



B.A. ENGLISH – I YEAR

DJE1A : INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH

SYLLABUS

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UNIT – I PROSE

Voluntary Poverty - M.K Gandhi

M. K Gandhi is the architect of free India and he has been rightly called the Father of the Nation. Mahatma Gandhi's best book is his own "Experiment with Truth". The Selection is an address delivered at the hall, London. He talks about the value and sacredness of voluntary poverty especially for a politician and public worker. This idea is delivered from Hindu teachings but as delivered by Gandhi it becomes a Christian idea recalling to us about Jesus and Tolstoy.

Gandhi enters politics. He says that if we want to get peace in life, we should discard all wealth and all possessions. In the beginning it is a hard struggle with his wife and children. Regarding his own self it is a very slow progress. It is also painful. He wants to remain free from immorality, untruth and political gain. Gandhi discards his possessions one by one. He feels great relief and joy to give up his things. He says that he could walk with ease. He adds that he is able to do service to his fellow men with great comfort and greater joy.

Gandhiji feels that possessions are a crime. The best possession is Non-possession or willing to surrender. Unnecessary bodily possessions should be avoided. For example, a person should have only minimum requirements for living- food, clothes and shelter. One should not have luxurious comforts in the name of civilization. Less material possession will lead to better mental satisfaction and spiritual progress.

Man becomes better by service to fellow men. Man must realise that even his body does not belong to him. God has given it and it will also be taken by him. Hence the body should not be used for pleasure but for entire service to humanity. Our body is not meant for dissipation or self-indulgence. God gave us our body with which to serve others. Gandhi says that he wants to surrender his things and also use his body to serve others. Gandhi has a mystic belief that God will help us when we dispossess ourselves. He says: 'If food is necessary, food will come to you'. Gandhi shares the belief of Christians that if we pray sincerely, God will meet our needs. Gandhi says that God has never forsaken him.



An Idea before the youth - Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was one of the most distinguished men of India. In this we see a rare combination of Indian tradition and scientific thinking. Dr. Radhakrishnan has contributed much to the cause of education in our country. In this essay he points out the importance of the right education for the youth of the country. He looks at the needs of India as related to education in a perspective that is historical, political, economic, philosophic and religious.

Political freedom has brought us the sacred responsibility of building up a new India. It will be free from disease, the curse of caste and creed. Our country is passing through a great revolutionary period in human history. It is facing a many sides challenge, political and economic, social and cultural. Education is the media. Through this our youth can be trained to face this great challenge and build the new India of our dreams.

Scientific and technological studies develop the attitude of tolerance, freedom from prejudice and hospitality to new ideas. We have to develop our heart and intelligence and our own moral values. Then only we can save the world from total destruction. But this will be possible only if we develop our moral values and take the right judgements.

Any satisfactory system of education should insist on both knowledge and wisdom. It should not only train the intellect, but also bring grace into the heart of man. Through the study of literature, philosophy and religion we gain wisdom easily. The study of these subjects helps us to understand the higher laws of the universe and face the difficult problems of life. The students have to develop a sense of self-control and a sense of balance.

A University is essential for teachers and students. The quality of education will depend on the quality of the teachers. The University teachers must be paid well, and then only they may be able to devote themselves to learning, teaching, and research. Magnificent buildings and equipment's are no substitute for great teachers. In the absence of experienced teachers, it is impossible for the students to get sufficient academic tuition or moral guidance.

Our future destiny as a nation depends on our spiritual strength rather than upon our material wealth. The greatest advantage of a nation is the spirit of its people. If we develop the spirit of our people, our future will be bright. He remarks that there is no revolutionary passion among the people of our country at present. There is only a spirit of enjoyment. There is no spirit of sacrifice. We seem to demand more than what we give. There is a kind of spiritual slackness among the people. We have to overcome this spiritual slackness and work hard for the country.



If we become learned without getting truly cultured, we become a danger to society. We become like demons and we may bring destruction to the world. It is wrong to assume that scientific discovery and technological improvement alone can bring about the betterment of mankind. We have placed too much emphasis on scientific training. We have to rectify this mistake and develop the basic values of the spirit.

This essay reveals Dr. Radhakrishnan's love for our country and his concern to give the right kind of education to the young men and women of our country.

The Barber's Trade Union - Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) was born in a Kshatriya family in Peshawar. After completing his education in India, he went abroad for pursuing higher studies. He had been prolific as a novelist, short story writer and critic. His novels are *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, *The Village* etc., His one of his remarkable short story is "Barber's Trade Union".

In this story, the narrator himself is the participant, a friend of Chandu, the protagonist, and he is full of admiration for him. For him Chandu is the 'embodiment of perfection'. But Chandu is a barber, a low-caste boy and the narrator is a Brahmin boy. Chandu is his senior by about six months and he always takes the lead in all matters. He is good at reciting poetry, but bad at mathematics. At a tender age, Chandu take all his domestic responsibility.

Every morning Chandu goes to the village for shaving and hair-cutting. There he observes certain novelties there, particularly the rig out of doctor Kalan Khan a white turban, a white rubber coat and a leather bag in hand. He is uncontrollably fascinated towards the clothes. Chandu wears a doctor's clothes. He points out how his father had traditionally treated ailments like boils, pimples, etc. And he has learnt it from his father. The narrator agrees with him, and later encourages him. When he entered the house of the landlord his little son Devi who clapped his hands with joy and shouted to announce the coming of Chandu, the barber, in a beautiful heroic dress. Bijay Chand, the Jahagirdar, expresses his disapproval saying Ram!Ram! He accuses Chandu of defiling his religion. He again violates the maxim of relevance.

The narrator advises Chandu in good faith that Pandit Paramanand would approve of his argument. But the Pandit is not better than the land lord. He vilifies Chandu as a low-caste devil, and discriminates between the narrator and Chandu on the basis of caste. On hearing this Chandu does not look back and ran in a flurry. The narrator is worrying about



Chandu's fate. He wanted to meet him, so he moves his house. His mother's speech is full of different moves. She follows the Cooperative Principle telling him that she does not know where Chandu has gone. But, her elaborate answer may appear to be flouting the maxim of quantity.

She also expresses her anxiety about Chandu's activities. She wants to convey her heart felt feelings to the narrator. The poor old woman has lost her husband, and there is no one to share her anxiety and her apprehension about Chandu's activities. The narrator is Chandu's close friend, and a fit person to share her thoughts with him. The interaction is concluded by the narrator taking his leave. The interaction between Chandu and the narrator later reveals different moves on the part of Chandu, who is very innovative. He desires to change his fate and fate of his fellow-brothers by way of overcoming his predicament. Despite his being a mere barber boy, he has ability to outwit and outsmart others. Chandu is so shrewd and cunning that he has already had his Verka counterpart in his league.

Chandu very conveniently succeeds in his plan of non-cooperation. The villagers approach the barber at Verka with a double money offer, but in vain. The villagers reel under the new situation while Chandu makes hey in the town. He summons all the barbers in the purview of seven miles and convinces them that it was high time that all the elders came to them and that they must stop dancing attendance to them. And thus, they launch into "Rajkot District Brothers' Hair dressing and Shaving Saloon"

Work and its Secret - Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda's real name was Narendranath Dutta. He was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta. When he was young, he questioned on the discrimination based on caste and religion. As a child he had great respect for sanyasis. He would give away anything if asked for. Thus from his childhood he had the spirit of sacrifice. He started Sri Ramakrishna Mission in 1897.

Helping others physically, by removing their physical needs is great. If a man's wants can be removed for ever, it is surely the greatest help that can be given him. Spiritual knowledge is the only thing that can destroy our miseries forever. All other knowledge satisfies wants only for a time. He who gives man spiritual knowledge is the greatest benefactor of mankind. A spiritually strong and sound man will be strong in every other respect. The gift of knowledge is a far higher gift than that of food and clothes because the real life of man consists of knowledge. Ignorance is death, knowledge is life. Physical help



cannot bring permanent satisfaction. So, that help which tends to make us strong spiritually is the highest, next to it comes intellectual help, and after that physical help. The miseries of the world cannot be cured by physical help only.

All work is by nature composed of good and evil. Every work must necessarily be a mixture of good and evil. Good and evil will both have their results, will produce their Karma. Good action will entail upon us good effect; bad action, bad. The Bhagavad Gita says “Work incessantly, but be not attached to it”. Every work that we do, every movement of the body, every thought that we think, leaves an impression on the mind stuff. Each man’s character is determined by the sum total of these impressions. If good impression prevail, the character becomes good; if bad, it becomes bad. If these bad impressions are always working, and their resultant must be evil, and that man will be a bad man; he cannot help it. When a man has done so much good work and thought so many good thoughts that there is an irresistible tendency in him to do good, in spite of himself and even if he wished to do evil, his mind will not allow him to do so; the tendencies will turn him back; he is completely under the influence of the good tendencies.

