Introduction :-

Humanism is the term generally applied to the predominant social philosophy and intellectual and literary currents of the period from 1400 to 1650. The return to favor of the pagan classics stimulated the philosophy of secularism, the appreciation of worldly pleasures, and above all intensified the assertion of personal independence and individual expression. Zeal for the classics was a result as well as a cause of the growing secular view of life. Expansion of trade, growth of prosperity and luxury, and widening social contacts generated interest in worldly pleasures, in spite of formal allegiance to ascetic Christian doctrine. Men thus affected -- the humanists -- welcomed classical writers who revealed similar social values and secular attitudes.

The attitude of mind which attaches primary importance to man and to his faculties, affairs, temporal aspirations and well-being. (from Latin ‘humanus, “human” homo “man”, homines “mankind”), often regarded as the characteristic attitude of the renaissance in Western Europe. The Greek and Roman classical writers regularly distinguished the human or humane, on the one hand from the bestial and on the other from the divine; but in making the latter contrast they usually stressed some pathetic aspect of human, such as mortality or fallibility. Medieval christianity, however, suggested that man’s life on earth was significant only in so far as it affected his soul’s expectation of God’s mercy after death, and it was against this belitting of his natural condition that the humanists of the Renaissance asserted the intrinsic value of man’s life before death and the greatness of his potentialities. As ecclesiastical influence waned, the protest of humanism was turned against secular orthodoxies that subordinated man to the abstract concepts of political or biological theory.

Humanism is an umbrella term. It has varied definition so it is necessary to consult them. Here are the definitions taken from different source:

In the light of Oxford English Dictionary, Humanism as “An outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human being, emphasis common human needs, and see solely rational ways of solving human problems”.
Humanism defines by **American Heritage Dictionary** as “A cultural and intellectual movement of the Renaissance that emphasized secular concerns as a result of the rediscovery and the study of the literature, art and civilization of Ancient Greece and Rome”.

In the same way humanism in the pages of **Collins English Dictionary** as “The denial of any power or moral value superior to that of Humanity; the rejection of religion in favour of a belief in the advancement of humanity by its own efforts.”

Like other definitions humanism as made by **Mankind English Dictionary** “Any system or mood of thought or action in which human interests values and dignity are taken to be at primary importance, as in moral judgments”.

Historians are pretty much agreed on the general outlines of those mental attitudes and scholarly interests which are assembled under the rubric of humanism. The most fundamental point of agreement is that the humanist mentality stood at a point midway between medieval supernaturalism and the modern scientific and critical attitude. Medievalists see humanism as the terminal product of the Middle Ages. Modern historians are perhaps more apt to view humanism as the germinal period of modernism.

Almost everywhere, humanism began as a rather pious, timid, and conservative drift away from medieval Christianity and ended in bold independence of medieval tradition. Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), one of the greatest humanists, occupied a position midway between extreme piety and frank secularism. Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) represented conservative Italian humanism. Robust secularism and intellectual independence reached its height in Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540). Rudolphus Agricola (1443-1485) may be regarded as the German Petrarch. In England, John Colet (c.1467-1519) and Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) were early or conservative humanists, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) represented later or agnostic and skeptical humanism. In France, pious classicists like Lefèvre d'Étaples (1453-1536) were succeeded by frank, urbane, and devout skeptics like Michel Montaigne (1533-1592) and bold anti-clerical satirists like François Rabelais (c.1495-1533).
When men like Petrarch and his fellow humanists read pagan literature, they were infected with the secular outlook of the Greeks and Romans. Even rather pious humanists became enamored of what Augustine branded the City of Man. Petrarch, a devout Christian, worshipped the pagan eclecticism of Cicero. Erasmus suggested that such titles as St. Socrates and St. Cicero were not inappropriate or sacrilegious, and openly preferred the pagans to the Schoolmen. "Whatever is pious and conduces to good manners ought not to be called profane," he wrote.

In the 20th century some new senses were given to the word humanism. F.C.S. Schiller (1864-1937) took it as the special name of his own version of pragmatism maintaining that all philosophical understanding stems from human activities and reaffirming ‘protagoras’ contention that “man is the measure” against what he call the “Intellectualist” philosophies whatever represented by Plato, by Hume or by the idealists of his own time.

The ‘new humanism’ of Irvin Babbitt was very different, being a reaction in favour of classical order against romanticism and naturalism, not only in their literary but also in their wider aspects.

By the thorough study of E.M. Forster, though whatever and wherever the man and land may be respectively, he has given in all his works the pure and aesthetic value to man as a man. Humanism is seen throughout the work of E.M. Forster. In the light of all these things, the work with said title will be carried out.