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Academic ESL World History Unit 4. E. Gaskell, North and South Introduction

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OER Academic ESL Unit 4.

Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South*

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SHE LAY CURLED UPON THE SOFA IN THE BACK

DRAWING-ROOM.”—P. 1.

North and South.

INTRODUCTION

The novel *North and South* is a great illustration of the cultural and social conditions of the industrial revolution. In the novel, you follow both the manufactures, the owners of the factories, and the workers and their living conditions in these new industrial towns. The novel’s central theme is the conflict between the wealthy manufacturers of northern England and the men, women and children who spend endless hours in the factories. It further depicts the interesting gender roles of its time. Margaret Hale is the most central character, and it is mostly her point of view that we follow throughout the novel.

The novel was published in 1854 by the female author Elizabeth Gaskell. She herself had moved from a quaint and sheltered community to live with her husband in the smoky industrial town of Manchester. Here portrayal of the conditions, lifestyle and gender roles are unusual for a time when there were few published female writers.

You will read one of the first editions of the novel. We know this by looking at the publisher's name, the location, and the date of publication, and comparing it to other similar editions. Why does this matter? We have discussed the importance of reference to sources and text materials. When we refer to a text, we cannot just quote any text, but a text that is authentic, and different editions will be slightly different. Therefore, we refer to the exact edition of a text to ensure the author's original intentions are protected. In fact, there are "critical editions" of novels and plays etc. that compare the text to other versions. These are also called "annotated editions" because experts make comments about the differences between text and sources. You may remember the discussion about the "oldest book in the world". When we discussed the Bible, we noticed how careful the texts in this book have been guarded and protected. This is one of the reasons Martin Luther got into trouble, but this is how it survived. Therefore, we need to make sure our sources are authentic. Otherwise, we fall prey to disinformation and "fake news". It works the same way with books. It is a great gift to read the original edition. In this case, we are close to this experience, and it is a rich and accessible text despite its old age.

The assignments focus on chapters I- XXX, close to the first half of the novel, and are divided into three parts. In some cases, you will be asked to interpret and analyze the details, specific themes, and characters, and sometimes you will simply read and take notes.

For the second part of the novel, please consult "Suggested Activities" listed in part 4.

ORGANIZATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Part 1. Chapter I- V

Part 2. Chapters VI- XV

Part 3. Chapters XVI- XXX

Part 4. Suggested Activities