As the tortoise tucks its feet and head inside the shell, and you may kill it and break it in pieces, and yet it will not come out, even so the character of that man who has control over his motives and organs is unchangeably established. He controls his own inner forces, and nothing can draw them out against his will. By this continuous reflex of good thoughts, good impressions moving over the surface of the mind, the tendency for doing well becomes strong, and as the result we feel able to control the Indriyas. Liberation means entire freedom- freedom from the bondage of good, as well as from the bondage of evil. A golden chain is as much a chain as an iron one. The world is not our habitation; it is only one of the many stages through which we are passing.

The word love is very difficult to understand. Love never comes until there is freedom. There is no true love possible in the slave. The very act of love brings happiness; Real existence, real knowledge, and real love are eternally connected with one another. True love can never react so as to cause pain either to the lover or to the beloved. A man who loves a woman always wishes to have her all to him. He feels extremely jealous about her every movement. He wants her to sit near him, to stand near him, and to eat and move at his bidding. He is a slave to her and wished to have her as his slave. That is not love. It cannot be love, because it is painful. If she does not do what he wants, it brings him pain. With love



there is no painful reaction. Love only brings a reaction of bliss. If it does not, it is not love, where there is real love; it does not die, and will never produce any painful reaction.

After the battle of Kurukshetra the Pandavas performed a great sacrifice and made very large gifts to the poor. There came a mongoose, half of whose body was golden. It began to roll on the floor of the sacrificial hall. Then it said to those around, that that was not sacrifice. The mongoose said, once there dwelt a poor Brahmin with his wife, his son, and his son's wife. They were very poor. There came in that land a three years' famine. The family had starved. One day the father brought home a little barley flour. He divided into four parts, one for each member of the family. When they were about to eat, there came a guest. He set before the guest his own portion of the food first then every member's portion which the guest ate and departed. That night they died of starvation. A few granules of that flour had fallen on the floor. When the mongoose rolled on them half of its body became golden. The charity of the house holder is nobler than that of the sanyasi. Thus it is plain that to be an ideal householder is much more difficult task than an ideal Sannyasin; the true life of work is indeed as hard as, if not harder than, the equally true life of renunciation.



UNIT II - POETRY

Enterprise- Nissim Ezekiel

Text

It started as a pilgrimage
Exalting minds and making all
The burdens light, The second stage
Explored but did not test the call.
The sun beat down to match our rage.
We stood it very well, I thought,
Observed and put down copious notes
On things the peasants sold and bought
The way of serpents and of goats.
Three cities where a sage had taught to
But when the differences arose
On how to cross a desert path,
We lost a friend whose stylish prose
Was quite the best of all our batch.
A shadow falls on us and grows.
Another phase was reached when we
Where twice attacked, and lost our way.
A section claimed its liberty
To leave the group. I tried to prey.
Our leader said he smelt the sea
We noticed nothing as we went,
A straggling crowd of little hope,
Ignoring what the thunder ment,
Deprived of common needs like soap.
Some were broken, some merely bent.
When, finally, we reached the place,
We hardly know why we were there.
The trip had darkened every face,
Our deeds were neither great nor rare.
Home is where we have to gather grace.



Critical appreciation of the poem

Nissim Ezekiel's poem "Enterprise" described a metaphorical journey toward a specific goal. The travellers on this journey begin in a real physical place, a desert, and argue about how to cross this challenging landscape. One of the members of the group, who wrote the most stylish prose, goes his own way. The rest of the group was left on its own. Some quit the team.

A group of men, including the poet, embarked on a voyage to England, where the poet went with a few friends in a group. They called it a "pilgrimage". This pilgrimage was both real and imagined. They were spiritually high. In their way they had many hurdles. The first phase went off well, but the pilgrims found that, at the second stage, the sun scorched them; it tested their courage and fortitude. At a spiritual level, the journey to the Holy Land. They bore this well. They were keen observers. They took plentiful notes and recorded their observations "on the things peasants sold and bought" as well as the behaviours of serpents and goats, as also "three cities where a sage had taught". The allusion to the "three cities" is obscure here.

They then reached a desert, and there arose differences among them on how to cross that patch. One of the pilgrims, who possessed a gift for stylish writing, abandoned the journey midway. They lost their best intellect. This entailed a great loss, and they were shocked. A pall of gloom fell over them.

In another phase of the voyage, the pilgrims were attacked twice and they lost their way. Some of them broke away from the group. The rest of the way they travelled on their own. The poet tried his best to persuade them to remain with the rest of the group. He also "tried to pray" for the success of their enterprise, and the leader informed him that they were near the sea, meaning that they were on the right track. Now they could continue their "pilgrimage".

On their way, this small group of stragglers did not notice anything. They were without hope; they did not pay any heed to what the thunder said. They despaired of the success of their mission. They were poor of their common basic needs like soap. Some of them were totally broken down, while others were bent with their physical and spiritual burden.

Finally the travellers reached their destination; however, it was not quite home. Ezekiel concluded that this type of expedition was not a worthy undertaking; living "at home" with inner satisfaction is the greatest achievement of all. They came to the conclusion



that their journey had been neither pioneering nor notable for any reason. They had thought their journey would make a mark in history. The only problem is that others have made this journey before. It was nothing new.

The journey of Enterprise is a metaphor for life and our focus on the destination as the only means for our goals. Some critics have noted that Ezekiel's Enterprise is also his attempt to bring together two homes his place of birth and his journey to a European city.

Exile - R. Parthasarthy

Text

As a man approaches thirty he may take stock of himself.

Not that anything important happens.

At thirty the mud will have settled:

you see yourself in a mirror.

Perhaps, refuse the image as yours.

Makes no difference, unless

you overtake yourself. Pause for breath.

Time gave you distance: you see little else.

You stir, and the mirror dissolves.

Experience doesn't always make for knowledge:

you make the same mistakes.

Do the same things over again.

The woman you may have loved

you never married. These many years

you warned yourself at her hands.

The luminous pebbles of her body

stayed your feet, else you had overflowed

the banks, never reached shore.

The sides of the river swell

with the least pressure of her toes.

All night your hand has rested

on her left breast.

In the morning when she is gone

you will be alone like the stone benches



in the park, and would have forgotten
her whispers in the noises of the city.

Critical appreciation of the poem

R. Parthasarathy is one of the greatest poets in Indo-English poetry since independence. His collection of poems *Rough passage* has a three tier structure. In the first section *Exile* the poet describes his life in England where he felt like an exile uprooted from his culture. Cultural conflict is at the heart of Parathasarthy's poems. As a young student he was infatuated with England and the English language. But his life in England put an end to his anglomania. He was caught in a cultural dilemma. In *Exile* he reveals that the poet's infatuation with the English language and culture is under strain. The more he sees alien English life the more he becomes conscious of his Tamil roots.

He dressed in his foreign clothes. England also had polluted lands filled with smoke and litter. There were un bathed English children in a dirty set up. However, people were only disgusted with the coloureds. The poet described how the river divides the city from the night. Perhaps that is the only thing that divides the city from the night, giving an indication of the night life there. And the noises reappear as the mechanical routine returns to the day with trains and milkmen foregrounding the scene. The events of the day assume vocal overtones with the newspaper boy.

The poet tongue is hunchbacked due to words held back, and the burden of words left unsaid as he heads for Jadavpur to his beloved. She smelt of gin and cigarette ash. Her breasts were aroused and therefore sharp due to desire. The speaker makes sure that he carries this wisdom of the colonial past in the bone urn of his mind. His mind now carries the ashes of his own existence that he now presumes to be dead. It also carries the remnants of a colonial past.

Nevertheless, all that is left are the ashes of things that were once young and beautiful, of the flesh and glow and all that youth stood for. He comprehends that his life has come to a full circle now as he is thirty. When something comes to a full circle, it either completes a cycle or has come back to its beginning. He makes a resolution to give quality to the other half. He regrets that in the scramble to be a man in terms of sexual maturity and in the materialistic march for success, he has forgone his innocence.



Where the Mind is without Fear- Rabindranath Tagore

Text

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up in to fragments by barrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear of stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary
desert sand of death habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action-
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father let my country awake.

Summary of the Poem

Rabindranath Tagore was born as the youngest of the seven sons on 6th May 1861 at Jorsanko, Calcutta. He had no regular schooling. He spent most of his times in the servants' quarters. At first he was drawn towards Indian devotional poetry. Tagore started translating some of his own lyrics into English. This collection was published in 1912 with W.B Yeats' introduction in the name of Gitanjali. In 1913 he was awarded Nobel Prize for this book.

“Where the Mind is Without Fear “ is one of the most famous and effective lyrics of Tagore. It is filled with patriotic feelings. It reveals Tagore's vision of free and ideal India. The freedom fighters of India fought the British to create a politically independent India whereas Tagore visualises a spiritually liberalised India.

