my own quilt. It's hardly a subject for romance. It seems to me that the blanket, though less comfortable, does not cast shadows as terrifying as the quilt, dancing on the wall.

I was then a small girl and fought all day with my brothers and their friends. Often I wondered why the hell I was so aggressive. At my age my other sisters were busy drawing admirers while I fought with any boy or girl I ran into! This was why when my mother went to Agra she left me with an adopted sister of hers for about a week. She knew well that there was no one in that house, not even a mouse, with which I could get into a fight. It was severe punishment for me! So Amma left me with Begum Jaan, the same lady whose quilt is etched in my memory like the scar left by a blacksmith's brand. Her poor parents agreed to marry her off to the Nawab who was of 'ripe years' because he was very virtuous. No one had ever seen a nautch girl or prostitute in his house. He had performed Haj and helped several others to do it.

He, however, had a strange hobby. Some people are crazy enough to cultivate interests like breeding pigeons and watching cockfights. Nawab Saheb had contempt for such disgusting sports. He kept an open house for students — young, fair and slender-waisted boys whose expenses were borne by him. Having married Begum Jaan he tucked her away in the house with his other possessions and promptly forgot her. The frail, beautiful Begum wasted away in anguished loneliness.



One did not know when Begum Jaan's life began — whether it was when she committed the mistake of being born or when she came to the Nawab's house as his bride, climbed the four-poster bed and started counting her days. Or was it when she watched through the drawing room door the increasing number of firm-calved, supple-waisted boys and delicacies begin to come for them from the kitchen! Begum Jaan would have glimpses of them in their perfumed, flimsy shirts and feel as though she was being raked over burning embers!

Or did it start when she gave up on amulets, talismans, black magic and other ways of retaining the love of her straying husband? She arranged for night long reading of the scripture but in vain. One cannot draw blood from a stone. The Nawab didn't budge an inch. Begum Jaan was heart-broken and turned to books. But she didn't get relief. Romantic novels and sentimental verse depressed her even more. She began to pass sleepless nights yearning for a love that had never been. She felt like throwing all her clothes into the oven. One dresses up to impress people. Now, the Nawab didn't have a moment to spare. He was too busy chasing the gossamer shirts, nor did he allow her to go out. Relatives, however, would come for visits and would stay for months while she remained a prisoner in the house. These relatives, free-loaders all, made her blood boil. They helped themselves to rich food and got warm stuff made for themselves while she stiffened with cold despite the new cotton in her quilt. As she tossed and turned, her quilt made newer shapes on the wall but none of them held promise of life for her. Then why must one live? ...such a life as Begum Jaan was destined to live.

But then she started living and lived her life to the full. It was Rabbu who rescued her from the fall. Soon her thin body began to fill out. Her cheeks began to glow and she blossomed in beauty. It was a special oil massage that brought life back to the half-dead .Begum Jaan. Sorry, you won't find the recipe for this oil even in the most exclusive magazines. When I first saw Begum Jaan she was around forty. She looked a picture of grandeur, reclining on the couch. Rabbu sat against her back, massaging her waist. A purple shawl covered her feet as she sat in regal splendour, a veritable Maharani. I was fascinated by her looks and felt like sitting by her for hours, just adoring her. Her complexion was marble white without a speck of ruddiness. Her hair was black and always bathed in oil. I had never seen the parting of her hair crooked, nor a single hair out of place. Her eyes were black and the elegantly-plucked eyebrows seemed like two bows spreading over the demure eyes. Her eyelids were heavy and eyelashes dense. However, the most fascinating part of her face were her lips — usually dyed in lipstick and with a mere trace of down on her upper lip. Long hair covered her temples. Sometimes her face seemed to change shape under my gaze and looked as though it were the face of a young boy...



Her skin was also white and smooth and seemed as though someone had stitched it tightly over her body. When she stretched her legs for the massage I stole a glance at their sheen, enraptured. She was very tall and the ample flesh on her body made her look stately and magnificent. Her hands were large and smooth, her waist exquisitely formed. Rabbu used to massage her back for hours together. It was as though getting the massage was one of the basic necessities of life. Rather — more important than life's necessities.

Rabbu had no other household duties. Perched on the couch she was always massaging some part of her body or the other. At times I could hardly bear it — the sight of Rabbu massaging or rubbing at all hours. Speaking for myself, if anyone were to touch my body so often I would certainly rot to death. Even this daily massaging was not enough. On the days she took a bath, she would massage the Begum's body with a variety of oils and pastes for two hours. And she would massage with such vigour that even imagining it made me sick. The doors would be closed, the braziers would be lit and then the session began. Usually, Rabbu was the only person allowed to remain inside on such occasions. Other maids handed over the necessary things at the door, muttering disapproval.

In fact — Begum Jaan was afflicted with a persistent itch. Despite using all the oils and balms the itch remained stubbornly there. Doctors and hakims pronounced that nothing was wrong, the skin was unblemished. It could be an infection under the skin. "These doctors are crazy... There's nothing wrong with you. It's just the heat of the body," Rabbu would say, smiling while she gazed at Begum Jaan dreamily.

Rabbu! She was as dark as Begum Jaan was fair, as purple as the other one was white. She seemed to glow like heated iron. Her face was scarred by small- pox. She was short, stocky and had a small paunch. Her hands were small but agile, her large, swollen lips were always wet. A strange, sickening stench exuded from her body. And her tiny, puffy hands moved dexterously over Begum Jaan's body — now at her waist, now at her hips, then sliding down her thighs and dashing to her ankles. Whenever I sat by Begum Jaan my eyes would remain glued to those roving hands.

All through the year Begum Jaan would wear Hyderbadi jaali karga kurtas, white and billowing, and brightly coloured pyjamas. And even if it was warm and the fan was on, she would cover herself with a light shawl. She loved winter. I, too, liked to be at her house in that season. She rarely moved out. Lying on the carpet she would munch dry fruits as Rabbu rubbed her back. The other maids were jealous of Rabbu. The witch! She ate, sat and even slept with Begum Jaan! Rabbu and Begum Jaan were the subject of their gossip during leisure hours. Someone would mention their name and the whole group would burst into loud guffaws. What juicy stories they made up about them! Begum Jaan

was oblivious to all this, cut off as she was from the world outside. Her existence was centred on herself and her itch.

I have already mentioned that I was very young at that time and was in love with Begum Jaan. She, too, was fond of me. When Amma decided to go to Agra, she left me with Begum Jaan for a week. She knew that left alone in the house I would fight with my brothers or roam around. The arrangement pleased both Begum Jaan and me. After all she was Amma's adopted sister! Now the question was — where would I sleep? In Begum Jaan's room, naturally. A small bed was placed alongside hers. Till ten or eleven at night we chatted and played "Chance." Then I went to bed. Rabbu was still rubbing her back as I fell asleep. "Ugly woman!" I thought. I woke up at night and was scared. It was pitch dark and Begum Jaan's quilt was shaking vigorously as though an elephant was struggling inside.

"Begum Jaan...", I could barely form the words out of fear. The elephant stopped shaking and the quilt came down. "What's it? Get back to sleep." Begum Jaan's voice seemed to come from somewhere. "I'm scared," I whimpered. "Get back to sleep. What's there to be scared of? Recite the Ayatul kursi."\* "All right..." I began to recite the prayer but each time I reached

ya lamu ma bain... I forgot the lines though I knew the entire Rubayat by heart. "May I come to you, Begum Jaan?" "No, child... Get back to sleep." Her tone was rather abrupt. Then

I heard two people whispering. Oh God, who was this other person? I was really afraid.

"Begum Jaan... I think there's a thief in the room." "Go to sleep, child... There's no thief," this was Rabbu's voice. I drew the quilt over my face and fell asleep. By morning I had totally forgotten the terrifying scene enacted at night. I have always been superstitious — night fears, sleep- walking and sleep-talking were daily occurrences in my childhood. Everyone used to say that I was possessed by evil spirits. So the incident slipped from my memory. The quilt looked perfectly innocent in the morning. But the following night I woke up again and heard Begum Jaan and Rabbu arguing in a subdued tone. I could not hear what they were saying and what the upshot of the tiff was, but I heard Rabbu crying. Then came the slurping sound of a cat licking a plate... I was scared and got back to sleep.

The next day Rabbu went to see her son, an irascible young man. Begum Jaan had done a lot to help him out — bought him a shop, got him a job in the village. But nothing really pleased him. He stayed with Nawab Saheb for some time, who got him new clothes and other gifts; but he ran away for no good reason and never came back, even to see Rabbu... Rabbu had gone to a relative's house to see

him. Begum Jaan was reluctant to let her go but realised that Rabbu was helpless. So she didn't prevent her from going.

All through the day Begum Jaan was out of her element. Her body ached at every joint, but she couldn't bear anyone's touch. She didn't eat anything and kept moping in the bed the whole day. "Shall I rub your back, Begum Jaan...?" I asked zestfully as I shuffled the deck of cards. She began to peer at me. "Shall I, really?" I put away the cards and began to rub her back while Begum Jaan lay there quietly. Rabbu was due to return the next day... but she didn't. Begum Jaan grew more and more irritable. She drank cup after cup of tea and her head began to ache. I again began rubbing her back which was smooth as the top of a table. I rubbed gently and was happy to be of some use to her. "A little harder... open the straps," Begum Jaan said. "Here... a little below the shoulder... that's right... Ah! what pleasure..." She expressed her satisfaction between sensuous breaths. "A little further..."

Begum Jaan instructed though her hands could easily reach that spot. But she wanted me to stroke it. How proud I felt! "Here... oh, oh, you're tickling me... Ah!" She smiled. I chatted away as I continued to massage her. I'll send you to the market tomorrow... What do you want? ...A doll that sleeps or wakes up as you want?" "No, Begum Jaan... I don't want dolls... Do you think I'm still a child?" "So you're an old woman then," she laughed. "If not a doll I'll get you a babua\*... Dress it up yourself. I'll give you a lot of rags. Okay?"

"Okay," I answered.

"Here," She would take my hand and place it where it itched and I, lost in the thought of the babua, kept on scratching her listlessly while she talked. "Listen... you need some more frocks. I'll send for the tailor tomorrow and ask him to make new ones for you. Your mother has left some dress material." "I don't want that red material... It looks so cheap," I was chattering, oblivious of where my hands travelled. Begum Jaan lay still... Oh God! I jerked my hand away.

"Hey girl, watch where your hands are... You hurt my ribs." Begum Jaan smiled mischievously. I was embarrassed. "Come here and lie down beside me..." She made me lie down with my head on her arm "How skinny you are... your ribs are coming out." She began counting my ribs. I tried to protest.

"Come on, I'm not going to eat you up. How tight this sweater is! And you don't have a warm vest on." I felt very uncomfortable. "How many ribs does one have?" She changed the topic.

"Nine on one side, ten on the other," I blurted out my school hygiene, rather incoherently.

"Take away your hand... Let's see... one, two, three..."

I wanted to run away, but she held me tightly. I tried to wriggle out and Begum Jaan began to laugh loudly. To this day whenever I am reminded of her face at that moment, I feel jittery.

Her eyelids had drooped, her upper lip showed a black shadow and tiny beads of sweat sparkled on her lips and nose despite the cold. Her hands were cold like ice but clammy as though the skin had been stripped off. She had put away the shawl and in the fine karga kurta her body shone like a ball of dough. The heavy gold buttons of the kurta were open and swinging to one side.

It was evening and the room was getting enveloped in darkness. A strange fright overwhelmed me. Begum Jaan's deep-set eyes focused on me and I felt like crying. She was pressing me as though I were a clay doll and the odour of her warm body made me almost throw up. But she was like one possessed. I could neither scream nor cry. After sometime she stopped and lay back exhausted. She was breathing heavily and her face looked pale and dull. I thought she was going to die and rushed out of the room...

Thank God Rabbu returned that night. Scared, I went to bed rather early and pulled the quilt over me. But sleep evaded me for hours. Amma was taking so long to return from Agra! I had got so terrified of Begum Jaan that I spent the whole day in the company of maids. I felt too nervous to step into her room. What could I have said to anyone? That I was afraid of Begum Jaan? Begum Jaan who was so attached to me?

That day Rabbu and Begum Jaan had a tiff again. This did not augur well for me because Begum Jaan's thoughts were immediately directed towards me. She realised that I was wandering outdoors in the cold and might die of pneumonia! "Child, do you want to put me to shame in public? If something should happen to you, it'll be a disaster." She made me sit beside her as she washed her face and hands in the water basin. Tea was set on a tripod next to her.

"Make tea, please... and give me a cup," she said as she wiped her face with a towel. "I'll change in the meanwhile." I took tea while she dressed. During her body massage she sent for me repeatedly. I went in, keeping my face turned away and ran out after doing the errand. When she changed her dress, I began to feel jittery. Turning my face away from her I sipped my tea.

My heart yearned in anguish for Amma. This punishment was much more severe than I deserved for fighting with my brothers. Amma always disliked my playing with boys. Now tell me, are they man-eaters that they would eat up her darling? And who are the boys? My own brothers and their puny, little friends! She was a believer in strict segregation for women. And Begum Jaan here was more

terrifying than all the loafers of the world. Left to myself, I would have run out to the street — even further away! But I was helpless and had to stay there much against my wish.

Begum Jaan had decked herself up elaborately and perfumed herself with the warm scent of attars. Then she began to shower me with affection. “I want to go home,” was my answer to all her suggestions. Then I started crying. “There, there... come near me... I’ll take you to the market today. Okay?” But I kept up the refrain of going home. All the toys and sweets of the world had no interest for me.

“Your brothers will bash you up, you witch,” She tapped me affectionately on my cheek.

“Let them.” “Raw mangoes are sour to taste. Begum Jaan,” hissed Rabbu, burning with jealousy. Then Begum Jaan had a fit. The gold necklace she had offered me moments ago flew into pieces. The muslin net dupatta was torn to shreds. And her hair-parting which was never crooked was a tangled mess.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” She screamed between spasms. I ran out. Begum Jaan regained her senses after much fuss and ministrations. When I peered into the room on tiptoe, I saw Rabbu rubbing her body, nestling against her waist. “Take off your shoes,” Rabbu said while stroking Begum Jaan’s ribs. Mouse-like, I snuggled into my quilt. There was a peculiar noise again. In the dark Begum Jaan’s quilt was once again swaying like an elephant. “Allah! Ah!...” I moaned in a feeble voice. The elephant inside the quilt heaved up and then sat down. I was mute. The elephant started to sway again. I was scared stiff. However, I had resolved to switch on the light that night, come what may. The elephant started fluttering once again and it seemed as though it was trying to squat. There was sound of someone smacking her lips, as though savouring a tasty pickle. Now I understood! Begum Jaan had not eaten anything the whole day.

And Rabbu, the witch, was a notorious glutton. She must be polishing off some goodies.

Flaring my nostrils I scented the air. There was only the smell of attar, sandalwood and henna, nothing else. Once again the quilt started swinging. I tried to lie down still but the quilt began to assume such grotesque shapes that I was thoroughly shaken. It seemed as though a large frog was inflating itself noisily and was about to leap on me.

“Aa... Ammi...” I whimpered courageously. No one paid any heed. The quilt crept into my

brain and began to grow larger. I stretched my leg nervously to the other side of the bed to grope for the switch and turned it on. The elephant somersaulted inside the quilt which deflated immediately. During the somersault the corner of the quilt rose by almost a foot...

Good God! I gasped and plunged into my bed.

**Meanings:-**

\* Verse from the Quran read to ward off evil.

\* A Male Doll.

**I) Answer the following questions briefly: -**

1. Who was Begum Jaan?
2. How did Rabbu help Begum?
3. What is the theme of 'The Quilt'?
4. What does 'The Quilt' represent in Ismat's story?
5. What is the significance of the title 'The Quilt'?

**II) Discussion Questions -**

1. How does 'The Quilt' explore the place of women in 1900's India?
2. Does Chughtai present Begum Jaan as an admirable character?
3. What role does Rabbu play in the story?
4. Comment on the significance of the title 'The Quilt'.
5. The story 'The Quilt' by Ismat Chughtai deals with the subject of homosexuality in a complex manner. Elaborate.

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### Open it - Saadat Hasan Manto



**Saadat Hasan Manto** (11 May 1912 – 18 January 1955)

Saadat Hasan Manto was born in Paproudi village of Samrala, in the Ludhiana district of the Punjab, India in a Muslim family of barristers on 11 May 1912. He belonged to a Kashmiri trading family that had settled in Amritsar in the early nineteenth century and taken up legal profession. His father, Khwaja Ghulam Hasan, was a session judge of a local court. His mother, Sardar Begum had a Pathan ancestry and was the second wife of his father. Ethnically a Kashmiri he was proud of his roots. In a letter to Pandit Nehru he suggested that being 'beautiful' was the second meaning of being 'Kashmiri'

Manto was a Pakistani writer, playwright and author, who was active in British India and later, after the 1947 partition of India, in Pakistan. Writing mainly in Urdu, he produced 22 collections of short

stories, a novel, five series of radio plays, three collections of essays and two collections of personal sketches. His best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics. He is best known for his stories about the partition of India, which he opposed, immediately following independence in 1947. He is acknowledged as one of the finest 20th century Urdu writers. He died on 18 January 1955, at Lakshmi Mansions, Lahore.

### About the short story

‘Khol Do’ is one of the most famous controversial stories by writer Saadat Hasan Manto. It is one of the master piece depicting the effects of violence during the partition of India. The story is about a traumatically widowed father Sirajuddin who left India during the partition and is desperately searching for his missing daughter. He describes her features to a group of boys and prays for their success in finding her. Khol Do is an accurate portrayal of the depths of human depravity in the backdrop of the horrific violence during partition. It is set in Mano Majra and the novel also depicts the cultural and political clashes between the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

### Open It!

The special train left Amritsar at two in the afternoon, taking eight hours to reach Mughalpura. Quite a few passengers were killed along the way, several received injuries, and some just wandered off to God knows where. At ten in the morning, when Sirajuddin opened his eyes on the ice-cold ground of the refugee camp, he saw a surging tide of men, women and children all around him and even his small remaining ability to think and comprehend deserted him.

He stared at the murky sky for the longest time. Amidst the incredible din, his ears seemed to be firmly plugged against any sound. Seeing him in this state anyone would have thought he was deeply engrossed in thought. That, of course, was not the case. He was totally numb. His entire being seemed to be suspended in space. Gazing blankly at the murky sky his eyes collided with the sun and a shaft of intense light penetrated every fibre of his being. Suddenly he snapped back into consciousness. A series of images flitted across his mind images of plunder, fire, stampede, the train station, gunshots, night, and Sakina. Sirajuddin jumped up with a start and made his way through the interminable tide of humanity around him like a man possessed.



For three full hours he scoured the camp calling out Sakina! Sakina! but found no trace of his only daughter, a teenager. The whole area was rife with ear-splitting noise. Someone was looking for his child, another for his mother, still another for his wife or daughter. Finally, Sirajuddin gave up and plopped down off to one side from sheer exhaustion, straining his memory to retrieve the moment when Sakina had become separated from him. However, each effort to recall ended with his mind jammed at the sight of his wife's mutilated body, her guts spilling out, and he couldn't go any further.

Sakina's mother was dead. She had died right in front of Sirajuddin's eyes. But where was Sakina? As she lay dying, Sakina's mother had urged him, Don't worry about me. Just take Sakina and run! Sakina was with him. Both of them were running barefooted. Her dupatta slipped off and when he stopped to pick it up, Sakina shouted, Abba Ji, leave it! He retrieved it anyway. Thinking about it now, his eyes spontaneously drifted toward the bulge in the pocket of his coat. He plunged his hand into the pocket and took out the piece of cloth. It was the same dupatta. There could be no doubt about it. But where was Sakina herself?

