UNIT -I—POETRY

WILFRED CAMPBELL: THE WINTER LAKES

"The Winter Lakes" by Wilfred Campbell Summary

The Educator Online

"The Winter Lakes" is a poem written by Canadian poet Wilfred Campbell. The poem celebrates the beauty and serenity of winter landscapes, specifically focusing on frozen lakes and the tranquility they bring during the cold season.

The poem opens with a description of the frozen lakes, which are encased in an ice and snow layer during the winter. The lakes are pictured as being silent and still, with a glassy surface formed from their frozen waters. The ice and snow create a pristine and magical landscape that enhances the surroundings' sense of tranquilly and purity.

Using words like "resting calm" and "silent bays," the poet emphasises the stillness of the lakes, conveying a sense of tranquilly and peace. Nature appears to be taking a break from its usual activities as the winter landscape appears to be in a state of hibernation.

Campbell captures the beauty of the winter sky and the snow-covered trees by depicting the frozen lakes as mirrors that reflect the surroundings. The reflection enhances the winter landscape's allure and ethereal quality.

The poet also emphasises how lonely and isolated winter can feel. The lakes appear to be isolated from the outside world because they are frozen and unexplored. The sense of unspoiled beauty and natural purity is enhanced by the absence of human activity.

Campbell uses vivid imagery to depict the winter scenes throughout the poem, giving the reader a sense of being there in the frozen landscape. The imagery also fosters awe and respect for the strength and beauty of nature during the winter.

The poet expresses his admiration and gratitude for the winter lakes as the poem goes on. As they endure the rigours of the winter season while continuing to be lovely and serene, he sees them as representations of strength and endurance.

Campbell makes a suggestion that the winter lakes have a mystical and spiritual quality in the final stanza. He calls them “veiled souls,” implying that the frozen lakes conceal depths and secrets that are not immediately apparent. This gives the poem a hint of mysticism and wonder.

Overall, “The Winter Lakes” is a celebration of the beauty and tranquility of winter landscapes, specifically focusing on the frozen lakes and the sense of serenity they bring. Campbell’s rich imagery and appreciation for nature’s wonders make this poem a beautiful and evocative depiction of the winter season.

SIR AUROBINDO : THR PILGRIM OF THE NIGHT

The renowned Indian philosopher, poet, and spiritual guide Sri Aurobindo wrote the profound poem “The Pilgrim of the Night”. The speaker’s spiritual journey into the domain of darkness and ignorance—symbolized by the Night—is captured in this poem. The difficult road of spiritual development and the pursuit of divine realisation are explored by Aurobindo through vivid imagery and poetic language.

The poem begins with a vivid and mysterious scene: the speaker has made a “assignation,” or appointment, with the Night. This Night symbolises the symbolic darkness of ignorance and the unknown in addition to the absence of daylight. The meeting spot’s description as a “abyss” alludes to a deep and maybe dangerous interaction.

The “deathless light” of God, which alludes to a divine nature or consciousness that beyond mortal limitations, is carried within the speaker. As the speaker sets out on a treacherous quest to capture the Night’s heart, this light serves as both a guide and a source of strength. The urge to alter and bring illumination to the exact source of ignorance and obscurity is suggested by the act of courting the Night’s dark and perilous heart.

Aurobindo uses contrasting pictures to highlight how serious the speaker’s decision is. He draws a comparison between the speaker’s journey through the “vastness dim and blind” and the “glory of the illumined Mind” and the “calm rapture of the divinized soul”. This striking contrast highlights the sacrifice and dedication needed to go into the unknown and face the darkness both inside and outside of oneself.

The “grey shore” where the “ignorant waters roll” is described by the speaker as being reached. The beach acts as a transitional area, a dividing line between the familiar and the foreign, the bright and the dark. The phrase “ignorant waters” implies that the speaker is navigating the depths of ignorance and unconsciousness, rather than merely traversing physical waters.

Strolling “by the chill wave through the dull slime,” the speaker illustrates how difficult and tiresome the trip is. The term “weary” is used twice, emphasising the difficulties encountered and alluded to a protracted battle through

the dark depths of ignorance. The trip appears never-ending despite the challenges, signifying the enduring character of the spiritual search.

As the speaker progresses, the poem reveals a sense of loss. The “lustrous godhead beyond Time” remains inaccessible, and there is no communication from the “celestial Friend.” This suggests a separation from the divine source and a feeling of abandonment or silence. The speaker’s longing for connection with the divine becomes a poignant element of the narrative.

A ray of optimism and direction can be found in the last few sentences. Though things don’t seem to be moving forward, the speaker says his footsteps will be a “pathway towards Immortality.” The transformational power of the spiritual journey is encapsulated in this expression, which implies that the seeker leaves an enduring mark on the path towards transcendence, even in the face of adversity and apparent silence from the divine.

In conclusion, “The Pilgrim of the Night” offers a deep examination of the spiritual path, represented by the speaker’s attempt to win over the Night. Aurobindo explores the difficulties, sacrifices, and existential issues involved in the path for divine realisation through vivid and powerful imagery. Readers are prompted to consider the nature of darkness, the transformational potential of inner light, and the eternal pursuit of immortality by this poetry.

