

Death in Venice

Thomas Mann

About the Author

Paul Thomas Mann was born on June 6, 1875, in Lubeck, North Germany. His Father, Thomas Johann Heinrich Mann, was a senator and a grain merchant. His mother, Julia da Silva Bruhns, was a Brazilian woman.

Thomas Mann was a German novelist, short story writer, social critic, journalist, philanthropist and essayist; he received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1929 and the Goethe Prize in 1949. He wrote a highly symbolic, iconic novel. *Buddenbrooks* was his first novel. *Death in Venice* (Der Tod in Venedig) first published in 1912. In the regime of Hitler, they had to flee to Switzerland. In those days German literature was written in jail by those who opposed Hitler.

Mann was influenced by Sigmund Freud and his views on dreams and German philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche, Wolfgang von Goethe and Arthur Schopenhauer, who had visited Venice several times. It is somewhat autobiographical, exaggerating Mann's trip to Venice. Mann's personality witnessed the cholera plague in Italy in 1911, and a young man that fascinated him. He wrote the novel, retelling the story in extravagant form. He died on 12th August 1955 in Switzerland.

Plot:

Death in Venice is divided into five chapters, and it has a dramatic structure, which is not something that we find often in English literature; it is about German life and society. There are some autobiographical elements of Thomas Mann's own life in the story. Mann visited Venice in 1911 with his wife, Katia Pringsheim. From her memoirs, written long after her husband had died, Mann had felt attracted to a 13-year-old boy he saw on that vacation.

Mann's homo-sexuality was not widely known when he was alive, but his wife knew about his attraction to young men. Setting of the story took place at Munich in Germany and at Venice in Italy. It was originally written in German and published in 1921.

The story begins as the famous middle-aged author Gustav Von Aschenbach walks outside in Munich, struggling with a new work; he finds himself esteemed and hopeful. The plot of the novel on rationalism versus hedonism objectively talks more about discipline.

Aschenbach is a very intelligent and romantic writer. He is living alone in Munich, Germany and he shifts to Italy. In Aschenbach's works, it finds protagonists who are victorious in being intellectually radical and started working on the various issues of the society. People accepted him and his writing, and then finally it was found that he is a great writer.

Aschenbach is the son of a high-ranking legal officer and a renowned person. It can relate Aschenbach's life with that of the writer Thomas Mann. He is a descendant from a family with a long tradition of Austria and disciplined service given to the Prussian state. Aschenbach is waiting for pleasure and happiness in life. He is not married. He belongs to a well-cultured and disciplined family.

He has bad health; therefore, for refreshment, he decides to go out. Venice is the place he wanted to visit, and this was a very short trip. He makes a plan, and he sets out on his journey. He has travelled to Adriatic Island, which is near Venice. The Adriatic is an ocean where different islands are created, and on this island, beautiful buildings are created, and this has become a site for the tourists. So, he wanted to visit artistic, and he set out for the same, but unfortunately the weather was not fine; it was rainy weather and rainy ways.

Thomas Mann talks about the change of earlier weather. Venice was not like this; there is change in the weather today, and then they have rain excessively in this rainy season. Aschenbach talks about the sky being heavy with clouds in Venice, and he says this is a different Venice; this is not as beautiful as earlier years prior he had visited this place. But it was not like, the more tourists have started coming, the more pollution is there, and more destruction has been caused to this beautiful place by human arrival, especially tourists.

The different localities of the Venice city, which is connected by waterways. Venice is known as the land of canals. Usually, people go there for a honeymoon because it is a prime location of romantic place. Venice is a place of beauty; and also place of darkness related to human beings, and tourists are destroying the beauty of Venice, the place when it is known for beauty and its luxurious life is vanishing in the novel.

Gustav Von Aschenbach got ample time for his wonderful writing in the mood of travelling to Venice, and he goes to Venice even if he had gone many times. Gustav goes to Venice for an off-season vacation on a spring afternoon. He leaves his apartment in Munich. He started his journey to Venice by boat. Venice is the city of water, city of canals, we don't find any roads in Venice; those are called gondolas, and the one who rows the boat is called a gondolier.

When Aschenbach reached there, he reached at hotel. He likes the international and elitist makeup of the hotel's guests. There seem to be many Slavic guests at the hotel, mainly from Poland. On his first evening, Aschenbach notices a group of three children made up of two girls and their gorgeous brother, a boy Tadzio was 14 years old.

Aschenbach sees a beautiful boy, Tadzio, who is also a guest. He falls in love with him, embracing the beauty and sensual side of the heart. A young boy who is very handsome. He was from Poland, and his wonderful appearance was so elegant. Aschenbach used a way to express his long-suppressed sexuality. Aschenbach is so much more passionate about Tadzio.

One day, Aschenbach sat on the beach; he watched Tadzio playing and observed the boy wading out to a sandbar. Tadzio seems to look at Aschenbach, smiles, and beckons for the man to join him. Aschenbach has a nightmare in which he joins a group of wild debauchers making sounds that resemble Tadzio's name. After this dream, Aschenbach becomes so obsessed with Tadzio that he doesn't care how his behaviour appears to others.

In his romantic mood, he went to the hotel barber and dyed his grey hair. He put on makeup and new clothes in an attempt to appear young and attract Tadzio. Aschenbach notices the number of tourists is decreasing in Venice. He hears rumours of a disease spreading in the area. Even so, Aschenbach stays in the hotel and becomes obsessed with Tadzio.

The next day Aschenbach went to a British travel agency in Venice, and an Englishman told him that there was a dangerous outbreak of cholera breeding through the city. After a few days, Aschenbach became very ill. He learnt that Tadzio's family was planning to leave Venice, and he went to the beach to see Tadzio once again.

Aschenbach is known for his romantic landscape and homo-sexual attraction. He doesn't even once talk to the boy. It is not dealing with the homosexual version of Lolita, sexual abuse, sexual grooming, or anything like that. But overall, Aschenbach is not having a good time in Venice; the place and things do not satisfy him. Aschenbach wanted to mix with other people and to become familiar with unknown people in foreign lands; that's why he planned for a visit, and after that he wanted to work on it very soon because he was a writer.

In the early twentieth century, a threat hung over the peace of Europe: a pandemic situation, and maximum civilians died because of a lack of medical help and facilities, etc. Thomas Mann talks about Aschenbach being attracted to bonding himself to passion, decadence, and ultimately death. The physical disease that was the plague outbreak in Venice city and Aschenbach himself got infected by this cholera.

Themes

Thomas Mann has attempted to explore various themes such as decadence, susceptibility to the environment, the death's head, the platonic ideal, Disguise, exoticism, youth and time etc. Thomas Mann reveals his struggle with his homosexuality, which found frequent reflection in the novel.

Decadence is degeneracy which was extremely popular in Europe literature is reflected in Mann's *Death of Venice*. The character Von Aschenbach expresses his homoerotic feelings towards a Polish boy Tadzio that conveys the issue of decadence. The reasonable resource for the feelings was the beauty of the boy. The feelings of Von Aschenbach of obsession leads towards the downfall of him.

Susceptibility to the environment is one of the themes of the novella in which the author through Von Aschenbach shows how susceptible he is towards environment through his character although he is a sensitive artist. The mood of the character is always possessed with weather.

Love and desire are also the themes of the novella *Death in Venice*. Aschenbach is very much obsessed with his desire for Tadzio who is very handsome. The author spends much of the pages of the novella on the description of the handsomeness of Tadzio. Aschenbach appreciates the beauty of him in a detached and aesthetic way. It looks as if he is appreciating the beauty as a work of art.

Beauty diminishes with increasing age is one of the themes of the novella. Aschenbach, although an old man, falls in love with Tadzio and get obsessed with her. Actually, youth is associated with beauty, Aschenbach admires the beauty of youth but it diminishes with the age. He becomes very much disgusted with his old appearance therefore he tries to appear younger. He thinks that he lost his time. As he became old, he envisions himself in the ancient time.

By and large, Thomas Mann presents several themes, including physical and moral decay, the conflict between intellect and inspiration, beauty, art, passion, and youth. The major message lies within the relationship between the protagonist character, action, and the young boy.

Critical Analysis:

Thomas Mann who was the leading German dramatist of 20th Century which was then filmed by an Italian filmmaker Luchino Visconti. Gustav von Aschenbach is a sensual man

always held his passions in check. He did not express his emotions throughout his life or in his art. In the terms of Sigmund Freud, he is a repressed character that could not remain stable for long time. As he allowed him to rise up with his doubled force and got obsessed with it. When he fell in love with the beauty of a boy Tadzio, he became slave to beauty and desire. He experienced his debased status of life by admitting his sensual desire. After that, he lived his life in total displacement in his every walk of life.

The method of writing “Myth plus Psychology” was implemented by Thomas Mann to write the novella. Both, myth and psychology, play a very significant role in the decline of Aschenbach. One can see the beauty of Tadzio described in mythical terms as it was compared with the Greek sculptures such as God of love Hyacinth and Narcissus. It can be also compared with the Platonic character Phaedrus. The demonic and devil figures such as strange red haired figures continuously reappears to Aschenbach that disturbed him very much and made him aware of his act. At the out set of the novella, Aschenbach became very much suppressed with the libidinal drives. The same was come up as per the principle stated by Sigmund Freud with doubled force.

Thomas Mann has used appropriate words to describe the characters and their situations. The phrases used such as reminiscent of a skull, the black colour of the gondola and the long-exposed teeth of grimacing figure play an instrumental role in creating an atmosphere of death. Two incidents in the author’s life led to the writing of this novel. In May 1911, the death of composer Gustav Mahler in Vienna. Mann’s interest in the boy Wladzio during the summer 1911 vacation in Venice. Mann talked about the relationship between life and mind.

Thus the novel focuses on a different subject of homosexuality. Thomas Mann described the dark and fearful features in Venice city; the lust image projected in the novel. Thomas Mann conveys his own life experience without hesitation.

