

CHAP - 07 THE INTERVIEW

CHRISTOPHER SILVESTER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR :- Christopher Silvester was a student of history at Peterhouse, Cambridge. He was a reporter for Private Eye for ten years & has written features for Vanity Fair. Following is an extract taken from his introduction to the Penguin Book of Interviews.

SUMMARY → The lesson begins with the introduction to interview as a commonplace of journalism since its invention, which was a little over 130 years ago. According to the author, it is not very surprising that people have very distinct opinions about the usage of 'Interview'. An interview leaves a lasting impression and according to an old saying, when perception are made about a certain person, the original identity of his soul gets stolen. Famous celebrities, writers and artists have been heard criticising interviews.

This is an extract from the Interview between Mukund and Umberto Eco, as a scholar for his ideas on semiotics, literary interpretation, and medieval aesthetics before he turned to writing fiction. The interview revolves around the success of his novel,

The interviewer begins by asking him how Umberto manages to do so many different things to which he replies by saying that he is doing the same thing. Umberto identifies himself as an academic scholar who attends academic conferences during the week & writes novels on Sundays. He believes there are empty spaces in atoms and the Universe. He calls them & most of his productive work is done during that time. Talking about the novel, he mentions that it is not an easy-read. It has a detective aspect to it along with metaphysics, theology and medieval history. Also, he believes that ~~to~~ the novel had been written 10 yrs earlier or later, it would have not seen such a huge success. Thus, the reason for its success ~~is~~ still remains a mystery.

SHORT QUESTION ANSWERS

Q17) What are some of the positive view on interview?

Ans. Interviews are an effective medium of communication. They are a highest form, a source of truth and an art.

Q21) Why do most celebrity writers despise being interviewed?

Ans. Most of famous writers despise being interviewed because they consider it as an unwarranted intrusion into their private lives.

Q37) What is the belief in some primitive cultures about being photo graphed?

Ans In some primitive cultures, it is believed that if you are photographed, your soul is stolen.

Q47) What do you understand by the expression "thumbprints on his wind pipe"?

Ans The expression "thumbprints on his windpipe" means a stumbling block in one's personality. It also means that they intrude into their private lives.

Q57) Who, in today's world is our chief source of information about personalities?

Ans In these days, Interviewer is our chief sources of information about personalities.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q17) How does Eco finds the time to write so much?

Ans Eco is a university professor who attends academic conferences all week. He finds so much time to write in the empty spaces that we all have in our lives, just ~~as~~ like empty spaces the structure of atoms and Universe. He would use that time to write an essay rather than sit idle. Therefore, he considers himself a scholar who writes novels on Sundays.

Q27) What is the reason for the huge success of the novel, "The Name of the Rose"?

Ans. The novel, The Name of the Rose is a hard-read, differentiating it from other novels. It is a detective narrative that contains metaphysics, theology and medical history. Thus, it targeted the audience that is not interested in an easy reading experience, probably not all the time. However, the success of the novel still remains a mystery. According to Umberto, had the novel been written ten years earlier or later, it would have not attracted the same proportion of audience.

Q37) Did Umberto Eco consider himself a novelist first or an academic scholar?

Ans. ~~Umberto~~ Umberto Eco considered himself an academic scholar first. He participated in academic conferences and not meetings of writers and pen clubs. He would say that he considered himself as a university professor who wrote novels on Sundays.

Eco's style of academic writing is narrative. It shows personal feelings. It is very interesting. It is much different from the regular academic style of writing which is thought to be dull, boring and depersonalised.