DEREK WALCOTT : RUINS OF A GREAT HOUSE

Derek Walcott: Collected Poems Summary and Analysis of "Ruins of a Great House"

Summary

“Ruins of a Great House” begins with a quote from the seventeenth-century writer Sir Thomas Browne, describing a setting winter sun. Following this quote, the first stanza of the poem begins by describing a “Great House” which has gone into ruin, and which symbolizes European empire. All that is left of the physical structure of the once great manor are the stones which built it, strewn across the earth for lizards to sharpen their claws against. The cherubs that decorated the gate now sing out with stained mouths, and the wheels of carriages have been sucked underneath the muck which has gathered outside the gate. Three crows settle in the creaking branches of a eucalyptus tree, and the smell of rotting limes fills the air, reminiscent of the rotting of the old empire. The stanza ends with a quotation from Blake, whose words call out goodbye to the “green fields” and “happy groves” which have been replaced by ruin.

The next stanza continues this extended discussion of the decaying empire as a “Great House” in ruin. Its marble was made up of the places its culture lauded: classical Greece, the American South. Yet this beauty was “deciduous”—a term that refers to plants that lose their leaves in the fall—and now it is gone. What is left is the

lawn overgrown with rough forest. Below the dead and fallen leaves, animals and humans have rotted down to bone. These dead creatures were never good, but rather come “from evil days, from evil times” (18).

In the third stanza, Walcott returns to the river, on the banks of which the lime trees grew. These were the first crop grown on the manor's grounds. The manor's wealthy, immoral young men and the beautiful young women they pursued are both gone, but the river still flows. The speaker climbs a wall decorated with wrought iron, made by craftsmen now exiled, trying to protect the great house. They may have successfully protected it from guilt, but not from the worms or the mice which gnawed it into ruin. The speaker hears the wind shaking in the limes, and hears it as “the death of a great empire,” a death brought about through the abuse of ignorant people by violence and Christianity .

The fourth stanza begins in a “green lawn,” split up by short walls built out of stone. The lawn dips down to the river, and the speaker paces over it thinking of the great poets of the English empire, men who wrote beautifully and murdered on behalf of the empire. Now their memories are muddled, because people aren’t sure whether to remember them for their writing or their crimes. The glorious “green age” which Blake called back to, the height of civilization and cultural achievement, was itself rotting, because it stank of the violence of empire. Its representatives are long dead, but the rot remains. The other remainder is their words, which rise up out of the ashes of empire and burn the eyes of the speaker.

Thus, in the final stanza, the speaker begins full of rage, thinking of the people who were enslaved and killed by the empire whose poetry is so admired. Yet against this anger, the compassion within him reminds him that England too was once a colony, seen as a backwater island on the fringes of Europe, torn up by the cold winds, the foaming English Channel between it and France, the fighting of different factions. He ends not in the anger he expected from himself, but rather with this compassion, this sense that the great manor belonged to a friend.

UNIT -II-- PROSE

V.S NAIPAUL : AREA OF DARKNESS

From their duration, their intimacy, and intensity, an outsider might take Anglo-Indian relations to be one of the richest and most fascinating of historical themes. The British, after all, ruled India for some two centuries—sending out, not the riffraff of their cities, but many of their finest minds and wisest spirits. And India was not always unresponsive. The great Bengali reformers of the 19th century were equally determined to revive India's traditions and to bring India the best in modern European thinking—which tended to mean Bentham and the two Mills (the elder Mill, of course, was one of the greatest of all British servants of India). Yet, by the end of the century, the mood had gone sour. It was in Bengal that the first

anti-British terrorist campaign was to break out. In Kipling's *Kim* there is an affection and respect for India and the ways of its natives—though not for the new, Western-educated "native"—that reflected the experience of many a British District Collector in the 1880's. How much of this was left by the 1920's may be judged from E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India—an* accurate book in this (though not in every) respect. Again, the powerful impress of British institutions on contemporary India can mislead, as the Englishness of a Nehru misled. Nehru's successor—and his possible successors—are distinctly less English, less Western, distinctly more traditional, more Hindu. The course of Anglo-Indian relations has its bursts of grandeur; but on the whole it is a wretched story. It never was a marriage of true minds; to many it seems in retrospect more like a squalid *mésalliance*.

That this is a sad, indeed a tragic, outcome for both Britain and India hardly needs to be stressed. And there are wider implications. After all, if India and Britain, with their long historical intimacy, understood one another so little, what of those other, briefer colonial relationships between the West and the Third World? Was each bedeviled by the same mutual misunderstanding? Will the outcome, mutual resentment and repudiation, prove to be the same? Perhaps it is still too early to say. It is perfectly arguable that each colonial relationship should be considered for itself. What Oscar Mannoni, in his *Prospero and Caliban*, says of French-Malagassy relations may, or may not, be true of French-Guinean relations, or of relations between Australians and aborigines, Dutchmen and Indonesians. India, in other words, may be a special case: the tragedy of the Anglo-Indian encounter may prove nothing. My own inclinations are toward the position taken up by Mannoni: that there are useful generalizations to be made about the colonial relationship. Prospero and Caliban can never be made equal partners by political decree—if only because, in Mannoni's psychological terms, Prospero has willed Caliban into being, and Caliban Prospero. What, even now, can be said with some assurance is that the act of independence does not put an end to the unequal relationship. Even the comparatively innocent American has to live with the psychological burden of colonialism bequeathed to him by his white brother-nations. Even for him, therefore, the question of whether or not India is a special case assumes some importance.