Characters:

I) Gustav Von Aschenbach-

Gusta von Achenbach is from Germany and aging writer honorable fastidious and repressor of high public status in Germany. Aschenbach is a well reputed writer in his native Germany. He is physically frail and has very few friends. He is around 50 years old, obsession with a handsome boy.

Aschenbach is one of the major characters who is an old writer whose sensual drives were repressed for long time. He is the protagonist. He was very much overwhelmed by intellectual and emotional barrenness. He is a man of discipline, control and duty. He pursued his professional success throughout his life and suppressed his emotions. While controlling his desires, he forgot to live his romantic life and lived a rigid self-discipline.

He travels to Venice and stays in hotel there happens to see a handsome boy Tadzio. He false in love with Tadzio embracing Beauty and the sensual side of art. When he fell in love with the boy Tadzio, he got very much obsessed with his beauty and took break from his intellectual thoroughness. His character represents tragic conflict between rationality and duality of mind. He also represents the artistic duality where beauty and suffering are entwined with each other.

II) Tadzio-

Tadzio is second major character in the novella *Death in Venice*. He is young, innocent and handsome boy. He is from Polish country, Aschenbach fell in love with the beauty of Tadzio. It is the true representation of Greek ideal of youth which is unattainable and pure. Although he does not speak in the novella very much but has great effect on the mind of Aschenbach that he became the object of Aschenbach's obsession. He became the divine figure who seems to be perfect character for Aschenbach. The author made him as a combination of aesthetic purity and physical youth. The character became the symbol of decay and desire. Tadzio is pure an innocent, attractive handsome boy. He is 14 years old boy, stayed with his mother, sisters and governess in Venice. Tadzio is a calm and kind hearted boy. He is representative of a wealthy Polish family.

Apart from the major characters, there are a few minor characters in the novella such as Jashu, The Gondolier, The hotel barber, the Guitarist, the English man etc. Jashu is the closest friend of Tadzio at hotel having rowdy temperament. The Gondolier is one more minor character who is mysterious in nature and considered to be the significant of the Greek mythological character Charon. The Guitarist makes an amusement of the audience present at the hotel with his ridiculous and vulgar behaviour. He is also aware of Aschenbach's interest in him.

Glossary:

Rationalism = philosophical view or belief that reason is the test of knowledge.

Radical=very different from usual or traditional

Prussian state= A German state cantered on the north European plain

Destruction= the state or fact of being loss

Vanish = to disappear suddenly

Slavic= Indo-European

Lolita= precociously seductive girl

Sensual =expressing or suggesting physical, especially sexual, pleasure or satisfaction

Wading = to walk through water

Sandbar=long raised area of sand below the surface of water

Debaucher= someone who assaults others sexually

Decadence= behaviour that show low moral standard

Susceptibility= harmed by something

Exoticism=Exceptional qualities things and people

Degeneracy= state of being or process of becoming degenerate

Diminish = to make or cause to seem smaller, less important etc.

EXERCISES

Answer the following questions.

- 1) What is the relationship between Gustov Aschenbach and Tadzio?
- 2) What is the central theme of the novella, *Death in Venice*?
- 3) What leads to Achenbach's downfall, *Death in Venice*?
- 4) Why does Aschenbach develop an attraction with Tadzio?
- 5) What does Tadzio represent in the novella, *Death in Venice*?
- 6) What kind of person is Gustov von Aschenbach? What is his personal history?
- 7) Write a note on autobiographical elements in the novella, *Death in Venice*.

Of Mice and Men

John Steinbeck

About the Author

John Steinbeck Jr. was born on 27 February 1902 in Salinas, California, USA. He is an American writer. His father, John Ernst Steinbeck, Sr., served as Monterey County treasurer. John Steinbeck Jr. was a novelist, short story writer, and war correspondent. He completed his education at Salinas High School in 1919. In the late 1920s, he came back to his hometown having failed and never graduated, and then he moved to find a job as a writer and began working as a guide for tourists. After some time, he went on to pursue a degree in literature from Stanford University. He, however, dropped out without a degree in 1925 and moved to New York.

He travelled to New York City, where he took odd jobs while trying to write. John Steinbeck brought out his debut novel titled 'Cup of Gold' in 1929. He published the book 'The Pastures of Heaven,' which comprised twelve short stories that were linked to each other', in 1932. 'The Red Pony' was a story weaving in memories of John Steinbeck's childhood in 1933. John tasted success with the novel 'Tortilla Flat' in 1935. Set after World War I, it was a hit with both critics as well as his readers. John Steinbeck wrote a trilogy named the 'Dust Bowl Trilogy.' These three books begin his notable 'California series.'

All these works are based on the Great Depression and focus on the migratory, immigrant influences and real life of the working class. 'In Dubious Battle' focuses on Communism in 1936. 'Of Mice and Men' focuses on dreams of America in 1937. 'The Grapes of Wrath' focuses on migrant workers in 1939. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his novel on 6th May 1940. 'The Grapes of Wrath,' which is considered his masterpiece, and he also received his Nobel Prize on 10th December 1962. The intellectual writer succumbed to heart failure in New York City but left behind a monumental legacy that included 27 books, on 20 December 1968. He was buried at Salinas next to the graves of his parents and grandparents.

He laboured with migrant workers on Spreckels sugar beet farms; there he learnt of the tougher features of the migrant life-cycle and the darker side of human nature, which provided him with material expressed in 'Of Mice and Men.' He has also been called 'A giant of American letters.' Most of his works Set in California, where he was born and raised.

Most of his works employ settings in his native central California coast and Salina Valley. He frequently explored the themes of fate and justice, especially applied to downtrodden and underprivileged society.

Plot:

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is a novella. It is a parable about the nature of human desires and dreams and revolves around two displaced gypsy, teenage ranch workers, George Milton and Lennie Small. They traveled from one place to another during the Great Depression in California in the 1930s due to the stock market crash. They start working on a ranch in a place called Soledad, which is highly agriculturally-wealthy area of the state where migrant workers come haunting for work in large numbers.

The whole novel happens within the time span of four days from Thursday evening to the end of Sunday.

George is a short, lithe-minded intellectual but an uneducated one. While Lennie is bigger in size and mentally challenged, he cannot comprehend how to behave with others and does not know his huge strength. Both have been let off miles away by a bus driver from the ranch. Therefore George decided they should camp by the Selena River to enjoy one last night of freedom and go to the ranch in the morning. On the arrival at the ranch, they meet the boss. The boss is suspicious of their friendship because they travel together. George lies boss that they are cousins and Lennie is dull because a horse kicked in his head when he was a child. He always saves Lennie, instructed by George not to speak when they are on ranch. Lennie loves soft things, especially rabbits, but often kills them because he doesn't know his strength, being a mentally handicapped giant.

As they decided both arrived at ranch and meet first Candy who tells them the boss is angry due to coming late on work in the morning. Boss inquired about their job skills and past experience of employment. Curley enters the bunkhouse who is boss's son he is fund of martial art that is Boxing who enjoys beating of bigger man. Later on, Curley's wife enters the bunkhouse in the absence of Curley and flirts with George, Lennie and slim as usual. After she leaves, George warns his friend Lennie to stay away from her, otherwise she gets him into trouble. Meanwhile Carlson enters and explains about the smell of Candy's old dog and suggests he should kill his own dog and replace it from Slim. Slim warns George and Lennie to keep away themselves from that flirty women Curley's wife. He is impressed by their friendship. The togetherness of George and Lennie is a result of their loneliness.

The chapter third opens with George and Slim discussion about a puppy. Slim wants to give Lennie. George talks about his friendship with Lennie they are friends since they were children and raised together. At the death of his aunt Clara, George became responsible for caring Lennie. On the contrary, George acted more like a parent to Lennie. He even talks about their earlier job at Weed, but Lennie attempted to touch the silken fabric of women's dress, and he was consequently accused of rape. Carlson and Candy appear in bunkhouse, Carlson asks Candy that he should put an end to his old dog and Candy shoots his old dog. Slim offers Candy one his puppies after shooting his old dog, Candy is lonely after his dog's death. George and Lennie discuss their owning a farm, accidentally Candy hears that plan of owning a Farm who also wants to join them. When Carlson, Curley, Whit and slim again enters the bunkhouse. Curley expresses his regret to Slim for alleging him his affair with his wife and all they laugh at Curley for his insecurity about his wife.

Curley Charges Lennie who is Laughing at him and angrily Punch him; Lennie becomes affright, but doesn't react who is waiting for the permission of George to fight. back when George tells fight back and defend himself, so Lennie crashes Curley's hand and telling to others his hand stuck in machine that is why injured because Slim requests Curley doesn't tell reality to anybody otherwise Lennie would lose his Job. On Saturday night, except Candy crooks and Curley's wife most of the workers gone to whorehouse and billiards halls in nearby town. Lennie goes to Crook's room in the horse barn, Crook is unenthusiastic to allow

him in white workers room. Finally, he agrees to allow due to his innocent nature. Lennie forgets and revealed their dream of owning farm. Candy goes in his room seeking for Lennie and those three are discussing on owning farm. Candy explains that he has a sufficient money. Crook is equally interested to Purchase a piece of land. Though Lennie doesn't understand the gravity of anything but crook tells him about his painful nostalgia market by discrimination and loneliness. Meanwhile Curley's wife comes in room and ask for Curly though she knows he is in town. She find a company in her loneliness. Crooks forces her to leave his room but she turns on him, suggesting to have him lynched, if he speaks and misbehave with her. She lives barn and thank to Lennie for crushing Curley's hand. All the men have returned from town. George asks Lennie to come with him and they live together. This incident is marked by loneliness of Crook ones again. The next Sunday afternoon Lennie holds his puppy in his hand and pitting his head while he is in Barn. The puppy unintentionally, killed by his stroking it too hard. He tries to hide it under straw otherwise George will looks and keep him from looking after the rabbits. Curley's wife enters into the barn for talking with Lennie. At the beginning he tries to avoid her because he knows that George doesn't like to speak to her. She disclose endless loneliness and opens up her dislikes her husband Curly and her dreams is to become movie star is deficient. Lennie doesn't understand the importance of her talk. Lennie tells to her he and George will buy piece of land and put pet rabbits in the farm because he likes soft things. Curley's wife ask Lennie to roll hand on her silky soft hairs. Lennie begins rolling and suddenly her hairs turns rough, which makes her panic and she screams. Lennie shuts her mouth with hand on it.