The poet prays to the Almighty that his countrymen should be free from any fear of oppression or forced compulsion. Under the British rule people are afraid of the British government He wishes that everyone in his country has his head held high in dignity. In other words, according to him, in a truly free country every person should be fearless and should have a sense of self dignity.

Tagore dreams of a nation where knowledge would be free. Education should not be restricted to the upper class only but everybody should be allowed to acquire knowledge. No one will be deprived of knowledge and education of the grounds of poverty, caste and sex. All the Indians will remain united. The poet emphasizes the unity of not only of his countrymen but also of the entire world. He thinks there should be no division among people based on their caste, creed, colour, religion or other words, prejudices and superstitions should not divide the people in groups and break their unity. The children should learn freely



from the nature and the world around them. They should not be forced memorize some predetermined lessons.

Tagore favours the Gandhian idea of speaking the truth at all costs. The speech of Indians must come out from the depth of heart. The poet wants everyone to work hard to reach their goal, and in the long run to reach perfection. When its countrymen work hard a country flourishes. Tagore visualizes all people of India should work hard and tirelessly to attain perfection in all the fields. He prays that the flow clear stream of reason should not lost its way into the dull desert of blind beliefs, dogmas, old habits and superstitions. They must be abolished. The God must be the guide our ever expanding thoughts and ever widening actions. He will inspire them to think noble thoughts and to put them into action. The poet prayed to god to lead his country into that heaven of freedom where the freedom is based on truth, reason, love high thoughts and noble actions.

In the poem the poet's message is that if all the people of a nation are not wise enough to lead a happy and peaceful life free from all evils, they cannot enjoy their freedom well. So the poet concludes that the political freedom is not so important unless you are fearless, self dignified, knowledgeable, truthful, hard-working and broad-minded enough to enjoy it fully.

The Servants – Gieve Patel

Text

They come of peasant stock,
Truant from an insufficient plot.
Lights are shut off after dinner
But the city-blur enters,
Picks modulations on the skin;
The dark around them
Is brown, links body to body,
Or is dispelled,
and the hard fingers
glow as smoke is inhaled
and the lighted end of tobacco
Becomes an orange spot.
Others hands are wide
Or shut, it does not matter



One way or other –
They sit without thought
Mouth slightly open, recovering
From the day, and the eyes
Globe into the dim,
But are not informed because
Never have travelled beyond this
They sit like animals,
I mean no offence.
I have seen,
Animals resting in their stall,
The oil flame reflected in their eyes,
Large beads that though protruding
Actually rest
Behind the regular grind
of the jaws

Summary of the poem

Gieve Patel(1940) is a doctor by profession. He is also a playwright and painter. The poem Servants appeared in the New Commonwealth Poets, 1965.

The Servants were once farmers. They have now abandoned the plot that can no longer support them and have migrated to the city in search of livelihood. A student missing classes without permission; here the farmers leaving their occupation and moving away from their land. The plot is not large enough to support them. The room is filled with a brownish half light. They are trying to take rest, after a long day of hard work.

“Globe” here used as a verb- the round eye balls seem to probe the darkness. Globe may be a combination of ‘glow’ and ‘probe’. This idea is repeated later, when the poet compares their eyes to the eyes of animals in a stall. The light of intelligence is lacking, because they are not aware of a better life.



UNIT III - DRAMA

Where There's a Will- Mahesh Dattani

About author

Mahesh Dattani was born in 1958. He made his entry into Indian theatre with his first full length play “Where There’s a Will” in 1986, drawing attention on intricacies of relationships under patriarchal hegemony.

Plot Summary of the play

The central theme of the play is egoistic nature of the male section of the society, especially the head of the family who always lives under the impression that without his concern not a single leaf would be allowed to fall down. In this play the family head Mr. Hashmukh Mehta is the symbol of Hitlerism. He does not allow including his son anyone to do as they wish.

He is a symbol of patriarchal ego. He couldn’t distribute his power among his family members because he wanted to dominate each and everyone including his wife Komal Mehta. His son Ajit twenty three years old. He is a managing director of Hasmukh’s factory but he is not allowed to take a single decision. He is married but according to Hasmukh still he is not mature enough to take right decision at right time. So he neglects his son’s efficiency to control his established business in a right way. The scene shifts to Hasmukh’s death. He rises from his bed and observes his corpse. He moves behind the bed and speaks calmly of his death. Applying magic realism, Dattani has very deftly brought in the scene to establish the protagonist’s patriarchal hegemony even after death. “I am dead. I can see my own body lying still on the bed. Looking peaceful, but dead”. The ghost of Hasmukh makes comments throughout the rest of the play adding much humour to the sequences.

He tries to control his family even after his death. His domination is intolerable to all members of the family but they are not supposed to speak a single word without his permission. To rule over them even after his death he has made a ‘will’ of his property. The dramatist introduces the ghost of Hasmukh Mehta to watch their actions. Dattani has very deftly brought in the scene to establish the protagonist’s patriarchal hegemony even after death. The ghost of Hasmukh makes comments throughout the rest of the play adding much humour to the sequences. The family is bothered with too many condolence phone calls, rush of visitors and the paraphernalia of the funeral. The gathering is very impressive as family friends kept pouring to the bedroom to pay their last respects to the departed. His wife keep up her appearance of great loss crying at the appropriate moments under instructions from



Minal. Hasmukh struck even headlines in the media. He feels good knowing how famous he is after death with obituary in the papers full of photographs inserted by his own different companies.

Hasmukh making comments on his garland photograph, he is upset since they have not kept fresh flowers just as he used to do for his father's larger photograph. He finds the picture not up to his expectations. Frustrated the ghost of Hasmukh decides on a ghostly action: **“ I think I'll go outside and swing on the tamarind tree upside down”**.

Sonal Mehta is totally governed by others. She has been victimized and exploited by his husband's authority. According to Hasmukh she is a faithful dog. She is very meek, submissive and obedient. Hasmukh does not allow his wife to do whatever she likes. At the same time for sex he could go to other professional lady. He also makes detesting remarks on Sonal his wife with whom he never enjoyed marital bliss. He says “ Twenty-five years of marriage and I don't think she has ever enjoyed sex.... And I haven't enjoyed sex with her”. Frustrated in his conjugal life he began his affair with ultra-modern lady Kiran Jhaveri, his typist and secretary, in whom he finds brains that matched. Sonal is devoted and descent wife but her husband is very cunning and rude. He doesn't give respect and show love for his wife Sonal. Hasmukh says **“Then I should be very happy man. I 've got a loving wife who has been faithful to me like any dog would be”**. When Hasmukh is alive, he is suffering from certain diseases like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, etc. His wife is too much conscious of his health. She cares his husband but he could not give her a place in his heart. Kiran's explanations open the eyes of Sonal to stand on her own feet, rejecting the aid of her sister Minal under whose shadow she lives all the time. She has to break loose from ghosts of her own making in her stressful life under her husband.

As the play opens Ajit is on the phone talking to a friend about his frustration as his father does not give him Rs.5 Lakhs to modernize the factory. Being the company's JMD, he has planned to diversify the business to manufacture electronic typewriters. As the telephonic conversation continues, his father Hasmukh keeps commenting on Ajit's irresponsible and crackpot schemes. He goes to the extent of cursing the day. He is spendthrift son is frustrated being belittled and ignored by his father. Hasmukh's daughter-in-law Preeti is a scheming character seeking only his money. They are a strange house hold. Ajit is considered a failure by his father. Hasmukh is suspicious of daughter-in-law Preeti's intelligence. She is the only one who can match his lack of concern for any one.



Hasmukh Mehta has made Kiran Jhaveri, as the trustee of the trust named Has Mukh Mehta Charitable Trust. He has donated all his property including finances, shares etc., to the trust. As per the will, if the family members obey the rules mentioned in the will, they will get a regular allowance from the trust. The trust will be dissolved when Ajit turns forty five. As per the will Kiran has to stay with the family but when they deny her to do this she tells them. **“As the trustee of the Has Mukh Mehta Charitable Trust, I have the right to make a statement declaring that since the recipients of the trust, namely you all, are not complying with the rules set down by the deceased, the holdings of the trust will be divided between certain charitable institutions recommended by the founder, which will mean that you won’t ever get to see even a single rupee earned by your father in-law”.**

She teaches them everyday new lessons at home as well as office. She has got both brain and body like modern woman who can use any of them to satisfy her need very successfully. At last it is also observed that Sonal too become efficient to step forward to stop patriarchal attitude of the male section. Kiran is very sharp and open minded. She could be successful in observing Has Mukh’s mind very minutely. Through her experience with him, she tells Sonal, **“He depended on me for everything. He thought he was the decision maker. But I was. He wanted me to run his life.... He saw in me a woman who could father him! Men really never grow up!”** Finally she feels disgust for Has Mukh and hates him like her own father, brothers and husband. She feels pity for them as Has Mukh continues to rule over them even after death through his will. He does all that only to continue in his father’s footsteps who rule his family with an iron hand. She is glad that Ajit by revolting against his father has escaped from the scars and ghosts of the past: **“He may not be the greatest rebel on earth, but at least he is free of his father’s beliefs. He resists..... That is enough to prove that Ajit has won and Has Mukh has lost”.**

Preeti, Ajit’s wife, tells, **“He was a slave driver, your father! He almost drove me mad with his bossy nature. He succeeded with your mother”.** She is more intelligent and scheming in handling Has Mukh. **On her part she simply relented to his exerting authority “I gave in, I simply listened to him and didn’t ‘protest’ like you! I knew he didn’t have long to live”.** Being a scheming woman, she has planned it intelligently even by mixing her vitamin tablets with Has Mukh’s medicines in the same bottle. She blames Ajit for having made her and her future child paupers by his habit of answering back his father. Meanwhile, searching for the Calm pose tablets, Ajit finds the medicine bottle with vitamin and other tablets.