Yet this potentially rich and fascinating field has been surprisingly little explored. In Britain, the generation under forty knows almost nothing of India, and cares less. For those over forty who once lived and labored in India, the Raj is a fading dream: there are still strong sentimental ties, especially among military men, but they will hardly survive their generation. In India itself, Britain might appear to loom large: the image of the Raj is still powerful, perhaps more powerful in the glow of retrospective emulation than in the days of its actual glory. But the Britain the new Hindu Raj emulates is not the Britain of Harold Wilson, Kingsley Amis, and the Beatles. The living link has snapped. The Britain that is admired is an abstraction—a textbook model of jurisprudential wisdom, welfarestate economics, and parliamentary etiquette. Thus the Anglophilia of educated Indians is both embarrassingly flattering, and finally shallow—because it refers to an England that does not, and indeed never did, exist. A charming Indian lady once

assured me over the lunch-table, after her guest had told a particularly scarifying tale of corruption in high places, “You will find this hard to understand, I believe, we know that such things cannot happen in your country.” I did not like to disillusion her (this was about the time of the Profumo scandals). But in any case it would have done no good. What Indian editorials picked out was the fact that Mr. Profumo had actually got up in Parliament and *confessed*. How many Indian ministers, it was slyly suggested, would have been prepared to do a thing like that! And how much more, it was insinuated, would some of *our* ministers have to confess! How could one protest? Should one have insisted that these doings shed a rather murky light on the England of 1963? That would have been resented, and almost certainly not believed. These educated Indians were confident that they knew what the real England was: for them, whatever might happen, the real England would keep breaking through.

Since Independence there have been, I think, only three books which have done justice to the Anglo-Indian theme. The first, in point of time, was Nirad C. Chaudhuri's great *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, perhaps the best book in the English language ever written by an Indian. The second was *The Men Who Ruled India*, by Philip “Woodruff,” an eloquent, erudite, romantic monument to the British administrators of imperial India—perhaps the most convincing apologia for imperialism (though its author, Philip Mason, is no “imperialist” in the contemporary, pejorative sense) that has ever been composed. V. S. Naipaul's new book, *An Area of Darkness*, deserves to take its place as the third in this pantheon. It differs from its predecessors, each written shortly after Independence, in that it records a contemporary India, the India of Nehru's last years, of the Sino-Indian border dispute. But it differs also in the quality of the author's involvement. Both Mr. Chaudhuri and Mr. Mason were children of the British Raj—indeed their books may prove, with Kipling's and Forster's, its most enduring monuments. Mr. Naipaul, too, is a child of British imperialism, but in rather more indirect fashion. He is the grandson of a Brahmin from the Benares region who went to Trinidad in the 19th centry as an indentured laborer. But his education is British and he confesses that he lacks sympathy with much that is deeply Indian—he has no religious sense, no liking for metaphysics. Nevertheless, admirers of his earlier books must have hoped that he would one day write about India. They have been richly rewarded.

The strengths of Mr. Naipaul's book lie, then, where one would expect them to lie—in his novelist's ear for talk, in his shrewd, observant eye for detail. The descriptions of that lakeside hotel in Kashmir where he stayed, of that first agonized encounter with the sights and smells of the Orient in Bombay and Alexandria, are done with a sureness that is equal to anything in his fiction. But it is above all Mr. Naipaul's account of his return to the ancestral village (“the Village of the Dubes”) that seems certain of a high place in any anthology of English writing about India. Until the very end of his journey, the author seems to cling to the illusion that somewhere, somehow, he will discover what it is that connects him, through his Brahmin forebears, with this sprawling, defecating, inchoate India of today. Arrived in the village, he finds the shrines erected by his grandfather, with money sent from Trinidad, still standing. But the village and its

Brahmin community are not quite as he and his Trinidad family had been brought up to believe. A traditional welcome is laid on: but it is soon apparent that this prodigal's return is seen as a financial opportunity not to be missed. It is the final humiliation. The shameless beggary of India—as it must appear to a Westerner—could not be more cruelly brought home. Mr. Naipaul, who is nothing if not candid, admits that he panicked: from that moment he wanted only to get out of India as fast as he could.

In the best of his descriptive episodes Mr. Naipaul—and there is no higher praise—is not far inferior to Kipling. But the book has the defects of its virtues; it is interested largely in the immediacy, the accidents of life. Now that, in an Indian context, is very strange. For the Hindu sets little store by appearances—the world of *maya*. To the Hindu, essence is all. That is why most reportage, most descriptive writing in modern India, is so bad. In other words, the average Indian writer is weak precisely where Mr. Naipaul is strong. (Whether he is always strong where Mr. Naipaul is comparatively weak—in historical speculation, in philosophical contemplation—I would not care to say: though these gifts are certainly generously developed in Mr. Chaudhuri's books.) But it does seem that Mr. Naipaul is deaf to a good deal in the complex music of India—think, for instance, of the breathtaking aesthetic appeal of Satyajit Ray's films-because his own gifts lie in quite another direction. For all his Brahmin ancestry, Mr. Naipaul is very English in his sensibility (he is primarily a comic writer). In one sense, then, his book is intensely personal. It is the record of an attempt to clear that “area of darkness” which India, since childhood, had represented in the author's mind. The attempt succeeded, disastrously well: the darkness of ignorance yielded to the more painful darkness of knowledge. In that sense, Mr. Naipaul's journey was justified: he will hardly need to go back. But there is more to it than that. It is not chance that Mr. Naipaul's personal Odyssey conforms to the pattern of so many other attempted explorations, so many other passages to India, both in its high expectations, and in its final humiliation and rejection. Indeed, it appears to echo the tragedy of the British Raj itself. Mr. Naipaul's book is the latest, but not the last, nail in the coffin of that brave, but ill-favored endeavor.