She screams again and again, but in vain, Lennie is frightened and suddenly snaps her neck. When he realizes he has done something wrong to her, he immediately covers her body and runs away. Lennie is clumsy with his level of Force and doesn't know his immense physical strength.

While on run, Lennie hides himself behind the pool in Salinas. George comes there and hugs him. He tells him he is not angry and tries to soothe his mind. George pulls Carlson's gun from under his jacket and shoots Lennie inside his head. The other men arrive at the pool, and Curley thanks him for shooting Lennie. George did what he had to do. Saved himself from Curley's possible lynching death. An unawareness about his power and love for things makes him run into dangerous obsessions. In the end it represents the failure of the American Dream. Lennie's death spoils the ideal and rarest friendship between George and Lennie. George lives in loneliness and isolation after Lennie's death.

Main characters -

George Milton:

George is the protagonist and one of the two major characters along with Lennie Small of this novel. Protective, physically small and sharp-witted yet mentally strong man. He is an intelligent person and good at findings ways in trouble, though he often shows signs of unhappiness. He is pragmatic in nature, compassionate though he loses his patience with best friend Lennie. He is short-tempered but a loving who plays a role of guardian and caretaker of Lennie. He has a dark face with quick and restless eyes, but he gets angry easily while someone

threatens Lennie. George dreams work hard with his strong hands and buy a piece of land. He is an ideal and humble person. George is of caring nature. He is frightened being lonely. He finds the American dream in the form of land where he and Lennie can live without anybody's interfere. His life becomes complete with his role as Lennie's caretaker, but he happily accepts his accountability and nurtures his companionship. We seek this specialty in their friendship than other ranch hands. He symbolizes the itinerant ranch worker in search of jobs and haunted by loneliness.

Lennie Small:

Lennie Small is a physically awkward, shapeless of face, man with immense strength, but a childlike mind that is vulnerable to the society. He is submissive, Innocent, kind-hearted, lumbering, huge, etc. His mental disability is taking him far away from social issues like racism, ethics, ethos, social demeanor and prejudice against women as well, consequently he is happy to talk Crooks and Curley's wife means he quick forgets which make him miserable. He always gets angry and hostile when he feels that his friendship with George is endangered. He utterly rely on George. He likes soft things, loves to listen about rabbits, but doesn't understand his own strength, love for soft things leading to unintentional harm when he handles them. For example when he killed Curley's wife, animals like puppy, mouse, and his love for soft animals relate his gentle nature who often carries a mouse in his pocket. When he does something wrong, he feels fear. He can't understand and handle complex situation. Lennie's pale eyes with sloping shoulders symbolizes the struggles of those who are misinterpret or marginalized. Lack of understanding about the consequences of his actions is a key aspect of his character that results in over-dependency.

Candy:

Candy has tall stature, bowed-shouldered, an aging outcast ranch worker who lost one of his hands in an accident years ago. That's why he now works as an attendant or cleaner on the ranch. He fears becoming useless and is afraid of losing his job. He is talkative by nature. Because of loneliness and eagerness for companionship, his dream soft owning land with George and Lennie, so he wishes to give all his savings to become a partner in the purchased piece of land. When he finds Curley's wife is dead in a barn, he cries knowing that his plan ends. His feeble, old, sick, and disabled dog is his real companion, but he is deeply attached to that blind feeble dog. His old dog serves as a symbol of aging. His dog is killed by Carlson so he is alone in his sadness. The adjective "old" is used thirty times in text to describe Candy and his dog, which means the author wants to stress their age. It means age is an inevitable factor for ranch hands. He is a man with limited power.

Curley:

The author depicts Curley as an antagonist. He is the son of a ranch owner, a boxer by profession, wears high-heeled boots that shows his wealth and status. He takes the benefits and misuse of power over the workers on the ranch to treat them inhumanely, so they don't respect Curley at all and call him a coward. He is just married and extremely jealous of everyone who talks with his wife. He wears one glove full of Vaseline to keep his hands extra smooth for his wife. He is small in stature so he is insecure, a thin young man with a brown face and brown eyes, a head of dense curled hair but aggressive in his stance and action, Jealous, insecure, and attacks, especially with bigger and more vulnerable men like Lennie, so he always picks a fight with Lennie rather than others who would not fight back. Curley represents the toxic masculinity and power dynamics of the ranch. His behavior contributes to the tension in the story. Curley is the representative of the land-owning class and treats a lower economic class brutally.

Curley's Wife:

Curley's Wife is a young, flirtatious lonely, restless, unnamed, desirous of attention, deeply unhappy with her life and pretty women on the ranch. She represents a marginalized and displaced female who is mistrusted by her husband. She married too early to a husband, Curley, who neglects her. Her character symbolizes her lack of identity. She is seen as an intoxicated ranch worker, so all the men ignore her and are reluctant to talk to her on the ranch, except Lennie Small, due to fear of incurring the extreme anger of her jealous husband. Her stray eyes imply that she constantly attracts male attention to relieve her loneliness. She is lonely as well as regretful because her husband Curley beholds her as a sexual. She married Curley; therefore, her isolation leads her to look for company with men. She is miserable, having missed her opportunity to become a Hollywood film star. She tells Lennie she married Curley as a way of progressing her opportunities, but he is not fit for her as an appropriate husband. She blames her husband Curley. If she had not married Curley, she could have been a movie star. The death of Curley's wife is a key incident in the entire novel. On a Sunday afternoon, Lennie kills Curley's wife brutally. When she enters the barn and seeks Lennie hiding his dead puppy while petting it. She knows already his habit of petting soft things, so she asks him to feel her soft hair. He strokes her hair, and she panics and begins to scream. Lennie was frightened and covered her mouth to silence her. He breaks her neck and she dies. He doesn't mean to kill her, but unfortunately, it's happened. The death of Curley's wife was an accident. The novella represents the boundaries placed on women during that era.

Slim:

Slim is a muleskinner and leader of the mule team, an esteemed figure on the ranch. The best thing is Curley and his father treat only Slim respectfully as a trustworthy person. He mildly convinces Candy that it is time to kill his old dog. His main job is support to George. Slim is a person who can understand the bond between George and Lennie. Only he knows at the end of the novel George's decision to shoot Lennie is welfare of this guy. He often acts as a mediator and voice of reason. He is wise, kind, and empathetic, calm, thoughtful, and compassionate by nature. He symbolizes fairness and humanity. He earns the trust of George and others. He gives his puppy to Lennie as well as he helps Candy.

Carlson:

Carlson is an experienced worker on the ranch, fearless, self-centered, a harsh, tough-minded, good-natured ranch hand with a practical and emotionless nature who lives in the bunkhouse with George. It's a minor character, but it plays a crucial role in the novel. He has a complaint about Candy's old dog. He says the dog is useless and has a terrible smell; hence, it should be shot down. Candy loves his blind dog, that's why he can't do it; Carlson does for him. His main job is to provide the pistol who owns a Luger pistol, and by that pistol, he kills Candy's dog and offers him a new puppy.

Crooks:

Crook is intelligent, disciplined, and with a sharp mind is a person who cares for horses in the stable. He has a crooked back due to a horse kick injury. This physical deformity isolates him on the ranch. He lives in a small room attached to the stable is forced to sleep in a room in the barn, and is not allowed to spend his leisure time with white hands. The white men on the ranch don't allow Crooks to mingle with them in their social activities. Crook is the only black man on the ranch who is a racial victim of discrimination. His character represents loneliness, marginalization, racism, and the human need for companionship. He has no companion or

friend on the ranch. He doubly faces for his race and physical disability. One of the major themes of *Mice and Men* is loneliness, and Crooks is a good instance of this.

Crooks is unhappy when Lennie and Candy come to meet him. He wishes he would hoe in the garden if Lennie and George purchased a piece of land. He says he is the son of land from California and not a slave. So, he proudly refused the help of anyone. He spends a lot of time reading books, several books found in his room. He is considered an intelligent and wise character.

Minor character-

Boss:

The character of the Boss is a minor but significant figure. He is the manager of the ranch where George and Lennie seek work. Though he does not seem often, his presence serves power structures on the ranch. The Boss is a figure of control and is in charge of the ranch and its workers. He is not a friendly person by nature, but he demands and expects his workers to follow orders strictly on the ranch. When George and Lennie first arrive at the ranch for the job. The Boss is skeptical of their relationship. He says George's reason for looking after Lennie and that George might be exploiting Lennie for his benefit. The Boss is mostly focused on the workers'; ability to do their jobs. He always thinks of the success and prosperity of the ranch. He doesn't care about the personal lives of the workers. He gets quickly upset when his plan collapses.

Boss represents the power of the larger system and Static hierarchy where he symbolizes, the larger system of power on the ranch. He has control over the lives of the workers, but he is under the control of the owner of the ranch. It means positions of power are often restrained by higher authority.

Whit:

Whit is also a minor character who enters the middle part of the novella. He is one of the nosy, aggressive hands on the ranch who plays a limited role. Whit is brotherly and lighthearted He finds pleasure in small things, such as reading pulp magazines and connecting with others, which reflects his loneliness. Steinbeck doesn't relate his stature in detail. However, he is a typical young ranch hand. He daily spends all his money in a brothel in a nearby town. Consequently, he overcomes loneliness.

Aunt Clara:

Aunt Clara is Lennie Small's caretaker before her death. In the end of the novel, she appears to Lennie in a vision. Knowing the mental disability of Lennie, she nurtures him and takes a promise from George that he will take care of Lennie after her death. It means she is a lovable, compassionate, and kind woman. She is narrated as small in stature and stout and wears a long dress and apron. Physically she does not appear on the scene, however her presence can be seen in the Lennie's memory and dream.