Sirajuddin strained his memory but his tired mind was muddled. Had he been able to bring her to the station? Was she with him aboard the train? Had he passed out when the rioters forced the train to stop and stormed in? Was it then they carried her off? His mind was bursting with questions, but there were no answers. He needed sympathy, but everyone around him needed it too. He wanted to cry, but couldn't. His tears had dried up. Six days later, when Sirajuddin was able to pick himself up a bit, he met some people who were willing to help him. Eight young men equipped with a lorry and rifles. He blessed them and described Sakina for them.

She is fair and exceedingly pretty. She takes after her mother, not me. She is about seventeen, with big eyes and dark hair. She has a beautiful big mole on her right cheek. She is my only daughter. Please find her. May God bless you! The young volunteers assured old Sirajuddin with tremendous fervor that if his daughter was alive he would be reunited with her in a few days. The volunteers didn't spare any effort. Putting their lives in harm's way, they went to Amritsar. They rescued several women, men, and children and brought them to safety. Ten days passed but they found no trace of Sakina. One day they were heading off to Amritsar on their rescue mission aboard the same lorry when they spotted a girl trudging along the road near Chuhrat. The sound of the lorry startled the girl and she took off in a panic.

The boys stopped the lorry and ran after her. Eventually they caught up with her in a field. She was stunningly beautiful and had a big black mole on her right cheek. don't be afraid one of the boys tried to reassure her. Are you Sakina? The girl turned deathly pale. She didn't reply. When the boys, all of them, reassured her gently, her fear subsided and she admitted that she was indeed Sakina, Sirajuddin's daughter.

The young men tried every which way to please her. They fed her, gave her milk to drink, and then helped her to get into the lorry. One of 76 of them even took off his jacket and gave it to her because she was feeling quite awkward without her dupatta, making repeated but futile attempts to cover her chest with her arms. Several days went by without Sirajuddin receiving any news of Sakina. He spent his days making the rounds of different camps and offices but had no success in tracing his missing daughter. At night he prayed for the success of the volunteers who had assured him that if she was alive they would find her in a matter of days.

One day he saw those volunteers at the camp. They were sitting inside the lorry. Just as the lorry was about to take off Sirajuddin rushed over to them and asked, Son, did you find my Sakina? Oh, we will, we will, they said in unison and the lorry took off. Once again Sirajuddin prayed for the success of these young men, which took some of the weight off his heart. That evening he noticed some hullabaloo close to where he was sitting. Four men were carrying a stretcher. Upon inquiring he was told a girl was found lying unconscious by the train tracks. He followed them. They handed the girl over to the hospital staff and left. For a while he stood leaning against the wooden post outside the facility and then he walked slowly inside. There was no one in the room. All he could see was the same stretcher with a corpse lying on it. Sirajuddin advanced toward it taking small, hesitant steps.

All of a sudden, the room lit up. Sakina!! He screamed spotting the big black mole gleaming on the blanched face of the dead girl. What is it? The doctor who had turned on the light asked him. Sir, I am her father! The words came out of his raspy throat. The doctor glanced at the body lying on the stretcher. He felt the pulse and, pointing at the window, told Sirajuddin, Open it! Sakina's body stirred ever so faintly on the stretcher. With lifeless hands she slowly undid the knot of her waistband and lowered her shalwar. She is alive! My daughter is alive Old Sirajuddin screamed with unbounded joy. The doctor broke into a cold sweat.

Translated by Muhammad Umar Memon

**I. Answer the following questions briefly in a sentence:**

1. When was Khol Do written?
2. Name some of the themes in Khol Do.
3. The trauma of the father as depicted.
4. The setting of the story.

**II. Discussion Questions:**

1. The horrors of partition as depicted by Manto in 'Khol Do'.
2. Explain the efforts made by Sirajudin in searching for his daughter.
3. Khol Do is an essay of Communal violence during partition. Elucidate.

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### **The Good Mother – Mridula Koshy**



#### **The Author Mridula Koshy: -**

Mridula Koshy was born in New Delhi and migrated to the US in the 1984, at the age of 14. She has worked as a trade union organiser and community organiser, parent and writer.

She returned to India in 2004 and currently works as a librarian and community organiser with The Community Library Project, which runs four free community libraries, which together serve over 4000 members in Delhi NCR.

Her writing about the free library movement can be read in Caravan Magazine, on the blog of TCLP, All About Book Publishing, Scroll, Yahoo News, and Goethe Institute India's website.

Her collection of short stories, *If It Is Sweet* won the 2009 Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize and was shortlisted for the 2009 Vodafone Crossword Book Award.

Her first novel, *Not Only the Things That Have Happened* (Harper Collins, 2012) was shortlisted for the 2013 Crossword Book Award.

Koshy's books often explore the lives of Delhi's working class. Her latest novel *Bicycle Dreaming* focuses on family life in a waste worker community in Delhi. It follows a 13-year-old girl named Noor, who dreams of owning a bicycle and working as a *kabadiwala* like her father. However, the loss of his job forces him to work as a ragpicker, adversely affecting her family.

Her stories have appeared in literary journals including *Wasafiri*, as well as in anthologies in India, the United Kingdom and Italy.

### About the short story

*The Good Mother*, a tragic and rather gruesome take on single motherhood, is the story of a woman's pilgrimage to immerse the ashes of her dead sons. She picks up a younger lover on the way from Rishikesh to Delhi and ends up tipping the brass urn containing the ashes of her sons out of the window sill in a Defence Colony rent-in, which she shares with her foreign lover, instead of in the holy waters of the Ganga.

### The Good Mother

At the end of her tenure as mother, she leaves Manchester for her parents' home in Dehra Dun to enact what she doubts they will recognise as a pilgrimage. Once in Dehra Dun, she does not have the strength to dissemble, and she compromises with herself despite the fierce conviction that she is not obliged to compromise, ever again. She compromises neither by lying about nor by revealing the truth of her planned pilgrimage to her parents. She compromises by remaining silent in the face of their questions and instructions. This is what she saves her strength for: leaving them hobbled together on the veranda, her mother holding steady her now nearly-blind father with one hand, sari-end clenched between her teeth, freeing the other hand to wave at the car pulling the daughter away through folds of brown and green mountains.

In Rishikesh, she forgets them as she has forgotten those left behind in Manchester. She does not visit the ghats. She makes herself forget her children's wild joy the year before, as they floated twinkling lights in spinning boats of sewn leaves. 'To Delhi!' they had cheered. 'No,' she had said, 'not Delhi. The Ganges doesn't go to Delhi.'

She takes the Shatabdi Express to Agra and, acquiring an unexpected companion there—a boy younger by far than herself—criss-crosses back to Delhi with him. They take the accommodation in South Extension. To their relief, it is given to them at the same weekly rate of Rs 1,000 per night, exclusive of utilities, laundry and food, that they are quoted in the Delhi Tourism office. The rooms are dusty. There is an over-large front room their host says is the drawing room, where his dead wife's numerous self-portraits hang. There is a cramped bedroom, a closet-sized bathroom, and down the hall, a kitchen they share with the other tenants of the house.

Mr Kapoor introduces them to Megha, who ducks her head in assent to everything he has to say. Afterwards, trying to picture Megha, all she can remember is the sharpness of the part in her hair, a mismatch for her plump shyness. Mr Kapoor speaks in a certain weary code: 'cancer', pointing to his wife's self-portraits in the drawing room, 'call centre worker', pointing to Megha's bobbing head, 'sleeping', referring to Arun, whose door he opens without knocking.

When Mr Kapoor leaves, she looks at Marc for a moment. Megha slides back into her room, and then they are alone in the hallway of introductions. She opens their door, the bags are pushed in and they follow, shut the door and lock it with the key Mr Kapoor has provided. For good measure, Marc slides the reluctant top bolt into place, and she pushes in the bolt by the door handle. With a giggle, she slides her hand into his front pocket, but he, already weary from the effort of the bolt, is turning to the television. She watches him destroy the strange symmetry of cushions, balanced on point and in a row down the length of a bony sofa, in his search for the remote. A minute later, he has abandoned his failed search and is on his haunches, one hand cupping his chin and the other relentlessly depressing the channel button adjacent to the screen as he switches through a multitude of offerings.

She turns and explores the flat and feels a stirring of delight when she discovers the balcony. It is narrow and latticed in thick concrete lace. Where there should be light, there are shadows she welcomes.

She unpacks both their bags, fills the plastic bucket in the bathroom, mixes in the laundry soap and washes the dirty clothes that have been accumulating since Agra. Now it is she who is on her haunches, the long tail of her kurta tucked between her calves and buttocks. The concrete floor is free of the messiness of the bathroom in Agra. She jettisons worries about fungal infections and relishes the feel of water on the bare bottom of her feet. When her kurta slips out as she swivels from one pile of garments to the next, she removes it and her salwar, then her too-tight bra and underwear.

When the laundry is done, she carries it out to the balcony where she ties together the cords from three salwars, lashes them to a length of wire looped in the corner and stretches her creation back and forth, criss-crossing the narrow space of air. Taking care to first wipe the wire clean, she hangs his jeans, her salwars and kameezes, his t-shirts and boxers, her blessedly clean underwear. She lingers behind the gauzy window of pink that is her dupatta. The clothes crowd around her in mild movement and their gentle slaps rebuke her naked arms, breasts and ribs. In the heat of the afternoon, she shivers and thinks, I might be seen.

She has to thrust her face into the lattice and only then can she look out. She has allowed this apparent obscurity to lull her. Now she hides between the rows of clothes hanging around her and skirts all three walls, pulling items of clothing around her as she steps forward to peer through the openings. Two of the walls open to sky, and below that, a still market lane of motley shacks. The third wall, she discovers, abuts the balcony of the property wedged next door to Mr Kapoor's. She had not noticed from the outside, but the houses are built with no space between them, just the superfluity of two sets of walls in a tight kiss, so that they are suctioned, one to the other.

But these houses bear no relationship of symmetry nor do they accord any thought to each other. The balcony next door is built a good four feet higher so that she can see at eye level, through the openings in the lattice, the floor next door. It contains a jumble of abandoned cots, tools and wooden boards, a plastic container—the kind used for storing drinking water—and a few steel cups tumbled in wood

shavings. The house next door appears to be under construction, and perhaps the workers have broken for lunch and will return. She beats a retreat.

Marc is still in front of the television—no longer perched on his toes, no longer seated on his haunches, but now sprawled on his front; still close enough to the instrument to control it with his forefinger. She lays herself face down on his back. Her own back dries from the quick suck of the air conditioner that he has turned on. She thinks to clean him somehow before she begins. His clothes are stiff with the dirt of the train journey; his hair, lank and fine, smells salty to her, and in the delicate creases at the back of his young neck, little twisted rubbings of black grease alternate in the neat pattern of a feathery stalk of wheat. She licks him there, and he relents, sinks his chin from his cupped palm and releases his head. She licks methodically till he unlocks the elbows on which he is braced and lowers his chest and then his head to the floor. She abandons her earlier plan to bathe him and works against the hard floor as she digs under him for the buttons of his fly. Once unbuttoned, she turns him over. The salt-scent rising from him sharpens.

He is a selfish lover, and that is how she prefers him. They are practised in their selfishness for all they have known each other—only these nine days. She has blown him thus: tiredly now, and in the beginning relentlessly, with all of the technique and innovation at her command, to keep him with her. From Agra, she has brought him with her to Delhi.

When she is done, she moves up his length to look at his sleepy face. On the television screen, an advertisement for contact lenses urges changing the more or less fixed brown of Indian eyes. The flickering light of the screen scatters on his face, and in the late afternoon dark of the heavily curtained drawing room, he blinks in and out of her vision. She searches for the sheen of moisture that gathers in dew on the fine hairs of his upper lip.

Even after he turned three, the cut-off she had outlined to him, her younger son had insisted on continuing nursing, and further insisted on exercising this right in the most public of places and always with her seated and while standing himself between her knees. He had insisted loudly and earnestly—after a burger at the Burger King, the crumbles of meat spraying from his mouth; when they stopped to rest on the bench outside the pet store at the mall; and in the parking lot, with the driver's seat pulled back to its furthest and with his chubby back braced against the steering wheel.

And when her younger son pulled his face back from her, his sly eyes filled with laughter, and disdainful of his brother's disapproval, then there was this same sheen of spent pleasure on his upper lip, and sometimes a droplet or two of her watery offering sliding from plumped upper lip to chin. At such times she had not known what, if anything, that she felt, was truly hers. There was always the huge surge of embarrassment that they were engaged thus, at his age, and with her limp breasts. Alongside this, there was the gratitude that she could so simply satisfy such great need. And then there was also the dread of his impending flight from her on the same trajectory his brother had taken—a trajectory that allowed her first-born the distant and cool appraisal with which he had taken to viewing her. Gently, she releases the sleeping Marc's face, turning it toward the television, so that he will wake in the cradle of its oblivion.

She had met Marc outside the doctor's office at the government clinic in Agra and offered to help him with the necessary translation. The doctor had bypassed the three-step process of French to English to Hindi and back by easily communicating his expertise and anger as he gestured for the pants to be



pulled down, held up the syringe, turned to her with a sharp 'antihistamine', and proceeded with a brutal haste that forced her back and out of the room. She apologised to the boy later for not staying and conveyed the awkwardness of the idea that the doctor had disapproved of her seemingly being with him, a foreigner.

They stumbled forward. In Agra, in French, she was able to say what had eluded her since her flight from Manchester. '*Mes fils*,' she said, and her eyes remained dry. Her sons can only be viewed in a hasty jerk of her head over her shoulders, so the eyes slide in a split second past the vision of two sturdy boys belted into their car seats, and then out the window of her two-door, single-mom, second-hand, Toyota Tercel to take in her car crushed into the motorway barrier. Her eyes blink, obliterating what they have seen. Her sons are distant and dwindling specks, fixed against the static horizon of that barrier, which she flees. To look too long is to be sucked back. She is on a pilgrimage, she explained to Marc, and he said he would like to be on a pilgrimage as well. Not on this pilgrimage, she replied. But it was weak, and he knew it, because he followed her to her hotel, claiming she still owed him translation services. At this, she laughed and let him into her room.

From outside the drawing room, she hears the tap-tapping of hammers. There is lightness to the sound. These tools, she thinks, are made light, for smaller hands, or made cheaply, for poorer people. In the bedroom, she removes from her bag the small lota which her mother has wrapped in an endless length of fabric. Perhaps her mother had thought to stave off this inevitable scattering. Certainly, the numerous knots had eluded her in Agra. She had stood with the awkward bundle, defeated in the effort to find a spot away from the crowd, ignored the curious looks of those around her and picked and picked at the wrapping. In the end, afraid of being found out for the foolishness of all her ideas about herself, above all the idea of herself as a good mother, she had wept, turned and left.

She stands at the balcony door listening to the repeated tapping, the lengthy pauses, the cawing of a crow, and then she steps out. She stands and waits in between the hanging clothes. It is a long wait, and she feels herself seized with revulsion. The hammers fall silent. Accompanied by the scuffling sounds (how many faces pressed to the lattice—she tries to see and cannot) she thinks hard about what it is that she really feels.

Dry-eyed, she unwraps her bundle. This time it is easy. The knots are not really knots, just cloth twisting and criss-crossing, and deep inside the length of cloth there is a knot that slides free, revealing warm brass which gleams in the shade of the balcony. She tips the lota to the lattice that faces the street and market below. The lip of the jar catches the edge of the narrow opening in the concrete but cannot intrude beyond. Shaking out the contents is an awkward business. The brass and concrete where they meet and scrape make a rasping sound, and there is no breeze to carry the ashes that, soft and oily, disperse only slowly. Much of it mounds into the opening, and when the jar is empty, she sets it down, kneels to the floor and, bringing her mouth close, blows. Little bits swirl back and stick to her lids and lips, but the rest float out, and before she can grasp the moment they are gone. She cannot remember the words her mother had taught her to say.

The year before, when they pleaded for their sewn-leaf boats to float if not to Delhi then to Agra, she promised her boys she would take them there someday. 'To the Taj Mahal, to the Taj Mahal,' they had



screamed, ambushing each other with imaginary laser guns. Having failed them, she prays, the words stumbling from her, 'Please, take them to see the Taj.'

**I. Answer the following questions briefly:**

1. Name the places mentioned where the mother was travelling.
2. At the beginning of the essay, where was the mother going?
3. Where was the mother's home?
4. What mode of transportation the mother uses in Agra?
5. Whom did the mother meet in Shatabdi Express?
6. Describe the room in which the mother lived.
7. Who was Marc and where did the mother meet him?

**II. Discussion Questions:**

1. Explain the Mother's journey from Manchester.
2. Highlight the mother's ordeal with the knots.

### Bayen by Mahasweta Devi



#### About the Author : -

**Mahasweta Devi** (14 January 1926 – 28 July 2016) The Jnanpeth award winner Mahasweta Devi was born in a Brahmin family on 14 Jan 1926 in Dacca, British India. Her father, Manish Ghatak, was a poet and novelist of the Kallol movement, who used the pseudonym Jubanashwa . Devi's mother, Dharitri Devi, was also a writer and a social worker-whose brothers include sculptor Sankha Chaudhury and the founder-editor of *Economic and Political Weekly* of India, Sachin Chaudhury. She was an acclaimed Indian writer in Bengali and a social activist hailing from Bengal. She is a writer with commitment for her writing is not a means of entertainment but a mission. HER literary writings are closely associated with socio-political activities as she has ceaselessly worked for the cause of the

tribals, landless labourers and marginalized communities. Her philosophical support to the Naxalite Movement on humanitarian and social ground has invited wrath of the governmental and intellectual classes of India. Her works have been termed as the rich sites of feminist discourse by leading scholars.

Devi wrote over 100 novels and over 20 collections of short stories. Her notable literary works include *Hajar Churashir Maa*, *Rudali*, and *Aranyer Adhikar*. She was a leftist who worked for the rights and empowerment of the tribal people (*Lodha* and *Shabar*) of West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh states of India. She was honoured with various literary awards such as the Sahitya Academy Award (in Bengali), Jnanpith Award and Ramon Magsaysay Award along with India's civilian awards Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan.

### About the Short story

The short story *Bayen* of Mahasweta Devi is a dramatic representation of the bitter reality of life associated with women's life in rural India. Chandidasi, the protagonist of the story appears as a professional grave digger. She takes this responsibility from her father Kaludome after his death. It was a work that was against her feminine sensibility, but she did to please her forefathers. She is assigned the duty to make the burial of the dead children and to guard the grave at night. She is married to Malinder Gangaputra and was blessed with a child Bhagirath. Her happy life was envied by her sister-in-law and the villagers. And they waited for the time to destroy her peaceful life when she exhibited extreme affection to the daughter of her Sister-in-law, who was buried in the graveyard. Out of affection she took the dead body of the child from the burial ground and expressing her affection, and this is noticed by her sister-in-law, Shashi and the villagers and labelled her as a Bayen. In spite of her good intention and sincerity at work, she is damned as a witch. And this blame is strengthened by the society and her husband Malinder Gangaputra too. Her extreme affectionate attitude towards children made her to be labelled as Bayen by the villagers. Nevertheless, she feels her presence to be harmful even to her child who is craving to see and talk to her. With the passage of the time, she is disgusted with her job and seeing the corpses of infants, she perceives the image of her own suckling child whom she had to leave for guarding the graves of the dead children. She becomes restless to leave the job and becomes impatient to seek a fulfilment of her own feminism. She suffers discrimination and apathy from her forefathers, her husband and even her own son Bhagirath. While going to Malinder she happened to overhear the conversation of the robber's destructive plans of obstructing the train and causing harm to people. In order to save the people, she goes to the direction to the approaching train and gave up her life. However, she exhibits the sublimity of her character when she dies diverting a train accident by stopping the train with bamboo blocks which would otherwise have been the cause of great loss of life and property. She ultimately dies and the railway authorities are resolute to reward her posthumously.