UNIT -III – DRAMA

SOYINKA : THE ROAD

The Road is a novel of hopelessness and despair, with some dim hope keeping the main characters, a man and his son, alive. Mostly, the characters live dreadfully. They sleep cold under a tarp, they hide from cannibals, they starve for days on end—and yet they keep going. The man and the boy’s desperate march to the coast, to warmth, may all be for naught, but they make the journey anyway. The main conflict of the book is a simple one: stay alive. All of nature is against the man and the boy, and most of humanity too. They are hunted by survivors, many of them cannibals, but they maintain the hope of something better further down the road. The man is hopeless about his own life, but he retains some hope that he can provide for the boy and keep him alive. Indeed, the future survival of his son is the man’s only reason to continue.

The novel begins *in medias res*, in the middle of the action. The reader only gains perspective as to what brought the man and the boy to their current situation through flashbacks. This device lends immediate urgency to the plight of the man and boy. They must keep moving and they must find food. The flashbacks reveal that an environmental or nuclear disaster has destroyed nearly all natural life on the planet. By showing the man and boy hunting for canned food in abandoned houses in the present, the author reveals the outcome of this specific catastrophic event, and in the small portrait of a boy and his father, the author illustrates the universal outcome of such catastrophic devastation.

The inevitability of death on a dying world is a major theme in the novel. Events in the story reflect the chaos of the road, but everything points toward the ultimate climax of the father's death. There is no telling what each day will bring. Sometimes it's cannibals, sometimes it's freezing rain, and sometimes it's a warm reprieve. Mostly it is biting cold and danger. When the characters are sick, it foreshadows a specific looming danger that will ultimately lead to the demise of the man.

The decision to make the journey to the coast is made by the man; he reasons that they should get south to stay warm. This decision gives the characters a clear objective and thus drives the plot forward. However, the man has no idea whether achieving this objective will actually help them or not. Nevertheless, working toward a goal gives the man and boy some semblance of hope in an otherwise impossible situation. The man must frequently make many decisions like this, based on little information. He cannot know all he needs to. This causes him to take risks, which the boy questions or objects to. These risks often lead the man and his son into extremely dangerous situations, which nearly result in their death or capture. Stylistically, these incidents are presented briefly, in snippets. This presentation serves to highlight the unending monotony and terror of the road itself. Whatever happens to these characters, they will simply move on and fight a new challenge, so they may continue south on their journey to the coast. Therefore, the coast is more of a powerful idea than an actual place and represents the characters' last hope.

The rising action of the novel consists of these many episodes along the road, some terrible and some mundane. The man and the boy barely avoid cannibals, but also manage to visit the house where the man grew up. They scavenge for scraps, like siphoning small amounts of oil from old bottles, but they also find a bunker filled with supplies. The bunker is the greatest stroke of luck they could hope for, but they cannot stay. Their safety depends upon movement. After spells of good and bad luck in turn, the man and boy finally reach the coast. They have reached their destination at last, but once there it is not clear what they should do. The coast is just as desolate, gray, and dead as everything that came before it. Their migration was spurred on by hunger and the need to scavenge new ground. But even at the coast, they must continue looking for food.

The incidents continue as father and son track the coastal lands. During this time, the boy and his father grow further apart. The father makes difficult decisions for them both but the son doesn't always agree. When a thief steals their supplies, the father tracks him down and takes everything from him, essentially condemning the thief to death from exposure. The boy sees this as unnecessarily cruel, and he bitterly dissents. This incident marks a turning point in which the boy begins to assert his agency. As the father's health declines and the boy continues to form an independent worldview, their roles subtly shift. The man's impending death means the boy must not only become caretaker, but also contemplate what comes next.

The story's climax occurs when the father finally succumbs to death. The boy sits with his Papa and weeps for all that has been lost between them. By some turn of good luck, a stranger approaches and offers the boy shelter. The boy's father has taught him to be wary of cannibals, but the new man promises he is no cannibal. By trusting in and accepting help from the stranger, the boy marks the final break from his father. His father did his job of protecting the boy and keeping him alive. But now the boy must leave his father, and his father's world, behind him, relying only on himself to make decisions and stay alive. The stranger has a wife and children, which represents the possibility of a truly hopeful future for the boy. In the end, it is the man's fierce protectiveness and defensiveness that has kept the boy alive. However, it is the boy's good nature, his belief in the possible goodness of others, and his decision to trust that opens a new world for him.

GIRISH KARNAD : HAYAVADANA

The play opens with a **puja** to Ganesha, as **the Bhagavata** asks that Ganesha bless the performance that he and the company are about to put on. Then he places the audience in the setting of the play, Dharmapura, and begins to introduce the central characters. The first is **Devadatta**, the son of a **Brahmin** who outshines the other pundits and poets of the kingdom. The second is **Kapila**, the son of the iron-smith who is skilled at physical feats of strength. The two are the closest of friends.

As the Bhagavata sets up the story, there is a scream of terror offstage. An **actor** runs onstage screaming that he has seen a creature with a horse's head, a man's body, and the voice of a human. The Bhagavata doesn't believe him, and even when the creature (**Hayavadana**) enters, the Bhagavata thinks it is a mask and attempts to pull off Hayavadana's head. Upon realizing it's his real head, the Bhagavata listens as Hayavadana explains his origin: he is the son of a princess and a celestial being in horse form, and he is desperate to become a full man. The Bhagavata suggests he go to the temple of **Kali**, as she grants anything anyone asks for. Hayavadana sets out for the temple, hopeful that Kali will be able to change his head to a human head.