Themes:

Of Mice and Men covers several things, including the values of friendship, dreams, and dealing with loneliness, as well as the tension between strength and weakness seen in the contrast between Lennie and George. Steinbeck told a friend that he was experimenting with a new dramatic form.

The novel, which takes place during the Great Depression, begins beside the Selina's River near Solitaire, California, where two migrant workers, Lennie Small and George Milton, are working on their way to a nearby range. The novel is set in the farmland of Selina's Valley, where John Steinbeck was born. The ranch in the novel is near Soul, which is southeast of Selina's on the Selina's River.

The countryside is described at the beginning of the novel, and the ranch itself is based on Steinbeck's own experience. Steinbeck set *Of Mice and Men* against the backdrop The Great Depression in America. The stock market crash caused the Great Depression in 1929. The economic condition of the time greatly affected workers like George and Lennie. the economic condition at the time, which victimized workers like George and Lennie, who are the novel's protagonists.

The Great Depression began in the 1930s, will be discussed later. At that time, the economic condition affected George and Lennie, and rankling prevented them from achieving their dream, which is the main theme in the novel. Things in *Of Mice and Men*, the nature of dreams in essence, is as much a story about the nature of human dreams and aspirations and the forces that work against them as it is the story of two men.

Humans give meaning to their lives and to their future by chasing dreams without goals. Life is an endless stream of days that have little connection for meaning. George and Linnie's dream of owning a little farm.

Loneliness is present throughout this novel. Steinbeck's characters are often the underdogs, and he shows compassion towards them throughout his writings. Powerlessness takes many forms: intellectual, financial, and societal, and Steinbeck touches them. *Of Mice and Men* follows the migrant workers and childhood friends George and Lennie, who are on the way to work on a ranch.

Lennie has an intellectual disability and is dependent on George for guidance and protection. George finds life with Lennie to be sometimes challenging but is equally devoted to Lennie and values their friendship. The coalition of George, Lennie, and Candy represents the American dream in its fundamental state: capitalism in its purest form, a desire to work for themselves, not for others, a desire for material wealth and spiritual full payment.

The California coastal valley where the action is situated is the real setting, a small, confined, cosy, primitive place. George's relationship with Lennie is contrasting waste. George, a radical leader, attempts to lead, leaning a symbol of the masses to a utopia. Lennie, because he is too strong, and entrust were the face George and thus the Ethiopian face alternatively.

George is simply a worker trying to improve his lot in life by becoming a landowner. Lennie, large, simple-minded, and clumsy, is the character whose physical appearance is most like an animal. He is first described as looking like a bear with big paws, working heavily. Role of women being confined to the private sphere and adhering to domestic roles.

Curley's wife is the only woman on the ranch and desperately craves companionship; she and Curley never appear together alive. So this could reflect how distant husbands could be. Crooks is often alone and separated from the other men. This reflects the segregation of the races in 1930s America. Crooks being the only black character that he is largely ignored and ostracized by the other men.

Every character in *Of Mice and Men* has a dream; most of them are found on the American dream. The idea that anyone from any background can work hard and prosper. *Of Mice and Men* is social commentary on how life was in 1930. Steinbeck makes the reader

wonder whether man should go alone in the world or be responsible and helpful to others who are less fortunate in nature. Steinbeck uses nature imagery to evoke rainforest themes and to set the mood while talking about the historic occurrence.

The Dust Bowl made it difficult to find work, which also made it difficult to retain a job, making certain characters insecure about their disposability. The Dust Bowl is located on the West Coast. It was seen as a promised land. The Dust Bowl was a seven-year-long drought that started in 1931 that made it difficult to retain a job with certain disposability.

Seeing as the Dust Bowl prevented a lot of infertile soil. At the time to become infertile, this affected a lot of areas in the Central states in America, such as Oklahoma. although it did not affect California, and they made it look like the promised land. It attracted a lot of workers who went there.

Workers increased productivity and jobs in forms that led farmers to invest in more technology, such as tractors and extractors, in their farms so they can make more money; however, because of the economic depression, also known as the Great Depression of America, the people at that time had to sack a lot of their workers, which made the characters feel more disposable, and then the banks had to write off their land.

So, they could try and get money back from the loans that they took out to buy the technology in the first place. Blacks were segregated at that time as they didn't have the same rights that in today's society, and they were seen as the bottom of society because it was the 1930s. Women didn't have equal rights to men, and when it came to voting and working, they were seen as inferior. Many laws were to protect people who had disabilities were forced to work under horrible conditions, such as in ranches.

It is seen in a novel where characters such as Crooks and Candy can't work very well. Steinbeck portrays how challenging and unrewarding the life of a farmer may have been at the time; workers also dreamed of owning land just like George and Lennie, finding it in the promised land of California. The mild climate promised a longer growing season with soil that made it easy to make crops to harvest. In this way people who at that time were known as bin workers. Because they are carrying bundles on their backs today, they are known as backpackers.

They went there to try to strike and make money, and with that money buy their own land and pursue a dream of happiness. By and large, *Of Mice and Men* is a social commentary presenting the harsh realities of life in 1930s America. This was an appealing idea to the millions of very poor people living in America in the 1930s. Thus, the title of Steinbeck's novel is not only a reference to the poor mice that Lennie accidentally kills but also to everyone whose dreams are destroyed.

The mention of *Of Mice and Men* also suggests something small and feeble pitted against something strong in the shape of fate or destiny.

Critical analysis

Of Mice and Men, a novella written by John Steinbeck in 1937. During the Great Depression of 1930s, the vulnerability of the American Dream was expressed poignantly in this novel. The events are centered on two migrant ranch laborers-Lennie Small and George Milton. They go through various realities of the economic despair occurring in California's Salinas Valley. Steinbeck has

highlighted vanished dreams, societal injustice, disparities in race, gender and class, capital exploitation and isolation are masterfully explored in the novella.

The title, *Of Mice and Men*, is taken from Robert Burns' poem "To a Mouse," where one captures the unpreventable plans that went astray. Similarly, the scenario of George and Lennie about owning a farm disintegrates, reflecting upon the uncertainty and unpredictable life had in such times as those of the Great Depression.

It has six chapters, and the story runs in a cyclical manner, starting and ending at the Salinas River. This pattern makes a point that fate is inevitable, in the sense that individuals are trapped between social restriction and personal inability. The simplicity of settings and chronic narration of the story draws the reader's attention to the inner struggle and the desires of the characters.

Of Mice and Men explores power play and social strata among the underprivileged. The middle level is occupied by the white, landless farmhands, while Curley and his father represent the rich, ruling class. The lowest rank of the social ladder is represented by the Black stable buck, Crooks, whose brief entry into George and Lennie's dream reminds them of racial exclusion that never fades away.

Curley's wife, a gender-excluded character unnamed, lonely, and isolated from the rest, represents her exclusion based on her gender; besides, her isolation and shattered dream further outline her role in the story.

The plot of this novel is focused on George and Lennie seeking work and aiming to own a patch of land; their mutual need for each other, where George is the sharp-witted companion and Lennie has the mighty body, simultaneously serves as protection and friction point. Steinbeck, in this respect, explores alienation and the yearning of human beings to be together. Using characters such as Candy, Crooks, and Curley's wife, every character's hope of a brighter future depicts how empty their dreams are within their social and economic setup.

The novella focuses on the powerlessness of dreams with a backdrop of social and personal constraint. The relationship between George and Lennie is at the center because it offers a momentary escape from loneliness. George made illustration that the dream, they have toward the limitations of their friendship and the harsh reality that they face is an impossibility.

Thus, the collapse of George and Lennie's dream signifies the subtle nature with which Steinbeck has narrated systematic oppression and personal failure. Curley and his father represent structural oppression, while the acts of Curley's wife led to this tragic ending of the interplay of societal constraints on the individual will.

Loneliness is the pervasive element in the lives of the ranch workers, as seen in Candy's attachment to his dog and Crooks' cynicism. Curley's wife's unfulfilled aspirations reflect the broader marginalization of women. The novella juxtaposes acts of compassion with violence, highlighting the vulnerability and destructive cycles in the characters' lives. Lennie's accidental killing of Curley's wife and George's mercy killing of Lennie underscore the tragic inevitability of their circumstances.

He goes on to talk of the dehumanizing effects, he discusses admired characteristics, however: a yearning for animal life as if it would somehow make things easier. Lennie is isolated from the life of the animals as much as that of men. An association of women with soft animals betrays vulnerability and dehumanization.

It resonates universally by its themes on universal human experiences in the pursuit of dreams, the agony of isolation, and the certainty of loss. The innovative 'play novelette' format, coupled with Steinbeck's mastery over the structure and symbolism, has resulted in a poignant work that transcends time. His analysis of human desires in juxtaposition with the shackles of society makes this work remain relevant and profound.

Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California, and has a first-hand experience of the laboring class that he depicts. His politics is visible through his criticism of the capitalist society and culture of the American Dream, wherein the most vulnerable members of society are ignored. The social commentary of the novella captures the suffering of migrant workers who, during the 1930s, traveled to look for work away from their homes and families and fought to get limited space.

The Great Depression, which started with stock market crash of the 1929, thus frames the plot, underpinning the shattering of dreams of the American Dream. Some people remained hopeful for an improved future while, in striving to escape ruined farmland, moved west into the unknown. Steinbeck provides a contextual foundation for issues ranging from segregation, gender inequality, and the general exclusion of other disabled people with the aim of pointing out societal injustices experienced during period.

Ultimately, *Of Mice and Men* is a powerful social commentary that illustrates the harsh realities of life during the Great Depression and the enduring human desire for connection and fulfillment. Steinbeck's critique of the American Dream and his empathetic portrayal of his characters' struggles make the novella a timeless reflection on the human condition.