## Bayen

Translated by Mahua Bhattacharya

Bhagirath was very young when Chandi, his mother, was declared a bayen, a witch, and thrown out of the village.

A bayen is not an ordinary witch. She cannot be killed like an ordinary one, because to kill a bayen means death for your children.

So, Chandi was turned into a pariah and put in a hut by the railway tracks. Bhagirath was raised, without much care, by a stepmother. He did not know what a real mother could be like. Now and then, he did get a glimpse of the shed below the tree across the field where Chandibayen lived alone. Chandi, who could never be anybody's idea of a mother. Bhagirath had also seen the red flag fluttering on her roof from afar, and sometimes, in the flaming noon of April, he had caught sight of her red-clad figure—a dog on her trail clanking a piece of tin across the paddy fields, moving towards a dead pond.

A bayen has to warn people of her approach when she moves. She has but to cast her eyes on a young man or boy and she sucks the blood out of him. So a bayen has to live alone. When she walks, everyone—young and old—moves out of her sight. One day, and one day alone, Bhagirath saw his father, Malindar, talk to the bayen. T

"Look away my son," his father had ordered him.

The bayen stood on tiptoe by the pond. Bhagirath caught the reflection of the red-clad figure in the pond. A sun-bronzed face framed by wild matted hair. And eyes that silently devoured him. No, the bayen did not look at him directly either. She looked at his image as he saw hers, in the dark waters, shuddering violently.

Bhagirath closed his eyes and clung to his father.

"What has made you come here?" hissed his father at her.

"There's no oil for my hair, Gangaputta, no kerosene at home. I'm afraid to be alone."

She was crying, the bayen was crying. In the waters of the pond her eyes appeared to swim with tears.

"Didn't they send your week's ration on Saturday?" Every Saturday, a man from the Dom community of the village went to the tree with a week's provision- half a kilogram of rice, a handful of pulses, oil, salt, and other food for the bayen.

A bayen should not eat too much.

Calling on the tree to bear witness, he would leave the basket there and run away as fast as he could.

"The dogs stole it all."

"Do you need some money?"

"Who will sell me things?"

"Okay, I'll buy the things and leave them by the tree. Now, go away."

"I can't, I can't live alone

He picked up a handful of mud and stones from the side of the pond

"Gangaputta, this boy..?"

With an ugly oath Malindar threw the mud and stones at her.

The bayen ran away.

Malindar covered his face with his hands, and cried bitterly.

"How could I do it? I hurled stones at her body? It used to be a body as soft as butter. How could I be such a beast?"

It was a long time before he could calm down. He lit himself a cigarette.

"You, you talk talked to her, Baba?"

Malindar smiled mysteriously. "So what, my son?"

Bhagirath was terrified.

To talk to the bayen meant certain death.

The thought of his father dying scared the daylights out of him, because he was sure that his stepmother would throw him out.

Malindar said, his voice growing extraordinarily somber, "She may a bayen now, but she used to be mother once."

Bhagirath felt something rise to his throat. A bayen for a mother! Is a bayen a human being then? Hadn't he heard that a bayen raises dead children from the earth, hugs and nurses them? That whole trees dry up the instant a bayen looks at them? And Bhagirath, he is a live boy, born of a bayen's womb? He could think no more.

"She used to be a woman, your mother."

"And your wife?"

"Who asked you to be a bayen, then? Go away! Go away!"

"Yes, that too," Malindar sighed. "It was bad luck. Hers, yours and mine. Once a bayen, she's no longer human. Which is why I tell that you don't you have a mother."

Bhagirath stared in wonder at his father as they walked back along the mud culvert. He had never heard his father speak in that tone before.

They were not ordinary Doms. They worked in the cremation grounds and the municipality allowed only one Dom family to work there. Malindar's family used to make bric-a-brac out of cane and bamboo, raise poultry on the government farms and make compost out of garbage. Out of the entire Dom community only Malindar knew how to sign his name an accomplishment that had recently earned him a job in the subdivisional morgue; a government job that entitled him to forty-two rupees a month after signing on as Malindar Gangaputta. Besides, as Bhagirath knew, Malindar also bleached skeletons out of unclaimed bodies, using lime and bleaching powder. A whole skeleton, or even the skull or the rib cage, meant a lot of money. The morgue official sold the bones to would-be doctors at a handsome profit. The mere ten or fifteen rupees that his father got out of it was enough for him. He had invested the sum in usury and bought some pigs with the interest. His father was a respected man in the community. He went to his subdivisional office in shirt and shoes.

Red-eyed, Malindar stared at the red flag which burned above the bayen's hut like a vermilion dot against the saffron-colored horizon.

"She had everything, when she was your mother, my wife. I gave her striped saris to wear, and silver jewelry. I fed her, I rubbed oil into her hair, her body. She used to be so afraid of the dark," he muttered. "Did fate have to make a witch out of her? She'd be better off dead. Did you know that no one can take her life except she herself, my son?"

"Who makes a bayen out of a person, father?"

"God"

Malindar glanced around wearily to see if any other shadow hovered near Bhagirath in the midday sun.

A bayen is crafty in her art like any flower girl in the market. If she is keen on having some child, she walks close by, her face in shadow in spite of the fierce sun all around. Invisible to mortals, she casts the shadow of her veil on the child as he walks. If the boy dies she chuckles with feigned innocence, "How was I to know? I just tried to make a little shade for him in the heat but then he goes and melts away like butter! Too soft!"

No, there was no shadow of a foul-smelling, filthy red veil anywhere near his son. "What is there to fear, my son?" he said. "She'd never do you any harm."

As days went by, Bhagirath's mind began to stray towards the hut. Be it on the paddy field, be it on the pasture with the cows, his mind would rush to the railway tracks, if only to see how terror-stricken the bayen was of her loneliness, to see how she put oil in her hair and dried it in the April wind.

He was too afraid to go to her.

Perhaps he would never come back if he did. Perhaps she would turn him into a tree or a stone forever. He only gazed out for days on end. The sky between the Chhatim tree and the bayen's hut seemed like a woman's forehead where the red flag now limp, now flying in the breeze- burned like a vermilion dot. He had a mad wish to rush to the hut. Then, afraid of his own wish, he swiftly traced his way back home, wondering why no one mistreated him for being a bayen's son.

If you ill-treat a bayen's son, your children will die.

Bhagirath's stepmother didn't mistreat him either. In fact, she never showed any emotion for him whatsoever, the chief reason being that she did not have a son. Both her children, Sairavi and Gairabi, were daughters. She had no influence over her husband-first, because she hadn't borne him a son and second, because she had such protruding teeth and gums that her lips couldn't cover them. She would say, "My lips won't close at all, makes me look as if I'm smirking all the time. See to it Gangaputta, be sure to cover my face when I die or else, they'll say: There goes the bucktoothed wife of the Dom."

Jashi did nothing but work all day-cleaning the house, cooking rice, collecting wood, making cowdung cakes for fuel, tending to the pigs and picking lice out of her daughters' hair. She called Bhagirath "boy." Come eat, boy! Have your bath, boy!--as if theirs was a very formal relationship. If she did not take proper care of him the bayen might kill her daughters by black magic. Also, she knew she would have to depend on Bhagirath for support in her old age.

Sometimes she would sit, chin in hand, her lips baring her prominent gums, terrified that the bayen was working a magic spell on her daughters that very moment or making their effigies out of clay. At those times Jashi looked uglier than usual.

Malindar had deliberately married the ugliest girl in the community because when he had married the loveliest one, she had turned out to be a witch. Everyone knew that Malindar had loved his first wife deeply. Perhaps it was that love which had prompted him to tell Bhagirath everything about Chandi bayen, his mother.

One day, they were walking along the railway tracks. Malindar had a parcel of meat under his arms. It was one of his strange weaknesses that he could not kill the pigs he raised himself. He raised them and sold them to others and when he needed some meat, he had to get a portion of the meat from his customer. "Shall we sit a while under this tree, eh?" he asked his thirteen-year-old son, almost apologetically. Then he sat down, his back against the trunk of the banyan tree.

After a while Bhagirath asked, "This is the place the robbers go by, isn't it, Father?" Malindar liked to listen to him and often felt himself unworthy of his son.

Those days, the evening trains passing Sonadanga, Palasi, Dhubulia and other places were often robbed. They came in all shapes and sizes, these robbers... posing as gentlemen, poor students, refugees, settlers or house owners, to get an entry into the compartments. Then, at a pre-determined place and time they would pull the emergency chain and make the train stop in the dark. Their

accomplices would rush in from the fields outside. They would loot all they could, beat and even kill up passengers, if necessary, before disappearing. This banyan tree, in particular, was their favorite haunt after dark. This is what made Bhagirath ask about the robbers.

Bhagirath went to the government primary school. Once, his teacher had made them paint the wall magazine. He had sketched out the letters himself and had made the boys color them. It was from the magazine that Bhagirath had come to know that after the Untouchability Act of 1955, there were no longer any untouchables in India. He also learned that there was something called the Constitution of India, which says at the very beginning that all are equal. The magazine still hung on the wall but Bhagirath and his kind knew that their co-students, as well as the teachers, liked them to sit a bit apart, though none but the very poor and needy from the "lower" castes came to the school. There are schools, and then there are schools. In spite of this, the fact was that Bhagirath now spoke a bit differently, his accent had changed.

But, Malindar's mind was elsewhere. His eyes scoured the bare fields and beyond, as if in search of something. "My son," he said, "I used to be a hard and unkind man, but mother was soft, your very soft. She cried often. What irony!"

Irony indeed! It was as if God came and turned the tables, in a single day, on the Dom community. Chandi became a bayen, a heartless childhunter. Malindar grew gentle. He had to. If one of a family turns inhuman and disappears beyond the magic portals of the supernatural, the other has to stay behind and make a man of himself.

Malindar grabbed his son's hand. "Why should you not know what everyone knows about your mother," he told him. "Your mother's name was Chandidasi Gangadasi, she used to bury dead children. She was a descendant of Kalu Dom. She belonged to a race of cremation attendants, the Gangaputras. They were known as Gangaputras and Gangadasis, men and women who cremated the dead ones on the banks of the Ganga. Any river was the Ganga to them, in reverence to the great river."

Malindar would carry bamboo trunks and slice wood in the cremation ground while Chandi worked in the graveyard meant for the burial of children, a legacy of their respective pasts. The graveyard lay to the north of the village, overlooked by a banyan tree beside a lake. In those days if a child died before it was five years of age, its body had to be buried instead of being cremated. Chandi's father used to dig the graves and spread thorn bushes over them to save the dead from the marauding jackals. "Hoi! Hoi, there!" his drunken voice would thunder ominously in the dark. Chandi's father survived almost entirely on liquor and hashish. On Saturday he would go round the village carrying a thali in his hand. "I am your servant" he would call out, "I am a Gangaputta. May I have my rations, please?"

The villagers were frightened of him. They would keep young children out of his way, silently fill his thali and go away. One day a fair girl with light eyes and reddish hair came instead of him.

"I am Chandi," she announced, "daughter of the Gangaputta. My father is dead. Give me his rations instead."

"Will you do your father's work then?"

"Yes. I will bury the dead and guard the graves."



"Aren't afraid?" you

"I am not."

The word "fear" was foreign to Chandi. She could understand why parents cried when their children died, but the dead had to be buried, they couldn't be kept at home. That was what her job was, simple as that. What was fearsome or heartless about it? It must surely have been ordained by God himself? At least the Gangaputras had no hand in it. Why should people detest or fear them so much?

This was the Chandi that Malindar was to marry.

Even in those early days, Malindar was in the bone-business with the morgue official. The bones from the charnel house were used as fertilizer and were expensive as well. Malindar had money as well as courage. At night he hurried to return home shouting across the field, "I am not scared of anybody! I am a fire-eater. I have no fear of anyone!"

One night he came upon Chandi, roaming alone, under the banyan lantern in hand.

"Hey there!" he said. "Aren't you afraid of the dark?"

Chandi burst into peals of laughter which surprised him.

That very April,

He married her. The next April Bhagirath was born. One day Chandi came back crying, carrying Bhagirath in her arms. "They have stoned me, Gangaputta, they said I meant evil."

"How dare they?" Malindar stopped fencing the yard and almost danced with rage.

"Who dares stone the wife of Malindar Gangaputta?" he roared.

"Now, will you stop raising a row over it, and sit here for a while?"

"Oh, oh, oh!"

"Where is the shirt for Bhagirath?"

Malindar had forgotten.

"Tomorrow, I promise," he said. "A red shirt for my son, a red sari and a yellow blouse for the son's mother!"

"No, no, not for me. It only makes people envious and cast an evil eye."

"Don't I know that? At the primary school, they were always skipping classes. I alone learned how to sign my name. They were envious. I landed a government job, more envy. I married a golden doll of a wife, a descendant of the great Kalu Dom, still more envy. I built a new hut, and had two bighas of land for share cropping, how could they help being envious? Bastards! Get as envious as you like! I can take it all, I, Malindar Gangaputta. I'll send my son to school over there, beyond the railway tracks."

As he spoke, Chandi who sat and looked fixedly at him, grew silent. "I have not the heart to do it any more," she said at last. "I have not the heart to pick up the spade. But it is God's will. What can I do?" In wonder she shook her head and looked down at her limbs.

If there had been a male member of her father's family, he would have done the job. But there was none. She was a Gangaputra, keeper of the cremation grounds, She belonged to the family of the ancient Kalu Dom, he who gave shelter to the great king Harishchandra when he lost his kingdom. When the king became a servant, a chandal in the burning ghat, it was Kalu Dom who had employed him. When the king regained his kingdom and the ocean girdled earth was his, he began to dole out large territories. "What have you got for us?" asked a voice booming large across the royal court.

It was the ancient Gangaputra. His type could never speak in a low voice nor hear because the fire of the pyres roared eternally in their ears.

"What do you mean?"

"You have ordained cattle for the Brahmins, daily alms for the monks. What you for us?"

"All the burning ghats of the world are yours." "Repeat it."

"All the burning ghats of the world are yours." "Swear it!"

"I swear by God."

The ancient Gangaputra raised his hands and danced in wild joy.

"Ha!" he shouted. "The burning ghats for us, the burning ghats for us. The world's graveyards for us!"

Being a member of this particular race, could she, Chandi, reject this traditional occupation? Dare she, and let God wreak his wrath on her? Her fear grew greater every day. She would turn her face away after digging a grave.

Her fear and unease remained even after the grave was well covered with prickly bushes. At any time the legendary fire-mouthed jackal might steal in and start digging away with large paws to get at the body inside.

God... God... God... Chandi would weep softly and rush back home. She would light a lamp and sit praying for Bhagirath. At those times she also prayed for each and every child in the village that each should live forever. This was a weakness that she had developed of late. Because of her own child, she now felt a deep pain for every dead child. Her breast ached with milk if she stayed too long in the graveyard. She silently blamed her father as she dug the graves. He had no right to bring her to this work.

"Get hold of somebody else for this work, respected ones!" she said one day. "I am not fit for this any more

No one in the village seemed to listen. Not even Malindar, whose dealings in corpses, skin and bone-objects of abhorrence to others-had hardened him. "Scared of false shadows!" he had scoffed at her. If she cried too hard he would say, "Well, no one's left in your family to do this job for you."

It was around this time that the terrible thing happened. One of Malindar's sisters had come for a visit. She had a little daughter called Tukni who became quite devoted to Chandi. The village was suffering from a severe attack of smallpox at the time. Neither Chandi nor her people ever went for a vaccination. Instead, they relied on appeasing the goddess Sheetal, the deity controlling epidemics. When Tukni got the pox, Chandi, accompanied by her sister-in-law and carrying the little girl in her arms, went to pay homage to the goddess. The temple of the goddess was a regular affair set up by the coolies from Bihar who had once worked on the railway tracks. There was also a regular priest.

As fate would have it, the little girl died a few days later, though not in Chandi's house. Everyone, including the girl's parents, blamed the death on Chandi.

"What, me?"

"Oh, yes, you."

"Not me, for God's sake!" she pleaded with the Doms.

"Who else?"

"Never!" she thundered out, "I swear upon the head of my own child that I've never wished any ill of Tukni, or of any other child. You know my lineage."

Suddenly those people, those craven, superstitious people, lowered their eyes. Someone whispered, "What about the milk that spilled out of your breasts as you were piling earth on Tukni's grave?"

"Oh, the fools that you are!" She stared at them in wonder and hatred,

"All right," she said after a pause, "I don't care if the rage of my forefathers descends upon me. I quit this job from this very day"

"Quit your job!"

"Yes. I'll let you cowards guard the graves. I have wanted to leave for a long time. The Gangaputta will get a government job soon. I need not continue with this rotten work anymore.

Silencing every voice, she returned home. She asked Malindar if he would get a room at his new place of work. "Let's go there. Do you know what they call me?"

It was just to calm her down, just to pacify her with a joke that he said with a loud laugh,

"And what do they call you? A bayen?"

Chandi started trembling violently. She clutched at the wooden pillar that supported the roof. Excitement, rage and sorrow made her scream at him, "How could you utter that word, you, with a son of your own? Me, a bayen?"

"Oh, shut up!" Malindar shouted.

It was dead noon and the time for evil to cast its spell on human beings. It was a time when terrible rage and jealousy could easily take hold of an empty stomach and uncooled head. Malindar knew well the ways of his people.

"I am not a bayen! Oh, I am not a bayen!!"

Chandi's anguished cry traveled far and wide on raven's wings through the hot winds that reached every nook and corner of the village.

She stopped crying as suddenly as she had begun. "Let us run away somewhere when it's dark," she pleaded with him.

"Where?"

"Just somewhere."

"But where?"

"I do not know." She took Bhagirath in her arms and crept near Malindar.

"Come closer," she said, "Let me lay my head on your chest. I am so afraid. I am so afraid to have thrown away my forefather's job. Why am I so frightened today? I feel that I'll never see you or Bhagirath anymore. God! I am afraid." It was here that Malindar stopped speaking and wiped his eyes. "Now that I look back, my son, it seems as if it was God who put those words in her mouth that day."

"What happened next?"

For a few days Chandi just sat as if dazed. She puttered about the house a bit and often sat with Bhagirath in her arms, singing. She burned a lot of incense and lit lamps about the house and had an air of listening closely to something or the other.

Two months passed by uneventfully. No one came to call Chandi to work. There had hardly been any work either. They lived very peacefully, the three of them. Chandi became whole again. "There ought to be some other arrangement for the dead children," she said. "The present one is horrible."

"There will be, by and by," Malindar said. "Things are changing."

"How am I to know if I did the right thing? You see, some nights I seem to hear his call." hear my

"You hear him?"

"I seem to hear his Hoi, there!, just as if he were chasing the jackals off the graves."

"Shut up, Chandi

Fear grew in Malindar. Didn't he sometimes fear that perhaps Chandi was slowly changing into a witch? Some nights she woke up with a start and seemed to listen to dead children crying in their graves. Perhaps it was true what people were saying? Perhaps it would be best to go to the town after all.

The Dom community did not forget her. The Doms were keeping an eye on her, to her complete ignorance. Covertly or otherwise, a society can maintain its vigil if it wants to. There is nothing a society cannot do.