Recovering from the interruption, the Bhagavata returns to the play. He begins to sing, explaining that the two heroes fell in love with a girl and forgot themselves. Meanwhile, a **female chorus** sings in the background about the nature of love. Devadatta and Kapila enter. Devadatta explains his love for **Padmini**, explaining that he would

sacrifice his arms and his head if he could marry her. Kapila at first makes fun of Devadatta but then sees how much his friend is affected by Padmini. He agrees to find out her name and where she lives.

Kapila goes to the street where Padmini lives and begins to knock on the doors. When Padmini opens the door to her home, Kapila is immediately love-struck. Padmini asks him what he wants, outwitting him as he tries to come up with reasons why he is there. He eventually explains that he is there to woo her for Devadatta. Kapila says to himself that Padmini really needs a man of steel, and that Devadatta is too sensitive for someone as quick as Padmini.

The Bhagavata reveals that Devadatta and Padmini were quickly married, and that all three remained friends. The story then jumps forward six months, when Padmini is pregnant with a **son**, and the three friends are meant to go on a trip to Ujjain together. Devadatta expresses jealousy that Padmini seems to have some affection for Kapila, which Padmini denies. She says that she will cancel the trip so that the two of them can spend more time together, but when Kapila arrives, ready to leave, Padmini changes her mind and decides to go, much to Devadatta's dismay.

As the three of them travel together, Padmini remarks how well Kapila drives the cart. She points out a tree with the **Fortunate Lady's flower**, and Kapila rushes off to grab flowers for her. Padmini remarks to herself how muscular Kapila is, and Devadatta sees Padmini watching him with desire. When they pass the temple of Rudra and Kali, Devadatta is reminded of his old promise and sneaks away to cut off his head. Kapila goes to look for him, and upon discovering Devadatta's headless body is struck with grief. He decides to cut off his head as well.

Padmini begins to get worried about the two men and goes after them. She sees their two headless bodies on the ground and attempts to commit suicide as well. The goddess Kali stops her and tells her she will revive the men if Padmini replaces their heads on their bodies. Padmini, in her excitement, accidentally switches the two heads when she replaces them. The two men are revived: one with Devadatta's head and Kapila's body, and the other with Kapila's head and Devadatta's body.

At first, the three of them are amused by the mix-up, but when they try to return home, they discover issues. Each man believes that Padmini is his wife. Devadatta's head claims that the head rules the body, and so she is his wife. Kapila's head argues that his hand accepted hers at the wedding ceremony, and that the child she is carrying came from his body. Padmini is aghast, but decides to go with Devadatta's head. Kapila does not return with them.

As the second act opens, Padmini and Devadatta are happier than they've ever been. She loves his newfound strength, and the two of them prepare for their child. They buy two **dolls** for their son. The dolls speak to the audience and reveal that over time, Devadatta's new, strong body begins to revert to its old form. He and Padmini fight over how to treat their son, as she believes that Devadatta coddles him. The dolls tell the audience that Padmini begins to dream of Kapila. When the dolls begin to show signs of wear, Padmini asks Devadatta to get new ones and goes to show her son the forest.

As Padmini travels through the woods, she discovers Kapila living there. He has regained his strength, just as Devadatta has lost his. He explains how he had to war against his body, and how he has come to accept that he is, in fact, Kapila. Padmini implies that she is attracted to him, and spends several nights with him.

Devadatta returns with the dolls and tries to find Padmini in the woods. He discovers her with Kapila, and the two decide to kill each other to put an end to the struggle between their heads and their bodies. After they have killed each other, Padmini decides to perform **sati**, throwing herself on their funeral pyre. The Bhagavata explains that Padmini was, in her own way, a devoted wife.

Just as the audience believes the play has ended, a **second actor** comes onstage saying that there was a horse walking down the street singing the national anthem. The first actor also enters, with a young boy in tow. The boy is very serious, and does not speak, laugh, or cry. It is revealed the child is Padmini's son.

At that point, Hayavadana returns. He explains that he had asked Kali to make him complete, but instead of making him a complete human, she has made him a complete horse. Padmini's son begins to laugh at Hayavadana, and the two sing together. Hayavadana still wishes to rid himself of his human voice, and the boy encourages him to laugh. As Hayavadana laughs more and more, his laughter turns into a horse's neigh, and he thus becomes a complete horse.

The Bhagavata concludes the story by marveling at the mercy of Ganesha, who has fulfilled the desires of Hayavadana and the young boy. He says that it is time to pray, and Padmini, Devadatta, and Kapila join in thanking the Lord for ensuring the completion and success of the play.

UNIT : IV FICTION

CHINUA ACHEBE : THINGS FALL APART

Okonkwo is a wealthy and respected warrior of the Umuofia clan, a lower Nigerian tribe that is part of a consortium of nine connected villages. He is haunted by the actions of Unoka, his cowardly and spendthrift father, who died in disrepute, leaving many village debts unsettled. In response, Okonkwo became a clansman, warrior, farmer, and family provider extraordinaire. He has a twelve-year-old son named Nwoye whom he finds lazy; Okonkwo worries that Nwoye will end up a failure like Unoka.

In a settlement with a neighboring tribe, Umuofia wins a virgin and a fifteen-year-old boy. Okonkwo takes charge of the boy, Ikemefuna, and finds an ideal son in him. Nwoye likewise forms a strong attachment to the newcomer. Despite his fondness for Ikemefuna and despite the fact that the boy begins to call him "father," Okonkwo does not let himself show any affection for him.

During the Week of Peace, Okonkwo accuses his youngest wife, Ojiugo, of negligence. He severely beats her, breaking the peace of the sacred week. He makes some sacrifices to show his repentance, but he has shocked his community irreparably.