At the end of the play it is revealed that Preeti has hastened the death of her father-in-law. It shows that how she has applied her brain to remove the hurdle on her way to live a quite comfortable life. As far as Hasmukh's death is concerned Kiran exposes Preeti's act, not to black mail her but to show us how courageous she is! Kiran also finds how Hasmukh had a slow lingering death consuming wrong tablets for his ailments. Preeti has mixed her vitamin tablets along with his medicines. All the tablets in the bottle looked alike apparently. After Hasmukh's death Preeti has hidden the medicine bottle making excuses that she doesn't need them anymore. Kiran, however, questions Preeti on the matter while she trembles and begins to sob. Though Preeti is cornered there is no definite proof for the accusation levelled against her. Kiran can't go to the police either lacking clear evidence. Although Kiran has the power to disinherit Preeti, she doesn't want to do for the sake of Ajit and the child to be born. Since Preeti pleads Kiran not to tell it all to Ajit, she desists and changes the topic of conversation to the surprise birthday party Preeti has planned for Ajit.

In the party they all decide to be good friends for the rest of the twenty-one years as per the clause in the will. Their hearty cheering drives Hasmukh's ghost out of the house. He runs to stay permanently on the tamarind tree outside, regretting for having made the will, which ultimately drove him out. Ajit decides to cut it off as soon as his servant returned. Meanwhile Preeti experiences her baby move in her womb, as if suddenly sprung into life. The cutting of the tamarind tree will drive Hasmukh's ghost out of his shelter for ever, ending the patriarchal supremacy. Dattani has successfully explored like Ibsen some of the problems faced by patriarchal societies that need purging of the ghosts of the past.



UNIT IV – FICTION

Swami and Friends – R.K Narayan

About author

R.K. Narayan full name is Rasipuram Krishna Swami Iyer Narayana Swami. He was born in Madras on 10th October 1906. His father was a school headmaster and Narayan did some of his studies at his father's school. As his father's job entitled frequent transfer Narayan spent part of his childhood under the care of his maternal grandmother, Parvati. During this time his best friends and playmates were a peacock and mischievous monkey. His novels are based in a fictitious village called Malgudi. Some of his books are The Financial Expert, The Man-Eater of Malgudi, The Guide, Waiting for the Mahatma, and A Tiger For Malgudi. His stories generally dealt with the personalities and interactions of people in the Indian society. His stories held emotions and implicit satire, and the essences of his books are conveyed gracefully in simple and humorous prose.

In 1930, Narayan wrote his first novel, Swami and Friends is a delightful account of a school boy, Swaminathan whose name, a bridged as "Swami" gives a characteristically Narayanesque, ironic flavour to the title, raising expectations which the actual narrative neatly demolishes. Swami and Friends is the story of ten years old Swaminathan, a boy full of innocence, wonder and mischief and his experiences growing up in Malgudi. He is a student at the British established Albert Mission School, which stresses Christianity, English literature and the value of education life change dramatically

Summary of the play

Swami and Friends narrates the story of ten-year-old Swaminathan, who is known to his friends and family as Swami. In this book, R.K.Narayan takes readers through Swami's experiences and adventures in the fictional village of Malgudi. This story set in British-colonial India in the year 1930. It begins with an introduction to Swaminathan and his four principal friends: Somu, Sankar, Mani and Pea. Mani is a crude and naive simpleton, and his friendship is something that swami cherishes. Swami appreciates his friends' dramatically different personalities, and these differences only strengthen their powerful bond. Rajam is the best friend of Sami, who is the son of Malgudi's new police superintendent. Rajam represents the upper middle class section of the society, with his fur cap and stylish coat. Swaminathan and Mani hate Rajam, but three boys become best friends after confronting him. Likewise, Swaminathan's friendship with Rajam also initially angry Somu, Sankar, and



the Pea (Samuel). But Rajam convinces all six of the boys to be friends, becoming the de-facto leader of their group in the process.

When Swaminathan joins a mob protesting the recent arrest of an Indian politician in Malgudi, his life changes forever. In the mob Swami shatters the windows of his headmaster's office with a thrown rock. Several people are injured in the violence. His participation in the violence doesn't like by Rajam, so there is a crack in their friendship. Swami atones for his apologetic actions, earning Rajam's forgiveness. Suddenly Swami decides to join Rajam in founding a new cricket team called the M.C.C.

A match is between the M.C.C and another local youth team Y.M.C. This is the new tension between Rajam and Swami. Swami has no time to practice cricket, due to the heavy home work load at his new school. This infuriates Rajam, who threatens to never speak to him again if he misses the Y.M.C. match.

Swami fails to persuade his headmaster at the new school into allowing him an early dismissal to attend M.C.C's practices. He is forbidden from participating with M.C.C., He throws his headmaster's cane out the window. Swami decides to flee Malgudi for good. This time he is rescued, he missed the M.C.C's match and ruined his Rajam's friendship. Rajam's father has been transferred to a new city, and that the boy will be departing on the following morning. Swami decides to say good bye to him at the railway station, and wants to give him a book as a parting gift.

Unfortunately, on the morning of Rajam's departure, the train station is hectic and Swami cannot reach station before he boards the train. As the train departs, Mani pulls Swami through the crowd, and up to the window of Rajam's compartment. When Rajam refuses to speak to Swaminathan, Mani hands Swami's book to him. Mani consoles him and he says that Rajam intends to write and that he accepted his book; but Swami does not believe and novel ends on a note of ambiguity and uncertainly represented by Mani's indecipherable facial expression. This book traces his life through such turbulence, marking the simplicity of Swami's affections and relationships.

Character Sketches

Swaminathan

Swami is ten years old at the time when the novel opens. Though a boy in years, he is basically a child. His responses have not yet been patterned and disciplined. This result is he is involved in one trouble after another. But after each of such escapades he realizes his



mistake and so gains a little in maturity. Each one of his experience is a part of his education. It is step forward towards maturity. He is not a good student, and every Monday is black Monday for him, for he does not like to go to school after the delicious rest and vagabondage of Saturdays and Sundays. But he is quite happy in the company of his friends, particularly, Rajam and Mani, they exchanged visits, or loaf about happily even in the hot Sun. In the very beginning, we find that Swami is unable to endure the criticism of Hindu gods on the part of Ebenezar, the scripture teacher, put awkward question. So that the teacher is angry and twists his ears. Swami complains to his father, who writes a strong letter to the Headmaster. Swami is afraid, thinks that he has needlessly involved himself in trouble, and that it would have been better by far not to have spoken to his father about the matter. He felt he would not mind if a hundred Ebenezars said a thousand time worse things about the affair.

Swami's political activity makes him a much sadder and wiser person; it is an important step in his maturity. He absents himself from the school, and goes on a spree of window smashing not only in his school, but also in the Board high school. The result is that the next day, the Headmaster of the school takes him to task. He questions him as to why he did not come to school on the previous day. The school peon deposes against him with the result that he is made to stand on the desk, and is caned by the Headmaster. Unable to endure this humiliation, he snatches the cane from the Headmaster and runs out of the school. His career as a student of Albert school thus comes to a sudden end. As he himself tells his friends later on, he ought not to have indulged at all in his political activity.

He was admitted to the Board High School and had to undergo the painful experience of being looked down upon by the boys of the Albert Mission school which is a superior institution. The M.C.C is founded, Swami is declared to be "The Tale of his team", because of his skilful bowling and the Y.M.C is challenged to a friendly cricket match, and the challenge is accepted. He had no time for practicing cricket. After the school hours he had to attend the drill classed and scout classes. When the date is fixed for the match is quite near he begins to cut the drill and other classes. So he is caned by the Headmaster before the whole class. Suddenly Swami snatches the cane from the Headmaster, take up his books and runs out of the class, shouting that he does not want to study in that dirty school. He does not want to live in Malgudi. So he decided to run away from Malgudi to try his luck elsewhere. Here the novelist has given us his "Stream of Consciousness". Now he is tired, hungry, and also terrified, for he is all alone on the road, and it is getting dark. Then he remembers the



comforts of home, the love and affection of his mother and grandmother and the delicious food that he used to get there. His thinking processes are more logical now.