That's how one stormy night when Malindar was deep in drunken slumber, his courtyard filled with people. One of them, Ketan, an uncle of sorts of Chandi, called him out,

"Come and see for yourself whether your wife is a bayen or not."

Stupefied, Malindar sat up and stared at them with sleep-laden eyes.

"Come out and see, you son of a bitch! You are keeping a bayen for a wife while our children's lives are at stake."

Malindar came out. He could see the burial ground under the banyan tree humming with lamps, torches and people who stood milling around in silence. "Chandi, you!"

There she was, a sickle in her hand, a lantern burning beside her, a heap of thorn bushes stacked on one side.

"I was trying to cover the holes with these."

"Why, why did you come out?"

"The jackals had suddenly stopped their cries. Something in me said, there they are! Right at the holes, pawing for the bodies."

"You're a bayen!" The villagers raised their chant in awe.

"There is no one to watch over the dead."

"You are a bayen!"

"It's the job of my forefathers. What do these people know about it?"

"You are a bayen!"

"No, no, I am not a bayen! I have a son of my own. My breasts are heavy with milk for him. I am not a bayen. Why, Gangaputta, why don't you tell them, you know best."

Malindar stared, as if entranced, at the dimly-lit figure, at the breasts thrust out against her rain-soaked clothes. His mind was scared with pain, something whispered within him,

"Don't go near, Malindar. Go near a snake if you will, a fire even but not now, not to her, though you may have loved her. Don't go, or something terrible will happen."

Malindar stepped forward and looked at Chandi with bloodshot eyes. He let out a yell like a beast, "O-ho-ooo! A bayen you are! Who was it in the grave when you were nursing with milk? O-ho-ooo!"

"Gangaputta! Oh God!"

The terrible cry that tore out of her seemed to frighten the dead underground, her father's restless spirit and even that of the ancient Dom, Kalu, whose cry would rend the sky and the earth when a human being was banished from the human world to the condemned world of the supernatural. Malindar rushed to get the drum that had belonged to his father-in-law and ran back to the graveyard. He shouted as he beat the drum,

"I, Malindar Gangaputta, hereby declare that my wife is a bayen, a bayen!"

"What happened next?" asked Bhagirath.

"Next, my son? She was forced to live alone at Beltala. As afraid as she once was to live alone, she is all alone now. Hush, listen how the bayen sings." A strange strain of music floated up to them from afar, accompanied by the beat of a tin can. The song seemed to have no words at first but gradually the words became distinct.

Come sleep, come to bed of rags,

My child-god sleeps in my lap,

The elephants and horses at the palace gates,  
The dog Jumra in the ash heap.

It was the Bhagirath who knew the song.. song that his stepmother sang to make her daughters sleep.  
The song entered his soul, mingled in his blood and reverberated in his ears like some inscrutable pain.  
"Let's go home, son . . .

Malindar led a dazed Bhagirath back home.

A few days later Bhagirath rushed to the dead pond at noon. He had heard the sound of the tin.

The shadow of the bayen trembled in the water. The bayen was not looking at him. Her eyes lowered, she was filling the pitcher.

"Don't you have another sari? Would you like a sari that is not torn like this one? Want my dhoti?"

The bayen was silent. She had her face turned aside.

"Would you like to wear nice clothes?"

"The son of Gangaputta had better go home."

"I... I go to school now. I am a good boy."

"Don't talk to me. I am a bayen. Even my shadow is evil. Doesn't the son of Gangaputta know that?"

"I am not afraid."

"It's high noon, now. Young children shouldn't be at large in this heat. Let the boy go home."

"Aren't you afraid to live alone?"

"Afraid? No, I am not afraid of anything. Why should a bayen be afraid to stay alone?"

"Then what makes you cry?"

"Me, cry!"

"I have heard you."

"He has heard me? Cry?" Her crimson shadow trembled in the water. Her eyes were full. Her voice cracked as she said, "Let the son of Gangaputta go home and swear never, never to come near the bayen. Or... or . . I will tell Gangaputta!"

Bhagirath saw her turn back and race away along the mud culvert, her hair swirling about her face, her crimson sari fluttering in the air.

He sat alone for a long time by the pond, till the waters became still again. He couldn't recall the song.

On her part, the bayen sat in silence in her hut, thinking she knew-not-what. A long while later she raised herself and drew out a broken piece of mirror, "I am only a shadow of myself!" she muttered incoherently. She tried to run the comb through her hair. It was impossibly matted.

Why did the child talk about nice clothes? He was too young then to remember now. What should it matter to him, good decent clothes for her?

She frowned hard in an attempt to collect her thoughts. It had been a long time since she had thought about anything. Nothing was left but the rustle of the leaves, the whistling of winds and the rattling of the trains-sounds that had muddled up all her thoughts.

Somehow, she had a concrete thought today the child was in for some terrible disaster. Suddenly she felt a very wifely anger at the thoughtlessness of Malindar. Whose duty was it now to look after the child? Who had to protect him from the witch's eyes?

She rose, lit a lantern and took the road. She hurried along the railway tracks. There was the level crossing, the linesman's cabin. Malindar, on his way back from work, would turn here and take the mud culvert. As she walked towards it, she saw them. There were people doing something with the tracks. No, they were piling up bamboo sticks on the tracks. The five-up Lalgola Passenger train was due that evening with the Wednesday mail bag. It meant a lot of money. They had been waiting for the loot for a long time.

"Who are you?"

She raised the lantern and swung it near her face.

The men looked up, startled, with fear-dilated eyes and ashen faces. She had never seen the people of her community look so frightened before.

"It is the bayan!"

"So you are piling bamboos, ah? You would rob the train, eh? What, running away from fear of me? Ha! Throw away these sticks first, or you are done for!"

They could not undo what had been done clear the tracks, prevent the disaster. They could not. This is how society is, this is how it works. It was like when they had made her a witch with much fanfare and beating of drums.

The rain lashed her as she picked up the lantern. She was so helpless. What could she do? If she were a witch with supernatural powers, would not her servant, the demons of the dark, obey her bidding and stop the train? What could she do now, helpless as she was? F

She started running along the tracks, towards the train, waving at it wildly in a vain bid to stop it.

"Don't come any further, don't! There's a heap of bamboo piled ahead!" She continued to scream till the roar of the train drowned her voice and the train's light swallowed her up.

Chandi's name spread far and wide for her heroic self-sacrifice that had prevented a major train disaster. Even the government people came to hear of it. When her body left the morgue, the Officer in Charge, accompanied by the Block Development Officer, came to Malindar's house.

"The Railway Department will announce a medal for Chandi Gangadasi, Malindar. I know all about you, you see. She used to live alone, but there must be someone to receive it on her behalf. It was a brave deed, a real brave deed. Everyone is full of praise. She was your wife?"

Everyone was silent. People looked at one another, scratched their necks in embarrassment and looked down. Somebody whispered,

"Yes, sir, she was one of us."

This announcement astonished Bhagirath so much that he looked from one face to another. So they were recognizing her at last?

"Well, the government cannot give the cash award to all of you at the same time."

"Give it to me, sir." Bhagirath came forward.

"And who are you?"

"She was my mother."

"Mother?"

"Yes, sir," said Bhagirath, and the officer started taking it all down.

"My name is Bhagirath Gangaputta. My father, the revered Malindar Gangaputta. Residence, Domtoli, village Daharhati, my mother..." he paused and then, very distinctly, "My mother, the late Chandidasi Gangadasi... (Bhagirath broke into loud sobs) ... my mother, the late Chandidasi Gangadasi, sir. Not a bayen. She was never a bayen, my mother."

The officer stopped writing and stared first at Bhagirath, then at the crowd. The Doms stood silent, eyes downcast, as people condemned. The silence was suffocating and unbearable.

### **I) Answer the following briefly:**

1. Why was Chandi called Bayen?
2. Where is the setting of the story?
3. How did Chandi Dasi become a Bayen?
4. Character sketch of Bayen
5. Describe the ending of the story.

### **II) Discussion Questions: -**

1. 'Bayen' is the story of caste, witchcraft and superstitious beliefs. Elaborate
2. The character of Chandidasi as Bayen represents the marginalised role of all women in Indian society. Describe.
3. 'Bayen' is a quest of identity. Explain.
4. Describe the gender discrimination in 'Bayen'.



### UNIT- III

#### Representative Texts

##### Nine Indian Women Poets

##### Edited by Eunice De Souza

Eunice de Souza has been widely acknowledged as the one of the best Indian poets writing in English. She was a poet, novelist, leading literary critic born in 1940 and raised in Pune, in a Goan Catholic family. She lost her father at the early age of three. She had her early education in Pune. She acquired her English Literature with a masters from Marquette University, Wisconsin and a PhD from the University of Mumbai. She took on a teaching position at St. Xavier's College in Mumbai and was the Head of the Department of English, where she worked for 30 years until her retirement.

Eunice de Souza has written and published a range of writings including the novels *Dangerlok* (2001) and *Dev and Simran* (2003), four children's books and poetry collections. She has also edited numerous books and has written a weekly column for the *Mumbai Mirror* covering a range of issues from literature, history, politics to personal experiences. Her well known English poetry collections include *Fix* (1979), *Women in Dutch Painting* (1988), *Ways of Belonging* (1990), *A Necklace of Skulls* (2009) and *Learn from the Almond Leaf* (2016). Eunice de Souza was the only Indian woman to be included in the *Oxford India Anthology of Twelve Modern Indian Poets* (1992).



Her major achievement has been providing a deep understanding of the contemporary social climate and gender relations. “She was an eminent figure who dominated the poetry skyline,” says Sahitya Akademi-winning author Jerry Pinto. De Souza, throughout her writings shows concern for the plight of numerous Indian women across different social contexts: a maid, a daily wage worker or an isolated ‘housewife.’ Her poems commonly explore the loss, alienation and isolation that accompanies womanhood. The significance of Eunice de Souza’s contribution to post-Independence Indian poetry in English cannot be overstated. Her poetry captures rebellion and agony in short utterances that have a lasting impact on the readers.

### About the edited work

Nine Indian Women Poets edited by Eunice De Souza is a collection of witty, ironic, poignant, and technically-assured poems that are examples of some of the best contemporary Indian poetry today. Desouza wrote that the intention in bringing together these poems was to represent the growing maturity evident in the themes and styles of the poetry of Indian women. While it acquaints the reader with the variety in each poet’s work, the prime consideration of Nine Indian Women Poets is the intrinsic quality of the poems themselves-their subject, their language and craftsmanship. The full anthology covers nine Indian women poets writing in English, representing two generations of post-Independence poets; Kamala Das, Mamta Kalia, Melanie Silgado, Eunice de Souza, Imtiaz Dharker, Smita Agarwal, Sujata Bhatt, Charmayne D Souza, and Tara Patel. This book is regarded as a must read for those interested in contemporary poetry, especially by Indian women writing in English.

### Mamta Kalia

Born 1940. An M.A. in English Literature, Delhi University, 1963, Mamta Kalia writes poetry in English and in Hindi. Her books in English are Tribute to Papa (1970) and Poems ‘78 (1978). In Hindi she has five novels to her credit, seven short story collections, two one-act play collections, four novelettes for children, and three works which she has edited. She has won six awards for her writing in Hindi. She was an Advisory Member on the Sahitya Akademi Board, New Delhi from 1988-91, and is a member of several other boards. She is a regular broadcaster for Akashvani and Doordarshan. She is at present Principal of Mahila Seva Sadan Degree College in Allahabad.

Mamta Kalia's first book in English ‘Tribute to Papa’ comes from its relaxed attitude to poetry, its wit, its understated irony, its played-down persona to whom nothing has happened 'except two children/ and two miscarriages'. Nor are the parents mythologized.



Bruce King has remarked, rightly, that 'the present contemporary manner appears to have been initiated by Mamta Kalia... He goes on to add that 'the directness of expression and natural, idiomatic colloquial vigour is more often found in the verse of Das, Kalia, de Souza and Silgado than in the male Indian English poets'

Mamta Kalia is the only poet in this collection who writes poems both in English and in Hindi. In a letter she says she has no transit problems'. She says she was more involved in writing in English when she lived in Bombay, but in Allahabad, the 'nerve centre of Hindi writing', her emphasis shifted to Hindi. In Allahabad she was 'primarily affected by the very ordinary life-style of extraordinary intellectuals, and their critical concepts and concerns'.

### **From Hers**

#### **Anonymous**

I no longer feel I'm Mamta Kalia.

I'm Kamla

or Vimla

or Kanta or Shanta.

I cook, I wash,

I bear, I rear,

I nag, I wag,

I sulk, I sag.

I see worthless movies at reduced rates

and feel happy at reduced rates.

I get a free plastic bucket

with a large packet of Super-Surf,

and feel happy.

I put on weight every month

like Kamla or Vimla or

Kanta or Shanta,

and feel happy.

I am no longer Mamta Kalia.

### Eunice de Souza

Several poets co-operated in the publication of *Fix*, Eunice de Souza's first book. Newground, the co-operative started by Melanie Silgado, Raul D'Gama Rose and Santan Rodrigues published it, Arun Kolatkar designed the cover, A.D. Hope and Adil Jussawalla provided the blurbs, and Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, Saleem Peeradina, Kersey Katrak, and Jussawalla reviewed it.

With this auspicious start, it is not surprising that *Fix*, a hard-edged, somewhat violent book, has survived as the most distinctive of de Souza's books. For Veronica Brady, writing in the *Journal of Literature and Theology*, many of the Catholic characters which appear in the poems are 'an embodiment of the complacency, the closed heart and mind which constitutes evil in de Souza's world because it entails the refusal of freedom, the "passion for the possible"... as distinct from the cultural religiosity she attacks here'. It is in this sense, Veronica Brady suggests, that de Souza's poetry can be called 'religious poetry'. In addition, the sense of pain, loss, and the absence of God are central to de Souza's poetry.

Several members of de Souza's community saw *Fix* as a betrayal. Some of de Souza's students told her that the book had been denounced from the pulpit at St Peter's in Bandra. Adil Jussawalla assured her that if she continued the same way, she would soon be denounced at St Peter's in Rome.

### Autobiographical

Right, now here it comes.

I killed my father when I was three.

I have muddled through several affairs

and always come out badly.

I've learned almost nothing from experience.

I head for the abyss with  
monotonous regularity.

My enemies say I'm a critic because  
really I'm writhing with envy  
and anyway need to get married.

My friends say I'm not  
entirely without talent.

Yes, I've tried suicide.  
I tidied my clothes but  
left no notes. I was surprised  
to wake up in the morning.

One day my soul  
stood outside me  
watching me twitch  
and grin and gibber  
the skin tight  
over my bones.

I thought the whole world  
was trying to rip me up  
cut me down go through me  
with a razor blade.

Then I discovered  
a cliché: that's what I wanted

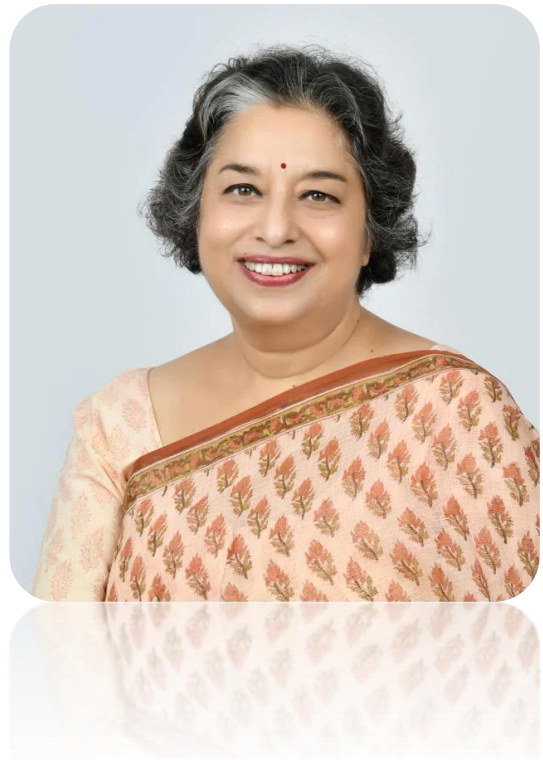
to do to the world.

### Smitha Agarwal

Born in 1958, Smita Agarwal teaches at the University of Allahabad where she worked for her Ph.D. on Sylvia Plath. She is a vocal artist for All India Radio. Though she has been publishing poems for twenty years she has not yet published a book. The poems included here are from her unpublished manuscript 'Glitch'. She also publishes stories for children.

In a short piece on poetry written for 'The Times of India', Smita Agarwal says that 'a poem performs a civilizing function, answering not only a human need for emotional expression but for rational control as well'. Poetry does this by resolving 'warring forces', and she goes on to discuss the ways in which the poetry of Meerabai, Sylvia Plath and Emily Dickinson finds ways to explore and control these forces. Through this exploration and control, both poet and reader find new ways of understanding themselves and life.

Smita Agarwal also writes poems that begin with observations of nature, and then go on to an insight about a person or situation, personal or social. In other words, Smita Agarwal's poems perform that civilizing function she has commented on in her discussions of poets, and reveal, at every turn, 'a self acutely aware of life'. Her achievement is all the more remarkable when one considers the fact that she is writing, as she says, 'essentially in isolation', and is 'primarily self-taught'.



### A Grass Widow's Prayer

Tall hill speckled with pine;  
The air scented. Again I  
Undertake the annual ascent up  
The spiralling way to your temple.  
It is Navaratra.  
The goddess is  
A decked out bride. I go to  
Offer her a red scarf trimmed  
With gold lace. Just-married girls spill  
Out of taxis and buses. They're on  
Their first visit to *Surkhanda*  
With their spouses. The lucky ones  
Shall meet their kin and shop  
At the fair. Meanwhile, I shall wind  
A red and gold thread round the peepul;  
Tie tiny brass bells to its outstretched  
Arms; bells that shall peal out my  
Prayers to the unseen gods that look  
Askance at my bare wrists, my forehead clear  
Of the sacramental dot, the parting in my hair  
A quiet, empty street. Devi-Ma, I come  
To deepen your red with my  
Absence of colour. Keep him safe;  
He who is alone at his outpost  
Battling shadows and sounds.  
May he win the war he set out for.

**Tara Patel**

Born in 1949, Tara Patel was educated in Gujarat and Malaysia. She is a freelance journalist and columnist. 'Single Woman', her first book, was published in 1992

The predominant tone of Tara Patel's work is a weariness so extreme that at times it sounds almost posthumous. The weariness stems from relationships that don't work, a sense of being the odd person out when everyone else seems to be alright, the demands of city life etc.

In its own way, 'Single Woman' is a brave book. It cannot have been easy to write poems in which the speakers express need so openly, unsheltered by irony. Feminist critics concerned with placing poets on a political spectrum would not necessarily approve. Patel's poems are haunting, in their rhythm, words and insight.

Nissim Ezekiel, who is in touch with the poet when she comes to Bombay, says that Tara Patel is convinced she is not a poet. Of course, as with all poets, she has poems that don't work, but her conclusion about herself is extreme. Perhaps it demonstrates an uncertainty of which only the genuine article is capable.

**From Single Woman****Woman**

A woman's life is a reaction  
to the crack of a whip.  
She learns to dodge it as it whistles  
around her  
but sometimes it lands on the thick,  
distorted welt of her memory.  
reminding her of lessons learned in the past.