GLOSSARY

Sharp-witted: Having the ability to react and think quickly.

Ranchhands: Labour who works on a large farm, especially in the US.

Vulnerable: A physiologically and emotionally weak person.

Lumbering: To move slowly.

Marginalised: Less important and powerless.

Ranch: A large farm where horses and cows were kept.

Stance: Posture

Flirtatious: To show a playful sexual attraction.

Barn: An agricultural building.

Muleskinner: Muledriver

Bunkhouse: A simple building for labourers to sleep in.

Lugar pistol: Parabellum pistol, which is designed by the Austrian Lugar.

California is the third-largest state in the US.

Whorehouse: A brothel

Lynching death: Unlawful killing of a person by a group

Alienation: Isolation from society or community

Dust Bowl: Drought-affected areas in the US

Exercises:

- 1) What does the title "Of Mice and Men" signify?
- 2) How does the novella *Of Mice and Men* reflect the realities of life for migrant workers?
- 3) Why did George shoot Lennie?
- 4) Describe the character sketch of Curly's wife.
- 5) Why did Lennie kill Curly's wife?

Samskara

About the Writer:

In 1932, Dr.U.R. Anantha Murthy (Udupi Rajagopala Acharya Anantha Murthy) was born in Melige, a lonely village in Shimoga District's Tirthahalli Taluk. His grandpa served as a priest 'propitiating gods for others' and he was a member of an orthodox Vaidika Brahmin household. Not wanting to be the same, his father studied English covertly and prepared for the London Matriculation Examination on his own. After leaving the area, he worked in a number of jobs in Benares and Bombay before taking over as monk. According to Anantha Murthy, "My dad was an excellent metaphor. An encounter between the two universes. I had to study the suktas when I was initiated, but he also made me memorize Warren Hastings' impeachment." The boy had inherited the rebellious habit from the self-taught father, who had varied between a tuft and a shorn head throughout his own life. Anantha Murthy received his initial education in Sanskrit at a conventional Patashala. In 1956, he earned both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Mysore. With the help of a Commonwealth Fellowship, he obtained a PhD in English and Comparative Literature from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom later in 1966.

U. R. Anantha Murthy started out in 1956 as an English lecturer and stayed that way till 1963. He held the position of Reader in English at Mysore University from 1970 until 1980. A number of international and Indian universities have hosted him as a visiting professor, including Cornell University (2001), the University of Hyderabad (2001), the University of Iowa (1975), Shivaji University (1982), Kolhapur, the University of Tübingen (1992) in Germany, the University of Pennsylvania (2000), and numerous others. He was the Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam from 1987 to 1990. In addition, from 1992 to 1993, he presided over the National Book Trust of India in Delhi. The Film and Television Institute of India in Pune in 2002, and the Indian Institute of Social Sciences in 1998. From 1993 until 1998, he served as the Sahitya Academy's president. For his significant achievements in a variety of subjects, U.R. Anantha Murthy has received several honors from the government and academic institutions. The Padma Bhushana in 1998 and the Jnanapeeta Award in 1994 are noteworthy.

About the Novel :

In 1965, Anantha Murthy's *Samskara* was published in Kannada, which went on to become famous throughout India. A.K. Ramanujan later translated it into English, and Oxford University Press published it in 1976. In 1970, Girish Karnad played the part of the protagonist in the Kannada adaptation of the book. The movie turned out to be one of the precursors of a new trend in Kannada cinema.

When U.R. Anantha Murthy, an English professor at Mysore University, wrote his short story *Samskara*, it caused quite a stir in Karnataka. Anantha Murthy, a Brahmin himself, raised a bright mirror to the Brahmin community with this book. He brought up the topic 'What is actually culture (Samskara) is it achieved by blindly following rules and traditions, is it lost when they are not kept?' The Samskara (funeral) of Naranappa, a Brahmin who renounced his Brahminhood, serves as the backdrop for this timeless query, which is really yet unanswered even in this book. (The word Samskara has several connotations, but three of the most significant ones are ritual, culture and funeral.) One of the rare Kannada-language art films of its sort, 'Samskara' was transformed into an award-winning movie in 1970.

Samskara tells the tale of life in an agrahara, a small neighborhood inhabited by Brahmins who are members of the Madhwa community and devotees of Guru Madhwa (The

three most well-known philosophers of ancient India are Shankara, Madhwa, and Ramanuja). Somewhere in the southern Indian mountain range known as the Western Ghats lies the little village of Durvasapura, where the agrahara of Samskara is located. This agrahara's Brahmins are completely conceited, narrow-minded, avaricious, envious, and selfish. Their Brahminhood is limited to observing customs and laws that date back thousands of years. They don't know why they have to abide by the rules. They have no interest in comprehending. They fear that if they break the rules, bad things would happen to them. As long as people abide by customs and regulations, they feel secure. The Durvasapura agrahara is not particularly noteworthy in this regard. Such agraharas were present in many South Indian villages and cities until a few years ago.

The plot of Samskara :

The plot of Samskara is rather straightforward. There is a death at Durvasapura village's agrahara. The Brahmins of Agrahara are highly traditional and subject to annual ceremonies and rituals. The agrahara's spiritual leader is Praneshacharya. The execution of the deceased's burial ceremony is a ticklish issue in the agrahara. This is because, despite being a Brahmin of the agrahara, the deceased Naranappa disregarded all of the sect's established rules, choosing instead to live a reprobate's life and questioning the agrahara's orthodoxy. Consequently, since he has no heir, his relatives are unwilling to perform the samskara for him. So they come to the Acharya for the solution. The Acharya searches for an answer for this problem in his Books. He seeks a divine decree from the deity at the Maruti temple after failing to find a satisfactory response in them. However, Maruti doesn't provide him with any information. The late Naranappa's concubine tries to kneel at his feet to ask for his blessings as he is on his way back from the temple Chandri. The Acharya becomes intimate with her sexually as a result of their close physical touch throughout this procedure.

The Acharya makes the decision to go back to the agrahara and inform them of all that happened between him and Chandri. However, Chandri visits Naranappa's home and, with the assistance of Ahmad Bari, a Muslim fish vendor, makes plans to cremate him. However, nobody else in the agrahara is aware of this. The agrahara Brahmins are informed by the Acharya that they are free to follow their own hearts and that he is unable to advise them. By traveling to Kaimara and meeting a pundit there, the Brahmins attempt to find a solution to this issue. However, he is also unable to make a decision. So they go to their guru at the Mutt there. In accordance with custom, the guru requests that they carry out the samskara for the departed and give the Mutt his belongings.

When they return from the Mutt, they take the death of one of them and another lying ill very seriously. They also find out about Pranasha's wife's death. However, after his wife is cremated, the Acharya leaves the agrahara and wanders aimlessly like a gypsy. Putta takes him with him and exposes him to new experiences, and the Acharya decides to overcome his fear and return to his agrahara to face things there in his changed personality. The agrahara Brahmins, unaware of the Acharya's desertion, prepare Naranappa's cremation while patiently waiting for the Acharya to return.

The novel's plot is broken up into three sections. Ten chapters make up Part One, six chapters make up Part Two, and two chapters make up Part Three. The conflict between his close relatives over the gold ornaments of Chandri that were placed at the Acharya's disposal for the cremation of her lover Naranappa, the Acharya's unrelenting attempts to resolve the matter by consulting his books, his visit to the Maruti temple to obtain the divine decree from the god, his disappointment, and his chance encounter with Chandri that resulted in their mating in the shadowy forest close to the temple are all covered in the first section.

The Acharya's choice to go back to the agrahara and inform the agrahara Brahmins of everything that happened between him and Chandri is covered in the second section of the

book. Chandri's return to her mother's home in Kundapura; the cremation of Naranappa with the assistance of Muslim fish vendor Ahamad Bari; the endeavors of Shripati, one of Naranappa's youthful companions, and others to cremate their master and patron's body; the difficulties faced by the agrahara Brahmins who sought advice at Kaimara since the Acharya denied any involvement in the issue; the passing of Acharya's wife Bhagirathi; the Acharya's fruitless wanderings in the direction of the east; and the Brahmins' return to the agrahara's rat-infested, foul-smelling, and menacing carrion birds.

The Acharya's wanderings, his self-examination and self-questioning regarding his incapacity to deal with the dualities of life, such as Naranappa, his classmate Mahabala, and the great sages like Parasara and others; his learning of humility and his inability to overcome his fear of being recognized; his encounter with Putta; the people of Parijatapura's awareness of the plague epidemic having claimed Naranappa and others, and Manjayya's swift action to contain the epidemic; The new experiences Acharya had at the temple chariot festival in Melige, his encounter with Padmavati, his humiliation at the temple meals-line and his choice to go back to Durvasapura to face things head-on, and the agrahara Brahmins patiently waiting for Praneshacharya's return after he had made the preliminary arrangements for the samskara Naranappa without realizing that a Muslim had already done it.

There is a lot of Samskara narrative in each episode. The novelist incorporated episodes of Shripati's romance with Belli, Naranappa's unconventional life with his low-caste concubine Chandri and his Muslim companions, the Acharya's encounter with Narannappa, the Acharya's liaison with Chandri, and Dasacharya's visit to Parijatapura to satisfy his hunger into the plot structure. the agrahara Brahmins' desperate attempts to find a way to cremate Naranappa without compromising their orthodoxy by traveling to Parijatapura and Kaimara; their encounter with the Guru at the Mutt; the Muslim fish vendor Ahmad Bari's covert cremation of Naranappa under Chandri's guidance; Shripati and company's dramatic rehearsal at Parijatapura's efforts to bury their mentor and patron, Naranappa; the Brahmins of the agrahara, who waited for the Acharya to return so they could get his advice without realizing the Acharya had left the agrahara; the Acharya's encounter with Putta and his samskara by obtaining a rite of passage with his choice to return to the agrahara and confront things there with courage and fearlessness. These diverse tales are all masterfully written, evoking feelings of exhilaration, pity, terror, and tremendous drama. They are all closely related to the main event, which is the reprobate Naranappa's death.