Ikemefuna stays with Okonkwo's family for three years. Nwoye looks up to him as an older brother and, much to Okonkwo's pleasure, develops a more masculine attitude. One day, the locusts come to Umuofia—they will come every year for seven years before disappearing for another generation. The village excitedly collects them because they are good to eat when cooked.

Ogbuefi Ezeudu, a respected village elder, informs Okonkwo in private that the Oracle has said that Ikemefuna must be killed. He tells Okonkwo that because Ikemefuna calls him "father," Okonkwo should not take part in the boy's death. Okonkwo lies to Ikemefuna, telling him that they must return him to his home village. Nwoye bursts into tears.

As he walks with the men of Umuofia, Ikemefuna thinks about seeing his mother. After several hours of walking, some of Okonkwo's clansmen attack the boy with machetes. Ikemefuna runs to Okonkwo for help. But Okonkwo, who doesn't wish to look weak in front of his fellow tribesmen, cuts the boy down despite the Oracle's admonishment. When Okonkwo returns home, Nwoye deduces that his friend is dead.

Okonkwo sinks into a depression, neither able to sleep nor eat. He visits his friend Obierika and begins to feel revived a bit. Okonkwo's daughter Ezinma falls ill, but she recovers after Okonkwo gathers leaves for her medicine.
The death of Ogbuefi Ezeudu is announced to the surrounding villages by means of the *ekwe,* a musical instrument. Okonkwo feels guilty because the last time Ezeudu visited him was to warn him against taking part in Ikemefuna's death. At Ogbuefi Ezeudu's large and elaborate funeral, the men beat drums and fire their guns. Tragedy compounds upon itself when Okonkwo's gun explodes and kills Ogbuefi Ezeudu's sixteen-year-old son. Because killing a clansman is a crime against the earth goddess, Okonkwo must take his family into exile for seven years in order to atone. He gathers his most valuable belongings and takes his family to his mother's natal village, Mbanta. The men from Ogbuefi Ezeudu's quarter burn Okonkwo's buildings and kill his animals to cleanse the village of his sin.

Okonkwo's kinsmen, especially his uncle, Uchendu, receive him warmly. They help him build a new compound of huts and lend him yam seeds to start a farm. Although he is bitterly disappointed at his misfortune, Okonkwo reconciles himself to life in his motherland.

During the second year of Okonkwo's exile, Obierika brings several bags of cowries (shells used as currency) that he has made by selling Okonkwo's yams. Obierika plans to continue to do so until Okonkwo returns to the village. Obierika also brings the bad news that Abame, another village, has been destroyed by the white man.

Soon afterward, six missionaries travel to Mbanta. Through an interpreter named Mr. Kiaga, the missionaries' leader, Mr. Brown, speaks to the villagers. He tells them that their gods are false and that worshipping more than one God is idolatrous. But the villagers do not understand how the Holy Trinity can be accepted as one God. Although his aim is to convert the residents of Umuofia to Christianity, Mr. Brown does not allow his followers to antagonize the clan.
Mr. Brown grows ill and is soon replaced by Reverend James Smith, an intolerant and strict man. The more zealous converts are relieved to be free of Mr. Brown's policy of restraint. One such convert, Enoch, dares to unmask an *egwugwu* during the annual ceremony to honor the earth deity, an act equivalent to killing an ancestral spirit. The next day, the *egwugwu* burn Enoch's compound and Reverend Smith's church to the ground.

The District Commissioner is upset by the burning of the church and requests that the leaders of Umuofia meet with him. Once they are gathered, however, the leaders are handcuffed and thrown in jail, where they suffer insults and physical abuse.

After the prisoners are released, the clansmen hold a meeting, during which five court messengers approach and order the clansmen to desist. Expecting his fellow clan members to join him in uprising, Okonkwo kills their leader with his machete. When the crowd allows the other messengers to escape, Okonkwo realizes that his clan is not willing to go to war.

When the District Commissioner arrives at Okonkwo's compound, he finds that Okonkwo has hanged himself. Obierika and his friends lead the commissioner to the body. Obierika explains that suicide is a grave sin; thus, according to custom, none of Okonkwo's clansmen may touch his body. The commissioner, who is writing a book about Africa, believes that the story of Okonkwo's rebellion and death will make for an interesting paragraph or two. He has already chosen the book's title: *The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger.*

ROMESH GUNESEKERA : REEF

Reef Summary

Reef tells the decades-long story of Triton, a young Sri Lankan boy who works for a wealthy intellectual, Mister Salgado, and eventually becomes a successful restaurateur in London. Set against the context of the Sri Lankan Civil War, the text provides an intimate look at the personal consequences of classism and injustice.

The text opens with a scene set twenty years after Triton moves to London. At a gas station, he helps a recent Sri Lankan refugee, prompting him to recall the events that brought him to London. Triton then recounts his early childhood in Sri Lanka. After Triton accidentally burns down a schoolhouse, his uncle gives him to Mister Salgado as a servant. Initially, Triton is given menial tasks, like sweeping and bringing Mister Salgado tea. He clashes with the head servant, Joseph, who later sexually assaults Triton and is dismissed. After Joseph leaves, Triton, still a child, assumes the responsibility of running Mister Salgado's entire household.
As the years pass, Triton remains with Mister Salgado and demonstrates his natural talent for cooking. Mister Salgado begins to research oceanography, focusing on the erosion of coral reefs. Mister Salgado begins to court Nili, a hotel manager of a lower social class. Triton finds immense satisfaction in preparing elaborate, inventive meals for the couple, including an English-style Christmas dinner. Though excluded from the festivities, Triton overhears discussions of political unrest and anti-capitalist sentiments.