He decides to return home and he realizes that efforts to escape from harsh reality and futile, reality must be accepted and faced. In this way, by the end of the novel, Swami is entirely changed. He has grown and matured from a rash and impulsive child into a boy whose responses would be more patterned, controlled and disciplined.

Mani

Mani is the “Mighty Good-for – Nothing”. He towered above all the other boys of the class. He seldom brought any books to the class, and never bothered about homework. He came to the class, monopolized the last bench, and slept bravely. Mani is the hero of Swami. His friendship with Mani shows that Swami wants to keep on the right side of youth power. When Swami is nicknamed “The tail” he is jealous of Rajam and angry with Swami for being so very friendly with Rajam. Mani is one of the founder members of the M.C.C. and takes an active part in its activities. He does his best to console Swami when he is heart-broken at the departure of Rajam from Malgudi. Mani and Swami remain together up to the end, and we hope that their friendship deepened and matured with the passing of time.

Rajam

He is the son of the police superintendent, is late to arrive but soon he becomes the dearest friend of Swami. He came to school in a car. And he proved to be a very good student too. He spoke very good English, “exactly like a European”. Many of his classmates could not trust themselves to speak to him, their fund of broken English being small. Only Shankar, the genius of the class, had the courage to face him, though his English sounded halting and weak before that of Rajam. Rajam was a rival to Mani. If Mani jabbed, Rajam jabbed, if Mani clouted; he clouted; if Mani kicked, he kicked. Rajam is angry with Swami for having taken part in Political activity.

Rajam leaves Malgudi for good, and Swami’s heart is broken at the exits of his dearest friend, to whom he gives a parting present despite his callous conduct. We hope that Rajam was softened by this affectionate attachment and wrote to him. At last it is with this hope that Mani tries to console Swami.

Somu the monitor, who conducted himself with perfect ease and self confidence. He sat about his business, whatever it was, with absolute confidence and calmness. He was known to be chummy even with the teachers. He was more or less the uncle of the class. He



was not promoted to the next class. He failed, and so according to their code of conduct, he was excluded from the group. He plays no further role in the life of Swami.

Shankar is considered to be the most brilliant boy in the class. He solved many problems that was given to him in five minutes, and always managed to border on ninety percent. He could speak to the teachers in English in the open class. His face was radiant with intelligence, though his nose was almost damp, and though he came to the class with his hair braided and with flowers in it.



UNIT V – SHORT STORY

The Cow of the Barricades - Raja Rao

The story “The Cow of the Barricades” gives a picture of India’s struggle for independence under the inspiring of M.K Gandhi. In the story, the Master is not other than the Mahatma. Gauri’s death symbolizes the enduring source of energy that lies in purity, peace, goodness and unselfishness. Raja Rao has given a realistic portrayal of India as well as the beliefs that people hold. Published in 1947, the story is a part of a collection of stories and hold relevance for the times in which it was written.

The story has two main characters the Master and Gauri, the cow. The people of Suryanarayana Street pay respects to Gauri who visits the Street every Tuesday. Her arrival gives a kind of awareness to the people who are very eager to know her. Being an animal, a cow is unable to say who she is. She often comes to her Master who would give her food. People take the cow to be a strange creature, which would disappear after paying a visit and only the Master know about her whereabouts. Every time after a well reception she would leave the street without any further halt.

Everybody liked, loved and respected her. People thought her as Goddess Lakshmi, to support both rich and poor. Different kinds of people come to her carrying various wishes to be graced and fulfilled by Gauri. The students for good marks, girls for handsome husbands, widows for purity, childless for children and the like. Therefore every Tuesday there was a well-prepared procession of men and women at the Master’s hermitage. But Gauri would pass by them all unaffected by the attention she receives. People offered her various kinds of eatable things and sometimes she avoiding taking all. So the rest offering would be thrown into the river where fish and crocodiles would eat them.

The scene changes to a fight for freedom and on the advice of the Master, people stop buying foreign cloth, stop serving the Englishmen’s government and refuse to pay taxes. Everywhere it was preached that the children must wander the street holding blue cards and people especially women are refused to go out of their village, home to the open street. They are forbidden to continue worshipping in the temples. The work men build barricades to prevent the army from entering the city. But the Master said: “ **No barricades in the name of the Mahatma, for much blood will be spilt. No, there shall be no battle, brothers.**” When the city is about to be assaulted by the British, Gauri clammers to the top of the barricades. The crowd begins to chant the hymn Vande Mataram. The chief of the red man



fired a shot and Gauri died on the spot. But surprisingly nobody could see a drop of blood falling down from Gauri's head.

The Seth Jamnalal Dwarak Chand build a statue of Gauri at the spot and people started worshipping her. Children plays on her body and Master thinks Gauri is waiting in the Middle of Heavens to be born.

A Snake in the Grass – Rabindranath Tagore

Text

On a sunny afternoon, when the inmates of the bungalow were at their siesta a cyclist rang his bell at the gate frantically and announced: 'A big cobra has go into your compound. It crossed my wheel'. He pointed to its track under the gate, and resumed his journey.

The family consisting of the mother and her four sons assembled at the gate in great agitation. The old servant Dasa was sleeping in the shed. They shook him out of his sleep and announced to him the arrival of the cobra. 'There is no cobra', he replied and tried to dismiss the matter. They swore at him and forced him to take an interest in the cobra. 'They swore at him and forced him to take an interest in the cobra. 'The thing is somewhere here. If it is not found before the evening, we will, dismiss you. Your neglect of the garden and lawns is responsible for all these dreadful things coming in'. Some neighbours dropped in. They looked accusingly at Dasa: 'You have the laziest servant on earth', they said. 'He ought to keep the surroundings tidy'. 'I have been asking for a grass-cutter for months', Dasa said. In one voice they ordered him to manage with the available things and learn not to make demands. He persisted. They began to speculate much it would cost to buy a grass-cutter. A neighbour declared that you could not think of buying and article made of iron till after the war. He chanted banalities of wartime prices. The second son of the house asserted that he could get anything he wanted at controlled prices. The neighbour became eloquent on black market. A heated debate followed. The rest watched in apathy. At this point the college boy of the house butted in with: 'I read in an American paper that 30,000 people die of snake-bite every year'. Mother threw up her arms in horror and arraigned Dasa. The boy elaborated the statistics. 'I have worked it out, 83 a day. That means every twenty minutes someone is dying of cobra-bite. As we have been talking here, one person has lost his life somewhere': Mother nearly screamed on hearing it. The compound looked sinister. The boys brought in bamboo-sticks and pressed one into the hands of the servant also. He kept desultorily about the bush,' someone cried aptly. They tucked up their dhoties, seized every available knife



and crow-bar and began to hack the garden. Creepers, bushes, and lawns, were laid low. What could not be trimmed was cut to the root. The inner walls of the house brightened with the unobstructed glare streaming, in. When there was nothing more to be done Dasa asked triumphantly, 'Where is the snake?'

An old beggar cried for alms at the gate. They told her not to pester when they were engaged in a snake-hunt. On hearing it the old woman became happy. 'You are fortunate. It is God Subramanya who has come to visit you. Don't kill the snake'. Mother was in hearty agreement: 'You are right. I forgot all about the promised Abhishekan. This is a reminder'. She gave a coin to the beggar, who promised to send down a snake-charmer as she went. Presently an old man appeared at the gate and announced himself as a snake-charmer. They gathered around him. He spoke to them of his life and activities and his power over snakes. They asked admiringly: 'How do you catch them?' 'thus', he said, pouncing upon a hypothetical snake on the ground. They pointed the direction in which the cobra had gone and asked him to go ahead. He looked helplessly about and said: 'If you show me the snake, I'll at once catch it. Otherwise what can I do? The moments you see it again send for me. I live nearby'. He gave his name and address and departed.

At five in the evening, they threw away their sticks and implements and repaired to the veranda to rest. They had turned up every stone in the garden and cut down every grass blade and shrub, so that the tiniest insect coming into the garden should have no cover. They were loudly discussing the various measures they would take to protect themselves against reptiles in the future, when Dasa appeared before them carrying a water-pot whose mouth was sealed with a slab of stone. He put the pot down and said: 'I have caught him in this. I saw him peeping out of it--- I saw him before he could see me'. He explained at length the strategy he had employed to catch and seal up the snake in the pot. They stood at a safe distance and gazed on the pot. Dasa had the glow of a champion on his face. 'Don't call me an idler hereafter', he said. Mother complimented him on his sharpness and wished she had placed some milk in the pot as a sort of religious duty. Dasa picked up the pot cautiously and walked off saying that he would leave the pot with its contents with the snake-charmer living nearby. He became the hero of the day. They watched him in great admiration and decided to reward him adequately.