Then in rebellion she turned her face  
to the whip,  
till pain became a river in flood  
wreaking vengeance.  
She ran away to live as an escaped convict,  
or a refugee,  
or a yogi in the wilderness of civilization.  
Beneath the thick, distorted welt of her memory  
she dreams,



anyone could have touched baby-smooth skin  
with kisses.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Discuss Mamta Kalia's poetry as a comment on lost identity.
2. What are Eunice de Souza's declarations through her poem autobiographical?
3. Bring out the anxiousness in the grass widow's prayer.
4. How is the single woman portrayed by Tara Patel in her poetry?
5. Nine Indian Women Poets edited by Eunice De Souza are examples of some of the best contemporary Indian poetry. Substantiate.
6. How does De Souza bring together the growing maturity in the themes and styles of the poetry of Indian women through her anthology?

## M.S: A Life in Music - (Chapters I and II)

### T.J.S. George

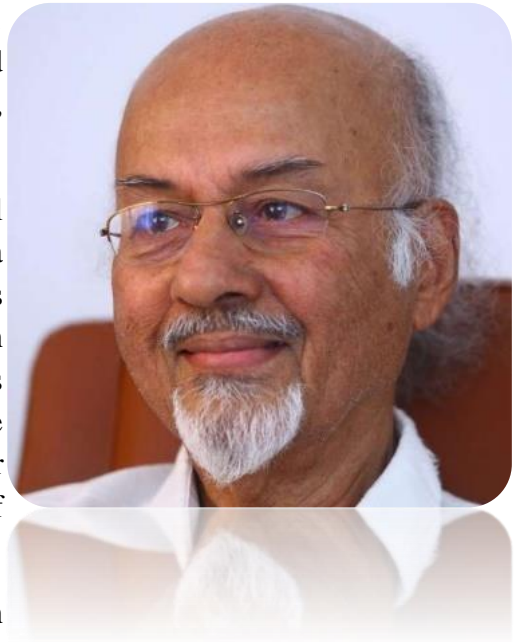
T.J.S. George (7.5.1928 ), a Padma Bhushan awardee in 2011 in the field of literature and education, is an Indian writer and biographer. He was born in Kerala to Thayil Thomas Jacob, a magistrate and Chachiamma Jacob, a homemaker.

T.J.S. George is internationally recognised as a professional author, a serious political columnist and biographer with a series of major books. After graduating from Madras Christian College, Chennai, with an Honours degree in English literature, he began his career in the Free Press Journal in Mumbai in 1950. After working in the International Press Institute, The Searchlight and the Far Eastern Economic Review he became the founding editor of Asia week (Hong Kong).

He is currently the editorial advisor of The New Indian Express. A veteran senior journalist and one of the best-known columnists in India, he continues his fight against social injustice, corruption and political anarchies through his columns in The Indian Express.

He is the recipient of several awards: the Kesari Media Award (2017), the Kamala Suraiya Award (2017), the Azeekodu Award (2013), the Basheer Puraskaram Award (2008), besides many others.

M.S. Subbulakshmi A Life in Music is a masterly biography that unravels the fascinating life journey of one of the greatest legends in the world of music, M Subbulakshmi. In the two chapters prescribed for study T.J.S. George presents an amazingly well researched introduction and discussion on Carnatic music and the social milieu of Tamilnadu. He places the life of MS in the larger context of Carnatic music, arts and cinema, the three most important aspects that determined her legendary status. The place where she was born, her circumstances and her life-altering decisions give us insights into the world of music and the times that she lived in. The way music evolved in Tamilnadu, the various caste and community equations and how MS withstood and overcame the challenges, provide a fascinating account.



### About the Text:

While narrating the story of MS, the author focuses on a whole range of related events both historical and contemporary. Some of the significant events are the evolution and development of Carnatic music and the arts, the role of the radio and the gramophone records in the careers of classical musicians, the role of Tamil cinema in popularising classical music, the impact of Indian independence on MS' career and profession. On the personal front, the author focuses on the role of M. Sadasivam in shaping her

life and career and the current trends in "experimental" music and their possible detrimental effect on the purity of Carnatic music.

T.J.S. George traces the origin of Carnatic music against the religious, historical and political backdrop of the times, the contributions of Purandara Dasa, the divide between South Indian and North Indian music and the nomenclature of Carnatic music are well delineated.

The second chapter focuses on the technique of 'gamaka' and the death of the 'yaazh' which resulted in the inclusion of the violin in Carnatic music. The musical Trinity and their contributions to Carnatic music and the differences between western and Carnatic music are discussed at length. The musical innovator known as the "Rajah of Carnatic music" and his presentation of the new format in the "kutcheri" drew the attention and appreciation of music officianados. Not only did it become popular, but it also led to the "democratisation" of art music. As an ideology it seemed fine but the caste- class debates made it clear that music would never be democratized. But Ariyakudi's innovation definitely broadened the reach of Carnatic music.

The arrival of the radio and the gramophone led to the popularization of Carnatic music in a big way and this gradually led to the arrival of cinema that developed along with the radio. Early Tamil films were filled with great classical compositions sung by gifted singers.

In the midst of all these innovations that were largely spearheaded by patriarchy, MS arrived with aplomb not realising that she had stormed a male bastion. MS, D.K. Pattammal, M.L. Vasanthakumari and N.C. Vasanthakokilam were the singers who belonged to the top bracket of classical musicians. "Rasikas" who hailed the original classical Trinity of Thiagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri, would now speak of Vasanthakumari, Pattammal and M.S. Subbulakshmi as a Trinity in themselves.

This fascinating and extensively researched introduction provides a masterly preface to the phenomenal repertoire of MS, her life and times.

## M.S: A Life in Music

### Chapter 1

#### M for History, S for Art

*Devotion associated with the ambrosia of swara and raga is verily paradise and salvation... One attains salvation when one becomes a jnani after several births; but he who has knowledge of ragas along with natural devotion is indeed a liberated soul.*

— Swara Raga Sudha

M. S. Subbulakshmi was born of two mothers, Madurai city and Shanmugavadivu, both representing the conscience and the heartbeat of Tamil ethos. A thousand years before Madras became a glint in British eyes, Madhurapuri, literally the ‘city of sweet nectar’, was the reigning capital of a kingdom, a metropolis, where art and literature flourished, and the nucleus of a temple civilization that held the south of India in thrall. Shanmugavadivu, a woman whose sheer strength of will made up for her sickly physical frame, was heir to a tradition that fostered artistic excellence even as it invited social exploitation. Subbulakshmi, inheriting the M and the S as badges of immutable soul forces, was born in a row house in one of the countless side alleys of the eternal city on 16 September 1916.

She was at once a child of history and art. Centuries of interaction between the two had not only created an environment but also established an ancestry that shaped her life, now obtrusively, now subliminally. The history that provided unseen layers to her personality was as convoluted as it was long. It was a history marked by great achievements and great failures; placid periods and high drama; and puritanical conservatism and passionate radicalism. Religion confronted religion, cultures clashed, and languages sought to dominate one another. Geography played a significant role. Generations came and went, each one influencing the next. Yesterday was always a part of today. The arts uniquely mirrored the past embedded in the present.

Subbulakshmi’s birthplace put her not just in South India, domain of the Dravidian peoples who had pressed down from the north, but in the southern part of South India, home to a particularly sturdy strain of Dravidianism. The Dravidian ethos developed around Tamil, the language of the oldest literature in India, and eventually comprised four ethnic linguistic families based on Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. The separateness of the Dravidians from people in the north, which

seminally influenced the way music developed, went beyond language. Early Tamil social structure was typically based on class rather than on caste. There was a measure of social mingling between the common people, Vellalar, and the royal class, Arasar. Each category took brides from the other and Vellalar was accorded equal prominence as the others at durbars. Society and social structure changed, as philosopher-president Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan put it, when the Aryans came and ‘found the natives of India whom they called Dasyus opposing their free advance. These Dasyus were of a dark complexion, eating beef and indulging in goblin worship. When the Aryans met them, they desired to keep themselves aloof from them. It is this spirit of exclusiveness born of pride of race and superiority of culture that developed into the later caste spirit.’ Native strains of Shaivism (worship of Shiva vis-à-vis that of Vishnu) developed their own superiority complexes. Before long, the rulers of the early kingdoms were integrated into the Brahmin-Kshatriya concept in recognition of their power, but the populace in Dravida country remained outside the hierarchy of caste. When the rise of Muslim rulers in the Deccan in the early fourteenth century made the Hindu kingdoms more stridently Hindu, Brahmins acquired land ownership and consequent economic ascendancy in addition to the spiritual authority they wielded. A cultural as well as social divide grew between the Brahmins, who became the Sanskritic-Aryan ruling class, and the non-Brahmins, who retained the Dravidian content of their roots. This otherness would fundamentally affect the course of South Indian history, especially Tamil history. Specifically, this phenomenon would shape the evolution of music and dance as well as the social milieu of the artistes. At almost every stage of the history of musical culture, the caste question would intrude, with or without justification. In Madurai, Shanmugavadivu and her family would experience the telling impact of communal categorization and the travails of coping with its repercussions.

These aspects, like every other detail of their lives, were conditioned by the unmistakable continuity of tradition in Madurai, one of the oldest human settlements in the south. According to popular mythology, this temple town was also the hub of Tamil civilization through its association with Agasthya Muni, the sage who travelled all over the land before making his abode in the Podigai hills in Tirunelveli district, located in present-day Tamil Nadu. Folklore depicted Tamil as a beautiful damsel gifted by Agasthya who personally attended the first two of the three literary sangams (gatherings) in Madurai. At the core of ancient Tamil culture was the concept of Muththamil, three-pronged Tamil, comprising literature, music and drama (iyal, isai and natakam), which included dance as well. Agasthya was believed to have written a treatise on these subjects. Madurai, which was once prosperous enough to attract invasions from the Chola, Vijayanagar, Maratha and Muslim kingdoms, was built by the Pandya kings of local origin. The beginnings of this monarchy have not been

accurately dated but it was believed to have been reigning in the fourth century BC and was still around in the fourteenth century AD, its borders shifting but its capital always in Madhurapuri on the banks of the Vaigai River. The Pandyas had established trade links with Java and Kandy on the one side and Arabia and Rome on the other. They transformed their capital into a bastion of education and fine arts and set up literary academies that became famous as the fountainhead of Sangam literature.

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*One of the Gopurams of the Meenakshi Temple, Madurai (Courtesy: KJR)*

The centrepiece of Madurai was (and continues to be) the Meenakshi Temple. It probably began as a modest structure under some unknown king of yore. The exquisite gopurams (towers) that made it famous dated from perhaps the thirteenth century AD, though its periodization has been made complicated by major rebuilding programmes undertaken during the sixteenth century and after. The carved figures that covered every square metre of the temple's outer surface often led enthusiasts to describe it as one of the wonders of the world. Actually, greater architectural significance was attached to the Pallava masterpieces of Mahabalipuram (seventh to eighth centuries) and the magnificent Chola

temples of Thanjavur (tenth to eleventh centuries). The contribution of the Pandyas was important in that they introduced new dimensions to the concept of ornamental architecture, achieving for their gopurams a grandeur of their own. But it was neither the awesomeness of the towers nor the gorgeous complexity of the carvings that accorded the Madurai Meenakshi Sundareswara Temple its uniqueness. It was the idea. Among the multitude of Hindu shrines, it was the only one dedicated to Shiva and Parvati, not in their familiar forms as the destroyer-restorer and his ever-present consort, but as the romantic god Sundareswara and the fish-eyed beauty Meenakshi. The precedence given to the consort over the lord in the temple's official name was taken up by devotees who invariably went first to worship Meenakshi. Madurai was the only place where Shiva, the macho god of the Hindu universe, happily took second place behind his lovely better half. That equation encouraged fables about Madurai. It was not uncommon for knowledgeable Tamils to greet people from Madurai, half-mockingly and half-enviously, as wise people who recognized the better half as better. All life and art in Madurai revolved round the temple. All artistes functioned under its shadow. The 'M' in the initials of Shanmugavadivu and Subbulakshmi was more than a geographical formality; it was an umbilical bond. Musicians were inextricably linked to temple civilization because the nuances of their art were closely associated with the rituals of worship. Indeed, every activity was temple oriented— from preparing huge quantities of food and stringing garlands to managing money matters and employing people. Great temple complexes constituted walled cities in themselves with extensions spreading beyond. Within the walls would be housed the main and satellite shrines, bathing tanks, large and small dining halls, administrative offices, public buildings, bazaars and dwelling houses of different types. The institution of the temple was almost always the largest landholder and employer in the locality and therefore the main pillar of the local economy. Artistes were regarded as appendages of the temple as were cooks and cowherds, accountants and construction engineers. Musicians and dancers performed during the celebration of festivals related to the deities, which explained the strong religious connotations of traditional performing arts in the south. Music in particular grew as a form of reciting eulogies to the gods.

Exactly when that process began lies in the realm of folklore. Along with other arts, music was popularly linked to the Vedas which date back to at least 2000 BC (the Rig Veda could be as old as 3000 BC). Art forms such as drama, dance and music were specifically associated with Bharata Muni's Natya Sastra, dated variously between 400 BC and AD 500; a generally accepted period is AD 100 to AD 200. The way the arts were mixed in this classic work caused confusion. The crucial question was: Was music merely incidental to drama in Bharata's scheme? The book's preperformance Purvaranga section called for the playing of drums and musical instruments primarily to attract attention since the



audience would comprise ‘women, children and foolish persons. Then again, in some editions of the work, the text ended with the title of the treatise appearing as *Sangeetha Pustakam*, or *The Music Book*. Was Bharata the sole author or were interpolators at work?

The linking of the arts with the Vedas was perhaps a characteristic Indian way of emphasizing what was important to human beings in their everyday lives, be it vitalizing plants (like the tulasi, basil) or life supporting animals (like the cow). Music was further integrated into people’s daily routine by the rise in the old Tamil country of the tradition of wandering minstrels. Music had acquired a popular base by the time thevaram (a hymn in adoration of god) was established as a tradition by preeminent individuals such as Thirujnana Sambandar, Thirunavukkarasar and Sundaramurthy Nayanar (seventh to ninth centuries). Thevaram constituted the great body of hymnal compositions that was regarded as the Tamil equivalent of the Vedas underpinning Shaivism in South India. Such a corpus was also seen as poetry rather than musical composition; recited rather than sung. But the compositions were rendered in accordance with raga and tala, accompanied by yaazh (a kind of harp, with one string for each note), muzhavu (drum) and kuzhal (flute). Such compositions certainly helped develop an early form of singing in temples. Sambandar was the earliest poet to compose kritis as we know them today.

Scholars differed over the validity of linking the ancient form of native Tamil music with what eventually became Carnatic music. Some held the view that the linkage was close and vital. According to this school, the ancient inhabitants of Tamil country had a fairly well-developed Dravida sangeetam (music) based on a seven-note structure and concepts such as sruti (called alah) and raga and songs (called panns). Many of their ragas closely resembled those that later formed the corpus of Carnatic music. Further, some of the proponents of this school asserted that the thevaram panns were the essence of native Tamil music and that such music was, in turn, the basis of Carnatic music. Others, however, were not inclined to discern any thread of continuity from native Tamil traditions to the nineteenth century. According to them, Carnatic music’s ancestry could not be taken too far back because there was a long gap of cultural amnesia after the ancient period when records were either not kept or were lost. Consequently, the Sangam period and the thevaram tradition could not be taken as early wellsprings of the Carnatic stream. Indeed, in their view, Madurai itself was inconsequential to the development of Carnatic music, which, as it is understood today, could only be about 500 to 600 years old at the very most.

Perhaps there was an ideological caste dimension to this division of opinion among scholars: an instinctive desire to draw a line between the Dravidian and Sanskritic parts of history and between the non-Brahmin roots and the Brahmin flowering. At least one, if not two, of the thevaram saints were



Brahmins. Nevertheless, the southern part of South India was strong on Shaiva siddhanta, an indigenous Tamil philosophical system that developed in opposition to the Vedic- Vedantic system. This system arose from a non-Brahmin but upper-caste movement centred round a Brahminized Shiva. But its aversion to the Vedic Brahmins was as strong as its contempt for the lower orders.

All were agreed, however, that the modern phase of Carnatic music began with Purandara Dasa (1484-1564). Born in Hampi (now in Karnataka), the capital of the Vijayanagar Empire, he was a wealthy diamond merchant who was known in his early life as a notorious miser. He experienced a spiritual change of heart under the influence of his wife and spent the rest of his life as a wandering composer-balladeer strumming his tambura and singing the praises of god. But he was different from the devotional minstrels of earlier times in that he devised a form and idiom to his music. By turning Mayamalavagowla into a primary raga (because its notes were unmistakably distinct) and using the adi tala timing mechanism, he organized a schematic framework for the learning of music. That process of systematization was completed when a seventeenth-century musicologist, Venkatamakhi, wrote his Chaturdandi Prakasika. He achieved what no one had thought of earlier—a complete theoretical system of melas, the scales of a raga. The calibrated scale of sounds called the melakarta (comprising 72 primary ragas) opened up a whole new world, for the janaka or parent raga could give birth to hundreds of janya, derived, ragas. For the first time in the history of South Indian music, science had provided a base to art.

From the works of several theoreticians, many features emerged as exclusively Indian and many others as exclusively South Indian. Raga, for example, was uniquely Indian. The division of the octave into the 22-sruti scale was another departure from the universal system of 12 semi-tones; the advantage was that the Indian arrangement allowed subtler variations than were possible in other systems. The emphasis Indian music placed on rhythm and its technicalities made it not only different but also richer: more vocal than instrumental; more individualistic than concerted.

By the middle of the sixteenth century, however, a geographical divide came up between South Indian and North Indian music as well. The music of the south retained a pristine quality because it was largely unaffected by invasions from afar. Whereas Mughal, Persian, Egyptian and Arabian influences affected the northern regions, indigenous influences coalesced and prospered in the south. Many commonalities survived but many differences also surfaced. Most of the differences related to the technicalities of organization and presentation. In general, Hindustani musicians aimed at creating raga bhava, mood, in their listeners by dwelling at length on basic swaras and the basic sruti. On the other hand, Carnatic musicians used complex voice variations and other techniques to produce raga bhava

rapidly. Theory and system were important in Carnatic music, but not in Hindustani. The words of a composition were central to the rendering of Carnatic music; in Hindustani the words were invariably just a means for the conveyance of music.

Although the south was, by and large, spared foreign influences, it had to cope with intraregional invasionary thrusts and cultural challenges. The linguistic division of the region into four competing units was a fundamental determinant of cultural diversity. In many areas these differences would remain unreconciled. But in the field of music there was an amalgamation of interests from the start. Some dissonance would develop in the first half of the twentieth century, but the formative years saw Carnatic music taking shape and sustenance as one catholic school— non-exclusive and non-sectarian—its internal barriers disappearing as a result of a collective adoration of the art.

The survival of the English term ‘Carnatic’ in the nomenclature was characteristic of this union of interests. The word was, of course, a colonial bastardization, initially perpetrated by the Portuguese and then continued by the British, both of whom could not negotiate the phonemes of the word ‘Karnataka’. The origin can be attributed to the geographical area called Canara and the people Canarese. However, the Canara of the European era spilled over language walls to include the Malayalam-speaking areas of Malabar. When the Vijayanagar Empire consolidated its rule over Karnataka, it encompassed Telugu-speaking Telangana areas. Later the Nawab of Arcot (now in Tamil Nadu) occupied parts of Vijayanagar territory and gave himself the title ‘Nawab of Carnatic’ with headquarters in the Tamil heartland. The term Carnatic thus came to symbolize a pan-south conglomeration of all the linguistic streams in the region. When India gained independence in 1947, Westernized variations of Indian names were rendered obsolete, but ‘Carnatic’ continued in English discussions with reference to the south’s musical school. In Indian languages the music was called ‘Karnataka sangeeta’. Some pointed out that the word Karnataka had a meaning denoting ‘ancient, that which was already there’. More widely, the term was said to acknowledge the pioneering contributions of Purandara Dasa who hailed from the present-day Karnataka’s Bellary area. Whatever the origin, the term never referred to the geographical-political state of Karnataka to the exclusion of others. This was precisely the value of the Cword. Some modern writers in English refer to Carnatic music as Karnatak music, perhaps because they see ‘Carnatic’ as a colonial spelling unworthy of retention. But in linguistically reorganized India, ‘Karnatak music’ will inevitably be mistaken for the music of the state of Karnataka. ‘Carnatic’ neatly avoids that trap.