Nili moves into Mister Salgado's home, which pleases Triton, as Nili often praises his cooking and shows interest in his life. As she and Mister Salgado host parties for their eccentric group of friends, cracks in their relationship begin to show. Eventually, Nili leaves Mister Salgado for an American named Robert, causing Mister Salgado to plunge into a depression; Triton assumes the burden of attending to Mister Salgado's emotional needs as well as his physical needs.

After the opposition party wins the Sri Lankan election, Mister Salgado's research lab closes, and his close friend, Dias, goes missing. Afraid for his safety, Mister Salgado flees to England with Triton. The two men settle in London, and their relationship evolves into friendship. Mister Salgado buys Triton a restaurant and leaves him his house before returning to Sri Lanka to care for Nili, who suffered a mental break after arsonists razed her hotel. Alone for the first time, Triton follows his passion and grows his restaurant.

UNIT – V – CRITICISM

STUART HALL : CULTURAL IDENTIFY AND DIASPORA

In this essay, Hall considers the nature of the “black subject” (392) who is represented by “film and other forms of visual representation of the Afro-Caribbean (and Asian) ‘blacks’ of the diasporas of the West” (392). “Who is this emergent, new subject of the cinema? From where does he/she speak?” (392). Referring to the seminal work of Émile Benveniste (signalled by the gesture towards “enunication” [392]), he contends that what recent theories of enunciation suggest is that, though we speak, so to say ‘in our own name’, of ourselves and from our own experience, nevertheless who speaks, and the subject who is spoken of, are never identical, never exactly in the same place. (392) Hall’s thesis is that rather than thinking of identity as an “already accomplished fact,

which the new cultural practices then represent" (392), we should think instead of "identity as a 'production' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (392). Hall points out that there are two principal ways of thinking about (cultural) identity. The traditional model views identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. . . . This 'oneness', underlying all the other, more superficial differences, is the truth, the essence of 'Caribbeanness', of the black experience. It is this identity which a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express. . . . (393) Hall acknowledges that the "rediscovery of this identity is often the object of what Frantz Fanon once called a 'passionate research'" (393) and that such a "conception of cultural identity played a crucial role in all post colonial struggles" (393). However, he questions whether such a view merely entails "unearthing that which the colonial experience buried and overlaid" (393). For him, it is better to envision a "quite different practice" (393), one based on "not the rediscovery but the production of identity. Not an identity grounded in the archaeology, but in the re-telling of the past" (393). Such a viewpoint would entail acknowledging that this is an "act of imaginative rediscovery" (393), one which involves "imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the history of all enforced diasporas" (394) and leads to the restoration of an "imaginary fullness or plentitude, to set against the broken rubric of our past" (394). Africa, he stresses, is the "name of the missing term, the great aporia, which lies at the centre of our cultural identity and gives it a meaning which, until recently, it lacked" (394). The second model of (cultural) identity (which Hall favours) acknowledges the "critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather--since history has intervened--'what we have become'" (394). From this point of view, cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.

Drawing upon the work of Michel Foucault and Edward Said, Hall argues that cognizance must be taken of the "ways in which black people, black experiences, were positioned and subject-ed in the dominant regimes of representation" (394), these latter being the "effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalisation. Not only, in Said's 'Orientalist' sense, were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge of the West by those regimes. They had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as 'Other'" (394). Hall stresses that it is one thing to "position a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another thing to subject them to that 'knowledge', not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, by the power of inner compulsion and subjective con-formation to the norm" (394). Hence, from this perspective, it must

be acknowledged that cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark. It is not once-and-for-all. It is not a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute Return. (395) Cultural identities are the "unstable points of identification . . . which are made, within the discourses of history and culture" (394). The foregoing raises an indispensable question: if "identity does not proceed, in a straight unbroken line, from some fixed origin, how are we to understand its formation?" (395). In response, Hall offers his model of Caribbean identity. He suggests that we should think of "black Caribbean identities as "'framed by two axes or vectors, simultaneously operative: the vector of similarity or continuity [the first model of identity]; and the vector of difference and rupture" (395). Employing a Bakhtinian metaphor, he contends that these two axes exist in a "dialogic relationship" (395): paradoxically, "what we share is precisely the experience of a profound discontinuity" (395). To be precise, the uprooting of slavery and transportation and the insertion into the plantation economy (as well as the symbolic economy) of the Western world . . . 'unified' these peoples across their differences, in the same moment as it cut them off from direct access to their past. (396) Firstly, Africa and India are not monolithically united entities. Moreover, each island is profoundly different from the others. What is more, we do not stand in quite the same relationship of 'otherness' to the metropolitan centres. "Difference, therefore, persists--in and alongside continuity" (396), Hall stresses. The task for Hall is, therefore, how to "describe this play of 'difference' within identity" (396). While he acknowledges that a common history has unified us across our differences, this common history "does not constitute a common origin, since it was, metaphorically as well as literally, a translation" (396). Drawing upon the work of Jacques Derrida, Hall contends that such "cultural 'play' could not be represented . . . as a simple binary opposition--'past/present', 'them/us'. Its complexity exceed this binary structure of representation. At different places, times, in relation to different questions, the boundaries are re-sited" (396). Hall finds Derrida's notion of 'différance' particularly useful to describe that "special and peculiar supplement which the black and mulatto skin adds to the 'refinement' and sophistication" (397) of European culture. Différance "challenges the fixed binaries which stabilise meaning and representation and show how meaning is never fixed or completed, but keeps on moving on to encompass other, additional or supplementary meanings" (397). The question is: where "does identity come in to this infinite postponement of meaning?" (397). Hall contends, gesturing towards the Derridean view that people arrest signifying play in a Procrustean fashion, that meaning "depends upon the contingent and arbitrary stop" (397). Such a view does not contradict the view that meaning is potentially infinite: it "only threatens to do so if we mistake this 'cut' of identity--this positioning, which makes meaning possible--as a natural and permanent, rather than an arbitrary and contingent ending. . . . Meaning continues to unfold . . . beyond the arbitrary closure which makes it, at any moment, possible. . . There is always something left over" (396). Drawing upon Derrida's notion of différance, Hall posits that it is possible to "rethink the positioning and repositioning of Caribbean cultural identities in relation to at least three 'presences', to borrow Aimé Césaire's and Léopold Senghor's metaphor: Présence Africaine, Présence Européene, and Présence Américaine" (398), none of which can ever be fully present (presence is deferred). (The last of these is Hall's term