It was five minutes since Dasa was gone when the youngest son cried: 'See there!' Out of a hole in the compound wall a cobra emerged. It glided along towards the gate, paused for a moment to look at the gathering in the veranda with its hood half-open. It



crawled under the gate and disappeared along a drain. When they recovered from the shock they asked. ‘Does it mean that there are two snakes here?’ The college boy murmured: ‘I wish I had taken the risk and knocked the water-pot from Dasa’s hand; we might have mown what it contained’.

Summary of the story

R.K. Narayan is a very humorous writer. In his novels and stories are set in Malgudi, an imaginary town in south India. The place is imaginary but the people are quite true to life. In the short story, “A Snake in the Grass” he presents a mother and her four sons. Each character is vividly individualized.

The focus in the short story is on the servant, Dasa. He is an old man. He sleeps almost always. One sunny afternoon, a cobra creeps into the garden. The family consisting of the mother and her four sons assembled at the gate in great agitation. Everybody finds fault with the lazy Dasa. But Dasa puts the blame on the mistress of the house. He says that, if she had supplied him with a grass cutter, he would have cut down all the foliage. The members of the family cut down every grass blade and shrub. The garden is bare now.

The mother is very pious. She is also very superstitious. An old beggar woman cries for alms at the gate. They tell her not to pester when they are engaged in a snake hunt. On hearing it the old woman become very happy and says **‘You are fortunate. It is God Subramanya who has come to visit you. Don’t kill the snake’**. The mother agrees with the beggar-woman. She says that the snake have come to remind her of her failure to do Abhishekam for the Lord. She gives a coin to the beggar woman for her suggestion.

At five in the evening, they throw away their sticks and implement and repair to the veranda to rest. They have turned up every stone in the garden and cut down every grass blade and shrub, so that the tiniest insect coming into the garden has no cover. They are loudly discussing and relaxing themselves in the veranda when Dasa appears there with a closed pot whose mouth is sealed with a slab of stone. He put the pot down and says: **‘I have caught him in this. I saw him peeping out of it... I saw him before he could see me’**. Nobody has the courage to open the pot and verify Dasa’s statement. Dasa goes away, saying he is going to hand over the snake to the snake charmer. After he leaves they all find a cobra dragging itself out of the garden. The realization dawns on all that Dasa has cheated them.



The Home Coming- Arun Joshi

Text

Since he returned from the war things had not been quite the same. He had fought on the Eastern front, in Dinaipur, where he was told, the fighting had been rough. Personally, he did not know. He had been commissioned only the previous year and this had been killed during the two weeks. Nine had died on the very first night.

The day he returned his fiancée and his family met him at the station. They embraced, and wept, and, later on they laughed. His fiancée wore an emerald green sari and in the winter sun, he thought, she looked very pretty. She asked him if the war had been bad. He said it had been all right but he wished so many of his men had not been killed. She said she had been simply dying for him to come back. He said that she was very nice of her. Then they talked of the blackouts and the air raids and things they had seen on the T.V. By the time they reached home –it was about twenty minutes drive from the station –she was saying that because of staying cooped indoors for so many evenings she had been eating too much and would now have to diet. His mother said dieting gave anaemia. Anaemia, she hinted, was bad for child-bearing.

Now, where he had come from, for days on end, he had not met a man, woman, or child, who had not been hungry, always hungry. Everyone was hungry, once in a way ,but to be always hungry, he had seen, was different . It made a bit of an animal of you , he thought ,turned you stupid. After the ceasefire he had supervised a relief station. People used to line up two hours in advance although there was nothing to do except sit and watch the cooks and sniff the air. When they got their ration they swallowed it in about two minutes. After that he could see they were as hungry as before, that in fact they were waiting for the next meal. The Old people had not bothered to look for food. If it came their way they ate it. If not. they lay down and died. That was the way it had been where he had come from. So when his fiancée talked of dieting and with what his mother said of anaemia he started to feel a little lost.

His mother was very keen on his marriage. So was he, in a way-until before the war. During the war he had killed ten men, led assaults that ended the lives of many others and had seen several hundred dead, gashed, charred, bloated, hacked, shot through with their hands behind their backs. He had seen bodies gorging the viaducts of canals, flaking off like state cake. Once he saw a hockey field strewn with the skeletons of boys. That was the first time he had seen dead people, aside from the corpses that he had seen carried around for cremation. His family were well-to-do and there had not yet been a death. So he had not seen



a dead body before and now he had seen hundreds of them. And he had been wondering about marriage. What was the meaning of one man's marriage; one man's life? He had been wondering what life was all about. Who, he had been thinking, could possibly be running the world. Such thoughts filled his head with confusion as he sat about or played cards or went out with his father for a game of golf.

He had a sister. He used to know her. Now she had changed. He couldn't put his finger on it. But she had changed. He couldn't put his finger on it. But she had changed. She wore strange clothes and shiny chains and goggles. She wore goggles even at night. At times she wore these for riding. She talked strangely, too.

One day she took him to a party. As a rule he didn't go to parties—they depressed him and worked on his nerves—but she said it was a party of a young people. He went because he had been having these thoughts and he hoped he could talk them over with someone. May be, he thought, he would feel a little better, more at home.

It was a small party. He knew most people. They were the children of businessmen whom he had known all his life. But most of them had changed. The boys had long hair and side-burns and some had beards. A couple of girls were without bras. The others wore pant suits and chains and goggles. All except him smoked. Just before the war ended he had taken in a lot of sulphur dioxide in an artillery barrage and he had been told to keep off smoking for a while. But he could drink. And he drank. All of them talked. In fact they were quite good at it. They could build things up, one on top of another, like children's blocks. One of them said the need was to see things whole, in perspective; to conceptualize. He did not know what that meant but, he thought, it meant building things up, one upon the other. There was a long haired boy who had once been in his literature class. Now, he said, he was a poet.

The poet seemed very keen to define genocide. He also wanted everybody to accept his definition. He said it was important to define genocide because how else did not know whether genocide had taken place. He said a great many cruel things had no doubt been done, but it was not correct to say that they amounted to genocide. The things that had happened, he said, did not meet the definition of genocide. Everyone was impressed because the poet said things different from what the press and everyone else had been saying.

They talked about the war and he listened. They talked of the things they had read in newspapers and magazines. He did not know what they had read but a lot of things. They said were not quite correct. They mixed up terms. Bazookas and mortars, for example, were not



the same, nor was an out-flanking manoeuvre the same as a pincer. But everyone seemed keen to use big words.

They also had their own views on how a war was fought. They thought you fought from trenches and with tanks and guns and aeroplanes. They asked him what happened after the tanks and the artillery and the aeroplanes were done with the enemy. He said the enemy was usually still there after they were done. You had go out and fight him. They didn't seem to believe him.

After dinner everyone was a little groggy. The poet said he would recite a poem.

He read out casually from the back of an envelope but his face wore the death-look. He talked of golden Bengal bleeding under a violet sky. Everyone became very serious, goggles and all. Some of the girls looked very sad. 'But no matter,' the poet concluded, 'no matter, comrades, you shall not be forgotten, nor your death go un avenged.' He recited something like that.

The death-look still on his face, he asked him if he liked the poem. He said it was fine if that was how it seemed to him. Personally he remembered different things. He remembered, for example, pushing a boat off a bank, under the light of stars, into a pitch-black stream whose name he did not know. He remembered the silhouettes of the six boys in the boat. They had been detailed to demolish a bridge. When he pushed them off the bank he knew they would not come back. So did they. He knew they would be killed before or after the bridge was blown. Whichever way you looked at it, the boys knew, they would not come back. The oldest among them was nineteen. None of them had long hair or beards and none wore the death look. They just sat quietly, six silhouettes, a little defiant, a little afraid. He said he did not know much about violet skies but he knew it wasn't easy to die. And to die at nineteen-that, he said, was beyond his imagination.

Another time, he said, they walked into a village and there was a child stuck on a bayonet in front of every hut. There was nobody in the village; just a dead child stuck on a bayonet before every hut.

Then there was the school full of girls that had been the brothel for a battalion. A battalion, he told them, was a thousand men.

So, he said to the boys, if one were to write poems one would have to get it all in, all of this and much else. And he didn't know what sort of poems could get all of it in.



One day he learnt he had been awarded the Vir Chakra. It had been given to him for the night right at the start, the one in which nine of his men had been killed. He had often thought of that night.

He had been told to take an outpost. There had been a lot of shelling and machine-gun fire. Finally, he had ordered a direct assault. There was not much else he could do because they were short of time. There were short of time because beyond the outpost was a highway where a convoy had to be intercepted. He had hoped they would take the enemy by surprise. But as they got within range there was heavy fire from all sides; Brens and machine-guns and a lot grenades. Some of them were killed at once. Finally they were in the trenches. There was a bayonet charge and the decisive fight which they had won and for which he had got the Vir Chakra. But that bayonet charge kept troubling him.