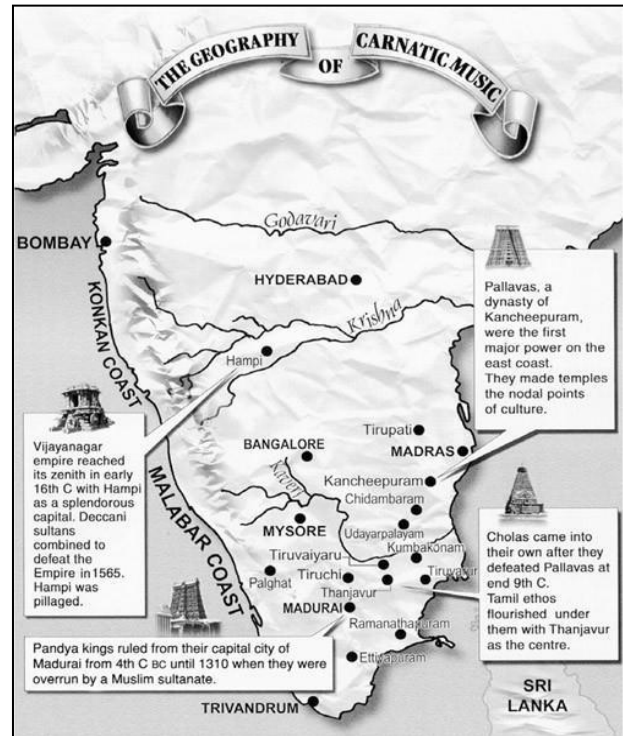
The historical fact was that the patriarchs of Carnatic music came from all four linguistic segments of the south. This was evident during Purandara Dasa’s pioneering period itself. Purandara Dasa and his

successor Venkatamakhi were Kannadigas. Annamacharya (1408-1503), who attained fame as the ‘father of the kriti form’, belonged to the Telugu region. Arunagirinathar (a fifteenth-century musician), who perfected a 108-tala system, was a Tamil. After the foundation was laid on the basis of the creativity that marked the fifteenth to seventeenth century period, the edifice of modern Carnatic music was raised by three men of genius who came to be known with appropriate veneration as ‘the Trinity’. The first, Thiagaraja (1767-1847), considered by popular acclamation as the greatest of the trio, was a Telugu, while the other two, Muthuswamy Dikshitar (1776- 1835) and Shyama Shastri (1762-1827), were Tamils. By a most extraordinary coincidence, all three were born in the same village, Tiruvarur, located in Thanjavur district, transforming it into the spiritual as well as temporal holy land of Carnatic music.

The Malayalam mosaic was fitted into the general pattern by sopana sangeetam, so called because it was sung in front of the steps (sopanam) leading up to the deity in a temple. In the eighteenth century, sopanam and class="drop" Kathakali music was already drawing upon Carnatic ragas. Malayalam’s direct contributions to the Carnatic mainstream began with Swati Thirunal (1813-47), the Maharaja of Travancore, who dedicated his life to music. A poet, singer as well as composer, Swati Thirunal created Carnatic kritis in Sanskrit, Malayalam and Telugu and set some of his compositions to Hindustani ragas. Travancore also played a strategic role in the history of Carnatic music during the crucial period of the Trinity’s creativity, when the south fell prey to European-sponsored wars. As one reliable authority observed: ‘The only South Indian native state that escaped the ravages of war was Travancore’. Consequently, music flourished there. The musicians of Mysore and Thanjavur, after the fall of their kingdoms, slowly moved to the southernmost state and found it safer to live there than elsewhere.’

### *Historical spots associated with Carnatic music.*

*(This map does not show the actual borders, it is not to scale and merely depicts the geographical area.)*



This all-south multilingual progression ran into a serious division of sentiment when a conference in Chidambaram (a temple town in Tamil Nadu) in 1941 passed a resolution to the effect that ‘musicians in Tamilnad are urged to sing Tamil songs at the commencement and conclusion of concerts. Organizers of concerts are requested to ensure that songs are mainly in Tamil’. This resolution marked the start of the Tamil isai (Tamil music) movement that raged in the Carnatic world for some five years. The organizers of the conference were the most prominent non-Brahmins of the day, namely, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, Ratnasabapathi Mudaliar, Sir Shanmukham Chetty and T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar. Some leaders of the Justice Party were also associated with this conference. Such developments naturally led to the impression that Tamil isai was part of the powerful anti-Brahmin winds that were blowing at the time. But the matter was not that simple.

C. Rajagopalachari, an orthodox Brahmin from the top echelons of the political leadership, and Kalki Krishnamurthi, celebrated writer-journalist and another prominent Brahmin, were also supporters of Tamil isai. Evidently, Tamil linguistic sentiments overrode caste sentiments in this instance.

It was true that Carnatic culture had grown with Telugu and Sanskrit compositions as its inspirational core. A common complaint was that Tamil songs were consigned to the status of end-of-concert tukadas, literally bits and pieces thrown in to amuse the lowest common denominator group in the audience. Perhaps the complaint had some validity, but the proposition that Tamil musicians should sing only Tamil songs struck many music lovers as an extremist position to take. Three renowned

titans of Carnatic music, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer—Tamils and Brahmins—were not enthusiastic about Tamil isai. This trio did popularize many Tamil kritis, but they did so even before the movement began. Ariyakudi, in fact, declined to deviate from his usual practice of starting a concert with a Telugu varnam. Beyond the world of musicians, the position was even more strongly asserted. The Hindu newspaper, although identified then with Brahmin stalwarts such as Rajagopalachari, opposed the movement and warned against the ‘intrusion of narrow-minded chauvinism into an art which is universal in its appeal’. T. T. Krishnamachari, a pillar of the Brahmin establishment (and later finance minister in Jawaharlal Nehru’s cabinet), said ‘music is a wordless search for beauty in sound’. Others criticized the movement with jibes like: ‘Did they play mridangam in Tamil?’ In the end the movement passed off without doing any serious damage to the Carnatic culture. Obviously, no one could possibly imagine classical music without Thiagaraja and his language, Telugu, ‘the most musical of Indian vernaculars’, as scholar-critic K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri once described it. Because of the preponderance of modulation-rich vowels in it, Telugu was also known as the ‘Italian of the East’. Carnatic music always personified much more than the sum of its parts, and eminent scholars understood it as such. Typical of their view was S. V. Ramamurti’s confident observation: ‘Thiagaraja’s music is a synthesis of South Indian culture... Its grammar is Carnatic, that is to say, South Indian.’

In retrospect, the Tamil isai movement could be seen as a natural historical footnote to the Telugu-Sanskrit dominance of the time. Sanskrit was already well established as the language of learning and culture. A man of erudition like Muthuswamy Dikshitar would not use his native Tamil while composing his songs. He wrote invariably in Sanskrit, perceived as worthy of his scholarship. Telugu, on the other hand, had become the language of the ruling courts. The Nayaks who governed Thanjavur and Madurai were Telugus. As the official language, Telugu became a status symbol just as English was to become in a subsequent age. This was a strong enough attraction for the composers to use Telugu extensively. Additionally, they recognized the inherent musicality of the language. Shyama Shastri, although a Tamil, wrote in Telugu. Moreover, it was Swati Thirunal’s use of Sanskrit and Telugu that helped him merge into the Carnatic milieu.

During that politically charged phase, the Tamil isai movement probably reflected the nationalist rather than the anti-Brahmin notions of the time. The Congress movement had begun to give the idea of linguistic states a patriotic fervour, and any effort to promote local languages and cultures would have appeared appropriate. That could explain the enthusiasm with which Congress leaders like Rajagopalachari plunged into the Tamil isai movement; it certainly had a profound impact. Chaste Tamil songs began to be prominently featured in their performances by classicists from Madurai Mani

Iyer to Dhandapani Desigar and from N. C. Vasanthakokilam to D. K. Pattammal. For her part M. S. Subbulakshmi became a standard-bearer of the movement because her husband Sadasivam was an ardent follower of Rajagopalachari and, therefore, an activist supporting Tamil isai. MS sang mostly Tamil songs during the period. She also widened her repertoire to take in the full range of the Tamil musical heritage, from Silappadikaram (the circa second-century BC epic) and thevaram poetry to early minstrels such as Muthuthandavar and Arunagirinathar. Perhaps to drive home the point more effectively, she included some compositions by Kalki Krishnamurthi, who was basically a prose writer.

Eventually, it was politics that provided Tamil isai the last laugh. 'Madras', the first city of Tamil, was also the political headquarters of the British administration in the south. In fact, the Madras Presidency covered virtually the entire south, subsuming large chunks of present-day Andhra, Karnataka and Malabar regions. Madras was the pan-south seat of power from where all decisions flowed. That eminence also elevated Madras to the status of the premier centre of cultural and intellectual activities in the south. The Madras benchmarks set the pace in education, dance and painting. In Carnatic music too, Madras developed into the hub of authority. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was not enough for a musician to be established in Thanjavur or Madurai or Mysore or Tirupati. For true recognition, he or she had to go to Madras and be acknowledged there. After the Madras Music Academy was established in 1928 by leading residents of Mylapore, the Brahmin citadel of Madras, Carnatic music acquired an instant 'Vatican Council' of its own, the ultimate symbol of establishmentarian power. Just as the Vatican is a sovereign entity within the city of Rome, Mylapore became an autonomous autarchy within the city of Madras.

The academy's approval could build careers and disapproval could destroy them. Political and administrative compulsions achieved what the isai movement could not: Tamil ethos became the decisive arbiter of Carnatic culture.

Actually, the animating spirit was not just Tamil but Tamil Brahmin in character. Mylapore was the civilizational pivot of Tamil Brahminism and the pillars of this area perceived it as entirely natural that they should be the providers to, and assessors of, all Carnatic culture. As some Western observers saw it, Madras Brahmins had preserved their identity 'more fanatically than their Brahmin brothers in the north', and were therefore in a situation 'analogous to that of the Whites in South Africa'. That was an overstatement, but an attitude of exclusivity did develop as a characteristic of Mylapore. Whereas the Tamil isai movement merely wanted some degree of prominence to be given to Tamil composers, Mylapore tended to project Tamil and Tamil Brahmins as having a natural superiority over others. A situation rapidly developed where non-Tamil musicians had problems getting the all-important nods



of approval from the Mylapore establishment. There were complaints in particular about the ‘suppression of Andhra talents.’ Establishmentarians would typically admit to this state of affairs, but deny any malevolent intentions. At the receiving end of such unintentional malevolence were stalwarts of the stature of Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, one of the great violinists of India. Dwaram reacted by refusing to accompany singers and insisting that he would only give solo performances. The incomparable violinist Mysore Chowdiah was also sidelined, but he compromised in his efforts to get the approval of the establishment. Balamuralikrishna was the first Andhra singer to be given the kind of adulation Tamil maestros received from the ‘popes’ of Madras. Since then, newer vocalists such as Nedunuri Krishnamurthy and Voleti Venkatesvarulu have broken the Tamil stranglehold. It is a matter of no small interest that even Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar was only grudgingly approved by Mylapore as he was a Palghat Iyer, which implied that he was a Tamil diluted by Malayalam.

Fortunately, the intrinsic strengths and core values of Carnatic music remained untouched by the pulls and counterpulls of narrow linguistic passions and prejudices. A Chembai or a Dwaram could afford to ignore the dispensers of patronage because their individualism was beyond the reach of detractors—and individualism was central to their art. Carnatic music allowed a flexibility that performers prized. The space or leeway it provided for individual self-expression and experimentation was its unique feature. Unlike in Western music where the composer was supreme (Mozart, Beethoven) followed by the conductor (Arturo Toscanini, Zubin Mehta), in Carnatic music the performer was the star. The quality and appeal of Carnatic music always depended less on the greatness of a Thiagaraja kriti and more on the way a Subbulakshmi rendered it. To that extent, the mother tongue of the composer was really not material to the appeal of a performance. The individualism of the singer was paramount.

Western aesthetics seem to make a distinction in this respect between music and other arts. They recognize the individual’s personal striving in fields such as writing, painting and dance. They even suggest that elements of brutality and savagery could creep into a performer’s exertions in the sphere of writing because the impulse to master a theme may have to be destructive in order to bring out its essential, and therefore beautiful, nature. Richard Poirier, one of the more influential critics in the West, put it graphically: ‘Performance is an exercise of power, a very anxious one. Curious because it is at first so furiously self-consultative, so even narcissistic, and later so eager for publicity, love and historical dimensions. Out of an accumulation of secretive acts emerges at last a form that presumes to compete with reality itself for control of the mind exposed to it.’ This observation about writers applied to Western musicians as well insofar as musical performance too was viewed as an intensely personal striving both by the composer and the performer. But in the Western idiom, the musician was considered to be at his best when he interpreted the music so as to create the illusion that the composer

was there on the stage with him. The Carnatic musician was not called upon to create any such illusion. He interpreted the music; he gave his *manodharma* (imaginative improvisation) free rein, but his aim was to create his own reality, not the composer's. In this sense, Carnatic music was more akin to writing than was Western music because it was an undisguised exercise of power by the individual performer for the control of his listener's mind. Patnam Subramania Iyer, who trained a generation of singers and composers, explained the approach differently: 'It is rather easy to win over an audience by rendering a raga or a kirtana which they have not previously heard. But the real merit of an artiste lies in his taking up a familiar raga or kirtana and showing in it those special nuances and shades of beauty not so far exploited by others who follow the beaten track.'

In trying to coax different shades of beauty out of a kirtana, singers sometimes resorted to rather wild gesticulations and vehement body language, often involuntarily, sometimes consciously. Such callisthenics became the topic of animated discussion in Carnatic music circles. Many argued against gesticulations, expressing the view that the intellectual and aesthetic manifestation of a singer's immanent musicality required no demonstration of physical mannerisms. They considered facial contortions and body movements as distractions that detracted from the sanctity of the music. They referred to Subbulakshmi as an outstanding example of musical focusing to the exclusion of all extraneous intrusions; there was no display of athleticism by her, only the natural fluency of an innate musical drive.

'True, but look at her eyes', pointed out those individuals who did not find fault with a singer's body language even when it tended to be exaggerated. According to them, the language of her eyes accomplished for Subbulakshmi what flying arms did for another singer. They asserted that mannerisms revealed the extent of a singer's involvement with his or her singing. Besides, such mannerisms, they felt, provided yet another basis for distinguishing one singer's art from another's. An M. D. Ramanathan's stage mannerism, for example, was related intrinsically to his enjoyment of his singing and thus was integral to the listener's enjoyment of it. His style was part of his music just as the complete absence of any body language in D. K. Pattammal was part of her music.

The debates on mannerisms seldom took into account those of the audience. Any respectable Carnatic audience would feel free to conduct conversations while the music was in progress, something that would be considered sacrilege in a Western concert hall. Listeners of Carnatic music would also keep track of the tala by snapping fingers or moving hands or feet rhythmically, which would be again viewed as taboo in the West. A performer who did well enough to impress an audience could expect the aficionados to express their feelings in a rather predictable pattern. When he or she started moving



towards the climax of his or her virtuosity, all conversation and even the tala-keeping activities in the audience would come to a halt: a hush would descend upon the hall, the singer would execute his or her crescendo with aplomb and then the audience would explode into spontaneous applause. Audience participation, even if it were of the exuberant kind, was essential to the Carnatic music experience. The world-renowned violinist, Yehudi Menuhin, was wonderstruck by this unique feature of South Indian aesthetics.

Audience characteristics, as much as the mannerisms of musicians were elements that formed the essence of Carnatic music. Yet such topics rarely inspired researchers. One can indeed find a growing volume of literature on Carnatic music. Several of P. Sambamoorthy's works, especially *Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians* (The Indian Music Publishing House, Madras, 1984) and *History of Indian Music* (The Indian Music Publishing House, Madras, 1982), are standard volumes of reference as are R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar's *History of South Indian (Carnatic) Music* (published by the author, Madras, 1972). Other books cover a fairly wide range: for instance, Vidya Shankar, *The Art and Science of Carnatic Music* (The Music Academy of Madras, Madras, 1983); S. Bhagyalekshmy, *Ragas in Carnatic Music* (CBH Publications, Trivandrum, 1990); C. Ramanujachari, *The Spiritual Heritage of Thiagaraja* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1981); Lalitha Ramakrishna, *Varnam: A Special Form in Karnatic Music* (Harman Publishing House, New Delhi, 1991); Jon Higgins, *The Music of Bharata Natyam* (Oxford & IBH Publishing House, New Delhi, 1993); and Robert Brown, *The Mridanga: A Study of Drumming in South India* (Michigan University, Ann Arbor, 1965).

An apparent gap, however, exists when it comes to the academic contextualization of music and musicians. The proliferation of university courses in music has not promoted studies into how music affects, and is, in turn, affected by life around it. The sociology, the ethics, the economics and the politics of music are all subjects awaiting examination and continuous assessment. Informed understanding of music will become possible only when there is a supporting culture of research and historiography. The existence in abundance of such a culture in the West explains the flow of studies even on esoteric linkages of music. Knowledgeable writers have explored various avenues, for instance: the way operas in Paris shaped French politics [Jane Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicised Art* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987)]; the role of music in enforcing the social class system and male dominance [Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in 18th Century England*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988)]; and the employment of music to give Austria a high cultural identity

[Michael Steinberg, *The Meaning of the Salzburg Festival: Austria as Theatre and Ideology, 1890–1938* (Cornell University Press, Cornell, 1990)].

Bharata Natyam doyenne Balasaraswathi has had a book published and a documentary made on her. But neither she nor legends such as Veena Dhanam and Bangalore Nagarathnamma attracted the attention of the leading sociologist M. N. Srinivas, whose theories of Sanskritization were highly relevant to the musical world (see Chapter 7). The Government of India attempted to make a documentary on Subbulakshmi in the early 1980s, but this project ran into all kinds of obstacles on account of Sadasivam's stringent terms and conditions. What ultimately emerged was inevitably scrappy. In fact, Subbulakshmi demanded (and demands) attention transcending music itself. In time she grew into a unique phenomenon in Tamil culture, combining the vitality of Dravida heritage with the resonance of Sanskritic traditions. No one in the Carnatic firmament overcame the negativism of caste with the same grace and finality as she did. By the time she reached her prime, she became, as Nietzsche said of aesthetics, a 'great ennobler of life'. The absence of authentic studies on such important phenomena denied opportunities to students of music to understand what the late Edward Said (the eminent literary critic and campaigner on behalf of the Palestinians) called 'consistent transgressions by music into adjoining domains—the family, school, class and sexual relations, nationalism, and even large public issues'. But the very nature of music ensured that 'the invasion by music into non-musical realms' went on as much in India as elsewhere. In the Carnatic sphere the interaction between music and life was intense and comprehensive. Music and public tastes substantially shaped each other. Subbulakshmi was a typical beneficiary of, and contributor to, this system. She honoured the ancientness of tradition, anchored her art on a spiritual base and absorbed the best in others while developing her own distinctiveness. She always remained conscious of the need to take music to as wide a world as possible. More than her contemporaries, she reached beyond her home town, beyond her home state and beyond even her country to become a universal ambassador of Carnatic music. It was no small achievement for a person who had virtually no schooling, could not speak any language with confidence other than her native tongue and was surrounded by social obstacles traditionally considered insurmountable. She triumphed by just being herself.