for the New World, the “juncture-point where the many cultural tributaries meet” [400], the “primal scene” [401] where the fateful/fatal encounter was staged between Africa and the West” [401]). Drawing upon both the spatial and temporal metaphors which Derrida employs, Hall is implicitly and simultaneously comparing Caribbean society to a sign within a wider sign-system, a signifier located along the chain of signification and, by extension, a text which is linked ‘intertextually’ to other region-texts.1 Drawing upon the notions of both displacement and deferral, Hall insinuates that the Caribbean is neither an isolatable and autonomous place which exists in a social and historical vacuum nor is the past separable from the present. Rather, the Caribbean as we know it today is a dynamic entity produced by its relation to those other socio-historical entities whose inhabitants migrated to and came to form the region. Interestingly, in an omission as grave as those exclusions for which he would not fail to censure European racists, Hall fails to make any mention of that very ‘Présence Indienne’ to which he himself had alluded and whose influence is very marked in countries such as Trinidad and Guyana. By far the most important region-sign-signifier-text in this regard is evidently, in the light of what Hall writes earlier, the African ‘presence.’ (Europe’s legacy is an undeniable, ineluctable but troubling one for most Caribbean persons to confront. “For many of us, this is a matter not of too little but of too much” [399], he writes. The question is, can we ever “recognise its irreversible influence, whilst resisting its imperialising eye?” [400], he asks.) Africa is the “site of the repressed” (398), the “signified which could not be represented directly in slavery” (398) but which “remained and remains the unspoken unspeakable ‘presence’ in Caribbean culture” (398). Gesturing to the early work of thinkers like Brathwaite (e.g. “Timehri”), Hall is at pains to stress that it is not a question of ever recovering a lost Africa per se: whether it is . . . an origin of our identities, unchanged by four hundred years of displacement, dismemberment, transportation, to which we could in any final or literal sense return, is . . . open to doubt. The original ‘Africa’ is no longer there. It too has been transformed. History is, in that sense, irreversible. We must not collude with the West which, precisely, normalises and appropriates Africa by freezing it into some timeless zone of the primitive and unchanging past. Africa must at last be reckoned with by Caribbean people, but it cannot in any simple sense be merely recovered. (399) Rather, Hall is gesturing to the new texts of all kinds, literary, filmic, etc., even the new social texts of Africa which Caribbean persons have managed to fashion in their quest for nationhood. Writing with reference to Jamaica, Hall argues that an “Afro-Caribbean identity became historically available” (398) to Caribbean persons only in the 1970's through an “indigenous cultural revolution” (398), through the “impact on popular life of the post-colonial revolution, the civil rights struggles, the culture of Rastafarianism and the music of reggae” (398). These and related factors made possible or became the “metaphors, the figures or signifiers of a new construction of ‘Jamaican-ness” (398). These and similar cultural endeavours “signified a ‘new’ Africa of the New World, grounded in an ‘old’ Africa: . . . this Africa, as we might say, . . . as a spiritual, cultural and political metaphor” (398): this is the “Africa we must return to--but by ‘another route’: what Africa has become in the New World, what we have made of ‘Africa’: ‘Africa’--as we retell it through politics, memory and desire” (399). From this point of view, Africa “‘has acquired an imaginative or figurative value that we can name and feel’. Our belongingness to it constitutes what Benedict Anderson calls an ‘imaginary

community'" (399). This 'Africa' is a necessary part of the "Caribbean imaginary" (399): the displacement which has marked the region has given rise to a "certain imaginary plentitude, recreating the endless desire to return to 'lost origins', to be one again with the mother, to go back to the beginning" (402). Hall's notion of diasporic identity is one based upon différance and hybridity. It rejects old "imperialising" (401) and "hegemonising" (401) forms of "'ethnicity'" (401). Gesturing to the ongoing problem of the Palestinian homeland, he argues that his model does not conceptualise the securing of identity solely "in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return, even if it means pushing other peoples into the sea" (401). It is "defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity . . . hybridity" (402). Hall claims to offer a "different way of thinking about cultural identity" (402) by theorising identity "as constituted, not outside but within representation" (402) and hence of cinema or literature "not as a second-order mirror held up to reflect what already exists, but as that form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects, and thereby enable us to discover places from which to speak" (402). Hall ends by citing the relevance to his model of identity of Benedict Anderson's redefinition of the community as "distinguished, not by their falsity/genuiness, but by the style in which they are imagined