Anantha Murthy keeps up the pace of his plot development with abrupt turns and twists that create suspense and horror. With the help of characters like Lakshmiddevamma, Shripati, and Ahmad Bari moving in the dark night of the agrahara with different objectives, the novelist creates a sense of terror to the inmates of the agrahara. The protagonist Praneshacharya, who goes to the Maruti temple to seek a divine decree to solve the issue of Naranappa's cremation, unexpectedly enjoys sexual pleasure with the concubine of the agrahara's most hated reprobate Naranappa. This adds a new twist to the plot, and the Acharya, the Crown Jewel of Vedic Learning, abruptly descends from the heights of glory to the inglorious troublemaker, Naranappa.

While the Agrahara Brahmins engage in internal strife and fear losing their orthodoxy by cremating Naranappa, Chandri discreetly arranges for Naranappa to be burned with the assistance of a Muslim fish vendor. The youthful companions of Naranappa and the agrahara Brahmins attempt in vain to cremate a body that has already been burnt since they are unaware of this. The agrahara Brahmins and the outcastes on the village hill are not told the cause of the fatalities in the agrahara and the outcaste hutments. As a result, the outcasts believe it is the Demon's doing, while the agrahara Brahmins believe a curse has been placed on them for their commissions and omissions. Despite being enamored by Padmavati's

sensual beauty, the Acharya resists the urge to have another one-night encounter with her and chooses to return to Durvasapura to finish his samskara after gaining the right of passage while traveling with Putta. The Acharya boards a bullock wagon and travels to Durvasapura as the book comes to a close. He has four or five more hours of travel ahead of him. Then what comes next? The novel by Anantha Murthy is left open-ended. The novel ends, yet it doesn't finish, as A.K. Ramanujan correctly noted. As a result, *Samskara* is a clever book that is renowned for its architectonics.

This way *Samskara* has a cleverly developed plot. Any book's ability to hold readers' interest from start to finish is a key component of its success. From the moment readers are introduced to the protagonist Praneshacharya's dilemma in handling the ticklish problem of performing the funeral rites of the reprobate Brahmin Naranappa of the agrahara to the Acharya's return to his own agrahara to resolve the issue with his altered profile, Anantha Murthy's *Samskara* has an outstanding plot that captivates them.

Critical Analysis :

Few Indian books have garnered as much acclaim as *Samskara : A Rite for a Dead Man* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978), written by U. R. Anantha Murthy and translated from Kannada by none other than A.K. Ramanujan. It has been used in numerous curricula and is one of the many achievements that have earned its author the presidency of the Sakhitya Akademi. Despite its fame, the novel still causes problems for traditionalists who don't like the sight of mercenary Brahmins or an acharya having sex with a prostitute; leftists who feel that the book never politicizes or historicizes its issues; moderns who are restless because it seems like a nostalgic return to a premodern era; feminists who are annoyed that there are no women other than sexy Shakuntalas and withered effects. The list could go on because the novel is, as its translator puts it in his Afterword, "a movement, not a closure" in any conventional sense of the word (147). We conclude with a traveling protagonist who is "anxious, expectant" (138), rather than a simple solution to a basic query.

Anxiety, expectation... These terms express the crisis of contradictions as well as the seriousness and pressing nature of any endeavor to resolve them. They undoubtedly serve as the foundation for every fiction that faces the difficulties both inside and between Tradition and Modernity and must navigate their relationship. Indeed, there are moments when we are led to believe that the protagonist of this book was actually Anantha Murthy himself, exploring a pre-colonial Karnatakan countryside free of British influences and experimenting with a "modern" existential identity within the strict Brahmin discipline of (to use Marriott's words again) an unmixed, unmarked, completely matched idol. "The author's attempt to exploit the tension between two world views" (166) marks the beginning of Meenakshi Mukherjee's analysis of the book. She emphasizes "the difficult and uneasy process of transition between the fixed settled order of life and the still inchoate stirrings of self" (167). As a metaphor of an existential type of identity that emerges from a stagnant nonexistence ossified† in ritual and dogma, she pursues the book.

However, the novel emphasizes that several layers of conflict combine to create the book's complex thematic texture. Purification rites are mentioned in the title, which is an epigraph from the dictionary. (consecrating the king, but also any ritual act, including funeral obsequies), and in this novel much purification comes to be required. But the phrase also more broadly denotes perfecting or refining, and in its links with "memory" suggests "the realizing of past perceptions." Both cleansing and the full consequences of prior views are crucial to the novel-but first things first.

There are three components to the issue for book readers. First, it is difficult to separate tradition as a response from tradition as a subject topic. We must examine its terminology to explain Pranesh's predicament in order to understand the degree to which

Tradition is a live language for expressing everyday life even in these changed times. The dead identity of Brahmin males enjoying the advantages of their positions at the top of the caste structure stands in contrast to this fully realized revival of tradition. How to realize Modernity's global saga of subjectivity at a time when the infamous Number One of consumer capitalism is the dominant historical model of that subject is the second, equally perplexing relationship between these traditional materials and the existential rhetoric of literary modernism. Third, the timeless period of a pre-colonial utopia, the particular markers of the 1930s or 1940s when the story appears to take place, and the sub-textual markers of the 1960s, when this book was written—possibly during the author's 1963–1966 Commonwealth Fellowship in England, an era of genuine blending of Karnatakian upbringing and cosmopolitan reinforcement of foreign influences—interplay in a confusing way. How do “mythic” time, historical time, and individual time connect to one other in this last instance?

Murthy's book is a complex thought process. It starts off simply enough, with the Brahmins of a renowned (proud, and somewhat dilapidated) *agrahara* (village) having to make a difficult decision. They can avoid the sin of leaving a dead Brahmin reprobate unattended if they bury him. However, if he is deemed completely reprobate and no longer “truly” Brahmin due to his numerous transgressions, they will contaminate themselves through contact, just as they would if they permit a true Brahmin to be buried by someone else. This is made worse by the fact that a mistake in this matter would destroy their reputation as a particularly holy, high settlement, one that is based on the presence of Pranesacharya, the winner of fifteen prize scarves in religious debates.

These two ripples share a pond because of the “past perceptions” he has to deal with, which are similar to Oedipus's: he is unaware of himself or the words and worlds he is in; his deliberate ignorance of his major choices and events comes back to haunt him when a crisis disrupts the pattern of his dominance. Similar to Oedipus, his life may be interpreted in both classic and contemporary existential perspectives. He married a young lady who was unable to function as anything other than a patient, for instance.

The discourse can occasionally become so explicitly existentialist that it throws off the delicate balance between tradition and modernity. He reaffirms an existentialist ethic after testing the idea that he is not accountable for his transgression with Chandri since he did not want it: “Even if I lost control, the responsibility to decide was still mine.” Only because it is possible to lose control—not because it is simple—does man's decision have validity. We give this entity we call our person shape and line via the decisions we make (98). He looks forward to introducing himself as a “new man” to his “When I tell them about myself, there should be no taint of repentance in me, no trace of any sorrow that I am a sinner,” he says, distancing himself from a theological framework for his transformation. If not, I am unable to transcend dualities and conflict. Mahabala [a college adversary who gave up faith for sex] is someone I have to visit. He has to be informed that the only shape we create for ourselves out of our deepest desires is unquestionably ours (135). Making decisions and creating our own shape are powerful ideas related to “leaving the ghostly stage behind” (123).

However, take note of how this phrase combines modernist existentialism with conventional wisdom: “beyond conflict and dualities” may transport you to the Sartrean zone, where existence comes before essence, or to *atma*, or pure soul. Although the “ghostly stage” is undoubtedly a place of bewilderment and inauthenticity, neither its exact definition nor its real accomplishment are entirely obvious. After all, the given line concludes with “Perhaps,” and he refers to himself as “a lost soul.” Not yet used to the self-creating power of the contemporary, lost to tradition, and adrift in modernity? Perhaps he was perplexed by his own shyness and theological oversimplifications, and he desperately needed a reality check from the world, which tempers the soul and turns commandments into knowledge. Is it a religious or self-ghost? His desire is to “escape this ambiguous Trishanku state” (101) stuck between

heaven and earth because he feels tormented by “conflict and dualities,” as we saw above. Maybe we’re prepared to write him off as whining and dishonest, using a spiritual smokescreen to hide his neocolonial identity. However, let’s continue reading the section that started with how our decisions shape who we are in order to navigate these complexities.

Both routes can eventually lead to moksha; both can experience the formless beyond these debilitating dualities, thereby presenting various means to different temperaments. This concept is the foundation of the argument, which becomes delicately theological. By going through the householder’s stage of life, living in the world without becoming of it, the forest-dweller’s retirement, and finally, possibly, the sanyasi’s total renunciation, the “normal” Brahmin receives a kind of homeopathic dose of the tantric. This completes the circle and differs from his celibate student youth. However much Praneshacharya thinks of himself in traditional terms, from the standpoint of Tradition, he is none of the above and is thus very much a “lost soul” ensnared in the delusion of “dualities.”

If we want to leave with a deep enough understanding of how existentialist and traditional readings coexist with these incidents, we need to apply what I’ve argued about how art actually works. Pranesh plays them as a tragically discordant pair of sound waves, but we’d prefer to see them aligned. Perhaps in order to capture their greatest thoughts, Praneshacharya interweaves his conventional language, but he also has the existentialist notion of an unexplored route that takes him on a really open journey of ongoing self-creation. Such a modern self becomes first conflicted, then doubled, then decentered and multiple, then logically postmodern (if it escapes being compressed into the mass subject of the simulacrum), flowing like a Heraclitian river into the ocean of Deleuzian becoming.