## Chapter 2

### Innovations and Idiosyncrasies

*Pray forgive me for my offences and come to my rescue. It will add to your glory if you treat me with mercy and protect me. Infatuated with arrogance, I have indulged in abusing good men almost as a routine of life. I have made a show to onlookers that I am a pious man doing Japam. I have taken refuge in thee. Have mercy on me. I can no longer bear this.*

— Aparadhamula

One of the great strengths of carnatic music is summed up in the term *manodharma*, which literally means ‘allowing the mind to seek its destiny’, a concept that invests Indian music with an altogether unique dimension. *Manodharma* or imaginative improvisation enables a performer to soar freely on the wings of his creativity and display his particular abilities. It is a celebration of originality. The *manodharmic* interpretation of a raga or mood ensures that one musician’s rendering of a raga or a composition will not be the same as another musician’s. Ideally, a *rasika* must listen to them all; marvelling at the diversity of skills on display is central to his listening pleasure. This characteristic makes Carnatic music, despite its conservatism, an art form that means many things to many people. It is orthodox, but it is not static. It has the capacity to turn and twist and evolve, sometimes noticeably, sometimes imperceptibly. It can respond to changing mores in society and to the internal dynamism of music itself. It can incorporate new elements, absorb new trends and adjust to new realities. The story of Carnatic music is dotted with examples of this inner vigour and resilience. Two that deserve special attention are the development of *gamaka* and the induction of the violin.

The *gamaka* is a technique of making the human voice perform seemingly impossible feats. In musical terminology it is called ornamentation. Essentially, *gamaka* seeks to achieve dexterous tonal oscillations to produce great artistry from seasoned singers. As P. Sambamoorthy defined it in his *Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians*, ‘*gamaka* is a collective term given to the various shakes, graces, ornaments and embellishments used in Indian music. It constitutes another dimension to music’. Early texts compared a raga rendered without *gamaka* to a creeper without flowers, or to a river without water.

There is a theory—not yet taken seriously—that the eighth-century Shaivite saint Thirujnana Sambandar was the father of Carnatic music because he devised the *gamaka*. This theory, espoused by Kamalai Thiagarajan of Madurai, is based on an incident mentioned in Sekkilar’s *Peria Puranam*, a chronicle of the lives of ancient Tamizhagam’s Shaivite saints. The instrument that accompanied the

saints in their peripatetic singing was the yaazh, a kind of harp with one string for each note, which meant that it could not reproduce undulating notes. The leading yazh player of the time, Thiruneelakanta Yazhppanar, was Sambandar's constant accompanist. Partisans in the yaazh player's village once gossiped that it was the expertise of their man that made the music great. The yaazh player was upset by such a claim and asked the saint to sing in a style that would project the singer's greatness over the instruments. The saint did so by interspersing his lines with gamaka. The yaazh player just could not keep pace and the frustrated Thiruneelakanta wanted to break his instrument into pieces. Sambandar then counselled that devices like the yaazh were after all man-made, while the human voice was gifted by God as the supreme instrument. Thus, when Sambandar laid the foundations of a gamaka-oriented musical system stressing the importance of the human voice over everything else, he was, in fact, argued Thiagarajan, laying the foundations of the Carnatic school. There was no doubt that Carnatic music was fundamentally vocal music; everything else was merely supplementary to the singing. It was also obvious that gamaka had become the heart of Carnatic music. The gamaka was a test of skill for both the singer and the instrumentalist and a source of delight to the listener.

The birth of gamaka and the death of the yaazh, in fact, pointed to the inadequacy of classifying musical instruments into string and wind categories, as per the Western tradition, which was unfamiliar with gamaka. In a paper presented to the Madras Music Academy in 1992, Thiagarajan claimed that the string–wind classification was misleading because the violin, the veena and the piano were all considered string instruments, yet there was a fundamental difference between the violin and the veena on the one hand and the piano on the other. He proposed that the classification should not be done on the basis of how sound was produced—through vibrating string or vibrating air—but rather on the basis of what kind of sound was produced: sound that progressed in unbroken continuity from one note to the next and sound that 'jumped' from one note to another. 'The old classification only states the obvious. The proposed new classification assesses the respective musical capabilities of the instruments,' Thiagarajan reasoned. As he further pointed out, instruments such as the veena and nagaswaram that produced continuous or 'analogue' sound alone could cope with the Carnatic gamaka. Instruments like the piano were 'digital' which explained why they could never enter the Carnatic universe. Unlike in Hindustani music, even the harmonium was too 'digital' to suit Carnatic music. Analogue instruments, on the other hand, came into their own as the Carnatic culture developed. One finger gliding up and down a single string on the veena could produce a spectrum of notes to match the most intricate gamaka the human voice could create. Naturally, the veena became the favoured accompanying instrument when Carnatic music developed its kutcheri (concert) system in the second half of the nineteenth century. But the veena quickly yielded ground to the humble flute. That phase

too did not last long; if the veena had an intimidating stage presence, the flute had an insignificant one. Musicians were looking for a way out when a fortuitous set of circumstances brought Muthuswamy Dikshitar and his brother Baluswamy in contact with Fort St. George, the seat of the British administration in Madras city. That was the start of another evolutionary thrust.

Muthuswamy Dikshitar was more scholarly than the other members of the Trinity. He had spent six years with his guru in Varanasi where he had been exposed to Hindustani music. He became interested in the European musical idiom during his visits to Fort St. George with a patron who was a dubash (agent) of the East India Company. A veena maestro as well as a composer, he experimented along with British music enthusiasts. One attempt was to set Sanskrit lines to English tunes. That first excursion into fusion music did not go far, but Dikshitar was intrigued and fascinated by the handsome little instrument with which the Englishmen were producing brilliant musical tones. This was the violin and Dikshitar was astonished to find how faithfully it could produce raga music. He asked Baluswamy to learn to play the violin. The younger brother quickly mastered the instrument under the guidance of a British instructor. After a period of practice together, Baluswamy's violin accompanied Muthuswamy's veena in a concert. The *kutcheri* was a success and the violin became as much a staple of Carnatic music as the *mridangam*. Other Western instruments also have successfully intruded into Carnatic territory in more recent years. A. K. C. Natarajan of Madurai has adapted the clarinet, Kamalai Thiagarajan the concert flute with keys, Kadri Gopalnath the saxophone and U. Srinivas the mandolin to the exacting demands of Carnatic ragas. But the felicity with which the wholly Western violin was transformed into an indistinguishably South Indian instrument was a tribute to Tamil ingenuity. Experts attributed two reasons for the triumph of the violin. Its flexibility with regard to pitch and tuning enabled it to produce the subtlest *gamakas*. At the same time, its timbre quality was closest to the human voice, which was important in a basically vocal system like Carnatic music. The manageability of the handy violin must have been another factor in the swift acceptance it found on the *kutcheri* circuit; travelling accompanists could easily tuck a violin under their arms, whereas a veena would have required a porter to transport it. Even the European practice of holding the violin to the shoulder and awkwardly supporting it with the chin was smartly nativized. The resourceful South Indian simply sat down in his modified *padmasana* and turned the violin into a convenient lap instrument. The sound was just as sweet.

As a lead concert instrument, nevertheless, the veena held its own. This instrument was always a popular symbol of musical grace and sophistication. Among South Indian instruments, it had the largest range of notes—three and a half octaves. (Two octaves are usually sufficient to cope with Carnatic music's demands; M. S. Subbulakshmi's voice had a range of three octaves.) The human

voice was referred to as gatra veena because of the great range it was capable of achieving. Those musicians who became vidwans and vidushis in veena were always in demand, not only to perform in concerts but also to train young aspirants from well-to-do families.

Shanmugavadivu achieved recognition and also earned an income from her adoption of the veena. Subbulakshmi also learned how to play the veena. But as she turned out to be a vocalist, it was the development of the gamaka and the Carnatic affirmation of the violin that directly concerned her. She used one to achieve demonstrable virtuosity in her singing; she used the other, which had become the most important accompaniment to Carnatic singing, to embellish her concerts. But these instruments had merely prepared the ground for her and other vocalists.

What enabled them to realize their full potential and turned their generation into a golden age was the confluence of a series of historical developments in the early decades of the twentieth century. A new formula was devised for the presentation of Carnatic music, making the kutcheri culture appealing to much larger numbers of people than before. New social forces emerged in support of the arts, replacing the feudal domination of the past. Also, technological advancements directly contributed to the widening of the popular base of classical music.

The art that initially developed under the inspiration engendered by Purandara Dasa and his contemporaries and later by the Trinity had tended to be too technical to appeal to the general public. Thiagaraja alone could be called a people's composer with a repertoire that was simple and easy to comprehend. Muthuswamy Dikshitar's music was full of erudition and a fair measure of knowledge was necessary for the listener to understand it. Shyama Shastri composed music that revealed a technical mastery; it was impressive, but beyond the reach of ordinary listeners. In folk assessment, Thiagaraja was compared to grapes; you just ate them and enjoyed their sweetness. Dikshitar was more like a coconut; you had to labour hard at shelling it before you could enjoy the fruit within. Shastri resembled the kadali banana; you had to peel it first and then taste it. About the worth of coconuts and bananas there never was any doubt even among those who loved their grapes. The compositions of the Trinity became the mainstay of the kutcheris presented by professional musicians. But the kutcheris reflected the prevailing concept of music as something meant only for knowledgeable aesthetes. No doubt South Indians were supposed to take to Carnatic music as naturally as Africans took to beat rhythms, but all of them were by no means experts. They were at best rasikas, people who enjoyed the art. For them a four-hour concert built on eminent scholarship and intricate technicalities was heavy going.

A saviour arrived from a remote village called Ariyakudi, in Ramanathapuram district (now in southern Tamil Nadu). Perhaps the most significant musician since the Trinity, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar (1890-1967) was not just a singer but also an innovator. He understood that there was widespread interest in classical music, but ordinary people were put off by the prevailing practice of the singer going on and on until he was tired, then the violinist taking over until he became tired, then the mridangam player holding forth until he became tired and then the singer, by now somewhat revived, venturing forth again. Such a state of affairs could not possibly go on, and Ariyakudi was convinced that classical music needed to be taken out of the confines of technicalities and made appealing to the general public in a formulation that they could appreciate. He had both the knowledge and the stature to embark on such an enterprise; he was known as the ‘Raja of Carnatic music’. He developed an entirely new framework for the kutcheri. Essentially, he introduced more variety and fitted all components into a three-tier structure. The first segment consisted of a varnam, a masterful exposition that set the mood of a raga. The varnam and a few quick songs would set the tempo for the kutcheri. The second segment usually comprised heavy songs with elaborations of ragas and the all-important ragam-thanam-pallavi. This was the stage where the singer’s manodharma came into play and he or she comprehensively delineated the same raga in three styles—pure raga visthara, followed by freestyle thanam and then a thalabound pallavi. The third segment focused on light compositions or tukadas aimed at evoking different moods. This led up to mangalam, a soothing and auspicious benedictory valediction.

As soon as Ariyakudi presented his format in a kutcheri or two of his own, both audiences and other musicians were struck by the virtuosity of the concept and the common sense of it all. The new structure appealed to specialists and ordinary listeners alike. The overall approach was serious enough to please the scholarly. At the same time, the format provided enough variety and light-hearted tukadas to attract those who were just beginning to test the waters of the Carnatic ocean. Rasikas still needed some understanding of ragas to fully enjoy Carnatic music, but they could do so without scholarship and the gentlemen-of-leisure status that would let them spend five to six hours in a concert hall. Ariyakudi’s formula became the standard for all Carnatic kutcheris, vastly increasing the popularity of classical music.

Some observers went so far as to say that the new format led to ‘the democratization of art music’. That phrase, however, had to be seen in perspective lest music appeared to be something it was not. There was no democratization in the true sense of the term in Carnatic music. Perhaps universal democratization was not possible in the nature of things. As Edward Said put it, ‘music, like literature, is practised in a social and cultural setting... Think of the affiliation between music and social privilege;



or between music and nation; or between music and religious veneration—and the idea will be clear enough’. It should cause no surprise if the musicologist in Said reflected his socio-political ideology. But he was not alone in his beliefs. Other musicologists in the West have aired similar views. So have some modern Dalit ideologues in India. While the Dalit approach was necessarily caste-based, Said looked at the entire scene in class terms. Both viewpoints associated music with upper-crust social circles. Both might have their valid points, but neither could suggest that the growth of music was stunted by its association with class and caste. If anything, early patronage by kings and zamindars helped the arts grow. Caste-class debates never resolve themselves. But in non-ideological terms it seemed clear that Carnatic music would never be democratized, any more than Beethoven would be, to the extent of including those who perceived conventional systems in upper-caste terms. What Ariyakudi’s innovation achieved was not democratization but a historically important broadening of Carnatic music’s reach.

Ariyakudi did not function in a vacuum. He could perceive new trends developing around him. The earliest indication that the times were changing was the rise of a very South Indian phenomenon in the shape of music sabhas, i.e., connoisseur clubs. These clubs were a timely substitute for the royal patronage that had sustained the arts earlier. The Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha (Madras, 1900) and the Gayana Samaja (Bangalore, 1906) were the pioneering associations. They soon mushroomed in urban areas across the region, acquiring great influence as trendsetters, mediators and arbiters in the spheres of music and dance. Membership of a sabha became a status symbol as well as a necessity like the morning coffee. Their citycentric character increased the clout of the sabhas since power always resided in the cities. But there were other agencies that took the arts to distant nooks and corners.

The Tamil theatre was a pioneer in this area. By the end of the nineteenth century, it became a significant social force with the founding of the famous Boys’ Companies in which all actors and ‘actresses’ were male. This was a reform instituted by the father figure of Tamil drama, Sankaradas Swamigal (1867-1922). Like most people, he had been outraged by adult actors and actresses going on stage in an inebriated state and deviating from the script to indulge in unwanted antics. To prevent such indiscretions, he set up the all-boys Bala Meena RanjaniSangeeta Sabha. This sabha met with such wide approval that all drama troupes thereafter began to sport Bala (boys) in their names. When the boys performing women’s roles reached voice-breaking age, they were thrown out rather unceremoniously. The system developed a scandalous edge of its own due to the rampant abuse of the boys, but it was a major player in the growth of popular culture and music. (That latter-day celluloid heroes like M. G. Ramachandran and Shivaji Ganesan started out in Boys’ Companies is a measure of the institution’s place in history.) The dramas were immensely popular. Their very titles acted as



magnets for the masses—Krishna Leela, Dasavatharam, Kannagi, Valli Thirumanam. They were invariably musicals. And the music was invariably classical. The drama troupes might have been generally considered ‘low class’ but very high indeed was the influence of great actor-singers like S. G. Kittappa and K. B. Sundarambal. Musical literacy that developed among listeners owed much to these stars of the stage. Subbulakshmi trained herself by singing their songs.

When new technology arrived, it overtook both the music sabhas and the theatre in carrying classical music far and wide. The contributions made by the gramophone and the radio—particularly the radio—to the popularization of Carnatic music can never be overstated. They literally gave it a mass following. The Gramophone Company of India with its famous His Master’s Voice trademark set up its factory in Calcutta in 1910. An imported Japanese gramophone then cost only Rs 10. Noticing that the young were showing unexpected interest in the new song box, HMV created an affiliate brand called Twin aimed specifically at the teenage market. Soon Columbia Records began a parallel operation. Gramophones and ‘plates’ became a craze in South India. So widespread was the interest that record companies sometimes functioned like newspapers, putting out special ‘editions’ to mark important events. When Motilal Nehru (Jawaharlal Nehru’s father) died in 1931, a Tamil record was promptly released with lyrics to the effect that ‘we have lost a great man’, sung by K.B. Sundarambal. Also, records extolling the virtues of khaddar were common. For classical music gramophone records were a boon. They not only made music accessible everywhere but also provided unprecedented opportunities for new talent to emerge. The necessity for the recording companies to keep the market constantly supplied made them send out talent scouts all over the region. As soon as a singer or instrumentalist showed signs of becoming popular, the companies would approach him or her with an offer of producing a record. When a singer had a record out in the market, it conferred instant recognition on him or her. For some musician’s records led to an easy road to fame. Subbulakshmi was one of the classical artistes thus ‘captured’ by the record companies very early in their careers.

The radio arrived on the scene a decade after the gramophone. Although amateur radio clubs began transmitting programmes in 1923 from Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Mysore (the term ‘Akashvani’ was coined in Mysore), professional broadcasting got into its stride only after All India Radio was formally established by the British administration in 1936. The first radio stations in the south were in Madras and Tiruchirapalli (Trichi). The Madras station had short-wave transmission as well, enabling it to reach the whole southern zone. Even in the initial stages, AIR’s accent was on music. After 1947 the institution became much more systematic in its promotion of serious music. AIR’s quality standards were set by three visionaries—Lionel Fielden, a maverick creative thinker who was the first director-general, Victor Paranjoti, whose brilliance as a broadcasting administrator was matched by

his excellence as a musician, and B. V. Keskar, who became independent India's first minister for information and broadcasting. As professionals, the first two made AIR one of the finest broadcasters in the world. As policy maker, Keskar launched programmes that knit the country together on the one hand and gave a definite bias to classical music on the other. His creation, called the 'National Programme', provided an effective platform for musicians of high calibre to reach the whole country. The other side of the balance sheet was not very edifying. AIR could be quite autocratic in its ways. It was exasperatingly bureaucratic and its partisanship could be blatant. It graded artistes like they were commodities at an auction. Women were barred from singing pallavis just because they were women. The harmonium was banned, period. It was in spite of these attitudinal infirmities and because of the potent nature of the medium that radio came to exercise a seminal influence on classical music in India. Carnatic music's debt to AIR was not repayable.

The popularization of music by gramophone and radio was achieved at the cost of a profound change in the very structure of music. A 10-inch shellac record packed into it just three minutes of music; the upper limit could be stretched to three minutes and ten seconds but no more. If it were not for the sense of awe created by technology, vidwans would have taken offence at the mere suggestion that their performance should be judged in terms of seconds. Yet a tough practitioner like Bangalore Nagarathnamma would dutifully race through a Thiagaraja kriti with one eye on the second hand. The ludicrous idea that a pallavi should last fifteen seconds, a charanam forty seconds and so on soon became the norm. Radio proved even more rigorous. If the traditional time span for a proper Carnatic concert was upwards of four hours, the National Programme chopped it down to an hour and a half and occasionally two hours, and that period included the announcements. The traditionalists felt cheated because they had been used to hearing 'Thodi' Krishna Iyer singing a thodi, a major raga, for seven to eight hours at a stretch. Also, 'Pallavi' Sessa Iyer could keep an audience enthralled for eight hours by elaborating on the varied nuances of just one pallavi. But AIR was the all-powerful new medium, and AIR was government. If AIR decreed that a Carnatic concert should be restricted to two hours, that was it. Interestingly, the 10-inch gramophone record and the duration rules of AIR changed the long- entrenched habits of classical musicians. They grudgingly came to accept the virtues of brevity. In fact, a new genre known as 'recording artistes' was born. They never saw a concert stage, but they were masters of the studio because they were experts in producing music by the second. Eventually, form decided content.

Another all-pervasive medium, the cinema, developed in India alongside radio, with 'talkies' appearing on the Indian screen for the first time in 1931. As in stage plays, in movies too, singing was the required talent, not acting. The primitiveness of available technology gave a further fillip to music.