At time when you charged with a bayonet it got locked inside the man. You could do things to draw it or you could fire your weapon so that it was released with the recoil. In any case you lost some seconds.

It was quite dark in the trenches. They had not been able to keep a close formation. One of his subedars was fighting to the left of him when his bayonet stuck. A soldier moved towards him. He remembered the sheen of moonlight on the soldier's bayonet, pointing towards his belly. He turned, which, in his own defence, he should not have. The subedar tackled the soldier. The next moment he was bayoneted himself. He was one of the nine that were killed.

He had visited the subedar's family. They lived in a mud hut in a circle of mud huts. He had met his mother she had cried and wanted to touch his hand. 'Please help us', she had said. 'You are big people; you can help'. The subedar's window was a little younger than his fiancée. They had two children; two years and nine months. He had recommended an award for the subedar. His children could study free up to the college. His widow would get a pension. But he didn't know what she would do. He wondered what a girl did when she got widowed at twenty and couldn't marry again.

While he was on leave these things kept swirling about his head. He lay awake most nights trying to make sense out of things. At times he wished he had a bagful of grenades that, some evening he could lob, one each, in every doorway down the street; or that there were a war, not a thousand miles away, but right in the heart of their city, in their streets and parks. At other times he was afraid. Dark shapes danced before his eyes and his palms grew moist. What he would do, he wondered, if there were other wars and other bayonet charges



and more boys in boats to be pushed into the silence of the night. Sometimes he thought of leaving the Army. Even so how could he be sure that he would not awake in the middle of the night and not know that somewhere a lieutenant was making a charge, that some subedar, with a wife and children, was getting bayoneted in the moonlight.

But in the morning there were the parties and movies and dancing and the flowers in their garden. There was his sister with her new car, the chains around her waist jangling every time she moved. There were the poets who hadn't seen a gun and arty-arty girls. And charity fetes and speeches on the radio. There was his mother insisting he marry straightway and, of course, his father getting ready for the boom. He did not know how to fit it all together or whether it could be fitted together. Ever.

Summary of the play

Arun Joshi (1939-1993) got his management degree from the U.S.A and later became the director of an institute of Industrial Relations in Delhi. He was an unusual writer who likes to stay away from the public eye and his writing often makes us aware of another level of reality beyond the surface of mundane day today to existence. He wrote novels and short stories.

The theme of "The Home Coming" is about a young soldier who returns home from the war front, only to find the whole place strange and un-natural. The story is a dark and stark portrayal of the hypocrisy and ignorance that plagues our society, especially in the self proclaimed high-brow, intellectual circles.

The narrator returned from Bangladesh liberation war in 1971. He had fought on the Eastern front in Dinajpur where the fighting had been rough. It was true that half of his men had been killed in two weeks. Nine had dies on the very first night; half of his men had been killed during the past two weeks.

After hectic and bloody battles on the Eastern front, the protagonist returned home and was welcomed warmly by his family and fiancée. He tried to go back to his civilian life-the life led by his fiancée and his family. However, he could not find it within himself to mingle with the crowd his family hangs out with. His finance told him that she had put on weight and therefore was going to diet. The young man was taken back to the time just after the end of the war when he had been in charge of a relief centre where he had to dole out food to the refugees. He said ,



“Everyone was hungry, once in a way, but to be always hungry, he had seen, was different. It made a bit of animal of you, he thought, turned you stupid..... When they got their ration they swallowed it in about two minutes. After that they could see that they were as hungry as before, that in fact they were waiting for the next meal. The old people had not bothered to look for food. If it came their way they ate it. If not they lay down and died. That was the way it had been where he had come from.”

His mother was very keen on his marriage, before the war he was also interested in marriage. But he has seen several hundred dead, gushed, charred, hacked, shot and many such bloody cruel inhuman merciless murder and torture under the name of war. The narrator went to the extent of thinking “To wonder who was running the world?” He was not able to share his feelings with his father who was a busy business man who did not like his son to enter into military. He then did not share his feelings even his sister whom he felt had changes. His sister took him to a party of known people. He felt that most of them had changed in style of clothing. All except him smoked. In the war he had inhaled lot of sulphur-di-oxide . So he did not like to smoke. One man in the party called himself as a poet and talked about genocide.

Everyone was impressed by his talk, but the narrator knew about Bazookas and mortars and he know about the horrors of the wars. He was reminded of six young boys sent out in a boat to blast a bridge during the process they would die. He also was troubled by the thought of the dreadful atrocity of the battalion who changed a school into a brother house. In which nine of his men were killed also brought sorrows to his heart. Subadar his friend had been killed. All these thought kept swaying in his mind. But in the morning things changed parties and movies speeches and radios etc... His mother was insisting that he should marry straight away and his father was also supporting her. He did not know how to accept it.

Green Parrots in a Cage - Gopi Gauba

A man wearing a large yellow turban stood at the gate. He was a tall man, middle-aged and had burning black eyes set in a wheat-cloured face. He carried all his belongings, change of clothes, blanket and brass vessel, in a shapeless bag slung on his shoulder. He had two parrots for sale, he said.

“No thank you,” I said, feeling sorry for the birds. It was a beautiful day and the cage was too small for them. The tiny hand of my son, held lightly within mine a minute ago was



now clenched tight. I looked down at the curly head of the sturdy little boy, aged three years. He stood beside me, solemnly watching the antics of the green parrots as they jumped from perch to floor of the cage and climbed up to the roof by their red beaks and knobby claws. The parrots had wicked black eyes and tiny mischievous tongues that fascinated us.

The man with the large turban smiled at the boy and spun the cage around to show off the beauty of the young birds. He raised his brilliant eyes to look at me appealingly.

‘I need the money,’ he said ‘for a ticket home’.

That year many people needed money to leave the town for home, wherever home was. From the cut of his homespun clothes, baggy jodhpurs tight at the knee and ankle and an intriguing short tunic that flared up from a high tight bodice like a ballerina’s skirt, the man’s home probably was Kutch, not far from Hyderabad Sind. I gave him the money and wondered if I need take the cage with the two parrots since I too would be leaving town soon. But I was afraid the Kutchee might be tempted to spend more time to sell the bird all over again. It was unlikely that he would release them.

My son brought the cage in, proudly and confidently, holding it aloft and kept it on the marble-topped table in the Verandah. For a long time he leaned against the table and looked at the parrots, love entering his heart for them.

Love swam openly in his large limpid eyes as he watched me feed the birds with a green chilli and ripe guava and fill small bowl with water. I barely saved my finger being nipped by a sharp beak and was blowing on the skin of my knuckles, calling the parrots a few unpleasant names, when my son, surprised at my shocked reaction and my language, offered them his podgy little finger.

While I dressed and bandaged it, I explained the anger of the little green parrots imprisoned inside a small cage.

My son heard me and understood the meaning of my words but such pleading trembled on the young face that I postponed my idea of going up to the terrace to open the cage door. It was already late afternoon. There would be cats about the place, my mother warned me.

Living in the heart of the old city of Hyderabad in Sind the only tree in sight grew in the compound of the mosque across the narrow lane. A hundred pigeons and at least one peacock lived in that tree. Green parrots, I finally decided, needed a large garden.



I thought of our orchard on the outskirts of the town with its many fruit trees, the little pond with the ducks and the old gardener, Ramai, whose special hobby was to look after the birds and frighten away the marauding crows and kites.

It took me a month to go to that orchard. The situation without was still somewhat tense they told me. But I was confident that our horse carriage was well known in the city. I must have driven over that bit of road innumerable times and knew every house and shopkeeper on the way. I was sure no one could possibly want to hurt a young, visibly pregnant woman travelling with a small son and two parrots in a cage.

However, Din Mohammed, who had been with us a long time, refused to take the risk. He insisted that the orchard was too far out of town and quite some distance from the bridge, being situated on the other side of the river Phuleili.

‘Release the parrots here, ‘Din advised or give them to the Maulana’.

Before I could agree or say anything about the required fruit trees he went to the mosque and brought the Maulana to the gate.

I had watched the Maulana dissolve into tears the previous week saying goodbye to my grandmother and my mother. Both my grandmother and my mother had come the house and into the neighbourhood of the mosque as brides, and now they were leaving, going across the border to make new homes on the other side.

The Maulana did not weep saying good-bye to me, but rested a gnarled hand on my son’s head and promised to look after our parrots. I saw the grief in his old grey-rimmed eyes. I turned my attention away from them, sliding my gaze across the narrow lane to look at the many strutting white pigeons, their tails spread out like fans, oblivious of what was happening around them. The peacock, with a bedraggled long tail sweeping the mud baked floor of the compound, sat on a low branch emitting loud ugly cries. Stupid things, I thought. I shook my head.