There are certain issues with Murthy’s formulation of Praneshacharya’s case history. By making a sexual encounter a contributing factor in Pranesh’s predicament, his female characters are reduced to supporting roles in a narrative that is exclusively for men. Chandri’s sudden departure from the scene deprives Pranesh of any opportunity to learn from a human relationship about decentering his highly masculine ego. As diligently as we attempt to understand his string of pained justifications within the broader dynamics of this chapter, they occasionally come out as petulant and self-indulgent.

There is little doubt that Murthy’s book depicts Pranesh’s failures as long as he continues to live in the imperial or autocratic egos fostered by the socioeconomic reification of either Traditional or Modern sociality. Because tradition and modernity are two of its dimensions, each of which is an interaction between authentic being and reifying social and economic forces, it has been difficult to read. These forces clash, complement, undermine, and, most importantly, confuse Pranesh’s attempts to avoid repeating the tragedy of Oedipus.

Themes :

Samskara by Anantha Murthy is an engrossing analysis of man-woman relationships. A careful reading of Samskara’s text reveals that the book is structured according to the quest pattern, with the protagonist’s inward search for himself reflected in his external search for meaningful connections. The ideal woman is the one who embarks on this self-discovery. The idea of a quest is as old as the myth of the Holy Grail or Endymion, or the Moth’s search for the star. Here, it takes the form of an Eros-driven experiential quest for self.

The main character of Samskara, Praneshacharya, is compelled to travel in the Campbellian method to learn more about his newly developed self. Praneshacharya had studied Sanskrit at Kashi and had always held the ascetic ideal in high regard. His classmate Mahabala vanished from the classroom one day. Later, in the streets of Kashi, Praneshacharya discovered him with a prostitute. Recalling the incident, the Acharya said : “I was shocked, I shuddered in terror... Then my heart became stone-hard. I vowed before I left that I would not follow in the footsteps of the fallen Mahabala. I shall be the antithesis of him”. (100) The first hint of Acharya’s psychological issue of indecision may be found here.

He remains disillusioned with Mahabala, which leads him to pursue asceticism. He intentionally weds a disabled lady - "I become ripe and ready when I marry an invalid" (02).

A Brahmin named Naranappa, a blatant hedonist and libertine, had lived in the agrahara where the Acharya resided. He put aside his idols and holy thread in favor of Chandri, a lady from a lower caste. In the temple pond honoring the deity Ganapati, he caught the fish and drank alcohol. Despite being shunned, he had no regard for other people. Praneshacharya's super-ego-dominated personality was seriously threatened by Naranappa's presence.

The starving Brahmin community of Durvasapura agrahara is tormented by the issue of executing Naranappa's cremation (samskara) at the start of the novel Samskara since he passes away without leaving an heir. Because they are afraid of contaminating themselves by performing the samskara for a reprobate Brahmin, his heirs are similarly reluctant to do the ceremonies for him. By having a sexual relationship with Chandri, Naranappa's concubine, the Acharya himself falls into difficulty. Ironically, as Ramanujan pointed out, the Acharya gives up everything and becomes one with his opposite while searching the Books for the answer and then seeking a sign from Maruti, the chaste Monkey God; in spite of all his 'preparation', he has an affair with Chandri, Naranappa's low-caste mistress.

The archetype of anima, which is projected onto Chandri and then on Padmavati in the village of Melige, is Praneshacharya's first sensual experience with the feminine principle. Like the heroes of the quest-myth, it sets the Acharya on a classic adventure. Finding the meaning of life and existence is the Acharya's mission. Chandri takes up the role of foster mother to the Acharya. His romantic sentiments for other women, as well as his emotions and impulses, are influenced by his connection with Chandri. Now, Chandri, the archetype of anima, controls his emotional and instinctual behavior.

Praneshacharya is introduced to a new life by his encounter with Eros in the guise of Chandri. His perspective on relationships with women changes. He now yearned to partake in the joys of love that he had formerly believed were bestowed upon Lord Krishna, who played with the cow-girls in the river. Belli's daring breasts came to his mind, which had never even occurred to him when he thought of a lady with a filthy sensation. The Acharya was drawn to the acrobat woman's gorgeous curves and serpentine stance as she balanced on a maypole. In the same way, Padmavati's sensual beauty and lusty appearance begged for him. He feels "as though he'd turned over and fallen into his childhood, lying in his mother's lap and finding rest there after great fatigue" after his encounter with Chandri.

Characters :

1. The Praneshacharya

Despite being married, Praneshacharya, the king of Durvasapura and the archetype of Agrahara, takes pride in his celibacy because he had no firsthand sexual experience due to his wife Bhagirati's disability. He views his celibacy as a voluntary road to salvation and a form of penance. He has never had a lusty gaze or longing for any lady. Because he believes that all beauty should be devoted to the goddess Lakshmi, Lord Vishnu's heavenly spouse, and that all love should be reserved for Lord Krishna, who has made love to cowgirls. But because of his extensive knowledge of Hindu mythology and puranas, he is able to use incredibly alluring and captivating language to convey the sensual beauty of the classical heroines. It is understandable that Shripati becomes so enthralled after hearing his speech on the beauty of Kalidasa's heroine Shakuntala that he plunges into the river and makes love to Belli, the outcast who is a true Matsyaghandi in her own right.

2. The Naranappa

The death of Naranappa at Durvasapura agrahara marks the start of the book Samskara. He is an anti-Brahminical Brahmin who has spent his whole life opposing the values and practices of his agraharan peers. His immoral ways, which openly disregard the

established traditions and conventions that the Brahmins hold holy when alive, have caused him to be a headache to his fellow Brahmins in the agrahara. He left his lawfully married wife behind and moved in with Chandri, a low-caste prostitute in the centre of the agrahara, where he also ate the meals she prepared. By consuming meat and defaming the temple pond by capturing and consuming the fish that is devoted to Lord Ganapati, he has interacted with Muslims. The 'saligrama', a sacred stone revered and adored by his fellow Brahmins for generations, has been thrown into the river by him. In addition to this, he has publicly shared alcohol with strangers in his home's front yard. Apart from attacking Brahmin beliefs, he has corrupted Brahmin youths like Shyama and Shripati. The former left his home to join the army, while the latter pursued Belli, a low-caste woman who had abandoned his wife Lilavati and betrayed Lakshmana and his Anasusya, who had taken him back from an orphanage.

3. Putta

One of the most significant characters in the book is Putta. Putta is a man of great simplicity. He naturally talks a much. He enjoys being with other people and does not rely on formalities to get friends with the Acharya. When Putta leaves his agrahara and disavows all obligations following the cremation of his wife, Bhagirathi, the Acharya encounters him. In an attempt to learn more about the Acharya, he discreetly starts a discussion with him. However, Putta is completely different from the Acharya. Putta does not hesitate to acknowledge to the Acharya that he is a member of the Malera group, and he takes his caste status quite lightly. The Acharya's self-centredness and self-absorption conceal his true nature. This gives Putta the impression that the Acharya is a Brahmin who travels on a mendicant diet.

4. Chandri

Chandri is Naranappa's carefully chosen concubine, renowned for her sex appeal and beauty. She was fetched from Kundapura by Naranappa on one of his trips there. She is a member of the lower caste of prostitutes. Durgabhatta and other agrahara Brahmins lament for her because of her beauty. In reality, Durgabhatta respects Naranappa's exquisite judgement for selecting Chandri, a beautiful woman. She is likened by Durgabhatta to Matsyagandhi, who ruled over the renowned sage Parasara. Shripati specifically mentions how beautiful she is to his buddies and how she is more loyal to their tutor Naranappa than a married wife would be. She has the power to control Naranappa and force him to follow her. She maintains the house for Naranappa and lives a comfortable life there. Regarding her status, she is neither arrogant nor modest. She tolerates Naranappa's outbursts because she truly loves him. She prepares non-vegetarian meals for him and his pals based on their preferences. She occasionally cleans up Naranappa and his pals' mess when they throw up during their drunken outbursts without complaining or making a sound. To adorn her gorgeous hair and maintain her status as a queen, Naranappa grows unique and fragrant flowers. Despite her status as Naranappa's favourite, she does not abuse her position. Despite eschewing the agrahara Brahmins, Naranappa does not express her approval or disapproval of him. Naranappa is a good lover, she attests.

Glossary :

1. **Scapegoat** : A person or thing that is blamed for something bad that someone else has done
2. **Pleasantries** : An [inconsequential remark](#) made as part of a [polite](#) conversation.
3. **Middleman** : A person who helps to arrange things between two people.
4. **Colonial** : Practice by which a powerful controls another, in order to rule become richer.
5. **Appetites** : A strong desire for something, especially food.

6. **Admixtures** : Something added by mixing.
7. **Patronizing** : Showing or characterized by a superior attitude towards others.
8. **Forging** : To make an illegal copy of something.
9. **Guilt-tripping** : Make feel guilty, especially in order to induce oneself to do something.
10. **Oedipus** : A mythical Greek king who unknowingly kills his father & marries his mother.

Reference :

U.R. Anantha Murthy. *Samskara : A Rite for a Dead Man*. New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1978.

Exercises :

I. Short answer type questions.

1. Explain the character of Putta.
2. What is the significance of the title *Samskara*.
3. Chandri in Anantha Murthy's *Samskara*.
4. Write a note on the story of *Samskara*.

II. Answer the following questions in about 300 words.

1. Attempt a critical appreciation of Anantha Murtliy's *Samskara*.
2. Critically examine the major themes in Anantha Murthy's *Samskara*.
3. Examine Naranappa as a mouthpiece of Anantha Murthy.
4. Write a detail note on plot construction of Anantha Murthy's *Samskara*.