Film historian Randor Guy noted that ‘because songs had to be sung along with dialogue on sets while the camera whirled, film-makers went after persons who could sing well. They made a beeline for classical Carnatic musicians and many eminent singers came into films whether they were good at acting or not’. Among such singers were G. N. Balasubramaniam (who began with *Bhama Vijayam* in 1934, and went on to act in four more movies including the evergreen *Shakuntalai* in 1940, in which M. S. Subbulakshmi was his leading lady), Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer (*Nandanar*, 1935) and Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer (*Tukaram*, 1937). Those musicians who did not want to act, such as Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar and veena maestro Chitti Babu, were persuaded to appear at least in reel-length kutchcheris. Cameo scenes were devised in movies for the violin star Mysore Chowdiah and nagaswaram legend T. N. Rajaratnam Pillai. But the musician who made the greatest cinematic impact was M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar. He was not in the same class as the masters, but he was a great singer and was adored by the multitudes for his style and voice. The first superstar of Tamil cinema, his hit movies won a mass following for classical music.

Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, perhaps the highest-ranking master of his generation after Ariyakudi, was one of the few who did not make it to the screen. Not that he had any objection to the idea. Like other musicians, he too was approached with a film offer. It came from AVM Studios, one of the big banners of the time, which wanted him to play the lead role in their version of *Nandanar*. Semmangudi agreed. But his father threw a tantrum when he heard the news. For him cinema represented evil and he threatened to jump into the family well if his son joined forces with it. Fortunately, the father did not have to get wet. Semmangudi dutifully gave up his chance to be immortalized in celluloid. The exceptions, however, did not loosen the bonding between cinema and Carnatic music. Early Tamil films were filled with great classical compositions rendered by gifted singers. The greatest contribution in both quality and quantity came from a multifaceted genius, Papanasam Sivan. Writing his own lyrics and composing his own tunes, Sivan made classical Carnatic music integral to Tamil cinema with his very first movie, *Seetha Kalyanam* (1933). Pairing with Thyagaraja Bhagavathar, Sivan penned the lyrics and created the music for some of Tamil cinema’s greatest classical hits such as *Pavalakkodi* (1934), *Chintamani* (1937) and *Sivakavi* (1943). Such was the calibre of his oeuvre that there were suggestions from the chair of the Madras Music Academy that Sivan be accorded a place alongside the Trinity as the ‘*Tamizh Thiagarajar*’. If any dividing line existed between classical music and cinema, Papanasam Sivan erased it. When M. S. Subbulakshmi and N. C. Vasanthakokilam entered cinema, they were only fitting themselves into a pattern that had been well and truly established.

The cumulative effect of these social and technological developments became, by the 1930s, quite dramatic. The music sabhas, the theatre, the gramophone, the radio and cinema combined to bring

about a flowering of classical music that had no parallel in the field of performing arts. Together they liberated music from the culture of patronage, which, while providing some much-needed encouragement in the early stages, had kept the public at arm's length. Music was snatched from the hands of the few and placed at the disposal of the many. The zamindar was replaced by the middle class.

Suddenly, an entire generation seemed to burst forth with talent. This generation was colourful and alive, brimming with confidence in itself, unafraid to display its angularities even as it was proud to exhibit its skills. This period throbbed with widely differing styles and schools that seemed to pull in opposing directions, yet came mysteriously together under the rubric of 'Carnatic'. It was animated by a psychedelic breed of characters, each one revelling in his or her separateness from others, with egos exploding in brilliant hues. They constituted a motley band. There were purists and freewheelers, traditionalists and iconoclasts, crowd-pullers and crowd-evaders, wits and bores—but all of them estimable musicians.

Their idiosyncrasies were legion. Some of them would refuse to sing in concerts for which tickets were sold. Others would open up when the mood seized them—sometimes on the roadside, sometimes in a shop. Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar once sat on the floor of a Palghat bank and sang for a full hour because a clerk there was longing to hear him. Some would not perform for an audience at all on the principle that music was only for *atma aanandam*, inner bliss. Tiger Varadachari believed that a musician's task was to awaken the life force within and express it through song. Veena Dhanam was famous for holding her sessions in her house where she played for herself. Sometimes, visitors would be allowed to sit in, but if anyone so much as suppressed a cough, she would stop playing in mid-note. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer was always breaking rules, passing comments that dripped with wit and humour and outraging puritans with his unconventional ways, but none would dare question his musical genius. The great Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar never tried to hide his reputation as a tippler; he would say that his name itself was an injunction to drink in public—*ellorum ariya kudi* (drink so that all others will know). Harikeshanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar, appointed court vidwan by the maharaja of Mysore, lived like a maharaja himself, draped in silks and jewels. During music festivals at his home town, he and fellow musicians would cover themselves with so much sandal paste that, when they bathed in the river, the waters would turn yellow and fragrant.

Great musicians they certainly were, but they were generally 'uneducated' in the customary sense of the term. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer went only to a *thinnai pallikoodam*, veranda school, in his village where studies were confined to a few Sanskrit slokas. His school-going stopped in the fifth class

because no money was available for him to go to better schools further away. Yet he became a leading scholar of Carnatic music. ‘Dancers and musicians of the time were educated in their arts, not in schools,’ explained T. Sankaran, the grandson of Veena Dhanam. ‘Give them a rupee and ask for change, they won’t be able to work it out. But they can work out tala-rhythm calculations like a computer.’ G.N. Balasubramaniam stood out as an oddity in this world because he began professional practice only after he obtained a BA Honours degree in English literature from the Madras Christian College in 1931. His educational background proved beneficial. His writings and lectures as well as the broadness of his ideas helped raise Carnatic standards even as his unique style led the way to a GNB school of singing, the GNB bani. He understood the grammar of music so well that he could reach out with confidence to those who did not. This ability helped him to serve as a bridge between the cerebral and melodic categories of music. English education also gave him the confidence to coin unusual terms. Once when he sang a Khamboji Raga and some listeners thought that he had strayed into Yadhukulakhamboji and Sankarabharanam ragas, he sang it again to show that he had not gone ‘Yadhukulakhambojical’ or ‘Sankarabharanamic’.

GNB developed a trademark bani (musical style) of his own. This was the briga, i.e., rapid and intricate variations in notes. Rendered mostly in the form of vowels, they added excitement to the concluding phase of a raga. If GNB’s briga style and university education made him different from all others, M. D. Ramanathan distinguished himself by his strict adherence to the rules of classicism. Within certain unbending parameters, he was still able to achieve bhava samudra, a peaking of emotions, in which he totally forgot himself to the delight of informed rasikas. The Alathur Brothers were always mathematically precise in their renderings; clinical yet musically elegant. Madurai Mani Iyer’s command of swara was such that each note he struck was in perfect unison with the sruti.

Among those who glittered were also eccentrics, ranging from the comical to the exasperating. Narayanaswamy Appa, Thanjavur’s most famous mridangam artiste, would not squeeze or wring his bath towel lest he tax his fingers unduly; those precious fingers were exclusively preserved for playing the drums. Gopalaswamy, known as natana nayaka because of his artistry on the stage, would frequently get caught up in a frenzy of devotion, dress up as a woman representing Krishna’s gopis and dance as he composed music. Krishnamachari, a veena virtuoso, always insisted on cooking his own food, especially his favourite dish puliyogara (tamarind rice). He quickly became known as ‘Puliyogara Krishnamachari’.

Easily the most vexatious eccentric of the Carnatic world was the flautist T. R. Mahalingam, a child prodigy who burst on the scene in the 1930s. Such was his musical prowess that he could half-hear a

complicated raga while playing country-style cricket, and faithfully reproduce it on his flute that night. People used to say he had a tape recorder in his brain. An ungainly man with disproportionate limbs, he was given to mood swings and was addicted to the bottle. Even at the most serious of classical concerts, he notoriously kept a flask of liquor by his side—not always disguised as coffee. Sometimes, he would reach a venue in a state of drunken stupor and four men would have to carry him on to the stage. Once seated among the accompanists and a flute pressed into his hands, he was miraculously transformed into a magician who could do wonders with the bamboo, with every principle in the Carnatic rule book scrupulously observed. Neither a doctor nor a psychologist ever came up with an explanation for this apparently supernatural phenomenon.

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It was a many-splendoured world of egotists, wits, wind bags, masters of individual styles and eccentrics that beckoned the simple daughter of a simple woman from Madurai's singing streets in the 1930s. She entered with aplomb. Guileless and acquiescent, Subbulakshmi did not realize that she was, in fact, heralding something of a revolution. She had entered a man's world. Of course, women singers had attained fame before her, but they were confined to the stage, like K. B. Sundarambal, or to the screen, like S. D. Subbulakshmi. For the first time, it was M. S. Subbulakshmi who demanded attention as a serious concert vocalist. By the time she began giving solo performances, Ariyakudi, Chembai and Maharajapuram had peaked as seniors. Still, the sky was filled with stars. GNB had begun his reign as the 'Prince of Carnatic music', behind Ariyakudi, the 'Raja'. A keen observer put the developing situation in a nutshell: 'Chittoor Subramania Pillai was carrying the flag for the manly Kancheepuram School. Musiri Subramania Iyer, excelling in soul-stirring passages in the lower octave, was crooning his way into the hearts of a select band of admirers. Just appearing on the scene was Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, breaking the sound barrier as it were with his initially unbroken voice which he lost no time in honing into a perfect unison with bhava and sruti. The inimitable Madurai Mani Iyer was keeping the audience swaying to the lilting cascades of his swaraprasthara. Film star and songster M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar had captured the masses with his classical melodies... Rising to prominence were the likes of T. K. Rangachari, Sathur Subramaniam and Thanjavur Nanu... MS challenged them all for attention.' The musical establishment as well as the listening public were forced to sit up and take note of the way she did it. As it happened, her entry coincided with that of some other highly talented women. Each of them was so outstandingly meritorious that anything less than an equal footing with the men would have been a disservice, not just to the women, but to music. The glitter of the golden age of Carnatic music owed as much to M. S. Subbulakshmi, D. K. Pattammal, M. L. Vasanthakumari and N. C. Vasanthakokilam as to the men.



NCV streaked across the Carnatic sky like a meteor and faded away. (She died in her mid-twenties.) She had a voice that rivalled Subbulakshmi's and some old-timers believed that if she had lived longer, she could have been as celebrated as MS. MLV, twelve years younger than Subbulakshmi, adopted GNB's famous style of tremulous, cascading swaras. She excelled in alapana, elaborations. She was a versatile artiste who could sing with confidence in all the South Indian languages as well as in Hindi. Herself a Tamilian, she set out to propagate Purandara Dasa's Kannada compositions as well as Thiagaraja's Telugu creations. She once took offence when, at a concert in interior Andhra, she was told to sing only Telugu songs. She became a campaigner against parochialism in music. Taking to playback singing, she popularized the classical style through hundreds of haunting film songs. She had the calibre to think up dream projects like a Purandara Dasa Chair in universities. She herself became a teacher at philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurthi's famous Rishi Valley School (located near Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh). She always spoke her mind on fundamental issues affecting music, something that Subbulakshmi could never imagine doing and D. K. Pattammal never did. MLV died in 1990 at the age of sixty-two.

DKP, three years younger than Subbulakshmi, was in a class by herself not only because her husky voice was quite unusual among women singers but also because, after NCV's untimely departure, she was the only Brahmin among them. That was a material factor because it meant that she had a kind of reverse caste barrier to overcome when others who came from the 'entertainment class' only had the gender barrier to fight. DKP broke the Brahminic code for women when she took to public singing. The orthodox protested vociferously but, precisely because she was Brahmin, DKP's breakthrough had a wholesome impact on the cause of emancipating women musicians from the shackles of tradition. In the end, though, it was the quality of her music that gave DKP a place in the Carnatic pantheon. She built up the largest repertoire by any artiste in the classical field. She covered a vast range: from conservative ragas to titillating padams (romantic moods) and jawalis (love poems set to lilting music), from the stylistic masterpieces of Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Thiagaraja to Tamil's most inspirational composers of all time, Papanasam Sivan and Subramania Bharati. She was outstanding for the clarity of her delivery and the blending of sangeeta, musical quality, with sahitya, literary content. She also demonstrated that the intricacies of ragam-thanam-pallavi were not beyond women singers. In their musicality DKP and Subbulakshmi have been classed together. The cognoscenti have found in them commonalities such as a palpable dedication to music, an unceasing interest in learning, the ability to put one's individual stamp on a tradition-bound art, a disciplined regimen of leading their lives, and an attitude dominated by moderation and humility. By any musical yardstick the ladies belonged in the top bracket. But because of their gender, neither the music sabhas nor fellow musicians would

initially accept them. When the great violinist Mysore Chowdiah agreed to accompany Subbulakshmi, it was considered a breaking of ranks. Palghat Mani Iyer (a mridangam maestro) condescended to accompany Pattammal only after his daughter was married to her son. When merit became overpoweringly obvious, the conservative establishment opened its doors to the women. The ultimate recognition came from those who mattered the most—the listeners. Rasikas would speak of Vasanthakumari, Pattammal and Subbulakshmi as a Trinity in themselves, just as Ariyakudi, Semmangudi and Chembai were treated as the modern Trinity. None of them were composers as were the original classical Trinity of Thiagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri. Nevertheless, the Tamil penchant to see a Trinity in each musical generation implied an attitude of veneration, which, considering the calibre of those constituting the triple Trinities, was fully deserved. On the other hand, it could also suggest a collective inclination to set high standards against which to measure a generation's artistic worth.

**MSS in a concert with violin legend Mysore Chowdiah**



The distaff side of the twentieth-century generation passed the test in style. But it was the proverbial hard day's night for Subbulakshmi, her peers and their families. The discrimination against women not only covered all facets of life; the women themselves accepted it as their natural fate. The ostensible advantage the Madurai Meenakshi Temple bestowed upon women proved to be no more than a mythical flourish. In fact, in temple towns like Madurai, the exploitation of women musicians and dancers was institutionalized in the name of god. The situation was indeed ironical because the protector and patron saint of India's musicians was female.

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## Glossary

**Madhurapuri:** Present day Madurai, a city in Tamilnadu which enshrines the famous Meenakshi-Sundareshwara Temple

**Satellite Shrines:** The other shrines housed along with the main shrine in a temple Appendages: a thing that is added or attached to something larger or more important

**Eulogies:** a speech or piece of writing that praises someone or something highly, especially a tribute to someone who has just died.

**Interpolator:** trying to insert (something of a different nature) into something else

**Thirujnana Sambandar, Thirunavukkarasar and Sundaramurthy Nayanar:** Three of the group of 63 saints called Nayanmars, who lived in Tamil Nadu during the 6th to 8th centuries CE, who were devoted to the Hindu god Shiva.

**Thevaram:** Hymns sung by the 63 saints in adoration of Lord Shiva

**Raga:** the melodic element and is crafted by improvisation on fixed patterns of ascent and descent.

**Tala:** the rhythmic structure on which the melody is laid.

**Kriti:** format of musical composition especially Carnatic – Consisting of Pallavi, the equivalent of a refrain in Western music, Anupallavi, the second verse, which is sometimes optional and Charanam, the final (and longest) verse that wraps up the song.

**Agastya:** a revered Vedic sage of Hinduism to whom Lord Shiva granted the knowledge of Tamil Language

**Dravida sangeetham:** Hymns sung by Bhakti Movement poets of South India that eventually dismantled Brahmin hegemony in the Subcontinent

**Sangam period:** the time between 400 BCE and 300 CE, which is identified as the time when earliest available Tamil literature is identified.

**Purandara Dasa:** a renowned composer of Carnatic music, a great devotee of Lord Krishna, a Vaishnava poet, a saint and a social reformer.

**Coalesced:** come together to form one mass or whole

**Dissonance:** lack of harmony among musical notes

**Aficionados:** a person who is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about an activity, subject, or pastime

**Virtuosity:** great skill in music or another artistic pursuit

**Esoteric:** intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with a specialized knowledge or interest.

**Peripatetic:** travelling from place to place, in particular working or based in various places for relatively short periods.

**Undulating:** move or go with a smooth up-and-down motion

**Partisans:** a strong supporter of a cause, or person Fortuitous: happening by chance rather than intention

**Kutcheri:** Concert

**Zamindars:** Land lords

**Ostensible:** stated or appearing to be true, but not necessarily so.

### Questions for discussion

1. What picture of societal divisions in Indian society does TJS George offer in this extract?
2. Describe the bond MS shared with the Madurai Meenakshi temple.
3. How does TJS George trace the evolution of Carnatic music in the extract?
4. Write a note on the Tamil music (tamil isai) movement in Tamil Nadu.
5. Discuss the differences between western and Carnatic music as explained in chapter 1.
6. How did the "kutcheri" (concert) system evolve in the 19th century?
7. Comment on how the radio and the gramophone contributed to the popularization of Carnatic music.
8. Discuss the contributions of Ariya kudi to Carnatic music.

**Course 8 – Gender Studies Part I**  
**Summative Assessment – 60 Marks**  
**General Pattern of Theory Question Paper**

**Time: 2 1/2 Hours**

**Total: 60 Marks**

**Part-A (Introduction to Gender Studies)**

**1. A. Write short notes on any two of the following** **2x5 = 10**

4 questions to be given from concepts of Gender Studies

**B. Answer any one of the following** **1x10 = 10**

Internal choice between the two essays

**Part-B (Short Stories)**

**2. A. Answer any one of the following** **1x10 = 10**

Three 10 Marks question to be given from short story selections

**B. Write Short Notes on any two of the following** **2x5 = 10**

Four 5 marks questions to be given from short story selections

**Part-C (Representative Texts)**

**3. A. Answer any two of the following** **2x5 = 10**

Four 5 Marks question to be given from anthology

**B. Answer any one of the following** **1x10 = 10**

Three 10 marks questions to be given from biography

**Course 8 – Gender Studies Part I**  
**Summative Assessment – 60 Marks**  
**Model Question Paper**

**Time: 2 1/2 Hours**  
**Total: 60 Marks**

**Part-A (Introduction to Gender Studies)**

**1. A. Write short notes on any 2 of the following: 2x5 = 10**

1. Sex and Gender
2. Masculinity
3. Gynocentrism
4. Queer Studies

**B. Answer any one of the following: 1x10 = 10**

1. The prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male and inferiority in the female. Explain.
2. How does Beauvoir analyze the oppressions of colonized, enslaved and other exploited people?

**Part-B (Short Stories)**

**2. A. Answer any one of the following: 1x10 = 10**

6. The story 'The Quilt' by Ismat Chughtai deals with the subject of homosexuality in a complex manner. Do you think so?
7. How is the horrors of partition brought out in 'Open It'?
8. 'Bayen is the story of caste, witchcraft and superstitious beliefs.' Substantiate.

**B. Write Short Notes on any two of the following: 2x5 = 10**

1. Rabbu in 'The Quilt'
2. Sirajudin's search for his daughter in 'Open It'
3. Mother's journey from Manchester in 'The Good Mother'
4. Ending of the story 'Bayen'

### Part-C (Representative Texts)

#### 3. A. Answer any two of the following:

**2x5 = 10**

1. Discuss Mamta Kalia's poetry as a comment on lost identity.
2. What are Eunice de Souza's declarations through her poem autobiographical?
3. Bring out the anxiousness in the grass widow's prayer.
4. How is the single woman portrayed by Tara Patel in her poetry?

#### B. Answer any one of the following:

**1x10 = 10**

1. What picture of societal divisions in Indian society does TJS George portray in the extract?
2. Comment on the contribution of radio and gramophone to the popularization of Carnatic music.
3. How did the "kutcheri" (concert) system evolve in the 19th century?

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