‘I have promised my son,’ I said gently, ‘that the parrots will be given an orchard, a garden with a lot of fruit trees. They are wild birds and will fly away from you. Someone will catch them and put them in a cage again and sell them’.

I thanked the old Maulana and bade him to look after my father, who, as the head of the Hindu community had decided to stay on to see to the affairs of his people left behind.

It was late afternoon when we got to the orchard. Din-Mohammed had, more or less, taken to his bed after leaving my grandmother and my mother at the station, and could not



bring himself to sit in the coachman's seat, much less see where he was going; the tears kept coming into his eyes and impairing his efficiency.

I took Khansahib, the second coachman, a young Pathan, tall and fierce of loyalty. He drove the carriage at an even fast pace, his eyes alert, my son sitting in his lap with whom he kept up a conversation full of gurgling laughter. I looked about me, at the familiar landmarks, filling my eyes with them, astounded that they would always be there and yet I might never see them again. It all seemed a bit difficult to accept this strange exile, something that took place only in stories of ancient times told to children by grandmothers on cosy winter evenings beside the fireside.

The gates of the orchard were open. There was no one about. We called out the gardener's name, my son, the Khansahib and I.

'Ramai,' we cried, 'arey Ramai, where are you gone?' We were answered by a heavy silence.

A late sun slanted across the lawns and partly lit some of the trees, as in a painting. For a long minute I stared around me trying not to mind the oppression of the silence, fighting the madness that was beginning to overwhelm me. I dropped to my knees and placed the palm of my hand on the green grass. It was not easy. Merely looking at the sheer beauty of the place made me want to weep.

'Ma,' said my son, coming to stand in front of me, his plump hands flat on my wet cheeks, 'you said the parrots will jump with joy at the sight of the fruit trees.'

'Yes, son,' I replied and got up to put the cage in the centre of the lawn. Gingerly I opened the tiny door afraid I might get nicked again. But the birds, sitting firmly on their perch stared at me warily, blinking their white eyelids like wise old men. I brought my son to sit on the edge of the lawn from where we could watch the parrots fly out.

We sat patiently for long time. The birds would not trust themselves to step out. They sat inside, feeling safe within the familiarity of the bars. Like us, they too waited in silence.

Time and again I had seen one of the parrots knock itself silly against the same bars in a vain attempt to break the cage open, to tear the place down. I had wondered if, like me, she was expecting and in desperate need to build nest. IT had broken my heart to watch her frenzy. I asked myself if a parrot could be born in captivity, within narrow confines of a small draughty cage. So intense had been her anguish I had been afraid she might burst a blood vessel.



And here they were, the little fools, sitting pretty inside their cage and politely declining to come out.

I raised my face skywards and saw, to my amazement, many parrots, hitherto hidden by the many-toned green foliage sitting on various branches. A green tree made an excellent camouflage. When I looked down again both the parrots had come out, one lingering beside the cage for a possible refuge back in it at the first sign of danger. But the other, bolder one hopped off, surprised at this new freedom of movement, for it promptly stopped hopping and looked dazed, as if clobbered on the head. I smiled, and heard my son give a chuckle of delight. The next minute the parrots were gone. It happened so quickly that to this day, when I try and recall the incident, I cannot make out how one moment they were there, distinct birds and friends of many weeks, and the next moment I could not see where they had gone, having so mingled with the leaves and the other remembers of their tribe. There was no farewell, no parting.

Feeling sad and now really scared of the silence and the shadows that thickened with each passing second, I took my son by the hand and hurried away, giving the desolate, empty cage a fleeting glance. Halfway across, the second lawn, I gave in to my impulse, picked up the child and began to run towards the waiting horse carriage.

And suddenly I was glad to be out of the place, for now the orchard was no longer a thing o beauty. It had become eerie and frightening. The fruit trees did not house green parrots with laughing red beaks and twinkling black eyes, but goblins and spooks that jeered and booed at us as we spend on the driveway, the horse's hooves thunderous on the gravel.

Summary of the play

Gopi Gauba who was an Indian writer was born in Hyderabad was educated in Karachi and Shanthiniketan. She lived in Lahore after her marriage and she was supposed to move to Mumbai at the time of partition. She was a journalist and short story writer. The partition of India in 1947 and its traumatic impact on people, who were forced to migrate, forms the background of her story Green Parrots in a cage. The story has won a BBC prize.

A parrot seller stood near the gate of the narrator. He had two parrots in a cage. He asked the narrator to buy his parrots. He also told her that he wanted money to get a ticket to go home. He was from Kutch. Like the parrot seller, many people needed money to leave the town. There were violent riots every-where in Hyderabad Sind because of the partition. Most of the Hindus, including the narrator had to leave for India.



The narrator bought the cage for her son. Moreover, she wanted to help the man. Her son kept the cage on the marble –topped table. The son played with the parrots, he fed them with green chilli and guava. The birds nipped the mother in anger. So they decided to leave the birds in their orchard.

Ramai, their old gardener, whose special hobby was to look- after the birds in the orchard. The narrator asked their coachman, Din Mohammed to take them to the orchard. He refused to take them to the orchard because orchard was too far out of the town. He also told them that it was not safe. He advised to give the birds' cage to Maulana. Maulana who was seen grief-stricken and old-grey rimmed eyes expressed the tragedy of the cruel partition. Kan Sahib the second watchman, a young Pathan. They went to the orchard. Its gates were open. They called for Ramai. But there was utter silence everywhere. They left the cage opened on the lawn. They thought that the birds would fly away happily. But the parrots were sitting firmly on their perch. They sat patiently for a long time. The birds were little fools sitting pretty inside their cage and politely declining to come out. After a long time, with much hesitation, one by one they flew away.

The narrator compared herself and her state to the state of the parrots. The writer invented some ideas, the relation between the dweller and the native place. The writer returned home but gladly. Likewise, people of Kutch, Sind and Hyderabad went away leaving their native place after the partition.

The Babus of Nayanjore- Tagore

Babus of Nayanjore were famous landholders. They were noted for their princely extravagance. They would tear off the rough border of their Dacca muslin, because it rubbed against their delicate skin. They could spend many thousands of rupees over the wedding of a kitten. The flood came. The line of succession among these old-world Babus, with their lordly habits, could not continue for long. Like a lamp with too many wicks burning, the oil flared away quickly, and the light went out. Kailas Babu left Nayanjore and came to Calcutta. His son did not remain long in this world of faded glory. He died, leaving behind him an only daughter.

In Calcutta the narrator was Babu's neighbour. His family history was just the opposite of Babu. The narrator's father got his money by his own exertions, and prided himself on never spending a penny more than was needed. He never had any inclination to earn the title of Babu by extravagant display; and his only son, the narrator owe him gratitude for that. He gave him the best education, and he was able to make his way in the world.



Kailas Babu was spotlessly neat in his dress on all occasions, though his supply of clothes was sorely limited. Every day he used to air his shirts and vests and coats and trousers carefully, and put them out in the sun, along with his bed-quilt, his pillowcase, and the small carpet on which he always sat. Very often he would iron out his shirts and linen with his own hands, and do other little menial tasks. After this he would open his door and receive his friends again. Though Kailas Babu, had lost all his landed property, he had still some family heirlooms left. On every suitable occasion he would bring them out in state, and thus try to save the world famed dignity of the Babus of Nayanjore. So the neighbourhood called him their Thakur Dada. When his guests got up to go away, Thakur Dada would accompany them to the door and say to them on the door-step: “Oh, by the way, when are you all coming to dine with me?”

The narrator did not like Thakur Dada’s speech and his activities. He had an amusing plan to cheat Dada. Narrator’s friend disguised himself as Chota Lat Sahib who was a retired Government servant. When Chota Lat Sahib’s arrival was announced, Kailas Babu ran panting and puffing and trembling to the door. He spread his old family shawl and he asked the Lat Sahib to be seated. After ten minutes’ interview, which consisted chiefly of nodding the head, his friend rose to his feet to depart, he carried many things like the sting of gold mohurs, the gold salver, the old ancestral shawl, the silver scent-sprinkler, and the otto-of-roses filigree box; Kailas Babu regarded this as the usual habit of Chota Lat Sahibs. The narrator was watching all the while from the next room and laughter. This was seen by his granddaughter. She could say no more and she covered her face with her hands and sobs. Now his mind was in a tumult.

On the next day, very early in the morning, he took all those stolen goods back to her grandfather’s lodgings, wishing to hand them over in secret to the servant Ganesh. He waited outside of Kailas Babu’s room. He placed the stolen goods at the feet of the girl and came away without a word. The narrator told him that he wanted to marry his granddaughter. On hearing this old man embraced him and broke out in a tumult of joy and he said: **“I am a poor man, and could never have expected such great good fortune”**. That was the first and last time in his life that he confessed to being poor.

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