III. Classroom Activities.

1. Make groups of students in the class and enact the story of *Samskara* in three parts and discuss the multiple meanings denoted by the part I, II and III.
2. Ask students to observe or recall how many types of Samskara they observe in the society. After some time ask them to note down those Samskara on a paper.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Plot:

Mr Utterson is a lawyer and his cousin Mr Enfield used to take walk everyday. They saw a strange old and door of Dr Jekyll. Dr Jekyll is a very popular doctor who has an interest in medical science. Mr. Enfield remembers a story which is associated with the old door. One fine morning of winter, he saw a man trampling on a young girl. Mr. Enfield chased the man with a courage and wanted to give justice to that girl. He brought Mr. Hyde out side the house. He is criminal minded fellow. There gathered a crowd. Mr. Hyde wants to escape from the situation. So he was ready to pay compensation to that girl. He went again into the house and brought a huge cheque. But Utterson is very interested and curious to know about Mr. Hyde. Mr Utterson is a professional lawyer so people used to give the wills to the lawyer. While studying the wills, he finds that his friend Dr. Jekyll has already given the will to Mr. Hyde. The will says that, 'In case of Dr. Jekyll's disappearance and death, all the property and possessions must be given to Mr Hyde. Mr Utterson knows that Mr Hyde is a criminal person. Dr Lanyon was the old friend of Mr Utterson and Dr. Jekyll. But Lanyon was unaware of Mr. Hyde and he has not seen Dr. Jekyll since ten years. Mr. Utterson deliberately observed the door, one day he saw Mr. Hyde was unlocking the door. Mr Utterson is shocked by the scene. Mr Utterson wants to see Dr Hyde but the servant Pool told that Dr Jekyll is out of house, and Pool is told that he should follow and obey orders of Mr Hyde at the house. Mr Utterson is worried about Dr. Jekyll because Mr Hyde is a criminal minded fellow, he may kill Dr. Jekyll to grab the property of Dr. Hyde.

Dr Jekyll organized a party to his friends after two weeks. Mr Utterson was also invited. He stays behind to discuss about the will. Dr Jekyll laughs at Utterson and says that it is the magic of medical science. Dr. Jekyll says that the strange relationship is there with Mr. Hyde. But Jekyll has not revealed all the details. No doubt the will should be carried out.

After one year Mr. Hyde again killed an elderly gentlemen. The murder is witnessed by a lady who recognizes that walking stick he has given to Dr Jekyll, is used to kill an old gentlemen. But when Mr Utterson hears that the murder is Mr Hyde, he asked the police to visit his house. When the police reached the house, they are told that Mr Hyde has not been at house for two months.

Mr Utterson visits the house of Dr Jekyll and he finds that Dr Jekyll is sick. It seems that Dr Jekyll is hiding Mr Hyde. But Dr Jekyll tells that he has not heard about Mr. Hyde again. He shows a letter to Mr. Utterson which is given by Mr Hyde. But Mr Utterson knew it better that the handwriting of will and the handwriting of this letter is near about same. There were many resemblances. It is the idea of Dr Jekyll that to escape from that situation so he forged this letter. Now Dr. Jekyll seems to be very happy for long time. He mingles in the society in such a way that he became part and parcel of the society again. On the other hand police was unable to find out Mr Hyde. Mr Utterson goes to meet Dr Lanyon to discuss the health of Dr Jekyll but Dr. Lanyon was seriously ill. Somehow Mr Utterson writes a letter regarding Dr. Jekyll's health but he got the reply from Dr Jekyll that he (Dr Jekyll) is disturbed and does not want to communicate with anybody. Dr Jekyll has written a letter to Dr. Lanyon

demanding a drawer containing chemicals, a vial and a notebook from Dr. Jekyll's lab, Dr. Lanyon is curious because this book contains some strange things. At midnight a man appears in the lab, he is very small. Clothes are too large for him. But Dr. Lanyon saw that Mr. Hyde transforms into Dr. Jekyll. After seeing this Dr. Lanyon became seriously ill.

After the death of Dr. Lanyon, Mr. Utterson got the letter which contains not to be opened till the death or disappearance of Dr. Jekyll. Mr. Utterson was very honest lawyer that's why he has not opened that letter and kept it in his custody. Mr. Utterson tries to visit Dr. Jekyll many times but his servant said that he has been living lonely and will not meet anybody. Now Dr. Jekyll has been living in confinement and he looked like prisoner. Mr. Utterson has called him and Dr. Jekyll has replied but suddenly his face changes. Poole came to Utterson and asked him to come to Dr. Jekyll's house. They visited library but the voice came from inside does not sound like Dr. Jekyll. So they think that he must be Mr. Hyde. They break the door, they find body inside and remains of the test tube baby (vial). The body is smaller than Dr. Jekyll's but wearing clothes that fit him.

There was a 'will' on the table which leaves everything to Utterson. Dr. Lanyon also left a letter to Mr. Utterson. It was also safe with him. Mr. Utterson goes to home to study all the documents and came back after reading.

Lastly, Dr. Jekyll tells the story that how he turned into Hyde. It is actually the specific curiosity and duality of human nature. Human nature is of two sides i.e. good and evil. Dr. Jekyll attempts to destroy the evil side but fails to do so. He became addicted to the character of Mr. Hyde- a criminal minded fellow. Mr. Hyde took over Dr. Jekyll and destroyed him. It means the evil has destroyed good self of human being.

Themes:

Victorian people were respectable. They believe in socially acceptable behaviour and attitudes. They follow morality. Moral values are only the rules of Victorian age. Certain things were banned in that period. They used to obey the manners and etiquette of society. They give respect to religion. Piousness is also one of the characters of the Victorian age. They also feel anxious and uneasy at certain times. For example Charles Darwin's 'The Descent of Man' caused the anxiety that man has evolved from the beast.

They were savage and wild, but believed in supernatural things which can not be understood and explainable by science also. They also believe in duality of personality or double character. It means good or bad. Character is considered one of the major things in life. It is said, 'If character is lost everything is lost.' human beings are debased and lost the good values of the human beings in the society.

Importance of Reputation:

Reputation is very much in the value systems for the respectable person's like Mr. Utterson and Mr. Enfield. They think that gossip should be avoided at all. Gossip as a great destroyer of reputation. Dr. Jekyll hides Mr. Hyde to preserve the reputation from the police and society. He does not want to ruin his respectability. Mr.

Uttersson is a professional lawyer. He also keeps the reputation Dr. Jekyll to preserve the appearance of order of decorum. Even he sees a vile in the hands of Dr. Jekyll. Mr Utterson sees the transformation of Dr. Jekyll into the Mr. Hyde. But he doesn't reveal to anybody and fails ill. He has not disclosed documents which was given to him. Mr Utterson thinks that if he reveals the truth to the society. Dr Jekyll's reputation will be spoiled.

Duality of Human Nature:

Duality of human nature is the key theme of R L Stevenson's fiction- The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. It explores the idea that every person has both good and evil side in human nature. It is constant reflected in literature. R L Stevenson believes that human nature is not a singular but a mixture of two forces i. e. good and evil. He took a scientific efforts for separating these two sides. So that one can indulge in dark desires without facing its problems. Many times his personality changes and he becomes Mr Hyde. His dark side dominated throughout his life and is the only cause of Dr Jekyll's collapse. Dr. Jekyll has created Mr. Hyde, it is a kind of reaction to repression. He wants to separate the moral and immoral desires completely. Dr Jekyll transforms as Mr. Hyde and enjoys a lot and takes a pleasures without without any guilt. As time passes and evil becomes stronger and good nature lost its control. Transformation power doesn't work on Mr. Hyde. Mr Hyde is out of reach of control. R. L. Stevenson conveys that suppression of the desire is not good thing in life. It doesn't remove but it grows in subconscious mind.

Repression and Morality:

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde revolves Victorian period, reputation, morality and anxieties of the people. Victorian morality observed strict rules and regulations. A reputed person should follow the moral ethics, but following the moral ethics one has to suppress his inner desires. Dr. Jekyll represents battle between good and evil of Victorian period. Reputed persons have to present themselves as good persons of the society, suppressing their dark side. He tries to separate good from evil, outer and inner emotions clearly, but human nature cannot be divide in tight compartment. Dr. Jekyll transform as Mr. Hyde and indulges in crime and murder, but lastly he has no control over his creation. Human nature should be understood and can not be controlled by any means.

Victorian moral and the Hypocrisy:

R. L Stevenson commented on Victorian morality and hypocrisy. Mr.Uttersson is lawyer by profession. He also hides many things of Dr. Jekyll because he doesn't want to damage his reputation. Mr Utterson doesn't want to investigate the case of Dr. Jekyll in depth. Dr. Jekyll and Mr Utterson is the respectable person in the society. They want to keep their good image in the society rather they are struggling to maintain this. Because society judges people based on morality and ethics. Dr Hyde is symbol who represents the Victorian society. People are living with double standard. One face is for public and another face is for themselves. But one day the hided face comes out and things are brought before the world.

Religion verses Science:

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde reflects religion verses science and technology. There is always conflict between religion and science. It also reflects huge scientific progress and ethical values of contemporary society. Dr Jekyll took

scientific efforts for separating good from evil, moral from immoral clearly. It is assumed that scientific experiments can challenge religious rituals. Human nature has both good and bad, moral and immoral aspects. Dr. Jekyll comments on huge advancement of technology, chemistry, psychology and medicine in Victorian age. Such kind of technological advancements should be tested by morality and ethics. The novel reflects the tension between scientific progress and Victorian faith. For example Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution 1859 challenged the religious faith that the god has created the human being. This world is the product of Adam and Eve. Whereas subconscious mind plays important role in shaping the human being's personality. Human behaviour is influence by inner self rather than any kind of the Almighty's inspiration and guidance. R. L. Stevenson does not reject or underestimate about the huge advancement of technology but he is against misuse of it. Knowledge without control of morality and ethics leads to destruction.

The inherent feature of Evil:

R.L. Stevenson said that good and evil is completely separate and exist in every individual. Main idea of this novel is that human beings are not pure or wicked, but it is a kind of mixture of it. Human being struggles to balance these forces. As pureness is a part of human being so the case of wickedness. R. L. Stevenson believes that human beings are not moral or wicked but mixture of it. Mr Jekyll wants to enjoy life and does criminal things in life, still lives as a respectable person in the society. One can not suppress one's dark side or hidden interest.