**Group 3: Intellectuals, Art and Politics in ’Einsame Menschen’**

-Christianity vs. Science conflict- Johannes commonly thought to be a product of transitional culture or, as one puts it, a "conscientious evolutionist and monist who does not yet feel at home in his accepted position.

- feeling of loneliness at this transitional age was a product of firstly the rapid growth of huge modern cities and secondly the breaking away from Christianity, through which many lost not only an important link with their fellow men but also a sense of personal security.

- To this extent, accordingly the loneliness was spiritual, especially for those like Johannes who wanted to find a substitute for Christianity. Drama is indeed ‘an elegy in honor of those who fell on the way to the promised land which they should never see themselves.

-Lonely people represented by Braun, Anna and Johannes.

- On the fundamental Christianity vs. Science plot rests also the secondary love triangle theme. Function of latter is twofold: to heighten the dramatic interest by supplying the personal conflict and to furnish the real setting for the theoretical problem pose by the philosophy of the ‘modern’ idealist.

- Shift in emphasis- blurs the basic design and disturbs the general impression. Love plot though originally secondary becomes primary, despite fact that the real problem still remains ‘the question of how such a character as Johannes can stand up under the pressure of a sudden decision.

- Deals with generational conflict within an upper middle-class family.

- Johannes is a self- employed scholar and adherent of the latest scientific and philosophical ideas, working on what he hopes will become his magnus opus. Johannes considers baptism of his grandson inappropriate and beneath the dignity of a sophisticated, modern intellectual.

- Wife has enjoyed no more than the average education for a woman of her generation and class, devotes her days to maintaining a comfortable household for her husband and infant son while trying to keep Johannes spendthrift ways in check.

- Elder Vockerats, conservative in religion and politics come from their rural Silesian home to attend the baptism of their grandson.

- Braun- rather cynical, shaven head acquaintance of the younger Vockerats.

- Anna Mahr and Johannes soon discover themselves to be kindred spirits. Despite Johannes insistence to his wife and parents that his new relationship is strictly platonic- he even tries to elevate it to a universal, high- minded blueprint for the future which will transcend sexual considerations entirely- a long drawn out kiss, reciprocated with equal ardor by Anna would seem to indicate his practice is outrunning his theory. J parents are understandably upset by what they consider adultery of the heart and what they fear may go further.

- Significance of location- symbolic, halfway between the bucolic countryside and the noise metropolis of Berlin. Friedrichshagen was as much a state of mind as a place. Sort of artists colony- men who were dissatisfied with the narrow definition of Naturalism (and extreme emphasis on natural science from which it derived).

* Themes of ethical problems concerning individual freedom vs. societal constraints.
* A lot of incidents in play derived from Hauptmann’s own direct experience- characteristics of characters derived from own family members.
* Evolving typology of Hauptmannian characters- Johannes is youthful, agitated, self-centered, professed idealists who treat women who love them in a callous manner which belies the sensitivity to which each would surely lay claim. Each cherishes an almost megalomaniac ambition but has, so far, nothing to show for it. In a real sense they are all weaker than the more instinctive and natural woman who try so hard to support them in their work.
* Each central character also an alter ego (counter male figure) who is (or pretends to be) cynical and world- weary but who upon closer inspection, is revealed to be in open or secret conflict with him- Braun goes out of his way to denigrate Anna Mahr while complaining ‘ I don’t suit her’.
* Hauptmann managed to create a distinctly new kind of female character in figure of Anna Mahr. Making her own way in a male world, she recognizes and opposes the ethical and social evils of her generation without sacrificing her femininity. Although subject to the same temptations as Johannes, she vacillates briefly and then follows her better moral instincts by withdrawing her disruptive influence from the young family.
* Johannes finds it difficult to adapt to a world that is rapidly changing its religious , scientific and philosophical orientation, she bears the additional burden of being in the vanguard of a women’s movement struggling for minimal rights (work- related, social, political and sexual) against a firmly entrenched male hierarchy.